

Beyond Machu Picchu Press Kit

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Book Pitch

Beyond Machu Picchu: Cusco, the Inca Trail and Ayahuasca is the second novel in the Beyond Series and set in the Andes near Machu Picchu. After Skyler Briggs returns from Kauai, he decides to travel to Peru with Josh to explore Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley. While partying in Isla Vista, Skyler meets the enchanting Indigo who wants to travel with Skyler and study the Machu Picchu ruins and the sacred geometry of the Incans. All three travel to Cusco and plan an ayahuasca ceremony. It doesn't take long before their casual drug use leads them into trouble.

****For Immediate Release****

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Press Release

Novel Released about Adventures in Andes near Machu Picchu

Book Explores Ayahuasca Ceremony in Sacred Valley

Skyler Briggs continues his journey in the newly released novel *Beyond Machu Picchu: Cusco, the Inca Trail and Ayahuasca*. Set in Santa Barbara and the Andes near Machu Picchu, the novel explores casual drug use, extended travel and hesitant love. After his adventure in Kauai, twenty-something Skyler decides to travel to Peru with his old buddy Josh. While partying in Isla Vista, Skyler meets Indigo, a dreadlocked math whiz, who wants to see Machu Picchu and explore the sacred geometry of the Incans. Indigo and Josh don't get along and Josh's non-stop partying leads to big problems when he goes too far.

The author Scott G. Kipp adds: "Skyler is beat up after his adventures Kauai and has sworn off weed. He jumps off the weed wagon quickly though and gets back to partying with Josh and Indigo. They decide to take a trip to Cusco and then an ayahuasca trip. Ayahuasca is a powerful hallucinogen from the Amazon jungle and Skyler hopes to visit the spirit world to help him overcome his grief."

The 200-page book is full of action, drama and romance. This is the second book in the Beyond Series of novels set in the most beautiful places in the world like Kauai, Peru, Nepal and Portugal. The novels document the unexpected twists and turns of Skyler in real, exciting and exotic places. Trouble is always around the corner in these easy-to-read, fun novels.

Excerpt from book: "I look up with my eyes shut and see white light. The blank canvas darkens and turns into a series of circles that grow like ripples in a pond. I feel like I'm entering a portal. I feel the beauty of the glistening geometry and I feel my body melting."

About the Author

Scott G. Kipp is an author and film maker based in Santa Barbara, California. Kipp lived in South America for five months to research the Andes around Machu Picchu to write *Beyond Machu Picchu*. Kipp splits his time between blogging, filming and playing his ukulele. With limited travels because of Covid, Kipp is building a home in the Alabama Hills below Mount Whitney. Kipp blogs about his travels and adventures at www.skipstrips.com.

Kipp is ready to speak online or in person about his books, films, travels and RVing.

Short Author Bio

Scott G. Kipp is the author of the Beyond Series and lives an adventurous life making films and traveling. Kipp travels extensively to research his novels that are based in the most beautiful places on Earth. Because of Covid, Kipp has parked his RV on some boulder-strewn acreage in the Alabama Hills below Mount Whitney. Find out more about his adventures at www.skipstrips.com.

Long Author Bio

Scott G. Kipp is an author and film maker living in Santa Barbara and the Alabama Hills below Mt. Whitney. He retired from a twenty-five-year career in electrical engineering in 2018. As a traveling author, he has traveled extensively to Europe, the United States, Japan, Peru and Nepal and plans to hike the Camino De Santiago for the Beyond Series of novels.

Kipp grew up in Overland Park, Kansas, in a large Catholic family and community. He was a good student and Eagle Scout and worked as a backpacking guide at Philmont Scout Ranch in the summer of 1985. He went to Kansas State University for a couple years before moving to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park to gain California residency. He also worked in Death Valley, Heavenly Valley and Harveys Casino before attending Cal Poly SLO. He got his bachelor's and master's in electrical engineering with a focus on fiber optics. To put himself through college, he did two internships in the Silicon Valley and was an international exchange student at Kingston Polytechnic in London.

His first job out of college was testing and building remote sensing satellites for Hughes Aircraft in Santa Barbara, California. He resigned after a couple years and took a four-month tour of New Zealand before driving Route 66 and touring the US for six months. He moved to Hsinchu, Taiwan where he taught English and eventually sold fiber optic cables. He met and married Grace Tsai and the young couple returned to the US and bought a conversion van. They traveled the US in their blue velvet van for five months before settling in Arizona, Colorado and Kansas City. They sold most of their belongings before moving into a large, fifth wheel RV. The Kipps telecommuted from around the US in the RV before settling in Santa Barbara, California.

In Broomfield, Colorado, Kipp worked for Cielo Communications marketing fiber optic transceivers before working the majority of his career developing standards for high-speed, fiber optic networks for McDATA, Brocade and eventually Broadcom. He standardized fiber optic transceivers, links, networks, security and management. He traveled worldwide for standards meetings and usually tacked on extra travel over eighteen years.

Kipp has written Beyond Na Pali, Beyond Machu Picchu, Broadband Entertainment, The Last Yankee Dodger and other unreleased novels. Because of COVID, Kipp has curtailed his travels and bought land in Lone Pine. You can track his recent adventures at www.skipstrips.com.

Media Presence

Scott G. Kipp has promoted his books and other content in radio interviews, readings, press interviews, and writing. He has spoken at many professional conferences, to newspapers and via Internet-based video. He produced a book and documentary about his father's professional baseball career in *The Last Yankee Dodger*. He has also written newspaper articles for the Iola Register and Yates Center News.

Topics of Discussion

Topics to discuss in an interview include:

How much money did you earn picking grapes in Crete?

How did you crash your RV on the first day you drove it?

Is the novel semi-autobiographical?

What inspires Skyler Briggs – the protagonist of the novel?

Why is the novel based in Peru?

Was the Inca Trail as challenging as you write about in the book?

Is ayahuasca illegal in Peru?

Is there a big difference between smoking weed and ayahuasca?

Have you traveled to the places in your novels?

Is the book pro-drug or anti-drug?

Has the legalization of marijuana been good or bad?

How does the use of marijuana influence the book?

How is sex involved in the book?

Are many engineers also creative writers? It seems like a contradiction?

Questions and Answers

What drives Skyler Briggs?

Skyler is very curious and adventurous. In addition to physically traveling, he travels in his dreams and with drugs. He loves getting high, but he has to balance that with the problems that can arise from doing drugs. It's a balancing act of having fun now without impeding his future. He is obviously driven by sex as well, but Indigo wants to play it cool for a number of reasons.

Where is the novel based?

The novel starts in Santa Barbara, but Skyler quickly flies to Cusco. Cusco is an ancient city that is growing fast. It's a mixture of historic cathedrals, nunneries and Incan ruins and modern hotels, restaurants and bars. Skyler and Josh take a day trip to beautiful Rainbow Mountain at 17,000' and then hikes the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. Skyler goes to Machu Picchu twice to see the ruins with Indigo. Skyler also explores the Incan ruins at Ollantaytambo and Pisac. These real places are very inspiring and a crucial aspect of the book.

What is ayahuasca?

Ayahuasca is a strong hallucinogen from the Amazon jungle. Ayahuasca is usually taken in doses that induce vomiting and strong hallucinogenic trips that last for hours. Ayahuasca means "vine of the soul" and most people have very profound experiences on the hallucinogen.

Are there many places to do ayahuasca in Peru?

Yes. Ayahuasca ceremonies are available throughout Peru. From small shops in Lima or Cusco to retreat centers like the Sacred Valley Tribe in the novel, a wide range of options exist. The Sacred Valley Tribe use the musical performances to lead the ceremony, but the ceremony can host as many as 100 people who can make the trip rather chaotic. Small shaman stores may have a ceremony for 2-6 people for a more intimate experience. It's a good idea to read reviews about each ayahuasca provider to know that they are reputable.

How is Josh the antagonist of the book?

Josh symbolizes the no-holds-bar party attitude of many people. Josh lives in the moment—to the extreme—and doesn't plan ahead. He quits his bartending job on a whim and just doesn't think about the future. His party all the time attitude keeps him from preparing for things like an extreme hike or the ayahuasca ceremony. He can also get into trouble with drug dealers and takes risks that many people wouldn't take.

Who does Indigo represent?

Indigo represents an intellectual woman who likes to party. Indigo's dread locks and hippy nature reflect the free spirit of many college students and Indigo is the phase of life that Indigo is in. Indigo is also unusually intelligent and can recall many facts that are backed up systematically.

Similar Books

The Beach by Alex Garland – *The Beach* is fairly close to *Beyond Machu Picchu*, *BMP* because it features travelers doing drugs and having fun. I wrote *Beyond Na Pali* before reading *The Beach*., but I wrote *BMP* afterwards.

Wild by Sheryl Strayed – *Wild* has similarities to *BMP* with backpacking and drug use sprinkled throughout the book.

A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson – Bryson’s famous book features backpacking and facing failure. *BMP* has similar challenges for the main character in real settings.

Eat, Pray Love by Elizabeth Gilbert – Gilbert’s spirit of adventure and falling in love have similar themes in *BMP*.

On the Road by Jack Kerouac – This classic travel book has lots of sex and drugs, but Sal has none of the guilt or misgivings that Skyler has.

Book Summary

Beyond Machu Picchu starts where *Beyond Na Pali* ends. Skyler is talking with his old buddy Josh about his plans for traveling in Josh's fetid Isla Vista apartment. Josh is pulling bongos while Skyler is refraining after swearing weed off while mourning for his lost love Shirley. When they go to lunch, they meet Nancy and Indigo, a dread-locked math-whiz. They proceed to drink the day away while talking about travel and ayahuasca—the mysterious hallucinogen from the Amazon. To keep the party going at Josh's apartment, Skyler breaks his vow of abstinence from weed and leaves with Indigo. Indigo captures Skyler's interest with her tattoos and esoteric knowledge on sacred geometry and Incas. Indigo takes Skyler to a labyrinth where their intimate relationship begins.

Skyler decides to travel full time and sells his car and moves everything into storage before departing for Peru. On the first day in Peru, Skyler and Josh meet Jill and Rita, two partying Brits from Oxford who decide to hike the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu with Josh and Skyler. After drinking all day, Josh scores some coke and weed from sketchy dealers in the decaying backstreets of Cusco. Josh gets Skyler to do coke for the first time and this leads Skyler to pass out from the long day of drinking and travel.

After waking with a hangover, Josh and Skyler take an adventure to Sacsayhuaman and end up finding an ayahuasca retreat center where they can partake after the Inca Trail. They also sign up for a day trip to Rainbow Mountain where disaster awaits a fellow traveler. The next day takes them to the Inca Trail where the partying resumes. After smoking weed, doing coke and screwing, Josh and Jill suffer acute mountain sickness on the hike to Dead Woman's pass at 13,828 feet. Josh and Jill recover the next day, but Skyler pays the price for getting too high and falling off the trail and injuring himself. The long days of hiking take their toll, but Skyler rallies for Machu Picchu that fascinates him.

After Machu Picchu, Indigo meets Skyler in Aguas Caliente, the small town at the base of Machu Picchu. Indigo and Skyler go to Machu Picchu the next morning and have a peaceful morning in the ruins before Skyler leaves Indigo to climb Huayna Picchu. When they get back to Aguas Caliente, they rush to catch their train that Josh misses. Now traveling without Josh, Skyler and Indigo take a beautiful train ride up the Sacred Valley to Ollantaytambo. They sleep together, but they abstain from sex because they are preparing for the ayahuasca ceremony.

After touring the Ollantaytambo ruins the next morning, Skyler and Indigo meet a drunk Josh with Jill and Rita. Josh is belligerent and gets in a fight with Skyler over preparations for the ceremony and Skyler's desire to commune with Shirley's spirit during the ceremony. Indigo and Skyler fight over their abstinence and Skyler's distance from Indigo. The chaos of the preparation and the fear of the ceremony leads to the climactic ayahuasca ceremony in the Sacred Valley.

Audience for Beyond Machu Picchu

Beyond Machu Picchu appeals to readers who want an exciting adventure inside and out. The drama, drugs and travel appeal to a crowd that wants more out of life. The book will have particular appeal to marijuana users, psychonauts and backpackers – often the same people. Men will have a higher predilection to the book because of the protagonist Skyler and the outdoor adventure. Many people will relate to Skyler's desire for long term travel and the desire to get out from behind a desk.

Here's a bullet list of the audience:

- Travelers
- Recreational Drug Users
- Backpackers
- Romantics