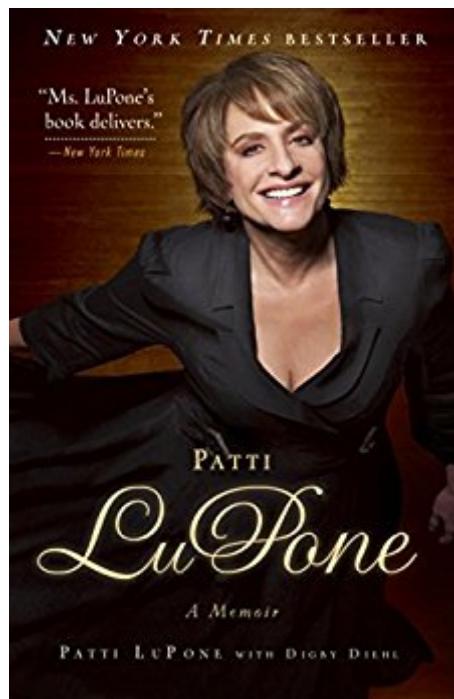


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Patti LuPone: A Memoir



Synopsis

The legendary Patti LuPone is one of the theatre's most beloved leading ladies. Now she lays it all bare, sharing the intimate story of her life both onstage and off--through the dizzying highs and darkest lows--with the humor and outspokenness that have become her trademarks. With nearly 100 photographs and illuminating details about the life of a working actor, from inspired costars and demanding directors to her distinct perspective on how she developed and honed her Tony Award-winning performances, *Patti LuPone: A Memoir* is as inspirational as it is entertaining. And though the title might say *a memoir*, this is ultimately a love letter to the theatre by a unique American artist. Raised on Long Island's North Shore, Patti discovered her calling at the age of four and knew that she was destined for the stage. A prodigiously gifted child, she was one of only 36 young actors chosen for the inaugural class of The Juilliard School's Drama Division, where she fought near-constant criticism from her instructors, and here describes those early years with disarming frankness. From the heady days of her early twenties--"crisscrossing the country as a founding member of the classical repertory theatre ensemble, The Acting Company--to her early success on Broadway, her four-year stint as Libby Thacher on the television series *Life Goes On*, her loving marriage to Matt Johnston, and much, much more, Patti chronicles her professional and personal life with inimitable candor and wit. With its insightful retrospective of her career-defining turns, both on Broadway and abroad, in *Evita*, *Les Misérables*, *Anything Goes*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Gypsy*, *Patti LuPone: A Memoir* reveals the artist's deeply felt passion for music and the theatre and is, in the end, the compelling and quintessential tale of an exceptional life well lived. I have been incredibly fortunate over the course of my career to have been associated with some extraordinary dramatic and musical productions, and also some rather spectacular disasters. Looking back, I can find gifts and life lessons in every one. •

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Customer Reviews

Patti LuPone needs to do some research. I saw Tyne Daly in "Gypsy" in the summer of 1991. Their revival won the Tony Award for Best Revival and for Best Actress in a Musical for Tyne Daly. Arthur Laurents was the director and in charge of that revival. Patti needs to deal with reality. To me and many others in the audience, Tyne Daly did a first rate performance as Mama Rose Lee. Besides vocal differences, Tyne Daly is still one of America's best dramatic actresses and her performance as Mary Beth Lacey in the "Cagney & Lacey" series proved it. I'm sorry but Patti LuPone disses Tyne Daly and others in this book. I really wanted to like Patti LuPone but I have lost a lot of respect for her. She blames everybody for her misfortune especially the "Sunset Boulevard" fiasco where she played Norma Desmond in London to mixed reviews and was replaced with Glenn Close for the Broadway production. Does Patti LuPone really believe she's the best musical theatrical actress out there? Believe me, I can name a handful of them alone. Also, she disses her "Life Goes On" co-star Bill Smitrovich for not having enough chemistry. He was a character actor who had a long career before the series and has been working afterwards without any complaints or cited in the tabloids for misbehavior. Patti has not been so lucky. Patti snatches somebody cell-phone during a performance last summer and threw out an audience member for taking pictures. I find this behavior to be inappropriate and disturbing. If I was going to see a musical or a play, I would prefer Patti not be in it. Her over-reaction is detrimental to the audience itself. No audience member wants to be ostracized or preached too.

I listened to the audio book, read by Patti, which I think is the best way to go. She's a little distanced and seems to be concentrating on enunciation (always an effort for "Flannel Mouth"), but when she gets into a good story, she utterly lets go and it's like listening to her live. This is very much a stage memoir. It's told show-to-show. You get the high points of her personal life (marriage, having a

child), but 95% of it is about theatrical experiences and the people specifically involved. She's very honest. At times you feel like she might have glossed over some dirt (vague allusions to her being a "dirty girl" and such), but when she lets loose she doesn't spare tact. One of my favorite lines is to Andrew Lloyd Webber: "Go sh@t in your hat!" Topol, Paul Sorvino, Bill Smitrovich (her "husband" on Life Goes On) and others get some no-holds-barred choice words from Patti. Delightful dish! On the other hand, she's kind of a whiner. If you put yourself in the place of an actor, and really think about it, a contract is really all you have to stand by. The industry is HEAVILY regulated by the unions, etc, and it's vital to honor contracts and hold with labor laws to a tee otherwise the whole experience just falls apart. However, even from her own mouth, she makes herself sound petulant and entitled...and spends a LOT of time discussing contract breaches. You just have to remember that this is her life, her profession. She really comes off as a diva, but when you think about it she kind of has to. I just hope other readers think it through and aren't put off by her. Factual note...she complains that Barbra Streisand recorded "Don't Cry For Me Argentina" before her, and that it was released "for all to hear" before the Evita album.

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