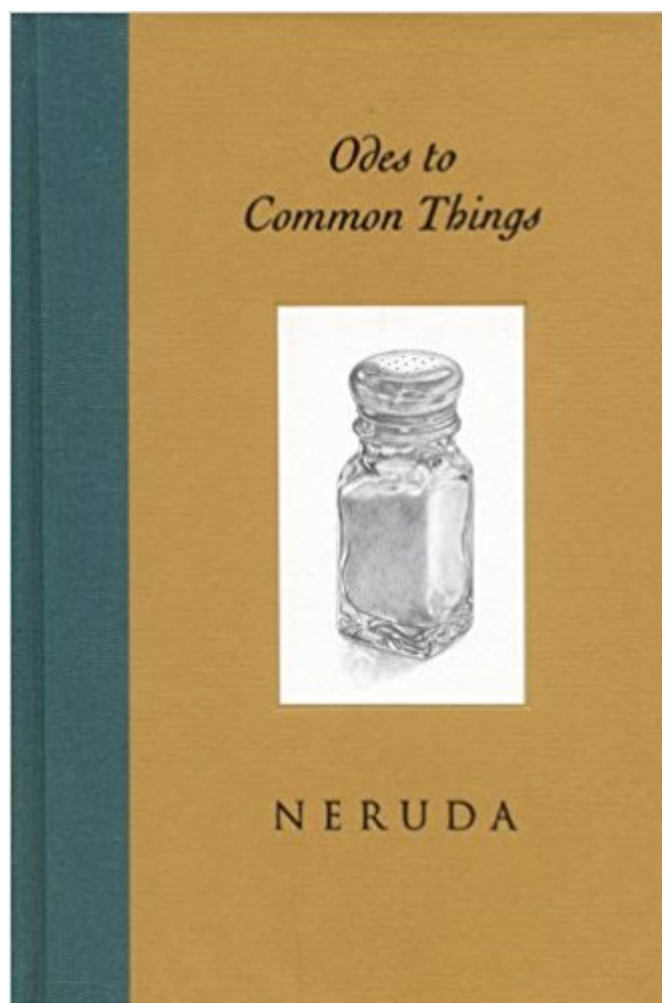


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# Odes To Common Things, Bilingual Edition



## Synopsis

A bilingual collection of 25 newly translated odes by the century's greatest Spanish-language poet, each accompanied by a pair of exquisite pencil drawings. From bread and soap to a bed and a box of tea, the "odes to common things" collected here conjure up the essence of their subjects clearly and wondrously. 50 b&w illustrations.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 152 pages

Publisher: Bulfinch; Bilingual edition (May 1, 1994)

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (22 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #282,954 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > Caribbean & Latin American

## Customer Reviews

This is a beautifully illustrated collection of Pablo Neruda's Odes to Common Things. As a high school art teacher, this is one of the books I use to teach illustration, both by using the book's illustrations as a good example, and through the poetry, to have students see the variety of imagery available even in things they see every day. In particular, Ode to a Cat and Ode to Scissors are both playful and haunting.

The Odes to Common Things was written toward the end of Neruda's life, in a voice steeped in the wisdom of a life experienced in the greatest joys and horrors of the 20th century. When Neruda writes about a table, a chair, flowers, socks, or soap, these common things become more than everyday banal objects: they are transformed and elevated into metaphors, vehicles for the greater questions that haunt our lives, capturing the often overlooked beauty of everyday life, of the little things that we seem to remember only in our twilight. Ken Krabbenhoft's translation is good, but often, as with other translations, it fails to capture the true spirit of the Spanish words (but not at his fault). It is for this reason I gave it four instead of five stars. My personal favorites include: "Oda al Pan" (Ode to Bread); "Oda a la Cama" (Ode to the Bed); and, "Oda al Violin de California" (Ode to a

Violin in California), perhaps because Neruda's inspiration may have come from walking the same shores that I too walk in barefoot pleasure.--ross saciuk

The night I received this book I went to a Leonard Cohen party where we listened/sang/played to his songs. He has some incredible lyrics. We talked about what a poet he is. The next night I was done with my dinner and my husband was still eating so I picked up the book and started reading to him. About the third page or so I suddenly burst into tears and just could not continue. The words of Odes to Common Things are so simple and so true and hit me right in the solar plexus. I highly recommend it.

This collection of poems is beautiful. Neruda's words capture the quotidian beauty of life and love. The format of the book, with English on one side and Spanish on the other, lends itself well to readers who can understand most but not all of the poem without translation. The binding is beautiful and makes a great gift.

Pablo Neruda--the last great poet. Every time I pick up one of his books I'm startled back in to coherence. "Odes to Common Things" is no exception. His elevation of what you and I take for granted to entities of self-completeness is nothing short of brilliance. When I see a chair all I see is a place to plant my weary body, but with Neruda the chair is transformed into something wildly exotic, transcendent and magical. "Ode to the dictionary" will make you regret not using yours more. A tell-tale sign of reading profound poetry is an encroaching sense of self-disgust. I rarely fail to achieve this feeling when reading Neruda. So if you're in the mood to be simultaneously elevated and degraded, read "Ode to Common Things", a book that is anything but common.

WOW. I've never been so moved by this book. As I began to read it, I sensed so many different things. How can such wonderful feelings be sensed by such common things. Pablo Neruda is a master in poetry. Im only 16 years old and I've never been so moved by such poetry. what an amazing man he was. it takes real gift to be able and write like that. This book really touched me, that sense and feeling in every line was enchanting. read this book, and you'll appreciate almost everything in life.

Neruda's use of language is truly sensual, in both English and Spanish. I must read for word lovers.

This publication is more than a book: it is a powerful experience visually, aesthetically, emotionally, intellectually, philosophically. Neruda believed in the enchantment of common things, just like he believed in the dignity of common people. Having the English and Spanish on facing pages enriches the experience of this lovely work. The translations by Ken Krabbenhoft are excellent. I have gifted copies of this book to many friends, who held on to it long after other books were recycled in rummage sales.

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