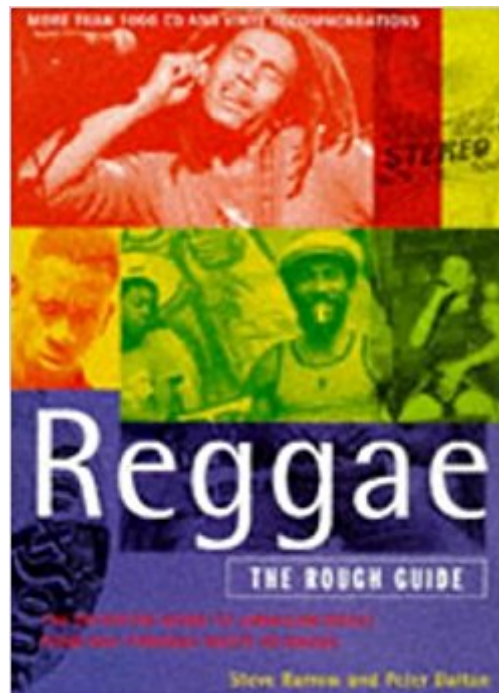




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Reggae: The Rough Guide (Rough Guides)



Synopsis

This guide charts the shifting world of Jamaican music through its various incarnations from Ska to Ragga. Focussing on the artists, musicians and producers who made it all happen, it presents the whole story. Features include interviews with the stars of reggae and over 1000 CD and vinyl recommendations.

Book Information

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Finally, a comprehensive guide covering the entire span of Jamaican music, from the 1950s mento and R&B through dub, dancehall and ragga. Along with interviews of crucial reggae personalities (Bunny Lee, King Jammy, and Coxsone Dodd, for example) and profiles of major careers (like Gregory Isaacs, Sugar Minott, and of course, Bob Marley), Barrow and Dalton provide the irreplaceable service of reviewing and recommending more than 1,000 CD and vinyl selections. The writers clearly love their topic and are exceedingly knowledgeable about it. The resulting guide is a combination of fascinating historical tidbits, scholarly attention to musical detail, and a definitive treatment of reggae's genre, artists, albums, and songs. --Stephanie Gold

This is an inexpensive yet near-comprehensive way to educate oneself about reggae music. Incorporating the same let's-cut-to-the-chase style that has characterized the Rough Guide travel books, as well as other music guides on rock, opera, and classical music, this guide to the hugely

popular Jamaican music is profusely illustrated and well indexed. The authors have been involved in reggae for over 20 years and are able to survey the genre's many aspects succinctly. They consider such subgenre categories as mento, ska, rude-boy music, and rocksteady and devote chapters to African reggae, reggae in Britain, and reggae in America. Most important is the direction that the guide gives to the best CD or vinyl sources of reggae. Great photos and album covers (all in black and white) liberally pepper the text. If a library feels compelled to stock only one title on reggae, one would be hard pressed to beat the price or content of this book. ?David M. Turkalo, Suffolk Univ. Law Sch. Lib., Boston Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Fantastic read-flows so easy and the insight you gain from this book is amazing. A MUST have for any fan of the genre.

Great book, one of the best resources, along with allmusic.com. However, if you have the 1st or 2nd edition, there is not enough new here to warrant buying this, wait for 4th edition. If you don't have any of the editions, which sells all three, this is a great start as are the other two.

I have used the rough guide to reggae and the smaller "Rough Guide: 100 Essential CDs" by the same authors, for over a decade. They have proven to be excellent resources that, as the other reviewer's touch on, serve as buyer's guides rather than books to be read cover to cover (though the smaller one can be read cover to cover). Some of the other comments that criticize the book's organization and objectivity are in my opinion totally irrelevant when you consider the overall depth and quality of this reggae resource. I have been a roots reggae deejay for 10 years and thanks largely to Barrow and Dalton my collection (and enjoyment) of the music has exploded. They basically never fail to recommend great music, they seem to know everything about the genre, and I find myself gaining more and more profound respect for their judgement. I consider my reggae to have gone from first tier knowledge before reading the rough guide (the Wailers, Isaacs, Brown, Spear, Toots, Wailing Souls, Scratch, pablo, tubby, etc), on to a "second-tier" understanding after starting to explore this (skatalites, abyssinians, yabby you, junior byles, heptones, ellis, sugar minott, u-roy, keith hudson, etc) and then after really digging into the rough guide I have reached yet another level entirely, which has brought me some of the most classic and under-appreciated music to emerge from Jamaica (guys like joe higgs, jackie mittoo, the royal rasses, slim smith, and bob andy). The gift that keeps on giving. I particularly like the smaller "100 Essential CDs" for the layout and cover-to-cover readability. Plus it allows for a longer review of each album that becomes a de

facto mini-biography of the artists. Thanks Steve and Peter for bringing me this muck joy! I am sure I will continue to find more classic music from your guides.

If you're looking for a quick and easy read on the history of Reggae, this probably isn't the place to start. If you're looking for a reference work to help you flesh out your reggae collection, this is the book for you. Steve Barrow might well be the most knowledgeable person writing about Reggae today. Since buying this book I've personally dropped a couple a grand on Reggae CDs, mainly on recommendations in this book or the Virgin Reggae guide. Overall, I'd say about 90%+ were worth my money. In this respect, the book has been invaluable to me. If you're a true fan of Reggae, it will be invaluable to you too. Some of the criticisms leveled by other reviewers on this site are a result of unfair or misguided expectations. They are apparently disappointed that the book isn't an easy read, or an oral history of some sort. I think the best way to approach this book is to start with a particular style of Reggae that you're interested in (i.e., Roots, Ska, etc.) and dig in. Get some on the recommended CDs, and enjoy! Then move on to another chapter if you are so inclined. One last plug for the author: Steve Barrow is the co-owner of Blood & Fire, currently Reggae's best reissue label. Buy everything you can get your hands with the B & F logo! - the stuff is worth its weight in ganja.

My parents raised me on roots, but when I wanted to broaden my DUB collection, one of the resources I turned to was the Rough Guide. Rough Guide is a great go-to reference for the history of different reggae sub-genres and makes a solid buying guide. I've not regretted any music purchases I've made using information from this book. It really helped steer me toward the kinds of music I enjoy and away from things I don't like quite so much, but it also suggested successful adventures I might never have tried otherwise.

Of the three books on reggae I have recently read this is the second best. It gives a fairly good overview of the music, recommends albums from various periods and interviews a lot of former and current stars. It's not really a book for continuous reading but rather a reference work to be consulted occasionally. Overall a worthwhile addition to the growing literature on reggae - better than Reggae, Rasta, Revolution but not as good as Reggae Routes : The Story of Jamaican Music which is definitely the best book ever written on the subject.

While Barrow is one of the most respected writers in terms of his knowledge of reggae music today,

I found the overall approach of the book to be cumbersome and more than a little boring. It is hard to narrow down any genre of music to 100 or so "essential" titles to have, and Jamaican music is certainly no exception. Indeed, to narrow down jazz, ska, rudeboy, rocksteady, reggae, dub, dancehall, and ragga (to name a few Jamaican sub-genres) to a few titles each is foolhardy at best. While this book may well help one add titles to their collection, the book is a mere microcosm of the music of Jamaica. For my money, search out the Virgin Guide to Reggae for a much more complete and information-ridden guide to the musics of Jamaica.

I enjoyed this book very much. If you have this, "Reggae Bloodlines" and "Catch a Fire," you have quite a comprehensive overview of the reggae phenomenon. "Reggae: The Rough Guide" is an indispensable World Music book, along with such must-have volumes as "The Brazilian Sound" and "World Music: The Rough Guide."

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