

My Home Sweet Rome: Living (and Loving) in the Eternal City

Sari Gilbert



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It's a nice place to visit but would you really want to live there? Sari Gilbert, who has lived for close to 40 years in what many have called the Eternal City, answers with a resounding "yes"—but it's a "yes... but". A native New Yorker who moved to Rome after finishing graduate school and then became a journalist, Gilbert's book "My Home Sweet Rome: Living (and Loving) in the Eternal City" describes what life is really like in the Italian capital: to sum it up, "fascinating, and delightful, but not at all easy". Many foreigners have moved to Italy, but relatively few have decided to stay on for the rest of their lives, unless they are married and have put down family roots. Gilbert uses her own particular status — as an attractive and single woman, as a journalist for major U.S. and Italian news organs, and as an American — as a magnifying lens to examine the various aspects of Italian and Roman life. She gives us an unveiled view of the country's politics, its stifling bureaucracy, its contradictory social customs, everyday concerns and gastronomical habits. Gilbert also takes us through the less pleasant phases of recent Italian history: Mafia, terrorism, the assassination attempt on the life of the first (but not the last) non-Italian Pope, the meteoric rise of Silvio Berlusconi. In the process, we learn what it is like to work in Italy as both a foreign correspondent and a local reporter for Italian newspapers. Even more intriguing perhaps, Gilbert sheds light on what love affairs are really like with Italian men, be they average Giuseppes or high-placed movers and shakers.

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