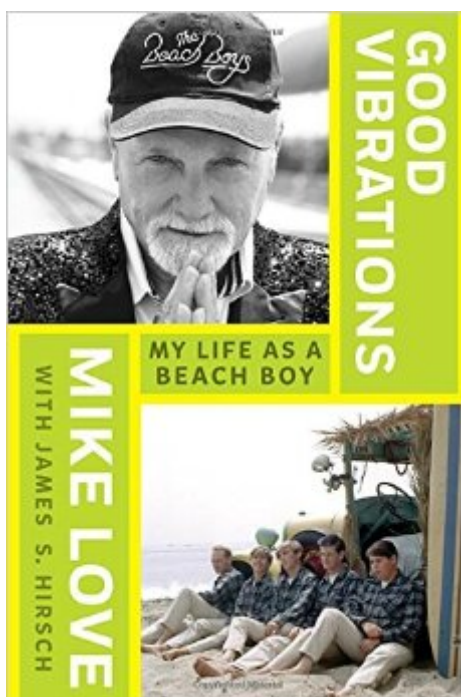


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Good Vibrations: My Life As A Beach Boy



Synopsis

Mike Love tells the story of his legendary, raucous, and ultimately triumphant five-decade career as the front man of The Beach Boys, the most popular American band in history -- timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of "Good Vibrations." As a founding member of The Beach Boys, Mike Love has spent an extraordinary fifty-five years, and counting, as the group's lead singer and one of its principal lyricists. The Beach Boys, from their California roots to their international fame, are a unique American story -- one of overnight success and age-defying longevity; of musical genius and reckless self-destruction; of spirituality, betrayal, and forgiveness -- and Love is the only band member to be part of it each and every step. His own story has never been fully told, of how a sheet-metal apprentice became the quintessential front man for America's most successful rock band, singing in more than 5,600 concerts in 26 countries. Love describes the stories behind his lyrics for pop classics such as "Good Vibrations," "California Girls," "Surfin' USA," and "Kokomo," while providing vivid portraits of the turbulent lives of his three gifted cousins, Brian, Dennis, and Carl Wilson. His partnership with Brian has few equals in American pop music, though Mike has carved out a legacy of his own -- he co-wrote the lyrics to eleven of the twelve original Beach Boy songs that were top 10 hits while providing the lead vocals on ten of them. The band's unprecedented durability also provides a glimpse into America's changing cultural mores over the past half century, while Love himself has experienced both the diabolical and the divine -- from Charles Manson's "family" threatening his life to Maharishi instilling it with peace. A husband, a father, and an avid environmentalist, Love has written a book that is as rich and layered as the Beach Boy harmonies themselves.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is reasonably enjoyable. It's smoothly written and covers a lot of ground. Some interesting new bits, such as about Dennis's solo album. I particularly liked the chapters on TM and the Maharishi and where Mike Love discusses his reaction to Brian Wilson's 1991 autobiography. And he goes into some really interesting detail in the lawsuits. One thing that troubled me was the ink devoted to Charles Manson. Dennis Wilson refused to speak on this subject his entire life. Mike Love made it an entire chapter. And how could Mike Love could defend his brother's breaking into Dennis Wilson's home at 1:00 in the morning and almost killing him? While I appreciate his loyalty to his brother and willingness to take on the subject, some things just cannot be justified. The reason the book does not get more stars is two-part. First is the familiarity of the anecdotes. Carl mimicking Spade Cooley. Brian freaking out on the plane. Bruce Johnston having to fit into Al Jardine's pants. Uncle Murry interrupting the Help Me Rhonda sessions. Brian falling asleep in the duty free lounge. I was so hoping for more on his childhood and those famous Christmas parties at his parents' home, or at least a childhood photo with his cousins. The fraction in the 1970s got glossed over in just a few pages. On the early life of the Wilsons, David Marks' Lost Beach Boy book has significantly more detail. The second is that Mike Love doesn't go deep enough, insofar as his own feelings and inner-workings are concerned. How does Mike Love truly feel about the other Beach Boys? Is he sorry Dennis and Carl died so young, or does he believe they brought it on themselves which he very well might given his anti-drug stance and fitness proclivities.

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