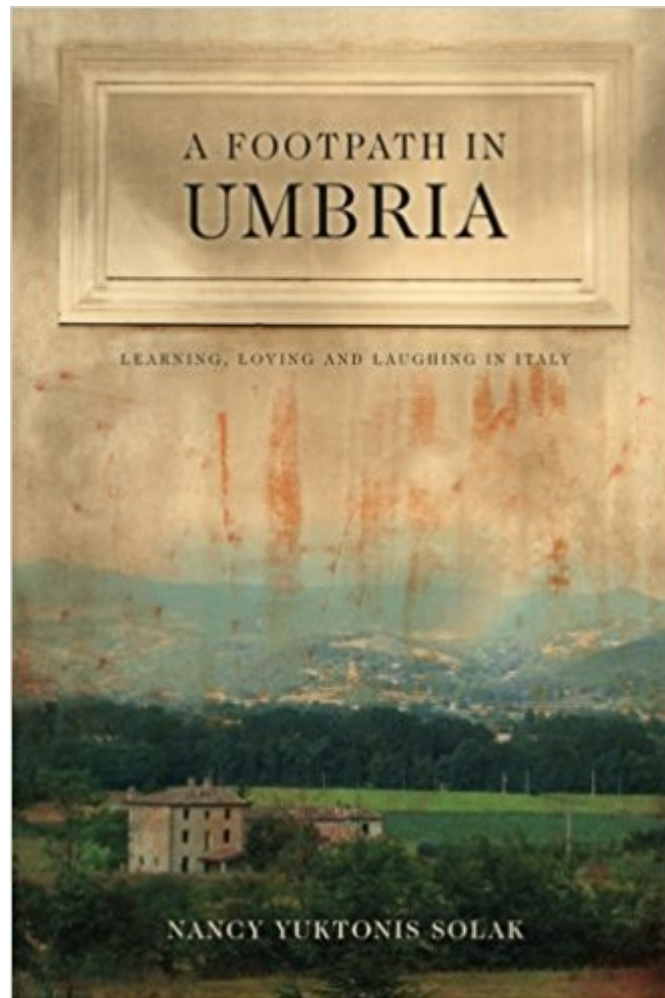




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# **A Footpath In Umbria: Learning, Loving & Laughing In Italy**



## Synopsis

Being a homebody, Nancy never would've spent a year in Italy had it not been for her husband's wanderlust. The couple didn't go there to buy or restore a house or to heal a trauma from the past. As ordinary boomers, they simply wanted to experience "The Dream" - to live in Italy. They settled down in traditional Umbria, just east of Tuscany. Constrained by a strict budget, their experience took on challenges as diverse as getting accustomed to the vagaries of Italian appliances to gathering their own wood. Transportation was by train, bus, bicycle or footpath. What neither of them knew when they began was how the adventure would challenge their habits, upbringing, and outlook on life. Most surprising of all was how the experience would challenge their relationship to each other. *A Footpath in Umbria* is a celebration of the joys and revelations to be found by changing venues, whether it's living in another country or simply venturing cross town.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nancy Yuktonis Solak is an award-winning writer and editor. She and her husband, Rich, live in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. They have two grown children.

I found this book to be more of a form of therapy for the author than a travel narrative. It does take place in Italy, but there was something about it that didn't grab me the way a few others have: Niall Allsop's two humorous books about his travels around that country-STUMBLING THROUGH ITALY and SCRATCHING THE TOE OF ITALY-and another "fish out of water" narrative by Australian Chris Harrison entitled HEAD OVER HEEL: SEDUCED BY SOUTHERN ITALY. Too, I was surprised

and disappointed that there was not much in the book about food. Life in Italy revolves around two primary things, the mid-day meal and family. This is where the other books I named above made my armchair travels around Italy so much more interesting and enjoyable. I felt as though I knew the people Allsop and Harrison met who became close friends during those lengthy meals they shared. That is what was needed and missing from this book. I never got to know, and like, the people Solak mentioned. Perhaps *A FOOTPATH IN UMBRIA* is suited for someone who, like Nancy Yuktonis Solak, struggles with anxiety and depression and wants to find out how she was able to cope with her unhappiness. As she writes at the end of the book, "I'm old enough now to know that I can change in an instant. What takes so long is deciding to change. Become 'willing' to change." 3 stars

I liked this book. It was well written and enjoyable to read. Ms Solak goes into good detail about why she and her husband decided to spend a year in Italy and how they were able to do it. They had a strict budget, figured out how to have their house looked after in the US, her husband was newly retired and she took a leave of absence from her job. I liked all the details about daily life and the differences with her US life. She also writes about her emotional state and how this year in Italy affects her and her marriage, which to me is much more interesting than yet another memoir about food and wine. Read this if you are traveling to Italy or thinking about staying there longer.

The author never really embraces Italy or its culture. This book is about her personal "growth," and seems trite. Disappointing that the characters ate their American breakfasts of oatmeal. There was little to no discussion about food, wine, art, towns & cities, or anything that makes Italy Italian. Don't bother with this one - i found it to be quite annoying.

We are going to Tuscany this next month so I wanted to read as much as possible about the people and the customs of the region. Besides being informative the book was entertaining as well. I caught a glimpse of the generosity and hospitality of the Italians. I was especially surprised and pleased to read of the Author's experience in the hospital after breaking her leg. I think all travelers have that fear that something will happen and the worst thing would be to go into a foreign hospital. Although it was different than our American hospitals, she received good, quality care. I would recommend it to anyone who is going to Italy for the first time.

Such a joy to read this book!! During the past two summers, I have studied Italian in the Umbrian town of Todi. Each time I return to Todi, I have such amazing experiences. Reading this book,

bought back to me such wonderful memories. Nancy captures, in her book, the warmth of the wonderful people of Umbria. It was such a pleasure to read a book about regular people who went over to Italy for a year. Prior to reading *A Footpath in Umbria*, I have read accounts of actors living in Italy in their villas or refurbished homes....not in my price range at all. Now after reading this wonderful book, I feel that I can live there for a few months. Grazie mille, Nancy!!

I liked that both authors took turns giving their perspectives (and being honest and vulnerable about their process). They didn't hide any struggles and gladly shared their wonderful experiences getting to really know their neighbors and acquaintances. I appreciated their curiosity and self reflection on American vs Italian ways of living. Having thought all my life about 'the perfect place to live' I liked being included in their thought processes about that as well. I really liked this book for me and will share with like minded friends.

I thoroughly enjoyed this great adventure that was experienced over the twelve months in Italy!! We have lived in Italy only for 4 months and also lived through many such experiences! How wonderful to appreciate the day events both good and not so good! It makes us realise that life is wonderful and very interesting without all the modern ways of daily life. Bravi!! I was there with you all the way! Mille Grazie!

Mildly interesting if you love Italy, otherwise you can probably pass. I thought it might have some helpful tidbits as one reviewer mentioned, or some marital introspection as another mentioned. Not the case. The few observations were so fleeting that you could miss them. I think those reviewers were digging for content.

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