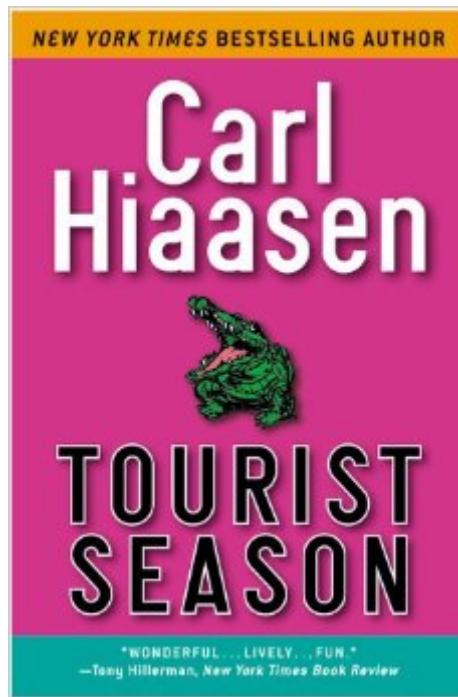


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Tourist Season



Synopsis

The only trace of the first victim was his Shriner's fez washed up on the Miami beach. The second victim, the head of the city's chamber of commerce, was found dead with a toy rubber alligator lodged in his throat. And that was just the beginning... Now Brian Keyes, reporter turned private eye, must move from muckraking to rooting out murder, in a caper that will mix football players, politicians, and police with a group of fanatics and a very hungry crocodile.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (255 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I've been reading Carl Hiassen's work for years, having jumped in around the middle, with "Native Tongue," "Skin Tight" and "Striptease." I've more recently been working my way through the rest of his catalog, including "Stormy Weather" and "Double Whammy," with his two latest books in hardback waiting on my to-be-read shelf. But years after the liner notes for a Jimmy Buffett song ("The Ballad of Skip Wiley and Skeet" off his "Barometer Soup" album) made me go look for this Hiassen's guy's works in a book store, I'm finally getting around to "Tourist Season," the first novel Hiassen wrote, featuring rogue newspaper columnist Skip Wiley. It's said that you spend your entire life writing your first novel, as you inevitably put pretty much all the good stuff in that one. Whatever the state of your craft, it's where your ideas, your good bits, your passion all gets poured into. While I've enjoyed other Hiassen books more (notably "Native Tongue" and "Skin Tight"), this certainly seems to be true for "Tourist Season." While all of his books have an overt current of rage directed at developers, destructive big business and endemic corruption, he always makes sure to leaven that with humor, a little zaniness, and some sweetness. Not here. Sure, there's some amusing bits, a

lot of them, really, but Hiassen's subsequent work has never been this dark, his rage never so undiminished. While all of his books barrel towards their climax, this is the first one I've read in which it's hard to see how there could be a happy ending, where the bad guys aren't REALLY bad and where it doesn't all seem like cosmic justice on the last page. I won't spoil the ending, but by midway through the book, it's clear that with the heaping handfuls of moral ambiguity mixed in, it's hard to have anything better than a bittersweet ending. In a nutshell, Miami newspaper columnist Skip Wiley has had enough. Enough of the influx of Yankees to Florida and the concomitant woes of greed, development and reckless destruction of the environment. Especially the latter. When Skip Wiley goes missing, and a new terrorist organization, the Nights of December, starts targeting the tourist industry in South Florida (starting by shoving a rubber alligator down a man's throat and then putting his dead body inside his luggage), Skip's editor calls a former reporter turned private investigator to track him down. Hiassen almost certainly does not advocate terrorism, murder and kidnap, but the cause is clearly near and dear to him, and he argues the Nights' cause eloquently. That makes their extremism tragic, and the possible endings all troubling. A solid novel, and one of Hiassen's best. While all of his novels will make you laugh, and keep you turning the pages, anxious to see what the next twist in the roller-coaster ride will be, "Tourist Season" will make you think, too. Definitely recommended for any of his existent fans, as well as fans of Dave Barry or Elmore Leonard.

This was my first Carl Hiaasen experience. The counter lady at a used book store suggested it (thank you, thank you, thank you) and I've read everyone of Hiaasen's works since then AND I've paid full price so Mr. Hiaasen could be duly compensated for the (unfortunately) short but intense stretches of reading joy he's provided. And as far as the laughing out loud reference in my review title, too many book jackets promise it but this one delivers! If you're new to Hiaasen I suggest you start here and read chronologically. First you'll see the talent grow and you'll get to know the serial characters as they're introduced. If you want a good, fast, quirky, funny, sometimes hilarious read, where the bad guys get what's coming to them---sometimes in the most bizarre ways---then begin at the beginning and carry on through to the most recent Hiaasen offering, Sick Puppy (although you could skip Lucky You and not miss much). Have fun!

Hiaasen is a GENIUS! Tourist Season was my first Hiassen book, and it was a beautiful start to my Hiassen reading rage. Since Tourist Season, I've read 3 more by C.H., and I'm not done yet. Carl Hiaasen's style has always surprised me. Each one of his stories begins with what seems like many

many separate, totally independent stories. Somehow, within a few hundred pages, each one of those stories become closely tied with every other one. Tourist Season had me laughing hysterically, more than any other Hiaasen book I think. Being a South Floridian, I've also traveled to most of the places described in this and other books. I find his depiction of the South Florida ecosystems splendid. Tourist Season especially evokes a genuine concern for the loss of Florida's natural land, and the final scene in the book is simply heart-wrenching. The perfect dose of humor coupled with a great look into natural Florida, away from Disney World and South Beach, I recommend Tourist Season to everyone, anywhere in the US. Definitely a good book to buy and keep forever.

Tourist Season has a gripping plot and Carl Hiaasen has a wicked sense of humor, but this is his first novel and it shows. Hiaasen's Sick Puppy was strongly recommended to me, but a copy of Tourist Season was at hand when I was looking for something to read, so this book became my first exposure to this author. Once I started reading, the plot kept me engaged, but I repeatedly found myself wishing I had waited to get hold of the other book. My problem with this book was the prose. The plot and the humor kept me reading, but the words kept getting in the way. The dialog isn't bad, but the descriptions are awkward, and the corny names of the characters sound like something out of a 1940's B movie. Throughout the book, he refers to his characters by their full names. You can find the name Brian Keyes three or four times in a single page. This gets annoying after a while. Despite the flaws, however, I recommend this book, but I would read something else by Carl Hiaasen first. Once you establish a relationship with the author, you will probably want to where young Carl got his start.

The classic Carl Hiaasen right here. You might not like the subject matter of this book if you're not a native Floridian, but it's a great work of fiction anyway. If you liked any of his other books, this one is for you!

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