

After Escobar

Taking Down the Notorious Cali Godfathers and the Biggest Drug Cartel in History

by Chris Feistl and Dave Mitchell with Jessica Balboni



Non-Fiction - True Crime

352 Pages

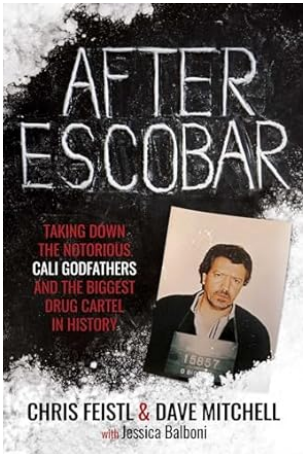
Reviewed on 07/11/2025

Book Review

Reviewed by Michelle Stanley for Readers' Favorite

After Escobar is a true crime story by Chris Feistl and Dave Mitchell. Taking down the notorious Cali Godfathers and the biggest drug cartel in Colombia's history seemed an insanely impossible mission to many, but Drug Enforcement Agents (DEA) Chris Feistl and Dave Mitchell were determined to make it happen. Cali Godfathers, Miguel and Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, celebrated when Medellín's drug baron, Pablo Escobar, was killed in 1993. Their Cali Cartel then became the most powerful crime syndicate during the 1990s. While the DEA and other law enforcement agencies focused on the Medellín Cartel, the Cali Cartel was able to strengthen and expand without keen observation. The brothers controlled a sophisticated international syndicate and used a supercomputer that baffled experts. They hired skilled personnel and killers, bribed politicians, policemen, and intimidated anyone they wanted in the interests of the cartel, and to avoid extradition to the United States, which they feared. Dave and Chris organized numerous raids, but often experienced setbacks because Cali spies infiltrated their working environment and personal space. The agents were distrustful, but adroit, and knew how to respond to the deadly "hide and seek" games the drug barons played with them and the people who became a threat to them.

After Escobar is a fascinating true crime story that Drug Enforcement Agents Chris Feistl and Dave Mitchell wrote with Jessica Balboni. They recall their years in Colombia working with local law enforcement agencies to destroy the Cali crime syndicate managed by the four Cali Godfathers: Miguel and Gilberto Orejuela, Jose "Chepe" Santacruz Londono, and Francisco Helmer "Pacho" Buitrago. After Escobar is a deeply absorbing story containing graphic details describing how vicious the Cali Godfathers were to their victims, as well as their entrepreneurial approach to the drug trade and real estate. Chris and Dave faced many life-threatening situations, and shared their concerns and fears. They proved how brave, smart, and witty they could be, despite the circumstances. Every page I turned highlighted their dedication and professionalism in doing the dangerous job they loved. Part of Chris Feistl and Dave Mitchell's story was told in Season 3 of the acclaimed Netflix series, *Narcos: Rise of a New Empire*. There was so much more content that I wanted to include in this review, but it would become a lengthy essay. I encourage you to read



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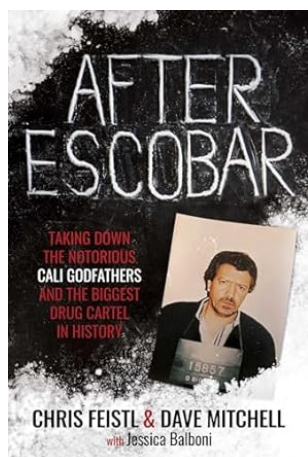


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After Escobar. You won't regret it!



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Author Biography



Chris Feistl was a DEA Special Agent for twenty-six years, serving in diverse assignments throughout the US as well as twelve years in Colombia, South America, where he investigated major drug cartels that were supplying tons of cocaine and heroin destined for the US. Starting as a new agent in Miami, he finished his career as an Assistant Special Agent in Charge in Phoenix in 2014.

Chris has been a frequent guest on television documentaries and true crime podcasts regarding the Cali cartel. He was portrayed in eighty episodes of a Spanish-language series entitled En la Boca del Lobo, as well as in Season 3 of Netflix's hit series Narcos. He has also appeared in several other television projects, shows, and radio programs.

Chris has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the DEA Administrator's Award of Honor (DEA's highest honor), and four Distinguished Service Medals from the Colombian government.