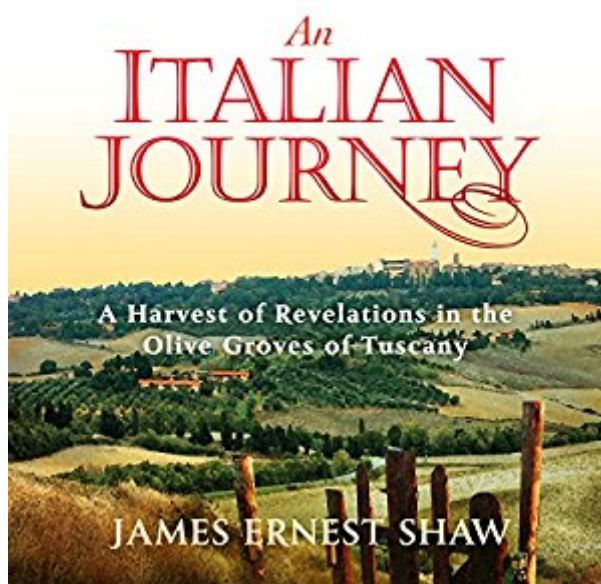


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An Italian Journey: A Harvest Of Revelations In The Olive Groves Of Tuscany: A Pretty Girl, Seven Tuscan Farmers, And A Roberto Rossellini Film: Bella Scoperta



Synopsis

An adventure of the heart in the mold of literature's classic spiritual journeys. It began with a girl. Then it was Italian food. After that it was books and discovering that even Mark Twain had fallen for Italy. E. M. Forster was smitten too: "Love and understand the Italians, for the people are more marvelous than the land." What is it about Italy and Italians? Italian movies immortalize the mystique. Fellini called it *La Dolce Vita*. Tornatore's *Cinema Paradiso* took James Shaw back to the sweet memories of his childhood and the Italian family who operated the hometown theater. And just like in the movie, young James had an Alfredo who, by example, taught him about serving people. James learned that Italians don't feel they're special. Luigi Barzini, author of *The Italians*, repeatedly asked, "Why are we the way we are?" and found no conclusive answer. But James was convinced there was a reason why the Renaissance was born in Tuscany and Italy has given the world Saint Francis, Michelangelo, da Vinci, Galileo, and now Benigni, whose film, *Life Is Beautiful*, showed the world that the Italian zest for living can even make a heaven of a hell. And so, after a lifetime of thinking about Italy, James became convinced that the way to find out why Italians are the way they are would be to eat with them at their kitchen tables. Day after day he picked their olives, and the Italians began treating him like family. And James began seeing their unique human quality that attracts people to Italy and keeps pulling them back again and again. But the story doesn't end in the olive groves of Tuscany. To discover the heart of Italian life, James had to travel back to World War II Italy. *An Italian Journey* will inspire you to follow your passions, your enthusiasms, to your own beautiful discoveries. *Bella Scoperta!*

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

So, there I am in Tuscany, having paid for this book on my Kindle, thinking it would be a wonderful companion on the trip. For the first couple of chapters, it is, although the simplistic writing hovers at the fifth grade level. But I put up with it because, after all, I'm in Italy! He's in Italy! Then I notice the phrases "thanking the Lord" and "thanking god" start to creep into the narrative. I keep reading...after all, the man explains that he survived a terrible accident in his 30s. Who am I to judge him for turning to religion, although I didn't expect that to be the topic of a travel memoir... Plus, he's biking through Tuscany, working on farms...what a great story...right?Unfortunately, Mr. Shaw does not seem to share my predilection for refraining from judging others. Here's where it starts to get funky: "Feel good government aid is hard to be against, but the time may be coming when bureaucrats won't [sic] have to see the errors of their ways - that by paying money for kids born out of wedlock, they are encouraging the bastardization of America, of Italy" (loc 1351). I read on, thinking that perhaps this was a minor preachy moment that would pass. Nope. "I was thinking that giving extra money to single mothers discourages marriages, pure and simple. If we as a society dangle the carrot, should we be surprised that so many women take it?" (loc 1356) I keep reading from pure disbelief that this is in a book about "An Italian Journey". And then, he says to Pietro, "I just read that forty percent of the babies born in the United States are to unwed mothers", (loc 1360) RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE OLDER SINGLE MOTHER WHO IS HIS HOST. Wait...it gets better...

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