

Surfing is unique among action sports in that you spend far more time searching, preparing, and paddling than you do actually riding waves. The key to a happy surfing life is in learning to relish these in-between moments just as much.

→ the internet. Few real secrets remain, but ask surfers about their favorite spots, and you might be met with a look like you've spat in their lunch. "Loose lips sink ships," as one photographer noted when we requested the locations of his submissions for this book.

The Kingdom's All Inside

If there's a misconception about surfing, it's that the act of riding a wave is in some way useful, enlightening, even. Really it's about the most frivolous thing you can do. Sure, there are health benefits to being in the ocean. And there's no doubt something to be gained from a communion with the natural world and the love of nature it brings. But for many surfers, the real value has nothing to do with any of this. Over the course of a life, the time you'll spend actually riding waves borders on negligible.

The definition of perfection is surely something that remains just out of reach, and nowhere is that more apparent than in surfing. There are endless variables that might make a "perfect" wave, both physical and metaphysical. The true beauty of waves lie not in their perfection but their imperfection. That's what keeps us going. Because you know that whether you're seven or seventy, the greatest wave could still be ahead. And you'll always want more. The true joy of surfing is not the discovery of perfect waves, or even the search for them, but just the hope they might exist. So here's to the perfect wave—let's hope you never find it. ~

