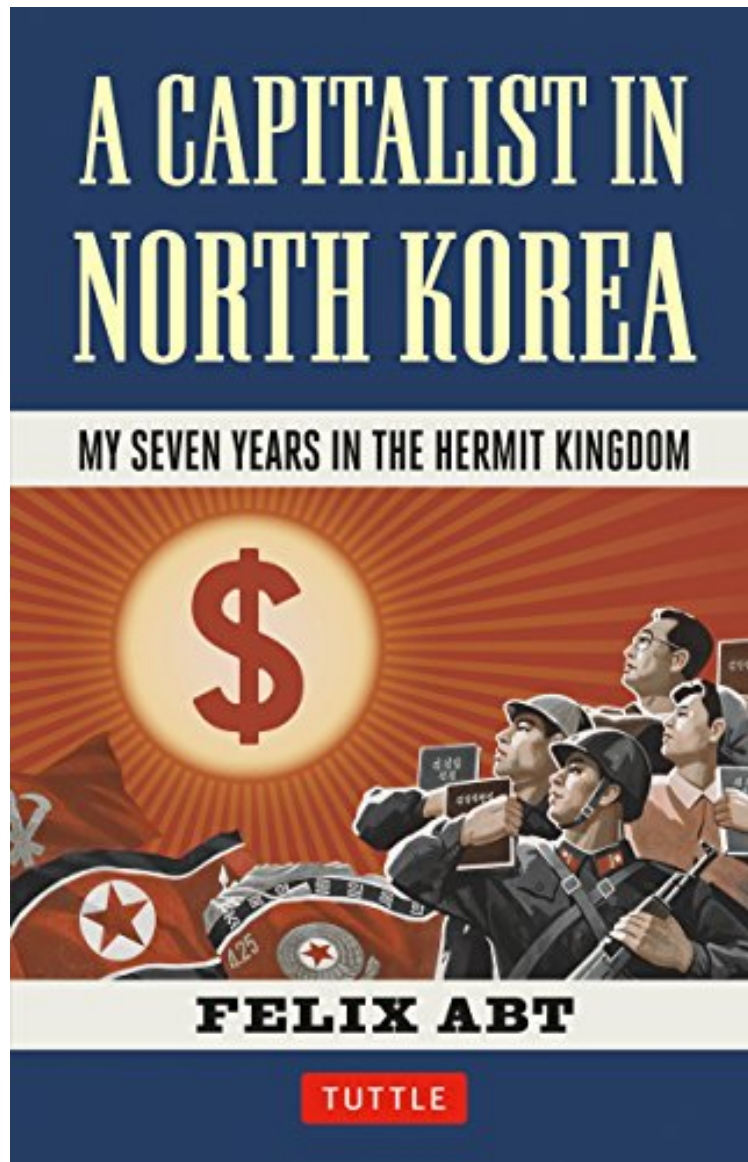


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## Capitalist in North Korea: My Seven Years in the Hermit Kingdom

*Felix Abt*

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**Felix Abt : Capitalist in North Korea: My Seven Years in the Hermit Kingdom** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Capitalist in North Korea: My Seven Years in the Hermit Kingdom:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Super interesting book, but not without flaws By Customer I'd definitely recommend this book. You can read about all its positives in the other reviews, so let me give some constructive criticism. It's an authentic personal story, and it's not just its biggest strength but also the origin of its two biggest weaknesses: 1. The author does not deny that the North Korean regime can be oppressive and aggressive, but

he's very easy going with it. He had a different experience, and that's great, but it feels \*way too\* easy going sometimes.2. The whole book has a very distinct "everyone else is wrong, only I know the truth" aura. Usually it's OK - I mean he really has a fascinating story, and many people are ignorant about NK indeed - but time to time it can be quite annoying. That said, it's a very interesting read.7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. This is a great book describing the normal life in a remote area ...By Thomas HimmelrichThis is a great book describing the normal life in a remote area on this world. Fighting against all the problems caused by sanctions not able to import materials necessary to produce basic goods. Interesting how this economy is growing and people adapting to new situations to master upcoming challenges - in all situations of life.10 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Lots to learnBy AnneNorth Korea has been in the news a lot recently. Of course, much of the attention has been negative and rightly so--it's sort of a mess, one with threats of missile launches, nuclear weapons, and allegations of serious human rights violations. I was curious to read about the country and its people from the perspective of someone who had once, at least sort of, been an insider. I found it here! Felix Abt has written a comprehensive, honest piece about life in North Korea. He truly seems to write objectively, which is refreshing. His anecdotes and observations are so interesting, especially to someone who knows nothing about the region. Overall a great read and highly recommended.

Business in North Korea: a paradoxical and fascinating situation is interpreted by a true insider.In 2002, the Swiss power company ABB appointed Felix Abt its country director for North Korea. The Swiss Entrepreneur lived and worked in North Korea for seven years, one of the few foreign businessmen there. After the experience, Abt felt compelled to write *A Capitalist in North Korea* to describe the multifaceted society he encountered. North Korea, at the time, was heavily sanctioned by the UN which made it extremely difficult to do business. Yet he discovered that it was a place where plastic surgery and South Korean TV dramas were wildly popular and where he rarely needed to walk more than a block to grab a quick hamburger. He was closely monitored and once faced accusations of spying, yet he learned that young North Koreans are hopeful—signing up for business courses in anticipation of a brighter, more open, future. In *A Capitalist in North Korea*, Abt shares these and many other unusual facts and insights about one of the world's most secretive nations.

"Few westerners have had a similar opportunity to meet and work alongside ordinary North Koreans — let alone socialize with them — and his book demonstrates an abiding affection for the people of this benighted state." —Julian Ryall, *South China Morning Post*"No one has [Felix Abt's] credentials: seven years of unparalleled access to most levels of North Koreans in the central government and seven of nine provinces, founder of a Pyongyang Business School and first President of the Pyongyang European Business Association. This "capitalist" attacks conventional wisdom on North Korea; sometimes with blunt force, sometimes with nuance, but always with a businessman's eye and always with a fiery, humor-tempered wit. Indeed, the personal pictures and lively pace of the book combine the feel of a fireside chat with facts one expects from a businessman." —Roger Cavazos, Associate, *The Nautilus Institute*"It's rare indeed to get an insider perspective from one of these agents of change." —*Foreign Policy in Focus*"The Swiss-born Abt, who lived and worked in Pyongyang from 22 to 29, is one of a small number of Western businesspeople who encourage economic engagement with North Korea." —*Vice News*"Felix Abt prefers to stay apolitical and impartial when sharing his thoughts and memories of the seven-year sojourn. From the book we can see that he loves Korea and cares about its people. In his assessments of North Korea's past and present the author approaches all issues from a human (and humanistic) perspective, trying to show life in the country without political or ideological coloring." —Leonid Petrov, lecturer in Korean Studies, *The University of Sydney*"Abt Draws from a trove of personal experience to create a vivid account of the people and place. Along the way, Abt addresses big questions such as economic reform and practical ones such as how to use —commerce to achieve brand recognition in North Korea." —Jeff Baron, U.S. — *Korea Institute at Sais*"hellip;the book is also peppered with interesting anecdotes and stories about cultural and private life in the DPRK that do not typically receive attention in the western media." —Curtis Melvin, blogger, *North Korea Economy Watch*About the AuthorFelix Abt co-founded the European Business Association as well as the Pyongyang Business School in North Korea. Prior to this, Abt worked in Europe, Africa and Asia as a senior executive for F. Hoffmann-La Roche and the ABB Group. In 2002, ABB appointed him as the Resident Country Director in North Korea. He went on to become a point man for Western investments in the country, representing several multinational corporations and even founding a business of his own. He currently lives in Vietnam and remains a shareholder in various North Korean joint ventures.