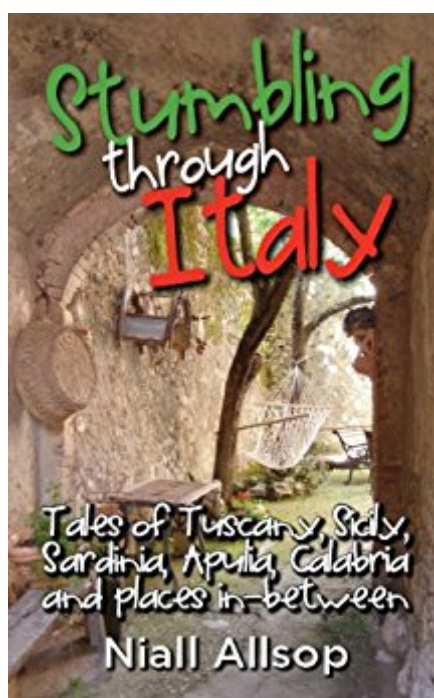


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# Stumbling Through Italy: Tales Of Tuscany, Sicily, Sardinia, Apulia, Calabria And Places In-between



## Synopsis

In September 1999 Niall Allsop and his wife Kay flew to Pisa and stepped onto Italian soil for the first time. Within six months they returned and thereafter they visited Italy at least twice a year, usually to the most southerly provinces of Apulia and Calabria and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. They knew they holidayed differently to other people and in Italy, despite the lack of language, they found themselves somehow drawn into people's lives and homes; they had experiences and encounters that seemed to pass others by. *Stumbling through Italy* is the irreverent chronicle of their Italian travels and the many remarkable and colorful people they met there up to the summer of 2008 ... when, finally reconciled to the inevitable, they returned to Italy one last time. Which, as they say, is another story. Also includes chapters on the idiosyncrasies of the Italian language and the Italian driving experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Although I thoroughly enjoyed the stories, especially the author's love of Siracusa (where I was born), it was so annoying to be constantly confronted by spelling, grammatical, or just mindless

typographical errors. Didn't anyone edit this book or simply run a spell-check? In this day and age, it's just inexcusable and shows a real lack of respect for the reader. I just ordered the follow-up book, *Scratching the Toe of Italy*, because there are so many dangling stories left unexplained at the end of this one, but I hope it's better proofread.

This book felt like I was with Niall and his wife on their many sojourns from home (England) to Italy from 1999 until moving to Italy in 2006. Niall Allsop is a tremendous writer. I felt like I was enjoying very interesting and enlightening history lessons from Apulia, Sicily, and Sardinia. I really enjoyed the information on the ancient Greek and Roman theatre ruins, the author and his wife at one point attended a Greek play written in the early BC's in the Greek theatre/ruins built in something like 5 or 6 BC, that sent chills of amazement (and some jealousy) up my spine. I very much enjoyed the history and current descriptions of Pompeii, and the picture Niall painted of the views from high places and the Calabria. Allsop and his wife were so into the people of Italy, people are depicted with the love and respect that is due them. Many friendships were formed and maintained over the years, and we are privy to the kindness and graciousness of the wonderful spirit of not only Italian folks but other travelers the Allsops became acquainted with over their years of travel. They traveled leisurely, slowly, allowing themselves to savor many places, people and sensations to the extent that many of us do not do on our vacations. This kind of traveling makes for wonderful memories. I have a feeling Niall was a great note keeper, a journal writer keeping note of all the wonderful details of the things they learned, saw, tasted, smelled and felt, records of niceties their many Italian friends did for them and wonderful times spent together with people. This book is not a travel guide, it is a record of precious memories, beautiful experiences. A precious book of a life well lived and much loved, a rare and wonderful journey.

A trip to Italy is a great experience. However, documenting the trip for others to read does not make for the most exciting reading. The book is basically a log of the writer and his wife's several trips to Italy. Some of the descriptions of the towns and the Italian people will be of interest to Italy lovers. He and his wife sound like wonderful people as they make many friends along the way while barely speaking any Italian. He does have a nice writing style, but the content is lacking excitement. There is no plot, no love story, no crime to solve, no drama, nothing to hold one's interest.

In his book, Neill Allsop takes the reader along on his ten year trip through the southern half of Italy. He and his wife Kay, who had "holidayed" in Portugal for many years, wanted a change of scene.

While sitting at a table in Capetti's Ristorante in Bath, England (their hometown) looking at a map of Spain, they are noticed by the restaurant's owner Vic. Allsop writes: "I'm not really quite sure why we chose Spain, let alone northern Spain, but all thoughts of touring the Basque country were soon dispelled when Vic took one look at our intended destination, rolled his eyes in disgust, unhooked a lopsided map of Italy from the wall and plonked it on the table. His jabbing finger said, 'This is where you should go'. And we did." The rest is an entertaining and very humorous travel narrative of the couple's twice yearly visits to Italy over a ten year period. They fell in love with the country, its food, its culture (Did I mention the food?), and its people...all wonderfully told by the author. The book really makes the reader want to go to Italy just to meet and get to know Italians just like the ones Neill and Kay met. Having been to Italy myself, I knew exactly what Neill was talking about. The Italians I met there were very friendly to me. And, like the author and Kay, my wife and I fell head over heels in love with Italy. Unfortunately, being an American and living several thousand miles away, I am not able to vacation there two times each year due to distance and very limited funds. STUMBLING THROUGH ITALY is definitely the next best thing to being there. (Highly recommended. 5 Stars) I also recommend Chris Harrison's HEAD OVER HEEL: SEDUCED BY SOUTHERN ITALY.

Interesting and humorous accounts of a British couple's frequent trips to Italy's less-trampled locations. This is a must-read for people who have visited the major Italian cities, churches, and museums...and are ready for a more intimate experience. Emphasis on quality time with the local people, visiting small towns and restaurants, etc. I downloaded this book to my Kindle and read it on the flight over to N. Italy. Descriptions of their ristorante experiences had me salivating and ready to start eating upon our arrival! Note on typos as alleged by some others: Didn't see 'em in the Kindle version....or maybe I was enjoying the content so much that I didn't get hung up on the format!

This was truly a well written book which transported you to some of the hidden gems of this incredible country!

Stumbling through Italy: Tales of Tuscany, Sicily, Sardinia, Apulia, Calabria and places in-between what a book, Having not long returned from southern Italy, this made me very sad that I hadn't read this book before I left. To be able to do it this way must have been an experience on its own. I could actually see the places as I was reading this! It's not about the tourist hotspots or the churches, it's about the people and how they live. It's funny because you can just about hear them

speak. I really loved this book and would highly recommend it to other readers. I hope we get to hear the next step of their adventure when they move.

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