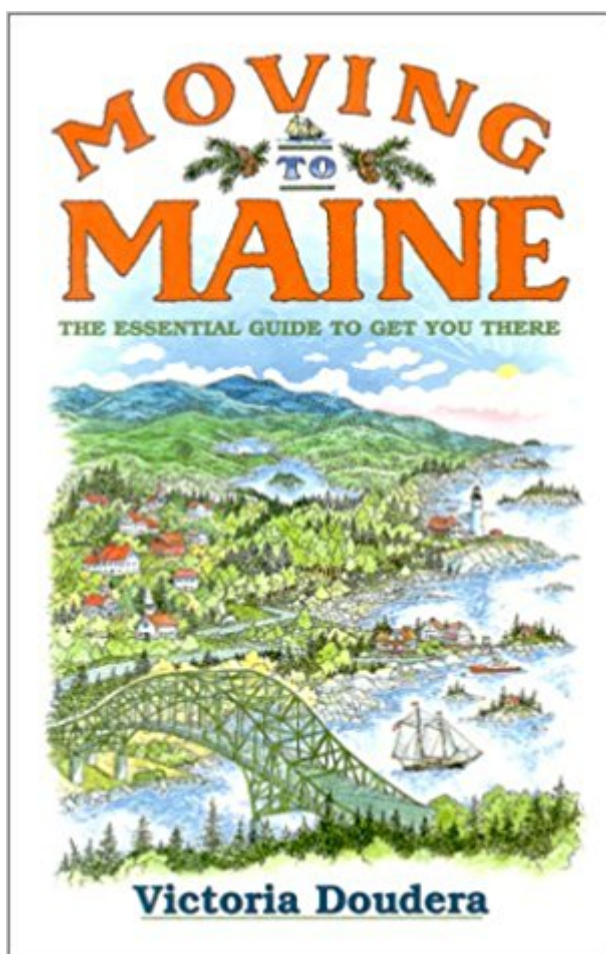




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Moving To Maine : The Essential Guide To Get You There



Synopsis

Book by Doudera, Victoria

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Book by Doudera, Victoria

It's crammed full of facts & figures, but like one reviewer mentioned, there is no discussion of Medical Insurance rates or plans--something hugely important to a lot of Americans these days. I should mention I've made several house-hunting trips to Maine myself. I was hoping this book this book would "fill in the gaps" for me; but I don't think it even really covers a lot of what I already knew. Besides all the dry statistics, there are testimonials from people who've moved to Maine, & by Gosh, every single one of them absolutely loves it(!). You think there might be one or two people who ever DIDN'T enjoy living in Maine? Not according to this book. Her other book, Where to Retire in Maine, is somewhat more useful than this IMO; I'd probably give it 3 stars (altho it didn't even cover some of the nicest areas near Portland). I've also ordered the "Moon Handbooks: Maine 2 Ed": often good travel guidebooks can provide tons more useful information about places than some of the "moving to..." books.

As someone doing serious searching as to where to move in New England, I expected more from this book's title as it had promised. Too often, I found the information too general and not specific. For example, coming from "the highest car insurance rates in the country" NJ, I wanted to know how

Maine's insurance costs ranked as a basic cost of living. Insurance costs -- auto or health -- were not discussed. Duh! Real estate? How about housing costs by county or community? Not in this book. What are average utility costs? What are Maine winters really like? In brief, you will not find the serious information in this book you need to make an informed decision about moving to Maine. Frankly, I'm having a hard time locating any definitive guidebook about living in Maine -- what about the subject of reliable heating -- what do residents do when power goes out? -- and will likely have to do my own laborious search through various sources -- to pull together all information I need. I really tire of purchasing books that don't deliver on their titles. This title -- does not deliver.

This is exactly what I was looking for and this item is something that fulfills my needs for what I want.

This book is nicely written and has a unique point of view for the person moving to Maine. There are some areas of Maine that receive more commentary than other, but what is included is good.

As others note, Doudera is more concerned with clam festivals and kayaking than the nuts and bolts of everyday living. The book is not impartial in the slightest; not one interviewee mentions any dissatisfaction in their Maine experience in a state where griping is the prime pastime. I, alas, am not impartial either, having moved to Maine from Montana a year and a half ago to my deep regret. If YOU must persist, however, I can provide some words of caution Doudera leaves unsaid. The omission of two particular subjects is especially heinous. First, though Doudera mentions that "on a map, the state appears to be sinking" from all the lakes and does recommend a home inspection, she completely elides the threat of flood or water damage. This should be your top priority in a home search; any Mainer will tell you that nearly no house is without at least occasional water in the basement, and persistent water problems can rot support beams, unseat the foundation, and threaten the long-term stability of a home - not to mention make the basement unusable and foster mold. Depending on the season, though, such problems might not be immediately apparent. Check the road drainage; ask multiple neighbors; have your inspector take a second look. FEMA flood zones are NOT a reliable guide. Do not trust your realtor to the extent Doudera recommends; as Maine has nearly no consumer-protection laws, agents have no motivation to disclose such issues. Secondly, if you venture off 95 or Rt. 1, you'll find that the roads are in a dangerous degree of disrepair, with asphalt like peanut brittle that's been cracked with a hammer. This is due to a combination of wet soil refreezing and unfreezing during winter ("frost heave") and plain neglect.

There are also a great number of roads that turn to rutted, nearly untraversable dirt without warning. Your car will see great wear and tear; you will go through at least one pair of struts per year (and I have heard of two or three). Until you acclimate, drive VERY carefully to avoid serious damage. Maine is also an extraordinarily fractious state. There is no sense of unity on the state or county or even town-to-town level; the radio and even TV ads are rife with competition in trying to tear down neighboring locales as "trailer trash". It's every man (and town) for himself, and this is a source of endless problems. Rampant corruption and waste in state government goes unchecked, as there is no one city press strong enough to expose or counter it. Taxes are extraordinarily high, as each individual village must provide near-completely for its own welfare and cannot take advantage of economies of scale. Utilities are provided unreliably and at great cost, like teenagers performing chores poorly and with great folderol to impress upon us their displeasure at such unreasonable requests. There are few charities or other means of community support; basic public goods like sidewalks or parks are relatively rare. It is hard to make friends due to the lack of community functions. If, like me, you took the concept of community for granted before, you won't after a year in Maine. Other points:- Maine's economy is tanking. Few Mainers will dispute this. In 2005, only Katrina-ravaged Louisiana had a worse outlook, a fact raised relentlessly by all sides in the 2006 elections. Doudera cites the wealth of small businesses, but the vast majority are at-home side ventures. For 40-hour-workweek employment, the average worker will have no choices beyond convenience stores and Wal-Mart.- Many businesses - general stores and supermarkets, not just restaurants - cannot sustain year-round operations and are therefore "closed for the season", the "season" ranging from winter only to everything except summer. This practice is not at all confined to resort towns. A seemingly lively community in summer might get much less so at other times.- Doudera expends a lot of space on puffins and moose. The former are restricted to a few isolated islands. The latter will not be seen unless you hunt up north; the highway signs are there solely for the tourists. (Deer, as Doudera mentions, are a legitimate concern; take care when driving on densely wooded highways.)- I cannot speak for health insurance, but my auto policy is relatively low. Generally, though, prices are on par with Massachusetts (or, as Doudera mentions, California), particularly for food and health care. (A recent eye exam cost me \$170.)- This might seem silly, but do not underestimate the effect the weather can have on your disposition. If you come from a sunny state, Maine's chronic overcast will be a big adjustment.- Winters in Maine are perhaps not living heck, though I have stayed for two exceptionally light seasons. Listening to everyone TALK about it, however, going on and on in defeatist tones with gleeful hand-wringing at forthcoming divine meteorological punishment, is plain unendurable.- All but a few beaches are chopped up and

privately owned. Don't expect a community waterfront.- Pollution is rampant from paper mills and factories. The rivers are the color of used toilet water.I complain, I know. I wish, though, that someone had told ME these things before I moved. I'll let you in on something positive - the absolute best fish in Maine is served at The Shed in Cornville, 10 minutes north of Skowhegan, where Rt. 150 meets Rt. 43. Unfortunately, it might no longer be available by the time you read this; the proprietors are selling, for a new garbage incinerator is slated to be built just 5 minutes away.You see what I mean.

At last! A wonderful resource book has been written that I intend to hand out to my customers and friends who are considering relocating their lives here. This guide tackels all the nut and bolts (see chapter 5 - Settling In) that most guides wouldn't bother with as they are geared to having fun in the state not living here. And thank you Victoria for a chapter on the Maine = Siberia weather myth that we locals are CONSTANTLY engaged in with those "from away"! I think I'll just hand them the book next time the "how are the winters?" question is asked. This is a well organized book that deals with the likes of taxes,getting your car registered, buying a house,education,cultural events,geographical descriptions and much,much more. It will be my companion playing Maine trivial pursuit while waiting for the kids to finish their ballet lessons. PS; it is a fun read!

Before moving to Maine a few months ago, we read Doudera's book and found it to be a good overview with some detail about moving to Maine. We're still, however, encountering some surprises from time to time that we wish we had known about. In some ways, moving to Maine from the big cityis like moving to another planet--there are so many things that we've never seen before (e.g., carpenter ants) and so many customs that we've yet to understand. Additional practical daily living advice and explanation would have been helpful in this book--but maybe that would have spoiled the joy of slowly coming to know the place for ourselves.

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