

## Film Review: Reese Witherspoon Takes a Tedious Trip Into the ‘Wild’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on December 5, 2014 - 12:40am

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CHICAGO – At times “Wild” resembles the hallucinatory fever dream of a dehydrated and delirious hiker (played by Reese Witherspoon), alone in the world. I only wish her fever dreams were more interesting for the rest of us.



Rating: **2.0**/5.0

Based on the book by Cheryl Strayed, it struck me a bit as the Sierra Club version of “Eat, Pray, Love.” It’s a selfish woman’s journey of self-empowerment disguised as a travelogue. After her mother’s death, she turns to sex and heroin to numb her pain. This leads her to bottom out in her personal life and the breakup of her marriage. So she sets off on the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada to find herself.

Nicholas Hornby’s adaptation really gives the audience the feeling of a lonely traveler on a quest. Hornby and director Jean-Marc Vallée tell the story as half-remembered images and flashbacks as Witherspoon trudges on and thinks about the people and the life she’s left behind. The tedium and the drudgery are all there, along with the wandering thoughts of a lonely woman trying to find her way. The film rests squarely on her shoulders, like the overstuffed backpack she carries around for much of it. But her character remains opaque, and she becomes a hard character to root for or even take much interest in.

*“Wild” has a limited release, including Chicago, on December 5th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Reese Witherspoon, Laura Dern, Gabby Hoffmann, Thomas Sadoski, Brian Van Holt and W. Earl Brown. Screenplay adapted by Nick Hornby, from the memoir by Cheryl Strayed. Directed by Jean-Marc Vallée. Rated “R”*



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Reese Witherspoon Carries the Weight in 'Wild'

*Photo credit: Fox Searchlight Pictures*



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