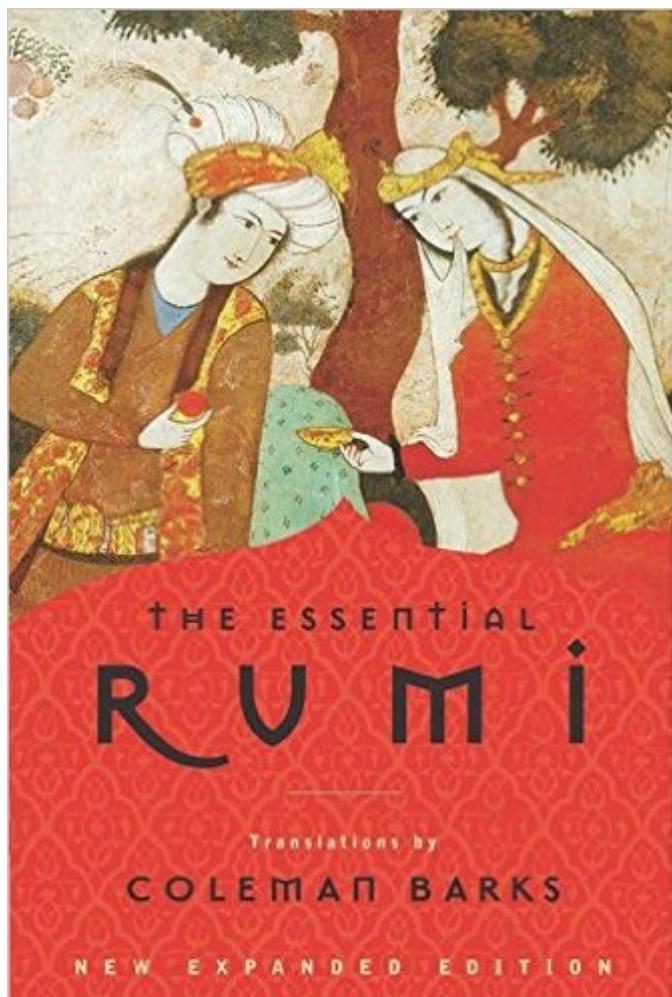


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# The Essential Rumi



## Synopsis

This revised and expanded edition of The Essential Rumi includes a new introduction by Coleman Barks and more than 80 never-before-published poems. Through his lyrical translations, Coleman Barks has been instrumental in bringing this exquisite literature to a remarkably wide range of readers, making the ecstatic, spiritual poetry of thirteenth-century Sufi Mystic Rumi more popular than ever. The Essential Rumi continues to be the bestselling of all Rumi books, and the definitive selection of his beautiful, mystical poetry.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (270 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #82,453 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Islam > Sufism #26 in Â Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > Middle Eastern #37 in Â Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Catechisms

## Customer Reviews

This review was originally written as a response to a one-star Spotlight Review entitled "Look elsewhere for Rumi's essence", which criticized Barks' versions of Rumi as inauthentic because they are not precisely literal; that negative review has since been removed. But what I said then still goes: Don't let the negative reviews drive you away from a great read. This book captures Rumi's essence like no other. And despite what the critics think, Coleman Barks is very well qualified to bring Rumi to a modern English audience. Consider these four points: 1) First, and most important, Barks loves Rumi; he loves Rumi's poetry; he loves that Presence Rumi's poetry celebrates and explores. In the original criticism, the reviewer implied Sufi poetry employs some kind of mantric magic when he said that "their poems are actually precise and carefully constructed technical instruments designed to have very specific effects on the reader under the right circumstances." Please. Rumi himself makes plain throughout his works that the point of his poetry - and of Sufism - is not technique. The point is love: "Rub your eyes, and look again at love, with love." Rumi would

have been the last person in the world to insist on strict adherence to technique, or compulsive literal translation. He was about soul, and transformation, and he said over and over again that the only real magic was love. That's the real essence of Rumi. And maybe Barks has been able to translate Rumi's poetry so effectively because he's coming from the heart and the soul, and not just the head.<sup>2)</sup> Second, Barks is a well-known American poet in his own right, a retired professor of English at Georgia University. He's studied the life and work of Rumi intensively for over thirty years.

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