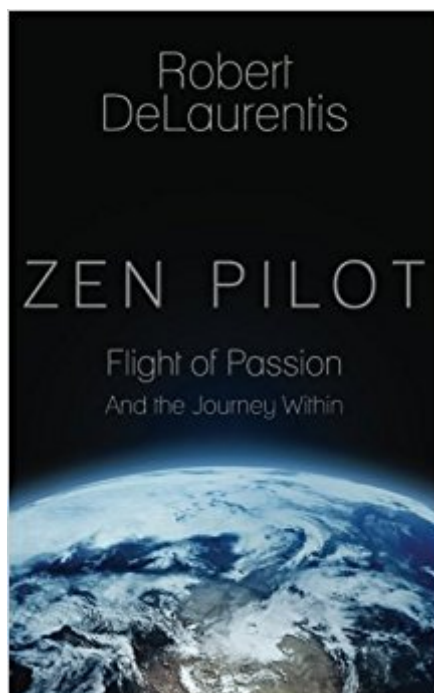


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# Zen Pilot: Flight Of Passion And The Journey Within



## Synopsis

"I was rocketing toward the ground in an aircraft loaded with high-octane aviation fuel. All I could do was negotiate where the impact would happen." Robert DeLaurentis had an impossibly big dream: to circumnavigate the globe in a single-engine piston plane. Meant to be the ultimate test of his flying skills as a pilot, the journey would take him to the ends of the earth and over some of the most inhospitable terrain on the planet. He diligently prepared himself and his plane, the "Spirit of San Diego," for the excursion. Having previously flown to far-off places, he thought he knew what to expect. But reality doesn't always make for the best co-pilot. What began as a call to adventure turned into a soul-defining mission riddled with equipment failure, fierce weather, foreign bureaucratic nightmares, and nearly ended in a crash into the vast Pacific Ocean. The voyage would stretch his limits, test his mental strength, and eventually define him. Beaten down, broken and discouraged, he found that the only way to survive was to surrender to the Universe. In this follow-up to *Flying Thru Life*, DeLaurentis shares the insights he gained for overcoming paralyzing fear, defeating obstacles, and confronting any situation with grace and ease. This raw, at times terrifying, real-life adventure will inspire anyone who loves flying, yearns to fly, or simply has their own "impossibly big dream." DeLaurentis's extraordinary journey shows us what it takes to be a Zen Pilot.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Kirkus Reviews says: "A daring pilot's true story of flying around the world." DeLaurentis

(Flying Thru Life, 2015) begins his rousing, compulsively readable autobiographical tale by assuring readers that everyone has the urge to fly: "We stare up into the sky," he writes, "and know somehow that we were meant to make that part of our playground." Certainly, this is true of DeLaurentis himself; in 22 fast-paced, accessible chapters, he narrates several of his own adventures in the air. He made a plan to fly his Piper Malibu Mirage, the Spirit of San Diego, across the Atlantic in the manner of Charles Lindbergh's 1927 transatlantic flight. However, the journey quickly grew into something much bigger: a flight around the world in which he visited dozens of countries and faced dozens of perils, airborne and otherwise. The resulting memoir is as immediately exciting as any flying stories written since pilot Ernest Gann's 1961 memoir Fate Is the Hunter.

DeLaurentis never lets up on his pacing and never quails from laying on the melodrama with gusto: "I was moving through the air in a 4,900-pound flying bomb," he writes in a typical passage, "and it was my job to get it back on the ground without it blowing it and me to pieces in a fiery cloud of billowing black flames and noxious burning aluminum." He fills his account with warmly drawn portraits of the people he met in his travels, with a particularly affectionate tone reserved for the crusty old mechanics at all the hangars and airstrips along the way. He balances out the action with lightly spiritual patter about the universe (with a capital "U") and some well-earned inspirational comments about facing one's doubts in order to embrace an adventurous life. Overall, he has a thrilling story to tell, and he does so with a tremendous amount of zeal and a winning streak of humor, making it a surefire bet for aviation aficionados everywhere. "A rough-and-ready flight memoir, dedicated to the human spirit of adventure." "An innate part of human nature is to explore, to wonder what's on the other side of that ridge or to see a mountain and climb it." Robert DeLaurentis's book "Zen Pilot" demonstrates this quest for challenge, adventure and exploration and tells his story of circumnavigating the planet in his Piper Malibu Mirage. His first hand accounting enthusiastically keeps readers excited and challenged to reach for and realize their own dreams. "Robert [or Zen Pilot], you don't just dream it, you do it!" ~ Dick Rutan, Commander, Voyager Aircraft "I've had the pleasure of meeting Robert DeLaurentis, "Zen Pilot", at aviation events where he has been a speaker. "Having followed his solo circumnavigation flight in 2015, I have looked forward to the release of his book Zen Pilot which documents Robert's flying experiences during that voyage. "What a great read! Zen Pilot: Flight of Passion & the Journey Within delivers Robert's amazing journey on so many levels. He is among the very few pilots who have pushed back the fears and mechanical concerns requested to undergo such an involved flying experience. "You will learn what personal goals led up to his undertaking of such an 'impossibly big dream', the steps taken to accomplish it, and

the hurdles he encountered (and overcame) along the way. The Zen Moments scattered throughout the book are great reminders to us about the power of being zen, especially in moments of stress and fear which are a common passengers when we take flight. While pilots will eat this story up, I believe anyone who aspires to reach higher and then live to tell it will thoroughly enjoy this 'hero's journey' adventure story that is as real as it can get."~ Jack Pelton, Chairman of the Board and CEO of the Experimental Aircraft Association and the former CEO of Cessna Aircraft Company "After reading Zen Pilot I can say I really like it! It's easy to read and I really like the "Zen Moments". It's a good format because a person can pick it up at any point in the book and be engaged immediately. Both the experiences you write about and the writing of them are huge accomplishments. Good job!"~ Patty Wagstaff, Aerobatic Champion & Airshow Pilot, Inductee National Aviation Hall of Fame

I really enjoyed this book and am giving it 5-stars. I read a lot of aviation titles and this is one of the better stories I have read in some time. Having said that, I must confess that at first I found the book annoying with how it was edited. It jumps between the past, the present and the future and back again in a very rough fashion. Add to this the grammar errors, which are prevalent in today's world of book writing, and this book had a lot to overcome to win me over, but I found myself pulling for Robert and increasingly empathetic to what he faced. As a general aviation pilot, this story hit home to me, even though I have not flown around the world. You do not need to be a pilot to read this book, it is inspiring for all types of people. There were times the aviation geek in me wanted more closure on his maintenance issues. In particular, the story line in Malaysia is not very clear on broken parts, epoxying his engine and "who did what when". The average reader probably does not care about this level of detail, but pilots and technical types will care.

Great adventure. Flew from Moffett to Hawaii many times in 4 engine Navy P-3, always fired up the radar 200 miles out to make sure the islands were there! Doug Coke [aercoke@gmail.com](mailto:aercoke@gmail.com)

A fun and inspirational armchair adventure with philosophical Zen comments. Great accounts of adventures and tense moments flying around the world in a PA-46 Malibu Mirage (a fantastic plane)

I enjoyed the story and all pilots have faced self doubt. Overcoming self doubt is a universal struggle and the book does a great job of bringing us on his journey.

Great read, honest and thoughtful, Robert shares his experiences with a rare insight not usually seen in this type of book.

Great read for a pilot. Some memorable events for me too.

I have no doubt that a trip like this is a life changing experience but the book is a little long on the zen and short on the technical aspects of the flight. However I would recommend it for both pilots and non pilots.

I usually read anywhere from 1-3 books at a time. Sometimes 1 of the books catches my imagination and interest to the point that the other books get put down and have to wait until a later time. This was my experience with Zen Pilot. It's very well written and one of the many things I really appreciated was the spacing and font size that were large enough to make it easier for a 59 year old man to read this 357 page book. Whenever I finished one chapter, I was compelled to keep reading the next chapter...as fast as possible. Every chapter of this book was intensely satisfying for me. It becomes obvious in a short amount of time to understand that Robert is a very experienced pilot. He states in his detailed description of his plane, that he had all the newest and greatest electronics installed in his Piper Malibu Mirage, a single engine piston propeller airplane. Yet what happens to his plane and him in the air, and on the ground, makes for an intensely interesting page turner. I've often dreamed of taking a trip around the world, albeit using commercial airlines. The idea of doing it alone in a single engine aircraft caught my attention, and would in my opinion be quite a fantasy for anyone. Zen Pilot is filled with both adventure and courage. Robert's book won't disappoint anyone wanting to intimately know what it would be like as a "fly" sitting in the co-pilot seat of his Piper Malibu Mirage during this epic trip! Enjoy the book...I certainly did.

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