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Happy Tango: Sallycat's Guide To Dancing In Buenos Aires 2nd Edition



Synopsis

Every tango dancer longs to go to Buenos Aires, but negotiating the complexities, traditions and practicalities of the world centre of tango can be daunting. This essential guide lets you in on everything you need to know, including: 11 rules for discovering the best of Buenos Aires tango; an A to Z of indispensable advice to help you fit in fast; a simple method for choosing where to dance first. Sallycat followed her own tango heart to Buenos Aires in 2007 and stayed to dance on; Happy Tango distils all her adventures on the city's dance floors into an honest and inspirational book-shaped friend. If you're dreaming of tango heaven in Argentina, why go it alone? Travel with Sallycat, and take the journey that's right for you.

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Customer Reviews

I am so happy I found this book before my trip to Buenos Aires. It is full of enormously helpful advice that no tango traveler should be without, but only an insider would know. Sally Blake made a trip to Bs. As. after only having danced for 5 months in her native England and ended up staying to learn and dance tango in the city of it's birth. She has navigated it's many milongas and made all the mistakes for you. Her advice and rules are designed to maximize your chances of getting dances and finding tango bliss (hence the name Happy Tango). In the first section she gives you 11 rules to follow, ones that she has followed (and broken) with quick explanations of why you should follow them. The 2nd section is an A to Z of dancing tango in Bs. As., all things tango you might encounter or need to know, with very helpful definitions and advice. In this section under the definition of "codigos" she outlines the code of conduct you should follow at the milongas to avoid looking like a

newcomer or committing an embarrassing gaffe. In the 3rd Section she gives you advice on where you might be happiest dancing and descriptions of 20 milongas to try neatly sorted into three categories (tourist circuit, traditional and informal) with notes on how to get there and what you NEED TO KNOW to enjoy yourself at each milonga or practica. There's even a final section with practical advice on where to stay, what to eat, money matters, learning Castellano (Argentine Spanish), getting around, safety, staying connected and even what to see on your time off from tango (if you take any). There are also a few appendices which include tango schools, shoe stores and people she has met in her time there who might be helpful to know about.

A friend of mine once said, "When I read news stories about things I know about, I'm often astonished about how wrong the journalist is about even the most fundamental concepts - which makes me wonder why I should believe anything I read from that publication about things I *don't* know about". On the other hand, we have Sally Blake's wonderful little book. In a relaxed, witty and non-judgmental style, she shares her hard-won lessons about her quest to find her own brand of tango happiness in the intense Buenos Aires tango social scene. She pragmatically separates the available social tango opportunities into three broad (and somewhat overlapping) categories: "tourist-circuit", "traditional", and "informal", with seven recommended "try-here-first" venues in each category, and thorough information about each recommended venue. For a "tango immigrant" Britisher, her descriptions are refreshingly lacking in tango-fundamentalist dogma, and are nuanced enough to allow you to gauge your best bet for the evening along the lines of the practical, important distinctions: age of attendees, prevalent style of dancing, pace of crowding through the evening, etc. Advice on the logistics of visiting Buenos Aires, the behavior codes in the milongas, any many other aspects of city life critically important to the tango visitor, appears very up-to-date. I know some of the vendors she recommends personally, and can vouch for many of her value judgments. Sally and I would probably see each other sometimes, and not every night, because our tastes and social circles are not exactly a perfect overlap - but her attitudes about aspects of the scene that are not always her preference are well-written and useful.

"Happy Tango" is completely spot-on! I write this at the dawn of the third day of my own solo Buenos Aires tango adventure. I have three months to go and, thanks to Sallycat, I am not sitting in my apartment wondering where to go and dance, or wallowing in sorrow over not being asked to dance at the milongas. I jumped right into the overwhelming BsAs tango community on my very first night and rarely sit out a tanda. (And, no, I have not paid for a taxi dancer.) Part memoir, and full of

the most insightful information on dancing tango in Argentina, "Happy Tango" is not written like any other guidebook. Sally Blake shares her own experiences (pitfalls and all) to help the typical tango "tourist" blend in like a local. (This book should be handed out at Ezeiza Airport to all those with tango shoes in their suitcase.) Her delightful voice speaks as an experienced friend looking out for you, and you will thank her for it. Sally's "11 Rules" for dancing in BsAs and the "20 places to try first" are simply brilliant. Breaking down the dance venues by style and detailing the "need to know" of each locale is absolutely one of the most helpful bits of information I found when researching for my trip. And if you follow her rules, you will not only fit in, but you will find your own "happy tango."-----A note from the reviewer, October 18, 2012: Two years since my initial review, I am in Buenos Aires again for an extended trip (with my boyfriend this time), and "Happy Tango" still remains one of the best resources for Buenos Aires tango information.

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