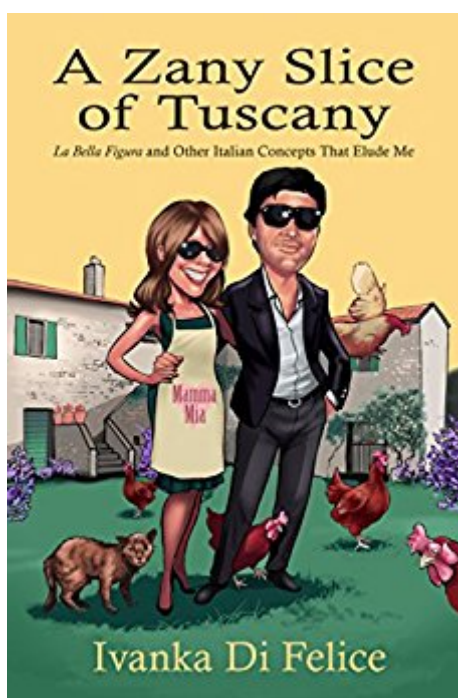


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A Zany Slice Of Tuscany: La Bella Figura And Other Italian Concepts That Elude Me



Synopsis

Taking up where *A Zany Slice of Italy* leaves off, New York Times best-selling author wannabe Ivanka Di Felice offers us more hilarious adventures in her beloved Tuscany. The tenacity with which Mrs. Di Felice still chases her dream is remarkable. She yearns for the glamorous life of Italy in pictures; meanwhile, sheâ€™s the poster child for â€œforty is the new sixty.â€• She dreams of fine restaurants and scintillating conversations, yet finds herself among a cast of Seinfeld-like characters. And while the rest of Italy lives it, the Slow Movement eludes herâ€”ironically, when spending time with relatives in their eighties. The authorâ€™s mother once said, â€œPerhaps you are not living your dream but rather the one that mischievous bella Italia had up her sleeve for youâ€”a dream that demands a full range of emotions daily.â€• Knowing how happy Ivanka and her husband are, despite life not always delivering what they wanted, her mother wisely added, â€œThis shows that our dreams are not always the best for us.â€• *A Zany Slice of Tuscany* not only gives us an insiderâ€™s look at the many beautiful moments of living abroad, but also transports us into a rarely seen Italia. Funny stories are recounted with wit and affection and donâ€™t leave you feeling negative, but instead as if youâ€™ve finally lived . . . in Italy.

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Customer Reviews

In April I discovered this author's first book (A ZANY SLICE OF ITALY.) It's one of the few times in my life that I finished a book and then started at the beginning and read it again. It's just so hilarious and charming and eccentric and fascinating. When I learned that she'd written a follow-up book, I was hesitant. I've read some great first books with horribly disappointing sequels. You've heard the saying, "We all have a book in us." No one ever says, "And a sequel." There's a reason for that. In fact, this second book is even better than the first. Not only are there plenty of belly laughs, but you get real insight into Italian life by a woman who's spent a lot of years there with a lot of Italian in-laws. At first she was stunned by the vibrancy and intensity and (sometimes) idiocy of Italian life. Not as lived by most ex-pats, but as the natives themselves zestfully attack the business of living. La dolce vida is lazy days sipping wine on the Riveria, not a bunch of octogenarians (and the occasional nonagenarian) hitting the ground running at dawn and racing through the day with break-neck intensity. Thank God for those long, frequent meals and that obligatory afternoon nap or the poor woman wouldn't have lived long enough to write the first book. Now, the first shock has worn off. She'll NEVER really get used to her husband's relatives' reckless driving, their love of even the worst wines, and their need to eat enormous meals five times a day, but at least it no longer takes her by surprise. It's part of the fun of living Italian. Italians have a genius for being happy, even under conditions that would cause an American to scream bloody murder. Why are they happy? Because they're Italian and they know deep in their hearts that their wine is superior, their food more delicious, their women more beautiful, and their countryside more breath-taking than any other country. Let the English have their wry, self-deprecating humor. Let the Russians enjoy their gloominess. Let the Americans whine and complain. Italians have nothing to be modest or unhappy about and they proudly refuse to fake it. This book is a series of stories that can be hilarious, touching, or bizarre or all three at the same time. Each one is a parable of the Italian mindset as the author has come to understand and appreciate it. Other ex-pats gush about gorgeous villas, fabulous food, and chic styles. This author celebrates the spirit of Italians and their effortless success at doing that which is such a struggle for the rest of us - just enjoying life. Not perfect life, but the precious one-time-around-and-you're-out existence that most of us waste in worry and over-work. And the best part is that you don't have to move to Italy to "live Italian." It's an attitude, not real estate. Italians never had a better press agent than this author and I hope they appreciate her. Or at least not run over her when she's trying to cross the street.

I really enjoyed reading this book. I'm an American married to my Italian wife who was born in Italy. She came to the US with her family when she was sixteen years old. I have experienced much if not all of her funny passages in this book, some of it laugh out loud. The Italian way of life is a bit different, but in many cases better in my opinion. This book explains a lot of it. I highly recommend it. The only problem I had was that it ended.

"A Zany Slice of Tuscany" is a welcome continuation of "A Zany Slice of Italy", and just as enjoyable to read. Ivanka DiFelice has a knack for story telling and clear descriptions of what is going on around her. She writes with a lovely sense of humor, even when things don't go as well as expected for her. She is a charming writer and this book was one of those "can't put it down because I want to see what is going to happen next" kind of books. If you ever wondered what it would be like to live in Italy, this is a must read. As we go through everyday life with Ivanka, we see that Italy is not all glamor and vespas as seen in movies. I was surprised at the level of difficulty to get simple tasks accomplished there such as buying an appliance or having work done on one's home. As a first generation Italian American (my father came to the US from Abruzzo), I was surprised at the amount of dislike and distrust of foreigners from certain countries that exists there. But the big families, and the closeness of the family that was described in this book is something that we really are lacking in the United States and would do good to emulate. They have the right idea over there.

I loved reading this book. It is a more humorous way of looking at an expat's daily adventures living in Tuscany. The author's style is easy to get into and is a book that I can happily read a small chapter or two of before bedtime. I needed something to read to unwind with after a hard day, something that would leave me with a smile on my face. This book is it. I have now ordered the other book A Zany Slice of Italy and will take it away with me on my next holiday...that's if I can resist the urge to read it beforehand!

The sequel to A Zany Slice of Italy, here Ivanka describes David and her adventures in the two towns in which they've lived in Tuscany. The in-laws are still making their presence felt even though they are in Abruzzo, several hours away, and we get to go on some sightseeing tours with Ivanka and David when friends come to visit. Di Felice writes beautifully and very humorously about their activities, but the icing on the cake was her summing up at the end, where she observes that expat living is a state of mind, and much the same benefits can be enjoyed by slowing down, enjoying

good food and wine, and refusing to participate in the rat race wherever you are. Excellent point and one that should be stressed!

I liked this one right from the beginning, not that I didn't like the first one, but in the first one the people upset me greatly until half way through the book I realized I was falling in love with them, including the chickens. I now look at chickens differently, and I wish I had one, and I WOULD give it a name, no I would never kill it, I would let the poor thing die a natural death and then give it to someone else to bury it for me since I would be very distraught as I was in this book. Poor little thing.....thanks for the recipes...
Just one correction for the website, it is "salviaeramerino.com" The letter 'e' was left out. I was once again surprised when I finished the book realizing that I have nothing left to read for amusement now. Please tell me another book is on the way! Please! Pretty please.....with mascarpone cheese on top?!?!?

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