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## Mango Elephants in the Sun: How Life in an African Village Let Me Be in My Skin

Von Susana Herrera

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**Von Susana Herrera : Mango Elephants in the Sun: How Life in an African Village Let Me Be in My Skin**  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mango Elephants in the Sun: How Life in an African Village Let Me Be in My Skin:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A nice readVon Ben KetchaA beautiful story by a peace corps set in the southern fringes of the Sahara desert in Northern

Cameroon. I enjoyed her vivid accounts and the details of the story. This book serves as a good read for anybody interested in the amazing way of life of the people of Northern Cameroon. It is my third novel on Cameroon this month and I enjoyed them all. The Usurper and Other Stories, Man no be God, and Disciples of Fortune are other good Cameroonian stories.

**Kurzbeschreibung**When the Peace Corps sends Susana Herrera to teach English in northern Cameroon, she yearns to embrace her adopted village and its people, to drink deep from the spirit of Mother Africa and to forget a bitter childhood and painful past. To the villagers, however, she's a rich American tourist, a *nasara* (white person) who has never known pain or want. They stare at her in silence. The children giggle and run away. At first her only confidant is a miraculously communicative lizard. Susana fights back with every ounce of heart and humor she possesses, and slowly begins to make a difference. She ventures out to the village well and learns to carry water on her head. In a classroom crowded to suffocation she finds a way to discipline her students without resorting to the beatings they are used to. She makes ice cream in the scorching heat, and learns how to plant millet and kill chickens. She laughs with the villagers, cries with them, works and prays with them, heals and is helped by them. Village life is hard but magical. Poverty is rampant yet people sing and share what little they have. The termites that chew up her bed like morning cereal are fried and eaten in their turn ("bite-sized and crunchy like Doritos"). Nobody knows what tomorrow may bring, but even the morning greetings impart a purer sense of being in the moment. Gradually, Susana and the village become part of each other. They will never be the same again.

**Pressestimmen**"Californian Susan Herrera spent two years in northern Cameroon in what might be described as the classic Peace Corps assignment: teaching school in a remote African village. 'Jam bah doo nah?' ('Are you in your skin?') her neighbors ask her by way of greeting, and the response means, 'Yes, I am alive, fully present and experiencing the moment.' Herrera's account is filled with cross-cultural anecdotes that are alternately amusing and poignant. She is appalled as she watches the other teachers administer corporal punishment, only to discover that her own students don't respect her authority because she refuses to beat them. Her solution is to devise more creative forms of classroom discipline. A pompous village chief offers her a bloody goat head as a gift of courtship. Herrera feels the thrill of triumph when her most ambitious student masters a bicycle for the first time, until the girl's older brother coldly rebukes the foreign teacher, 'Don't put desires in her head that she can never have.' Herrera's growing friendship with several local women and her tender romance with a handsome Cameroonian doctor give the narrative its continuity and novel-like structure."Scott Zesch, *Austin American-Statesman* "Whether she's writing about falling in love, getting malaria or teaching a young woman how to ride a bicycle, Herrera draws in readers with her uncommon intelligence and wisdom."Mary Spicuzza, *Metro Santa Cruz*

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