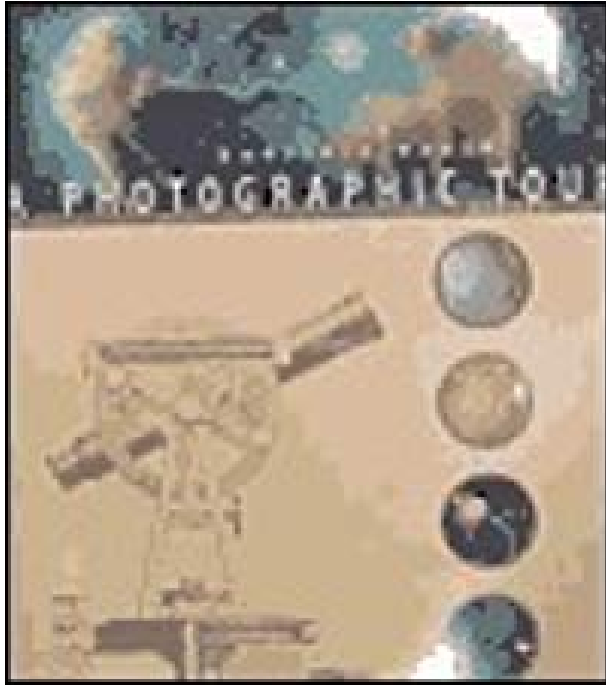


A Photographic Tour of the Universe



Pages:	144
Genre:	Environment
Language	English
Author:	Gabriele Vanin
ISBN10:	155209345X
Goodreads Rating:	4.00
Published:	January 1st 1996 by Firefly Books
ISBN13:	9781552093450

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A Photographic Tour of the Universe presents over 250 new images from space, drawn from space agencies (NASA and the European Space Agency) and by other renowned observatories. Each photograph is accompanied by an extensive caption that points out the important details in the image and summarizes the techniques and exposure times used to make the photographs. As we proceed through the text, which covers our solar system, the stars, the nebulae, the near galaxies, and, finally, the distant galaxies, we learn how astronomers have interpreted what they have seen and how the new images have changed what we know about the cosmos. Recent photos from the Hubble, for example, have shown the "signature" of black holes -- objects so massive and dense that not even light can escape their gravitational pull.

Other images taken recently are remarkable for their high resolution and extraordinary beauty, such as those revealing the famous Horsehead Nebula. The book includes an introduction by Richard M. West of the European Southern Observatory.