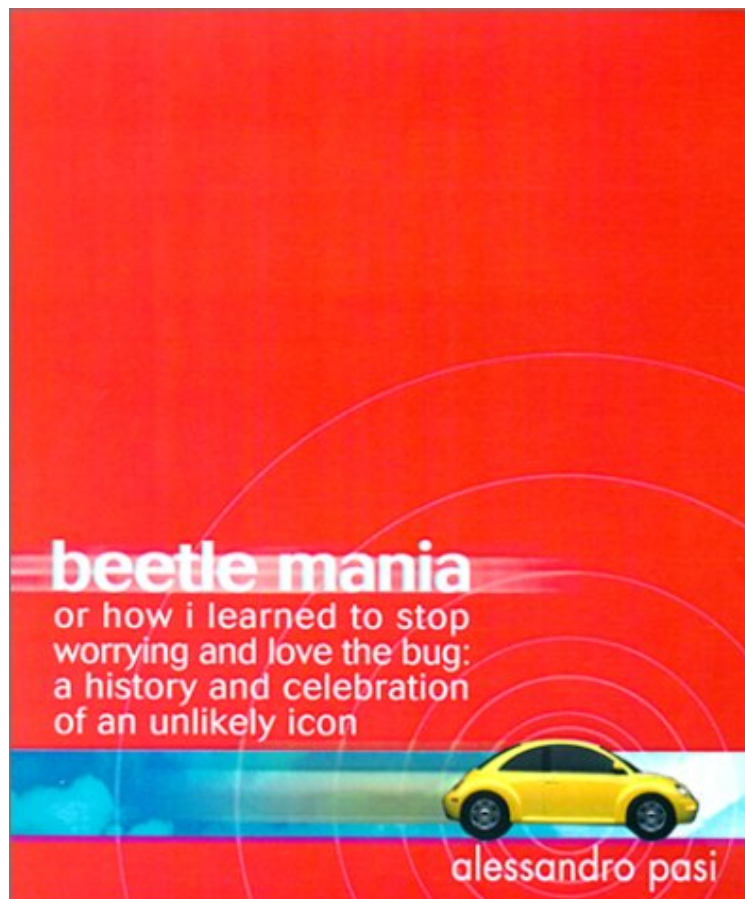


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Beetle Mania, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bug: A History and Celebration of an Unlikely Icon

Alessandro Pasi

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2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Another good Beetle BookBy Charlie MillerHow much more can you say? Pasi says it again. Nothing new here but some very nice pictures and some old ads. The "New Beetle" also gets some coverage and pictures.

Volkswagen. The name means "people's car" in German, which would certainly be just another bit of trivia, barely capable of arousing even a passing interest, except for its absolute accuracy, remarkable in the modern marketing lexicon of dazzling product names and slogans for its simple, irrefutable truth. For if any car is truly of the people, it's

the Volkswagen Beetle. On the whole, the car resembles nothing more than a great, eager-to-please pet, and yet it owes its existence to Adolf Hitler, who dreamed of an affordable, mass-produced car for the German worker. Happily, this was the extent of the little Beetle's association with the dictator, as production of the car was immediately turned over to the brilliant automotive engineer, Ferdinand Porsche. Porsche's original design was inspired by an egg; obviously, he "got" the Beetle. Still, the road from Porsche's early designs, through World War II, American liberation and British occupation was a long one, and the Beetle that first captured the hearts of drivers all over the world wouldn't appear until 1951. Even then, the car that would eventually become the official car of the revolution and a genuine 20th-century icon took a while to catch on. It wasn't until VW's legendarily clever and unconventional advertising campaigns that the car really became synonymous with the vibrant, unrestrained generation that made it their hallmark. But even that doesn't explain the enormous popularity of the car, or the fondness it inspired in its owners, or the simple way that just the sight of it could lift your spirits. The secret is this: the Beetle was the first car with a soul. Engagingly and authoritatively written, deliciously designed and featuring more than 300 gorgeous color and black white photos, this is the long-awaited record of the Volkswagen Beetle, from its earliest beginnings to its latest rebirth. Along the way you'll find examples of the priceless ad campaigns, a chronicle of the growing subculture of Beetle restorers and modifiers, and a complete timeline of the creation of the new Beetle. Like the car itself, this book is not only the history and celebration of an automobile, it's also a vital record of our society's changing image of itself.

About the Author Alessandro Pasi is a journalist. He has written another book on the Beetle, and two books for children. He is also an avid collector of Volkswagen Beetles.