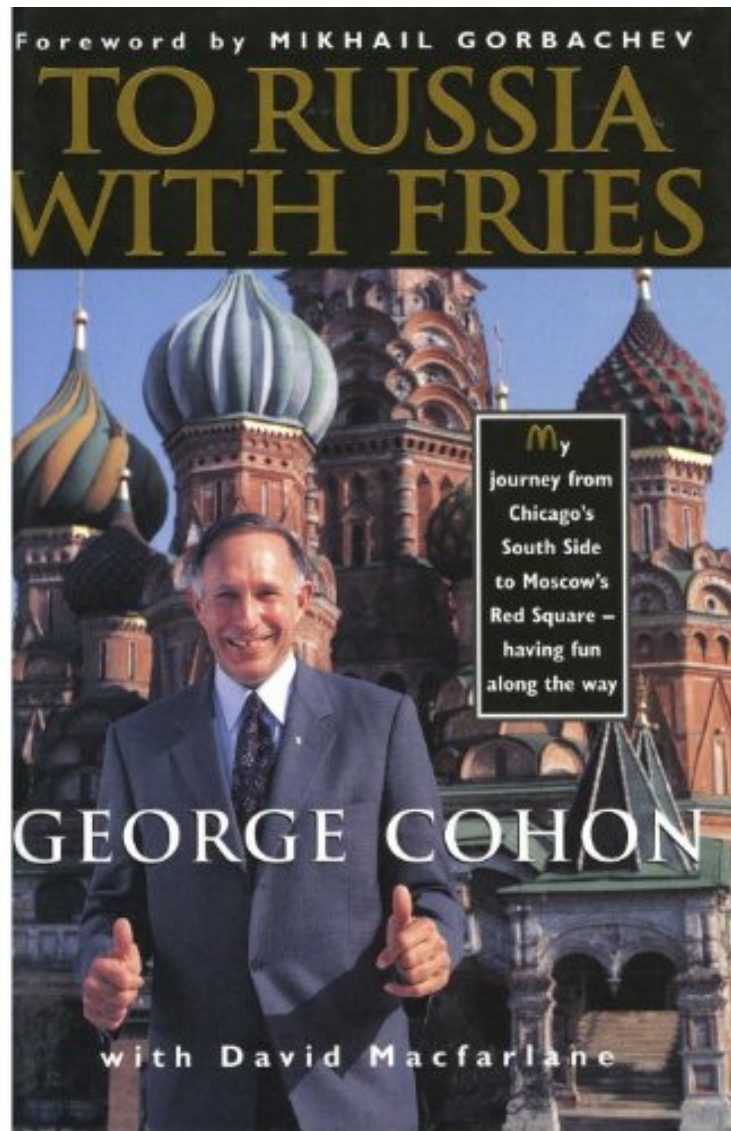


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To Russia with Fries

George Cohon, David Macfarlane
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George Cohon, David Macfarlane : To Russia with Fries before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised To Russia with Fries:

2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Selling Russians McBelieveBy A. J. WillisA fascinating story of the authors life, concentrating on his efforts trying to sell the concept of fast food to party apparachiks who had almost little idea what a hamburger was and acted as if they cared less. The book is full of the many humorous and incongruous situations that confronted the western businessman in both Soviet and post Soviet Russia, for that reason alone I would recommend the book.Having said this I found many irritations too in the sections of the book dealing

with activities outside Russia. There are a number of self congratulatory stories, where uninformed critics of multinational fast food are roundly dispatched. Meanwhile meaningful discussion of ironies such as corporate fast food super sizing kids and then building them Hospitals is conspicuous by its absence. Whether in this instance, blocking investment that helped black South Africans or raising money for Israel the book at times seems to be all about self righteous application of economic power. The author trained as a lawyer and naturally argues a good defence, but in criticism I found some of this irksome. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Needed this for a grad class and so glad to find it on By Singjo Needed this for a grad class and so glad to find it on . Great book on history of McD. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Interesting and Entertaining By Russell Chalfant Although there is a bit of name dropping and a few self congratulatory stories, overall this book is entertaining and worth reading. Mr. Cohon, while summarizing business dealings which define perseverance, provides interesting perspectives on business management, networking and family values. He also provides a lot of information about the inner political workings of the former Soviet Union.

You might think that an autobiography by the senior chairman of McDonald's in Canada and Russia would be a modestly boastful, ho-hum business story of expansion and board-room debates, wrapped in some nice reminiscences about his family. You would be very wrong. Because this is George Cohon's autobiography, and George Cohon ("Call me George, please") is not an ordinary man; not in his approach to business and not in his approach to telling his life story. It's true that George Cohon is one of the most successful businessmen of his generation and that he's also one of the most colourful. But the man you'll meet in the pages of *To Russia With Fries* is considerably more complex than that description suggests. Here, you'll encounter a man who not only dreamed the impossible dream of opening a McDonald's restaurant in the heart of the Soviet Union (of all places), but had the patience, the persistence, and above all the good humour to navigate the maze of obstacles set in his course by a scornful communist bureaucracy. You'll meet a man whose heart is bigger than his assets (he's donating all the royalties from this book to charity); a man with a serious sense of fun, who loves (and is frequently on the receiving end of) practical jokes; a man whose life so far has been extraordinary by any standard. You'll discover a man who is a natural and creative entrepreneur and an acknowledged expert on starting a business in Russia. He's been there and done that — long before the crash of the Iron Curtain. From a man who can think and do six things at once (he's been told he has a mind like a butterfly), comes a very lively and hugely entertaining story that has universal appeal. From the Hardcover edition.

From Publishers Weekly Decades before the collapse of the Soviet Union opened the floodgates to waves of Western entrepreneurs, an eager executive was in active negotiations with Brezhnev-era officials to give his corporation a presence in Soviet Russia. George Cohon, the senior chairman of McDonald's Restaurants of Canada, wanted to raise the golden arches in a corner of the world untouched by Big Macs. His account describes how he finally succeeded in opening the world's largest McDonald's — just blocks from Red Square — and selling more apple pies in the first three days of operation than the average Canadian restaurant sells in a year. With Macfarlane's (*Come from Away*) assistance, Cohon's hardworking, good-humored personality rings clear. Whether reflecting on the transformation of a South Side Chicago kid to multimillionaire ("I'm still the same guy who lived in an apartment with one bath. I just don't have to wait in line any more") or remembering stressful nightmares ("Gorbachev and I were making Big Macs at the SkyDome in Toronto and we couldn't keep up with the orders"), Cohon's narrative is that of a born storyteller. Cohon's delightful account of how determination and a sparkling sense of humor can topple even the stiffest bureaucratic opposition and the surliest service-sector standards will entertain readers. Author tour. (May) FYI: All proceeds from book sales will be donated to Ronald McDonald House Children's Charities. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus The golden arches of McDonald's, resplendent in the dour precincts of Pushkin Square, are symbols of the triumph of capitalism. That Ronald McDonald cavorts in Nizhni Novgorod and St. Petersburg may seem inevitable now, but time was when it was inconceivable. It took the chief cook and battle fighter of the Canadian arm of the burger empire to make such marketing history. In this far from bashful business autobiography, Cohon tells how he worked from perestroika through glasnost, from Brezhnev to Yeltsin, to bring "Beeg Meks" and fries to hungry Russians. During the 14 years of negotiation, Cohon had to explain the concept of hamburgers to myriad apparatchiks. He developed warm relationships with several bigwigs, including his pal Mikhail Gorbachev, who provided the foreword for this text. The essential democracy of fast food complemented the post-Soviet social upheavals, as did the "rubles only" policy, contrasted with the "hard currency only" rules of more upscale eateries. The natives loved the open door and the friendly crew as well as the food that burger diplomat Cohon insists is healthy. After all, he had to grow the potatoes and cook the ketchup to meet company standards. Indeed, the network of suppliers proved the greatest challenge. The account seems as devoid of guile as an Egg McMuffin. Throughout, Cohon refers to the inspiring sayings of Chairman Ray Kroc, who gave him the Canadian franchise in the first place. The author, born in Chicago, is now a citizen of Canada, where the book first appeared. He speaks of "pop" (for "soda"), writes "cheques," and mentions celebrities with the possible exception of Pierre Trudeau,

regretfully, unnoticed below the border. An animated story extolling the author's family, friends, faith, and business adventures, told in straightforward fashion. Like the billionth Big Mac, its not haute cuisine but is satisfactory on its own level. (32 pages bw photos) -- Copyright copy;1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "George Cohon's book is an excellent study of personal and professional leadership. I highly recommend it as a heart-warming story of Georger's journey, and of the lives he has touched along the way. He reminds us that if we have a vision and are not afraid to reach for our dreams, our dreams can become reality."ndash;Rick Hansen, Man in Motion"George Cohon's combination of family, business, humanity, friends and voluntarism is what this autobiography is all about and reinforces what I personally know George firmly believes. If you have grown because of someone, help someone grow because of you. This book is an impressive model for social leadership."ndash;Ron D. Barbaro, past president, Prudential Insurance Company of America Worldwide Operations.