

## A Romantic in Spain (Classic Travel Writing)

By Theophile Gautier

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By the 1930s Western books about China were common. But a book about the West, and particularly London, written by a Chinese author, was a rarity -- and continues to be so.

Chiang Yee's account of London, first published in 1938, is original in more ways than one. Not only one of the first widely available books written by a Chinese author in English, it also reverses the expected conventions of travel writing. For here the "exotic" subject matter is none other than London and its people, quizzically observed as an alien culture by a visiting foreigner. Immersing himself in the strange rituals of London life, Chiang Yee set out to learn about Londoners, their habits and their pleasures. In pubs and cafes, cinemas and art galleries, he watched the locals at work and at play. Fascinated by such social conventions as afternoon tea and discussing the weather, he tried to make sense of British society, treating his subjects with a mix of wonderment and affection. As he lived through the capital's various seasons, and endured the notorious London fogs, Chiang Yee's affinity with the city and its people grew.

Illustrated with the author's own atmospheric sketches, *The Silent Traveller in London* is also a book about China and a world in transition. Comparing London with his native land, Chiang Yee draws parallels and contrasts, seeking to rectify misunderstandings and stereotypes regarding Chinese life.

In May 1840, Theophile Gautier, the enfant terrible of the French Romantic movement, set off by coach from Paris for a journey to Spain. Hired by the journal *La Presse* to send back regular installments of his travelogue, Gautier recorded his experiences and impressions with extraordinary vividness and enthusiasm. The end result was the book *Voyage en Espagne* (1845), an enthralling piece of travel writing later translated into English.

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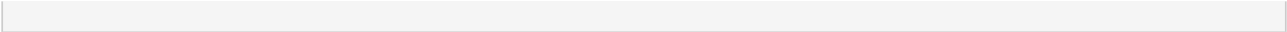
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### Editorial Review

From Library Journal

A well-known 19th-century French journalist and writer, Gautier began his career as an artist, which explains the unusual depth of visual detail and color in his writing. If you think that a 150-year-old travelog might be dated, think again. In this latest installment in Interlink's "Lost and Found" series, originally published in French in 1845, Gautier doesn't dilute his strong opinions about his experiences, both positive and negative. Clearly, he doesn't write to satisfy a tourist office but instead to give his own lively reactions to Spain, which at the time was relatively unknown to the rest of the world. The depth of description of the Escorial (Philip II's last palace) would put many contemporary travel writers to shame. And Gautier's account of the perils of carriage travel, country inns, and local cooking show us what modern tourists are missing as they travel across Spain today. Still, this is not merely a primer: experienced travelers to Spain will learn many new details about Spanish history, art, architecture, customs, and folklore. This special time capsule of Spain as seen through the eyes of one gifted writer is highly recommended for European travel as well as literature collections. Olga B. Wise, Compaq Computer Corp., Austin, TX  
Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Review

"One of the most beguiling classics of 19th century travel writing" - Times Literary Supplement

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: French

### Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Michael Jackson:**

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**Shirley Kistner:**

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**Duane Harden:**

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to accomplish! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book could be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the publication untitled A Romantic in Spain (Classic Travel Writing) can be great book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

**Sandra Brown:**

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