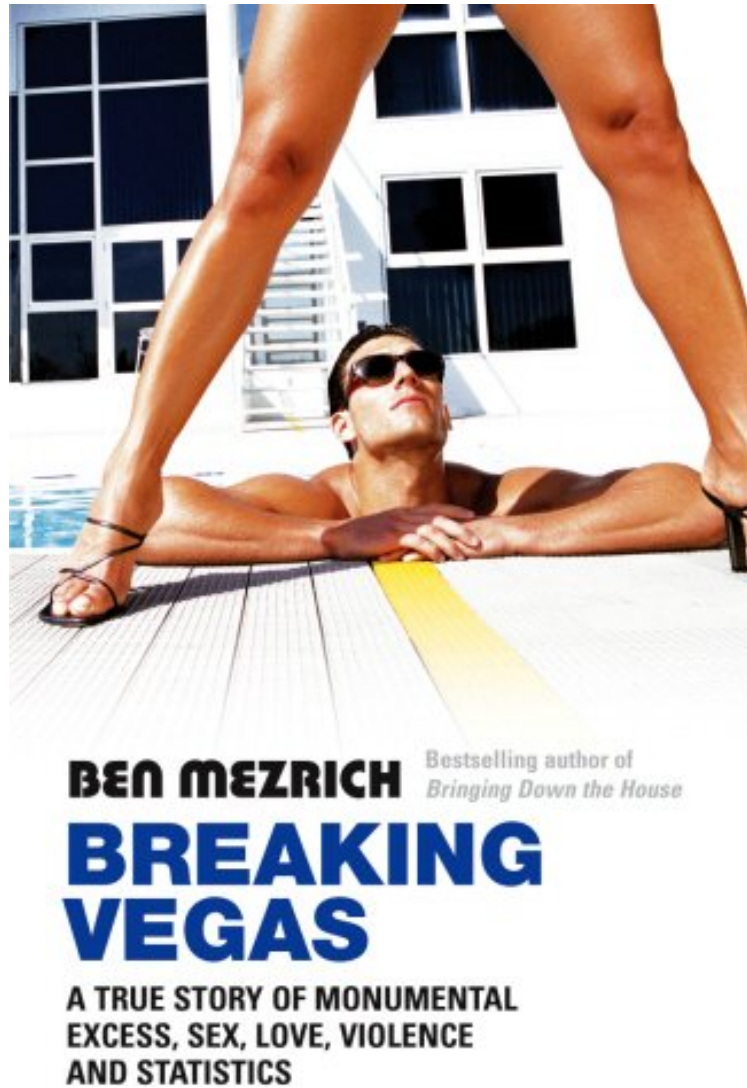


Breaking Vegas

Ben Mezrich

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Ben Mezrich : Breaking Vegas before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Breaking Vegas:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerGreat read, really enjoyed2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good IF you understand what you're hoping for in a readBy Landon ReedLet me be clear here. I'm a bit of a Mezrich fan. That is, I enjoy his subjects for what they are -quick, entertaining reads because of the sheer audacity exhibited by the people portrayed within his works.Whether every aspect of his work is true or bears

some embellishment hardly matters to me when buying one of his books. I'm just looking forward to reading about the type of life I'll never live but can certainly enjoy vicariously. Busting Vegas is a good companion to his earlier work Taking Down the House. Mezrich is almost apologetic when he explains why he chose to revisit old ground. The ideal situation would have been if BOTH of these tales were under one cover. The writing is fine. It could have been more tightly written certainly but the idea is to follow the events as well as put out a product with some length to it. This is the kind of book you can take to the beach, or on a plane trip as one reviewer noted, and help enhance the time you while away. I deliberated over whether to star this as a 3 or a 4 (and Netflix need to allow for half a star voting soon); and finally settled on 4 stars as I have qualified this review. I'm not sure if Mezrich patrols these reviews ever but just in case, I have a request. Could you dig a little deeper into MIT sometime soon? It seems to me this is the second book where a cabal of MIT mad scientists have come together using a cleverly hatched plan to bring ruin to the gambling underworld! Oh okay, maybe it's not as sinister as I wish it to be, but still... SOMETHING is going on at MIT. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. fun ahoy

By Bachelier Ben Mezrich has made a career of glamorizing geeks as they go from nerdy ivy-league academic overachievers to boyz with toyz (girls, guns, and cash). Along the way as he crafted his page-turners, folks suspect that his earlier career as a novelist is informing or overshadowing his latter career as a Tom Wolfe-journalist of hidden subcultures. In "Breaking Vegas" (BV) he continues with his well-honed formula, but as transparent as Mezrich's style and agenda may be, he writes a great book. BV follows the arc of the career of Russian migr and MIT student Semyon Dukach as he and his team mates deploy three probability enhancing strategies over "basic strategy" (Blackjack's -2% probability equivalent optimal strategy). Along the way they meet thugs, casino "hosts," Police, prostitutes, and druggies, making the whole thing as atmospheric as any memory of Vegas you may have. There are many irritating elements in the work: Mezrich's breast-fetishism for one (not a single female appears in the book without her breasts being described!). But the single most irritating is how much of a "math genius" Semyon is. It is an old literary trope...keep referring to your character as a genius, even if they do ordinary things...surround the character with folks who laud his/her genius...and eventually the reader believes you even if you haven't shown him to be genius. The techniques described in this work are no more genius beyond Statistics 102, and the skills employed are fully confessed to have been honed by sheer repetition, so where's the beef? A competent close-up magician of average intelligence could do this...genius it does not take. But make no mistake, the book is a fun read. Those parts that are true are interesting and those parts that are embellished, compressed, or narrative devices are all forgivable.

For nearly five years, he was known as the 'Darling Of Las Vegas'; the biggest high roller to hit Sin City in decades, a hotshot, twenty one year-old kid with a seemingly unlimited bankroll and an even more unlimited lust for big money action. His name was Semyon Dukatch, and stories swirled in his wake. Some said he was a Russian arms dealer, others a pop star from Eastern Europe. But the truth was even more unlikely: he was a twenty-one year old graduate student who had a plan that would one day make him richer than anyone could possibly imagine. The Darling of Las Vegas quickly became a legend in the casino world. He is the only person banned from the island of Aruba. He was held, at gunpoint, in a cave in Monte Carlo and told that if he ever returned, he'd be murdered. And he made millions of dollars playing blackjack, using three simple techniques that gave him the edge, techniques that are revealed in this book for the first time. This is his story, the ultimate true story of Las Vegas, the book Vegas doesn't want you to read...

"Riveting . . . [Mezrich has] become a master at delivering fast-paced, tightly structured narratives that keep readers engaged every step of the way. . . Most impressive . . . What [Mezrich has] done, beautifully, is craft a riveting story about kids with excess brainpower taking on casinos with excess money. He has penned a gripping true-life adventure that will keep you reading well past your bedtime" * Boston Globe * "A very enjoyable read that makes you feel like you're right there in Vegas playing along. Semyon's story is a fascinating, true life adventure" -- Kevin Spacey "Very stylish and captivating. . . Mezrich brilliantly captures the tension and excitement. . . A must read at all costs" * Daily Mirror * "Glamorous, exciting and true, it's a tale to send the Oceans Eleven back to bussing tables for tips" * Arena * "It's fast paced and believable, but does it really tell you how to win at blackjack? To find out, you'll have to buy the book, a small price to pay for the thousands you could make" * Daily Express * About the Author Ben Mezrich is the New York Times bestselling author of The Accidental Billionaires and Bringing Down the House in addition to many other books, both fiction and non-fiction. The major motion picture 21, starring Kevin Spacey, was based on Bringing Down the House. The Oscar-winning film The Social Network was adapted from The Accidental Billionaires. Mezrich lives in Boston with his wife and son.