



The Restaurant at the End of the Universe

Douglas Adams

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Facing annihilation at the hands of the warlike Vogons is a curious time to have a craving for tea. It could only happen to the cosmically displaced Arthur Dent and his curious comrades in arms as they hurtle across space powered by pure improbabilityband desperately in search of a place to eat.

Among Arthur's motley shipmates are Ford Prefect, a longtime friend and expert contributor to the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy; Zaphod Beeblebrox, the three-armed, two-headed ex-president of the galaxy; Tricia McMillan, a fellow Earth refugee who's gone native (her name is Trillian now); and Marvin, the moody android who suffers nothing and no one very gladly. Their destination? The ultimate hot spot for an evening of apocalyptic entertainment and fine dining, where the food (literally) speaks for itself.

Will they make it? The answer: hard to say. But bear in mind that the Hitchhiker's Guide deleted the term "Future Perfect" from its pages, since it was discovered not to be!

"What's such fun is how amusing the galaxy looks through Adams' sardonically silly eyes."

The Restaurant at the End of the Universe Details

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From Reader Review The Restaurant at the End of the Universe for online ebook

Algernon says

There is theory which states that if ever anyone discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable.

There is another theory which states that this has already happened.

Arthur Dent and his companions went through some bizarre and inexplicable adventures after the Earth got blown to bits by Vogons in the opening sequence of the series. They were probably too close to making sense of their situation, because Douglas Adams decided to turn it all around for the sequel.

Is is not an easy claim to make that the second Hitchhiker book is better than the previous one, since there was nothing wrong with the first one. Yet, for various reasons, I ended up reading it faster and enjoying it more. It may be the fact that there is actually a plot, like searching for the ruler of the universe as opposed to searching for a philosophical answer to the ultimate question. It may be that the jokes are better anchored in the actual story and feel less like an improvised skit. It may be that most of the characters are already established and we get less exposition and more action. For me though, I guess the main attraction is to discover Adams' hardcore nugget of humanism that holds it all together, like the black hole at the center of our Galaxy. Douglas Adams first points out to us how insignificant we are in the grand scheme of things, how tiny our problems are from the perspective of the Cosmos. Once he got us well and truly scared, he comes out with his guide to Life , The Universe and Everything, and puts on its cover the words : "Don't Panic!" . We may not understand everything there is to know about these issues, but we're alive, we are gifted with reasoning, and we might as well enjoy the ride.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy is an indispensable companion to all those who are keen to make sense of life in an infinitely complex and confusing Universe, for though it cannot hope to be useful or informative on all matters, it does at least make the reassuring claim, that where it is inaccurate it is at least definitively inaccurate. In cases of major discrepancy it's always reality that's got it wrong.

While the main quest may be the search for the man who rules the universe, there are enough mishaps and side quests to make the journey highly entertaining:

- We make a visit to the main offices of the publishers of the Hitchhiker Guide, where my favorite scene describes an encounter with the artificial intelligence of a Sirius Cybernetics Corporation Happy Vertical People Transporter.

Not unnaturally, many elevators imbued with intelligence and precognition became terribly frustrated with the mindless business of going up and down, up and down, experimented briefly with the notion of going sideways, as a sort of existential protest, demanded participation in the decision-making process and finally took to squatting in basements sulking.

An impoverished hitchhiker visiting any planets in the Sirius star system these days can pick up easy money working as a counselor for neurotic elevators.

Marvin the Paranoid Android and this acrophobic elevator are a great reminder for me that intelligence has its shortcomings, and needs to be balanced by other personality traits.

- We accompany Zaphod on a forced visit to a penal planet, where he is to be punished for stealing the most advanced spaceship in the universe by undergoing a session in the Total Perspective Vortex device. This torture machine is supposed to "demonstrates conclusively that if life is going to exist in a Universe of this size, then the one thing it cannot afford to have is a sense of proportion." To see the whole infinity of creation is to go instantly mad, unless (view spoiler)

Infinite: Bigger than the biggest thing ever and then some. Much bigger than that in fact, really amazingly immense, a totally stunning size, real "wow, that's big" time. Infinity is just so big that, by comparison, bigness itself looks really titchy. Gigantic multiplied by colossal multiplied by staggeringly huge is the sort of concept we're trying to get across here.

- we have dinner and drink Pan Galactic Gargleblasters at Milliways, the Restaurant at the End of the Universe, while we witness the unravelling of all existence and grapple with the absurd grammatical rules needed to express the upheaval of timelines , the mixing of the past with the future when/after/during/before the present ceases to exist.

- we meet the ghost of one of Zaphod's ancestors, who comes up with what is probably the best one-liner yet in the series:

"Life is wasted on the living"

- We attend the ultimate rock concert by the band Disaster Area whose leader, Hotblack Desiato, is spending a year dead in order to avoid paying taxes. Wthout giving away to many spoilers, the band is famous for using whole planets and astral bodies for special effects during their live performances.

- we get to meet the ruler of the universe, which might explain why it is so hard to make sense of it. (view spoiler)

- we find refuge from another explosive misunderstanding in space on a Golgafrinchan Ark Ship, carrying a third of the population of their home planet away from an imminent if unexplained cataclysm and heading towards a tiny blue dot located in the unfashionable end of a spiral arm of our galaxy.

At the end of the second Hitchhiker installment, I might feel like I am starting to make sense of the Universe, including an explanation of how intelligent life blossomed on Earth, but I expect Douglas Adams has a few surprises up his sleeve for the next novel.

I can't wait to find out.

The word 'genius' comes to mind easier and easier when describing his talent, and I don't mean it only in the slapstick, satirical way. His one liners reach much deeper than the superficial layers of my awareness.

If human beings don't keep exercising their lips, their brains start working.

Henry Avila says

Captain Jeltz, our old, not so good friend, (a callous butcher) from the previous book, is after the stolen spaceship, with the unlikely name,"Heart of Gold", again! On board are Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect, Trillian, and the ex -President of the Galaxy, the thief, Zaphod Beeblebrox (nobody cares about Marvin, the

annoying robot). The unsmiling captain likes killing, that's what he does best. The fugitive ship is just about to be no more, with the help of the cruel Vogan (a bad poet too), and his deadly spacecraft's weapons...The Heart of Gold's computer, is too busy making the perfect cup of tea, to defend the vessel.Thanks to the thirsty Mr.Dent, a man must have his beverage! The only bright side is, that the Englishman gets the best tea, he's ever had...With the crew, having only a few moments to live, the great- grandfather of Zaphod's, is someways, conjured up by Beeblebrox... He can't explain it either. Great -grandpa isn't very happy, observing the stupidity, of his great -grandson. Four generations and what a blockhead, it has produced. And an ill timed lecture, on his relative's shameful habits, complicates things. But blood is blood and with the desperate, nervous encouragement of the rest of the gang. He sends them in their merry, separate ways. Marvin and the former president, vanishing from the bridge. And the craft travels many light years away, from the rather dangerous, somewhat bleak situation. Zaphod materializes on distant, Ursa Minor Beta, a planet, where it's always a sunny, afternoon, along also, his not so fun but gloomy robot companion, Marvin, and "his" constant bad moods. Arriving in a bar, he's amazed, speechless, shocked, but the gentleman is no stranger to such an environment, and soon feels right at home (after a couple of good drinks). And on this world is the wonderful headquarters, of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Mr.Beeblebrox has an overpowering, mysterious urge, to see (he doesn't know why?), Mr.Zarniwoop, the editor. But there are problems, there always some, the sweet talking elevator, won't take them to the 15th floor. Even asks , if they wouldn't prefer going in the opposite direction, down. Strange behavior for this machine, some kind of premonition ? The reason becomes apparent soon after, an attack from the galaxy's forces, not happy with our former leader's actions. Despite the gallant efforts of Marvin's, they take the whole huge building, and transports it to the worst place, in the Milky Way, the Frogstar planet. What a dump! A voice tells him to come on down from the 15th floor...He does, very slowly, and enters a structure, on the dreary surface, that will what, kill him? Maybe or maybe not... He's hungry, slightly tired, and would prefer to be , in The Restaurant at the End of the Universe, (Milliways) where they see the end of the universe show , ever night (with a celebrity host). Reasonable prices too, a great view of the entertainment, if you can get a good table, and join his friends for a few libations....The only heaven, that our not quite perfect hero knows.

Courtney Lindwall says

Oh, how I do love Douglas Adams.

I find something really profound in the way Douglas Adams presents life, even through an otherwise nonsensical and just purely humorous book. When I look past the surface, some of life's most thought-provoking themes lie so clearly woven amidst his stories.

Each encounter, each adventure, each beloved character, each twist, each turn; these are all humorous, superbly written, and wonderful, but what I believe Adams does better than his other counter-parts is lace it all with such an intelligent irony to the point that, when you take the time to look, you see more than a Sci-Fi best-seller, you see a truly substantial commentary on the world around us.

Sara Kamjou says

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J.G. Keely says

The universe is a joke.

Even before I was shown the meaning of life in a dream at 17 (then promptly forgot it because I thought I smelled pancakes), I knew this to be true--and yet, I have always felt a need to search for the truth, that nebulous, ill-treated creature. Adams has always been, to me, to be a welcome companion in that journey.

Between the search for meaning and the recognition that it's all a joke in poor taste lies Douglas Adams, and, luckily for us, he doesn't seem to mind if you lie there with him. He's a tall guy, but he'll make room.

For all his crazed unpredictability, Adams is a powerful rationalist. His humor comes from his attempts to really think through all the things we take for granted. It turns out it takes little more than a moment's questioning to burst our preconceptions at the seams, yet rarely does this stop us from treating the most ludicrous things as if they were perfectly reasonable.

It is no surprise that famed atheist Richard Dawkins found a friend and ally in Adams. What is surprising is that people often fail to see the rather consistent and reasonable philosophy laid out by Adams' quips and absurdities. His approach is much more personable (and less embittered) than Dawkins', which is why I think of Adams as a better face for rational materialism (which is a polite way of saying 'atheism').

Reading his books, it's not hard to see that Dawkins is tired of arguing with uninformed idiots who can't even recognize when a point has actually been made. Adams' humanism, however, stretched much further than the contention between those who believe, and those who don't.

We see it from his protagonists, who are not elitist intellectuals--they're not even especially bright--but damn

it, they're trying. By showing a universe that makes no sense and having his characters constantly question it, Adams is subtly hinting that this is the natural human state, and the fact that we laugh and sympathize shows that it must be true.

It's all a joke, it's all ridiculous. The absurdists might find this depressing, but they're just a bunch of narcissists, anyhow. Demnading the world make sense and give you purpose is rather self centered when it already contains toasted paninis, attractive people in bathing suits, and Euler's Identity. I say let's sit down at the bar with the rabbi, the priest, and the frog and try to get a song going. Or at least recognize that it's okay to laugh at ourselves now and again. It's not the end of the world.

It's just is a joke, but some of us are in on it.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The Restaurant at the End of the Universe (Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy #2), Douglas Adams
The Restaurant at the End of the Universe (1980, ISBN 0-345-39181-0) is the second book in the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy comedy science fiction "trilogy" by Douglas Adams, and is a sequel.

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K.D. Absolutely says

Better than the first book. This has more funny moments and I just found myself laughing out loud more than when I was reading the first book. I guess it was by design. Douglas Adams had to explain fully his milieu for the series. Since he did that in the first book, his characters now have the whole universe to play around for themselves. So, they just don't hop and hop from one planet to another but also in this one, enjoy a time travel. They went to a restaurant at the end of the universe. Prior to my reading of this book, I thought that the restaurant is located at the end or the edge of the universe. But I was fascinated to learn that while eating steak (from the meat of a talking animal), you could watch the end or the death of the universe. Sorry for the spoiler but it's found in the first half of the book and there are other more interesting scenes in the second part and you have to read the book and experience for yourself how is it to be dining and watching the end of yourself. Very clever imagination.

I reason why I read this after the first book was that I'd like to find out what was the Ultimate Question for the Ultimate Answer that was "42." However, it seemed the Adams was deliberately delaying it as it was only in the second part where it was brought up and he did not even give any hints. So, after reading this

book, I looked from the third book but I could not locate it. So, I am now reading the fourth book and since its title is *Song Long and Thanks for All the Fish*, I hope to already know what the Ultimate Question is.

Again, I am not really a big sci-fi fan so I understand if you find this book more enjoyable and rated this with more than 3 stars. However, I agree with you that this book is good: talking insect as receptionist, elevator refusing to come up, animal talking to you prior to being butchered so you can buy and eat its meat, restaurant at the end of the universe, etc. They are all cleverly thought of that not too many of writers would be able to put them in one book and make people laugh. Really, unbelievable.

On to the 4th book.

Benjamin Duffy says

Back in junior high school, when I was being bussed 30 miles each way to the Magnet School for Gifted Math and Science Students (don't get excited; I washed out of the program in shame and disgrace after two years), the *Hitchhiker's Guide* series were all my nerdy friends' favorite books. They would throw quotes and in-jokes about Pan-Galactic Gargleblasters and Ravenous Bugblatter Beasts of Kraal back and forth at each other much like some (annoying) people like to do with Monty Python films or *The Princess Bride*. For whatever reason, all the Douglas Adams-themed 7th grade nerd humor rubbed me the wrong way and I refused to read the books, which was an act of breathtaking contrarianism at the time.

So recently, I decided it might be worthwhile to fill the *Hitchhiker's*-shaped hole in my literary Great Wall, and I started reading the series.

I think I might have been better off reading this book in 7th grade, because at age 36, what it did was irritate me, mostly. The constant wordplay seemed clumsy and unfunny, and most of the main characters sort of ran together. Worst of all, the plot was completely devoid of interest - I understand that the plot isn't supposed to be the central attraction in these books, but it's hard to muster up emotion over perilous situations when you just know the characters (whom you don't care much about to start with) are inevitably going to be bailed out by some zany *deus ex campus sinister* and zoom along to their next wacky adventure. It was like trying to get excited about watching other people ride a roller coaster.

I can't remember the last time I had such a hard time finishing such a short book, but I'm actually glad I did because the last 50 pages or so were the best part.

Cris says

Esta segunda parte de la serie de Douglas Adams mantiene el nivel de la primera en todos los sentidos. Desde las primeras páginas ya es difícil contener las carcajadas. Los diálogos sencillamente geniales y los personajes más disparatados que podrías imaginar hacen de este libro una lectura rapidísima y muy satisfactoria. Los continuos viajes en el tiempo y el espacio y las paradojas que derivan de ellos conducen a los protagonistas por una serie de situaciones inverosímiles y desternillantes. La Energía de Improbabilidad Infinita volverá a hacer de las suyas.

"Uno de los problemas fundamentales en los viajes a través del tiempo no consiste en que uno se convierta

por accidente en su propio padre o en su madre. En el hecho de convertirse en su propio padre o en su propia madre no existen problemas que una familia bien ajustada y de mentalidad abierta no pueda solucionar."

Reseña completa y mi versión de la portada en <http://sidumbledorefueralibrero.com/2...>

seak says

I'm absolutely astounded at how quotable this book is. It's no wonder Douglas Adams suffered from writers block because just about every line in the entire book (and previous book, and probably subsequent books), is perfectly crafted to bring about a chuckle.

In this second book of the trilogy of five (which is now 6 I'm told), our crew of Beeblebrox, Arthur, Trillian, Ford Prefect, and of course the loveable Melvin the depressed robot, has to find the man behind the power, the ruler of the entire universe.

Of course, it's peppered with more great aliens and planets and if you thought the Vogons were great (or terrible, depending how you look at it), well, let's just say the committee meetings don't end there.

Doug Adams was absolutely brilliant and I thought this was even more quotable than the last. And I love quotes. The actual plot was a little less so, and it's definitely a middle novel with that ending.

If this beginning doesn't sell you, however, I definitely won't:

"The story so far:

In the beginning the Universe was created. This has made a lot of people very angry and has been widely regarded as a bad move."

4 out of 5 Stars (highly recommended)

Manny says

"It must be nice," mused Ford Prefect thoughtfully, "to know what you're *for*. I don't have the slightest idea what *I'm* for. Most sentient beings don't. But *you*," he continued, turning to Arthur and Trillian. "You know. Part of finding the answer to the Ultimate Question. I'm sure that's comforting at times. "

"You mean the 42 business?" asked Arthur.

"What?" asked Zaphod's left head incredulously, while his right head rolled its eyes. "You mean you fell for that?!"

The rest of this review is available elsewhere (the location cannot be given for Goodreads policy reasons)

Emer says

"The Universe — some information to help you live in it.

1 - Area: Infinite.

The HitchHiker's Guide to the Galaxy offers this definition of the word "Infinite".

Infinite: Bigger than the biggest thing ever and then some. Much bigger than that in fact, really amazingly immense, a totally stunning size, "wow, that's big", time. Infinity is just so big that by comparison, bigness itself looks really titchy. Gigantic multiplied by colossal multiplied by staggeringly huge is the sort of concept we're trying to get across here.

2 - Imports: None.

It is impossible to import things into an infinite area, there being no outside to import things in from.

3 - Exports: None.

See imports.

4 - Population: None.

It is known that there are an infinite number of worlds, simply because there is an infinite amount of space for them to be in. However, not every one of them is inhabited. Therefore, there must be a finite number of inhabited worlds. Any finite number divided by infinity is as near to nothing as makes no odds, so the average population of all the planets in the Universe can be said to be zero. From this it follows that the population of the whole Universe is also zero, and that any people you may meet from time to time are merely the products of a deranged imagination."

This is the second book in The trilogy of five books in The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy series and while I love and adore the original book, this one however feels a little less fresh. In the words of Shirley Bassey and the Propellerheads 'it's all just a little bit of history repeating'

Okay... Maybe I'm being harsh. This is still very funny and it's got everything I loved about the first one with an even bigger dash of bonkers... but there was just too much repetition of certain aspects of explanations of the universe quoted from the fictitious Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy that were also in book one (which confusingly is also called The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy!!!) for me to feel that this was a completely original work. This is only my second time reading this book as opposed to book one which I've read at least five or six times so I think that also illustrates my somewhat lack of enthusiasm for this book. I would really only recommend it to diehard fans of the first book.

But if you do stick with this short book and the remainder of the series they have this strange sort of addictive quality that keep pulling you in and in and in and in....

The plot in this second book is bananas as you would and should expect, and for me this is all about the characters.

Arthur will forever be my favourite. I understand him!!! I UNDERSTAND HIS NEED FOR A GOOD CUP OF TEA!!!

Zaphod....is just bizarre and.... Yeah bizarre!!! Love him too.

Ford always surprises me... I want to be his friend soooo badly and hitchhike the universe with him for the craic!! I imagine we'd have an absolute blast

Trillian... To me the least developed character
And marvellous Marvin.... LOVEEEEEEE!!!!

So all in all it's an enjoyable romp through space and time and will make you giggle quite a bit!!!

three and a half stars

Roy Lotz says

I was talking to a friend of mine the other day, when he asked me for a book recommendation.

“Nothing too long,” he said. “Or too factual.”

My brain starting racing. Tolstoy? Much too long. Bill Bryson? Much too factual.

“The news?” I suggested.

“No, no,” he said. “A book.”

My mind kept racing through titles.

“Ah, I’ve got it!” I said finally. “Try *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series. They are wholly remarkable books.”

This brief conversation encapsulates why I enjoy these books so much. They’re well-written, thoughtful, funny, short, and immensely readable. They are the sorts of book you can recommend to nearly anyone, the sorts of books that turn illiterates into book enthusiasts. It’s hard to think of something more effortlessly pleasant.

Jason Koivu says

Had I read this? I couldn’t recall. I knew I’d seen the old tv version, but I wasn’t sure I’d actually read the book, so I read it. And why not? It’s a hell of a good book, and I’d do it again!

The Restaurant at the End of the Universe is kind of the continuing adventures of Arthur Dent. Honestly, while he’s a focal point of book one, he doesn’t factor into the sequel as much. This is more about Zaphod

Beeblebrox and Ford Perfect, as well as the kitchen sink's worth of whatever zany ideas Douglas Adams wanted to throw into the works.

I say "zany ideas" as if they are a haphazard, careless collection of ramblings, but Adams does actually stay on topic for much of the time. That topic is humanity's futility. We're a go-nowhere race going nowhere fast. Adams basically says we've been given two million years worth of time to do something with ourselves before it's all over, and frankly we will fuck it up. Oh well!

While not as sharp as the first book, this is a worthy successor and I plan to continue reading the remaining books in the series, which I'm pretty sure I haven't read yet.

Melindam says

"The History of every major Galactic Civilization tends to pass through three distinct and recognizable phases, those of **Survival, Inquiry and Sophistication**, otherwise known as **the How, Why, and Where** phases. For instance, the first phase is characterized by the question '**How can we eat?**' the second by the question '**Why do we eat?**' and the third by the question '**Where shall we have lunch?**'"

In which installment we learn that tea is a most dangerous beverage....
