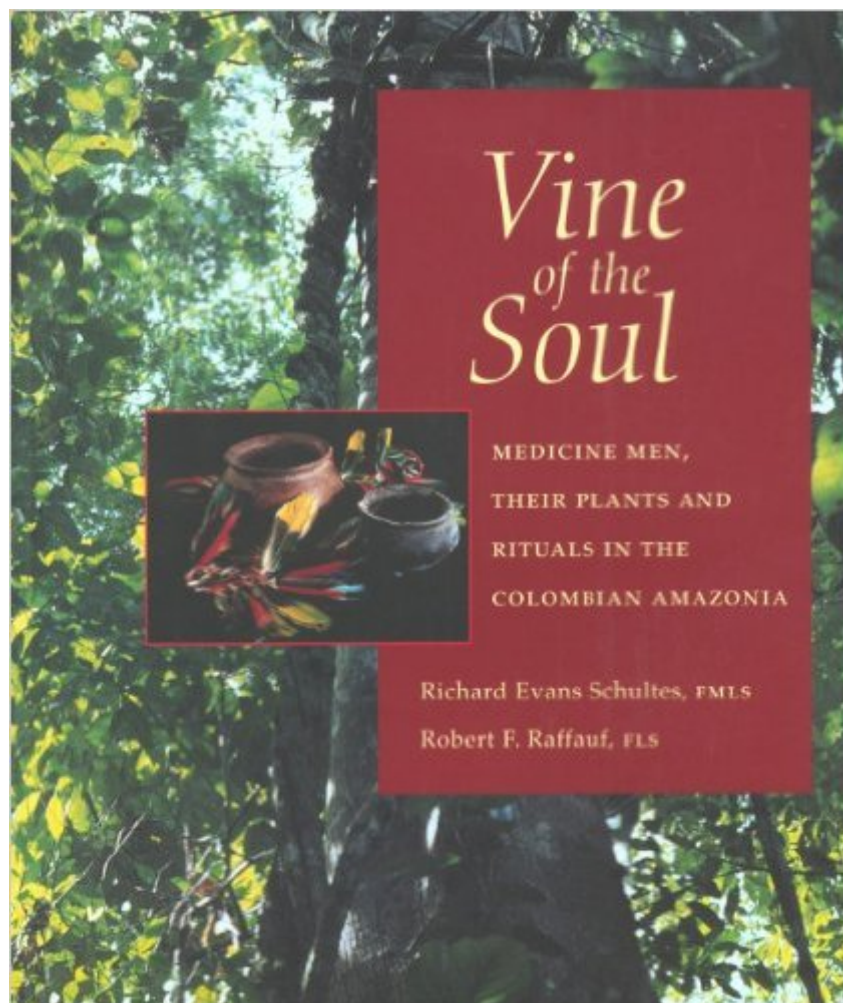


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Vine Of The Soul: Medicine Men, Their Plants & Rituals



Synopsis

The most comprehensive collection of authoritative writings on the subject ever published. A panorama of texts translated from nearly a dozen languages on the ayahuasca experience. These include indigenous mythic narratives and testimonies, religious hymns, as well as narratives related by western travelers, scientists, and writers who have had contact with ayahuasca in different contexts. Some of the material in this Reader has been published before in difficult to find journals and books in a variety of languages.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The collaborative work of Richard Evans Schultes (formerly Jeffrey Professor of Biology and Director of the Botanical Museum of Harvard University) and Robert F. Raffauf (formerly Professor of Pharmacognosy and Medicinal Chemistry, College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions, Northeastern University, Boston), *Vine Of The Soul: Medicine Men, Their Plants And Rituals In The Colombian* has been newly re-issued by Synergetic Press and is an informed and informative exploration of the religious beliefs and superstitions of the people native to the Colombian River area. Here studied are tribal sacred dances, art, petroglyphs, and architecture, hunting and fishing rituals, and more. *Vine Of The Soul* is wonderfully enhanced with different black-and-white photograph, and text captions describing particular aspects of the Colombian native traditions represented therein. A beautiful and absorbing tour of faith and spirituality, *Vine Of The Soul* is a core addition to personal, professional, academic, and community library Studies reading lists and South American Indian reference collections.

This is much more of a picture book than I had expected but it is a fascinating book. For the most part of its 270 pages there are full page photos of plants, places and traditional people of the region engaged in the use of medicinal plants, traditional art or music. Accompanying the photos are brief one to two paragraph descriptions of what peoples use the plant, where they are located, where the plant is found and what its traditional usage is. The black and white photos are of places rarely seen including sacred waterfalls, rock formations, unique endemic forest and plant communities that are not often depicted in photographic books on the region. This is a great book to thumb through and read as your curiosity is caught by one page after another showing a scene of extensive forest, a cliff-side pictograph, a strikingly bizarre flower. It is not a detailed text of ethnobotany, it is more like coming across an explorer's own notes and pictures that gives you a sense of privilege to view.

This is a tale of high adventure but with serious purpose. A small group of men and women risk their lives to seek out new medicinal plants among the most primitive places on Earth. They call themselves Ethno-Botanists in that they are part Anthropologist and part Botanist. The Shamans of the region are the world's foremost experts on which are the useful plants among the millions of plants in the one of the most genetically diverse plant concentrations on the planet. If you're looking for medicinal plants this is the place and the shamans are the ones to ask. The quest to capture this knowledge is given extra importance by the certainty that contact with the outside is quickly erasing the only places where it exists - in the heads of the aging Shamans who are disappearing faster than the forest itself.

I enjoyed the view into these cultures--really enjoyed it, though many of the photographs seemed staged. This book really is about "medicine men" and the one mention of "an elder Tikuna medicine woman", seemed viewed through a limited Western / patriarchal lens, suggesting the children were afraid of her because she can "hex" them. I do recommend the book, but as you are reading, keep in mind that the women of these cultures also have a deep relationship, not only with the plants as food, but also with the plants as medicine and as a doorway into the cosmos. They also have their ceremonies. The authors' "lack of seeing" women in their fullness whilst they were amongst these peoples does make me cautious with the rest of the information in this book.

This book is a must-have if you're interested in Ayahuasca, DMT, the region, shamans, rituals, etc. . it is all contained in this wonderful book. GREAT READ! Nice addition to the book collection!

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