



Hitchhiker's Guide

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Cliff is a twenty-something guy backpacking his way across Italy. He's interested in places that are "off the beaten path" and likes to meet other travelers. Cliff does not plan his days in advance. He travels on whim with a EuroRail pass. He likes to stay in hostels and eat in street side stands, although he will occasionally splurge on a good restaurant meal here and there.

The Hitchhiker's Guide is designed to connect people like Cliff to one another, to help find places of personal interest, and to share adventures with fellow travelers and friends at home.

The Hitchhiker's Guide

The Hitchhiker's Guide is a collaborative community-based context-aware travel guide.

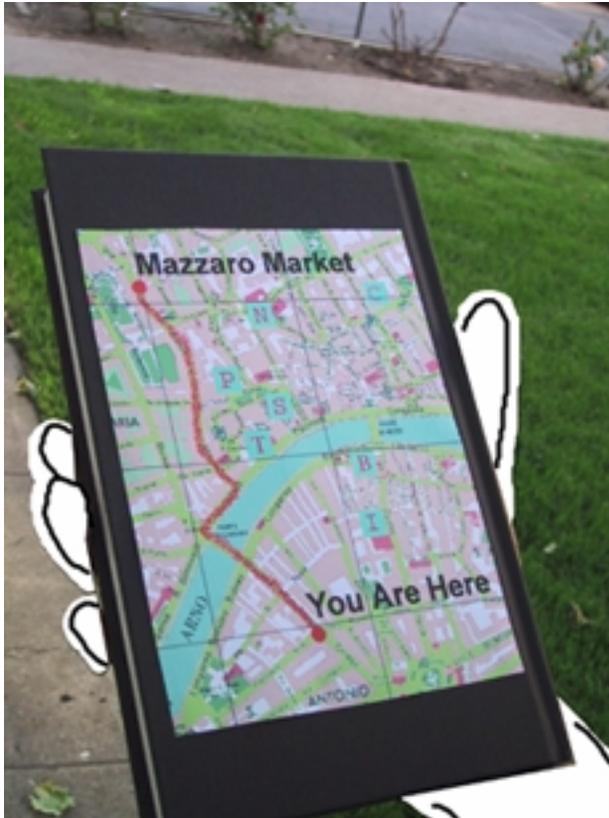
- The Guide is a book with an LCD screen on the back cover and pages containing electronic ink. There is a digital camera on the front cover.
- Users gain access to communities through real interactions with other travelers. This fosters the sense of community, collaboration, and reciprocity amongst the user base, and provides a mechanism for personalizing information.
- Information is authored by the Guide's many users and is accessed based on the Guide's location. Thus the Guide always provides updated information that is relevant to the person and place.
- This information includes pictures, directions, recommendations, warnings, and personal stories.



Cliff has just arrived in Pisa by bus. Being an organic granola type, Cliff is really keen to visit Pisa's Mazarro outdoor Market.

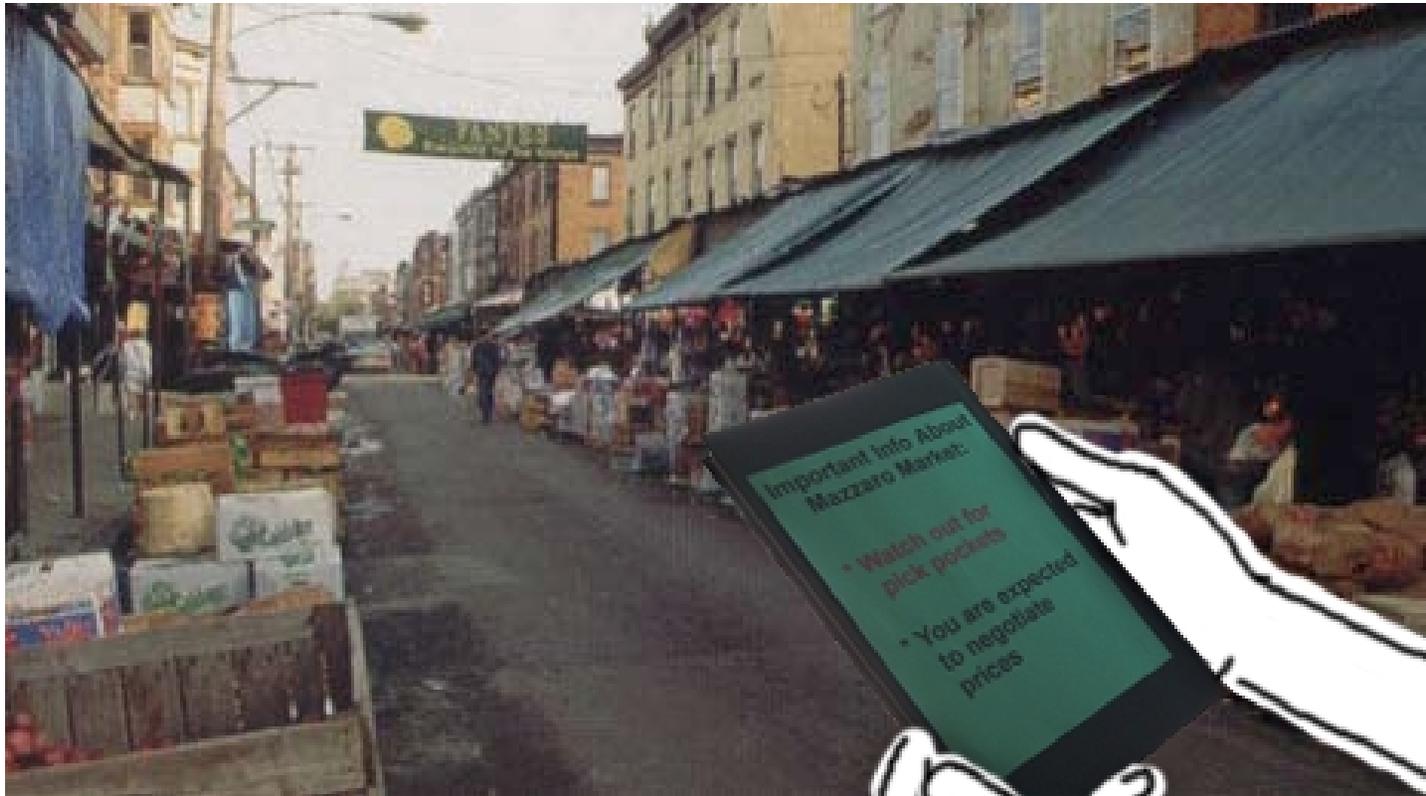
He folds down the corner of the page describing the market. This helps him remember the spots he's interested in visiting today, and keeps those pages static.





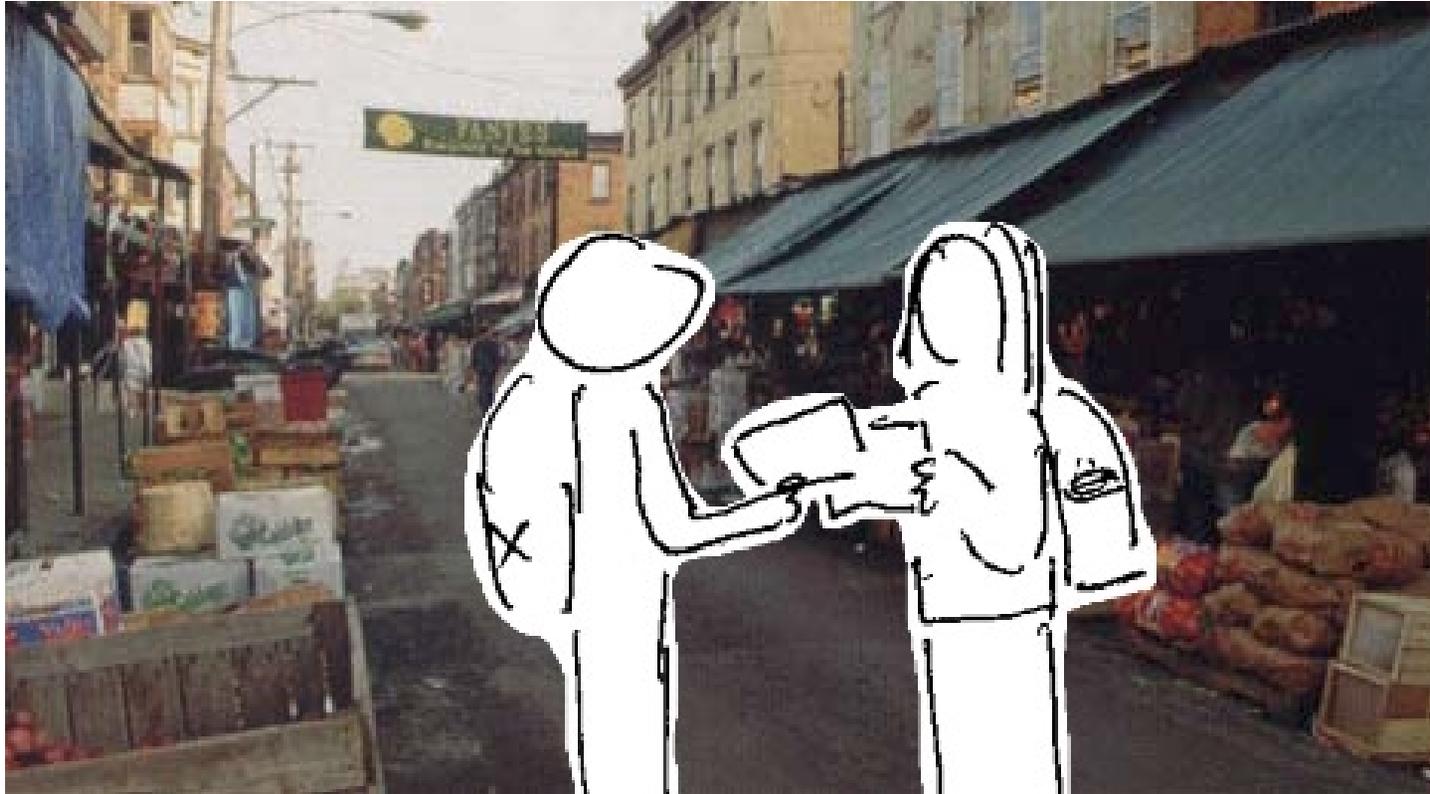
The guide senses Cliff's folding of the page, and automatically adds the Mazzaro Market to the places highlighted on the map on the back of Cliff's book.

The book also detects and marks Cliff's current location on the map. It draws a recommended walking path to the market, which Cliff refers to as he's backpacking his way through the streets of Pisa.



As he nears the market, Cliff feels the Guide wiggle. His location must be triggering a message. Looking down, he is warned to be on the watch for pickpockets .

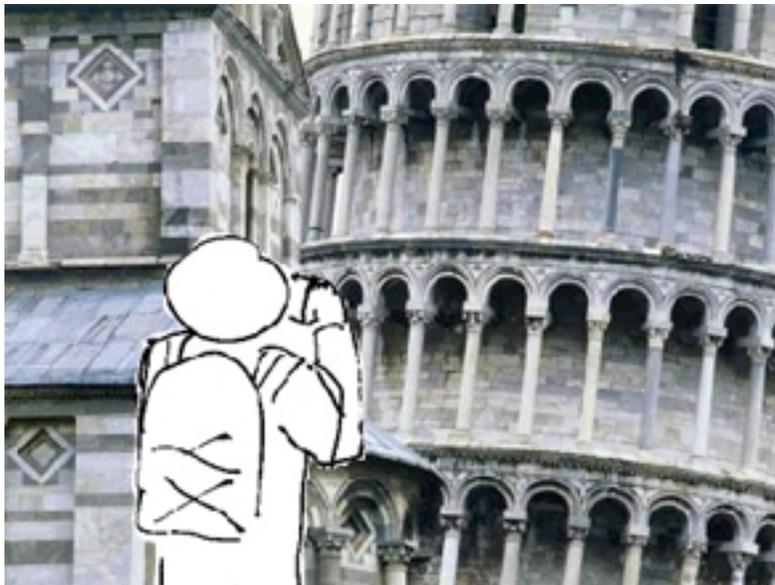
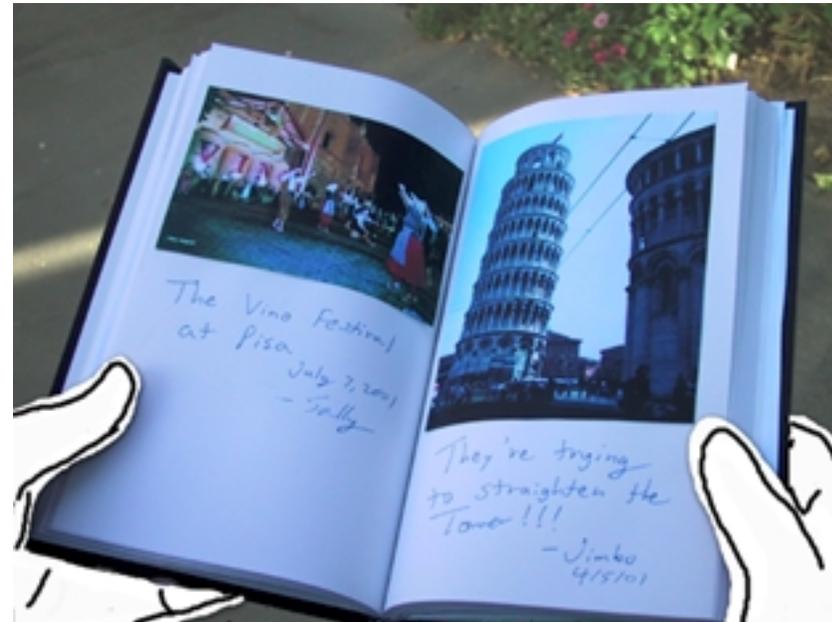
He also sees that he can and should bargain at the market. Cliff feels a little smug as he watches a bunch of clueless yuppie tourists overpay for their vegetables.



Cliff spies a girl carrying a Hitchhiker guide across the way. He introduces himself and they chat for a while. By bringing their books close, they exchange permissions to see one another's trip notes, and the notes of people they've met before.

She tells Cliff she's just come from the Leaning Tower of Pisa: "It's a tourist trap, but there's the funniest collection of pictures there!"

Cliff finds his way to the Tower, and sees goofy images left by previous hitchhikers. He laughs at all the pictures of people leaning in front of the tower. He discovers that he's just missed a giant wine festival held in the Tower's shadow last week.



Cliff is so charmed by this silly tradition of posting funny photos that he decides to take his own nutty picture to share with other Hitchhikers that might come this way.

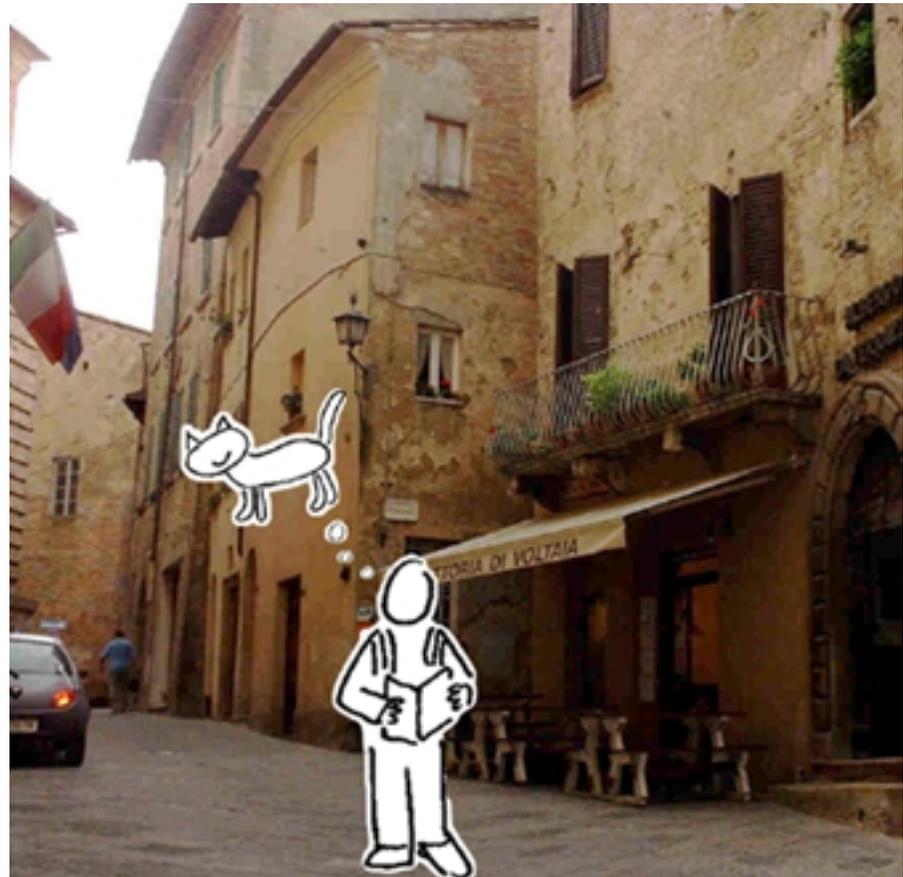


Cliff sends a copy of the picture along with a little note to his mom back home in New Jersey.

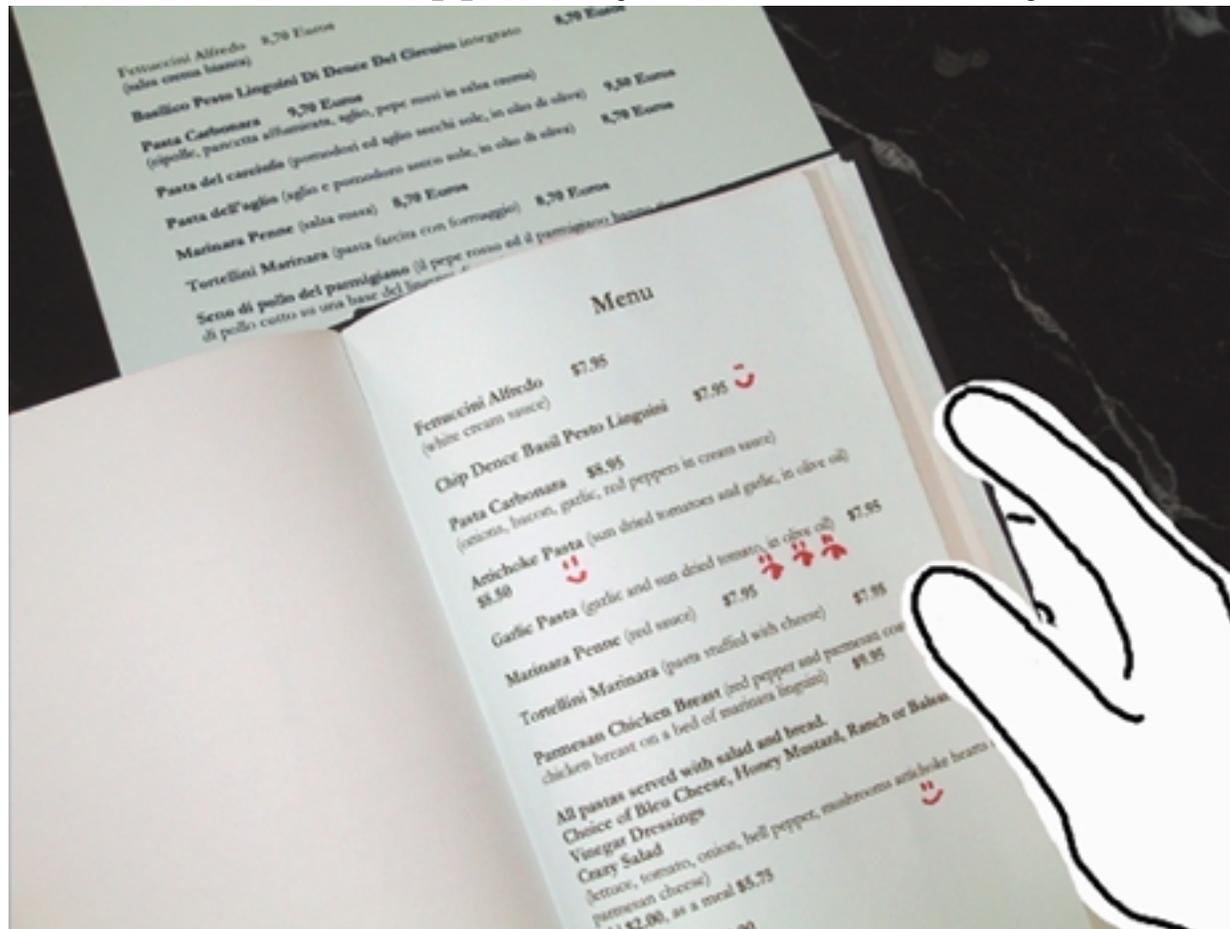
He knows his mom will be excited to hear from him. She's tracking his trip everyday and follows along on the web site of Cliff's trip automatically being created by the guidebook.

As dinnertime nears, Cliff looks in the Hitchhiker's Guide for someplace nearby that is cheap and good.

Reviews are plentiful, but Cliff trusts the Guide recommendations left by fellow travelers in the form of secret hobo signs. Cliff looks for the cat that he knows means "friendly to vegetarians."



At the restaurant, Cliff snaps an image of the menu, which is uploaded, optically recognized, translated, and then sent back to the Hitchhiker guide along with reviews by previous travelers. Apparently, the Garlic Pasta just sucks.



After a two-smiley dinner of pasta with artichokes, Cliff heads to the train station.

On the train, he opens the guidebook to the page that shows where he's been and the photos and notes he's entered.

He's looking forward to the chance to sit down and review his day, and to write more about his adventures on the train ride out of town.

