

Reviews for UZUMATI 1.0

Magnificent in Addeo's descriptive beauty. Brings Yosemite to life. Characters bring their lives along the trails of the valley. The nature and inhabitants become entwined as one. A real page turner

Jack Feinberg

I just finished Uzumati, A tale of the Yosemite by Ed Addeo. It was a thoroughly enjoyable read. I particularly liked the well-drawn fictional surrogates who move the story along in its prehistoric setting neatly segueing into fine descriptions of the historical characters as the story unfolds. It's an excellent history of a remarkable place. I'm definitely in the mood for a trip to the Ahwahnee.

JohnNorris

Migration, survival, imagination, nature, ingenuity, hardship, history, danger, flora & fauna, grandeur, etc.! Read the book, then plan your next, or first, visit to Yosemite Valley.

WWF

I fully expected this book to be informative and to teach me about the history of Yosemite Valley. It did, and I learned so much about Yosemite and its beginnings. However I was pleasantly surprised to find out that it was also a story with compelling characters who pulled me in, and I found myself not wanting to put the book down.

Denise

A great read is one that not only is entertaining, provocative, and engaging, but one that stays with you long after putting it down. Yosemite is a treasure of our earth and in "Uzumati" the author takes us on a journey through history of possible events that may have transpired when mankind's first encounters with this majestic place. This is ultimately a story about humanity and our evolving relationship with a place we love. I can't wait to visit Yosemite again and reflect on Uzumati!

Zenbones

The book is based on the author's 50 years of personal interest, first-hand experience and research. Clearly, the author loves the subject and primary setting, the Yosemite

(Uzumati) Valley in California and strives to convey his enthusiasm to readers. He has succeeded with this reader.

Uzumati (Grizzly Bear) was the local Indian name given to a “hidden” valley, which was not discovered by the Indians (descendants of the Asian migration) until about 1200 years ago. It proved to be a safe and bountiful site for the fortunate tribe that settled there. The epic multi-generational stories told in this book provide insights about the struggles leading to the eventual discovery. The story ends by describing the climactic events surrounding the re-discovery of the valley by a new wave of European-American settlers in the 19th century.

“Uzumati” as historical fiction, provides imagined events, plausible legends and prototypical characters. The author has relied on current theories of the natural forces, which resulted in the majestic beauty and diversity of the North American continent, as well as archeological evidence of tribal dispersion, tools and culture. He studied the animals, flora and fauna of the region as well as “native American” oral history to imagine pivotal events leading a small tribe to be the first humans to inhabit Yosemite Valley. Historical journals and news reports about the Mariposa Indian War (1851) provided the background for the main characters and events surrounding the forced relocation of the Indians to unsuitable “reservations” outside their beloved and sacred homeland.

The book is well crafted. It compresses time in a way that is neither tedious nor confusing. Written as an episodic, historical novel spanning about 3,000 years, the book introduces readers to several courageous Indian leaders who move their people incrementally toward a better, safer place. Each major character is well drawn, events are easy to visualize and descriptions are not burdened with superfluous adjectives. It is an easy book to read. The author’s descriptions of events and scenes are excellent. For example, several paragraphs beginning on page 131 were worth re-reading because they describe the first viewing of the valley and the reaction of the lone discoverer, who “was certain that he had stumbled into the secret dwelling place of every god and spirit of Indian lore”.

Many characters are memorable including Choluk, the discoverer, and crafty Chief Tenaya, the protector. Most major characters are Indians from Choluk’s family roots, portrayed as brave and intelligent leaders constrained by their limited tools and resources. The most sympathetic and memorable characters include an adventurous Anglo-American (Major Jim Savage) and the Indian companion and father - figure, (“Foxy”) who teaches him survival skills and appreciation of native culture, methods and language. A few battles among men and against grizzly bears include feats of physicality and strength that might be depicted, some day, in a spectacular adventure movie, filmed in the very special settings of Yosemite.

Ultimately, the region attracted hordes of new immigrants from the east who brought technology to exploit the treasures of the land and the valley could not remain a haven.

California became state of the USA in 1851 and the new settlers dominated and displaced the native people. Major Savage and Chief Tenaya, both historical adversaries, respect each other but both know that the final conflict will not end well for the Indians of the valley. The book concludes with mutual betrayal and political treachery. "Uzumati" is an enjoyable read for those who wonder about the dangerous human mass migration to the "new world" and first contacts between primitive cultures and technologically - advanced societies. The conclusion illustrates the practical and moral issues faced by both groups as attempts at cooperation and sharing by the few are sabotaged by the many. The struggle between good intentions and evil actions eventually influences outcomes but mistrust and misunderstanding are common human traits. The author has balanced the narrative but it is difficult not to sympathize with the original immigrants from the west (the Indians). Even today we struggle for better balance between our dependence on upon the nature, which we have discovered, and the technology, which we have invented.

Today, of course, the valley and surroundings are preserved as one of the favored U.S. National Parks, widely considered one of the most beautiful locations on earth. The subject and the book have captivated me. It has been an enjoyable reading experience, providing new perspectives on the clash of "manifest destiny" with tribal rights. As a result, I've resolved to visit Yosemite in order to experience, for my first time, the awesome beauty of the valley. Like me, most readers of this book may want to feel what was felt by the Indians, by the author and by countless visitors upon their first experience of Uzumati, the sacred valley.

Charles F. Galanaughon

The author took me back to the first time I visited Yosemite and was inspired to work in the out of doors, and I did for 35 years. The authors use of adjectives in describing the wonders of Yosemite made me remember the glories of the valley floor. This historical novel takes you through the beauty of Northern and Central California and at every turn, adventure. The story has interesting characters (James Savage and Tenaya) that will keep you spell bound. Add the historical backdrop of the Gold Rush, the 49ers and the Mariposa Battalion, makes this book a great read.

Karen D

Uzumati is a great read on a whole host of levels. If you are already a lover of the Yosemite Valley, this book delights because it takes the reader down through the millenniums from when it was first discovered by Native Americans to the time California became a state.. If you are looking for a rollicking good story full of memorable characters who happen to discover the wondrous beauty and haunting spirituality of the Yosemite Valley, then this

is a sure read for you.
If you are a would-be historian/adventurer, this book would be akin to walking the Northwest Territory with the Lewis and Clark expedition.
In short, whatever your interests, you owe yourself the pleasure of reading this novel. It is truly an Epic in every sense of the word.

Dennis K.