



An Italian Holiday

Maeve Haran

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Sunshine, warmth, lemon blossom . . .

Springtime in glorious Southern Italy can go to your head. Especially if you are escaping an overbearing husband, the embarrassingly public loss of your company, an interfering mother who still tries to run your life or the pain of a husband's affair with a girl young enough to be his daughter.

As the Italian sun ripens the lemons in the groves that tumble down the hillsides and the Mediterranean dazzles beneath them, assertive Angela, extrovert Sylvie, unconfident Claire and mousy Monica find burgeoning friendship and begin to blossom in quite unexpected ways.

Packed with memorable characters - from the acid-tongued Grand Old Man of Modern Art who lives next door - to the aspiring gigolo who thinks nothing of a forty year age gap, Maeve Haran's new novel is a witty and entertaining reminder of why going a little mad in the sun can sometimes be exactly what you need.

An Italian Holiday Details

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Author : Maeve Haran

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From Reader Review An Italian Holiday for online ebook

Rachel says

Reading the back of the book you would never know that the main characters were going to be 60 plus! It was a fun read and the characters were quite likeable. Sometimes it seemed like they behaved like much younger people!

Lydia Bailey says

Find yourself transported back to the Gulf of Naples via a group of 'post menopausal harpies' all with life issues they need a very special holiday to work through. I found the start of this rather confusing & the ending a little farcical & the writing a little laboured at times but on the whole, it was a thoroughly enjoyable read & I particularly enjoyed all the evocative descriptions of Italy itself. I find myself now browsing holiday websites ;)

Thebooktrail says

A solid, heartbreaking and fascinating read..

Travel to the locations in the novel: Booktrail it to Italy

This brought sunshine and smiles into my life! A novel about a mysterious house on the Amalfi coast that four strangers are headed towards for some R and R always gets my reading radar working overtime but this was just a joy from start to finish! Ah Angela even organising the breakfast on the first day got me laughing, Sylvie with her usual dress palette of vermillion to aubergine, Claire on her search for confidence and Monica mooching around in the background at first...well these very different women truly blossomed in the story and I felt instantly one of their little group. Heck I'd even joined their famous Lanzarella Women's Cooperative by the end of it (wait till you hear about that – that's a chuckle)

I imagined Maeve to be chuckling and laughing drinking limoncello whilst writing this novel for the fun splashes of colour and Italian words she sprinkled in to the mix, the sights of the whitewashed houses on the hill all calm followed by one character humping her suitcase up the mountain was just the perfect mix of Italian paradise and Brits abroad. There's certainly enough foreign flavour to get those taste buds drooling as well – I do like the sound of burrata cheese!

An Italian holiday is just that – a holiday with four new friends and some men folk drafted in for good measure. What these women find at the house they call The Siren is yours to discover but it's a cute and funny ramble on the hillside, looking out into the lemon groves and the promise of a better tomorrow.

Best to appreciate this novel with a glass of something yourself, with a hearty Italian (make of that what you will) whilst wearing ' a hug in a dress' -and have yourself that una vacanza italiana? It's a Done Deal ?

Tripfiction says

Novel set in Southern ITALY (Love, Life and Lemons in the sun)

Four women (strangers to each other) get away from it all by accepting a holiday in their mutual friend's beautiful villa in Italy. A warm, amusing and cheerful novel.

Four "older" women are the main characters in this wonderful book:

Claire – a caterer, not only for her business but also for her extended family

Angela – a successful business woman

Sylvie – a flamboyant house designer

Monica – a widow with an overbearing mother

They don't know each other, but through a mutual friend, grab at the opportunity to escape their everyday lives for a holiday (wrapped up as a business trip) in an idyllic villa in Italy. They assume they will be alone, so are surprised to find each other there, and their different characters cause some amusing clashes.

As their stay lengthens, they discover that the villa staff appear to be up to something, some of their new found Italian friends appear to be not at all as they seem, but most of all they all fall in love with the villa and its ambience. Along the way they begin to like each other.

Lemons and lemon groves are central to the story, as is sunshine, friendship and an appreciation of the simple things in life. Mealtimes are mostly taken on the sunny terrace, and the appreciation of good food (and glasses of Franciacorta sparkling wine) is a recurring theme.

Set initially in London, with some interesting historical details, the story quickly moves to a fictional (I assume) place in Southern Italy. An overall glimpse of customs and ways of life is given, but this is more a book about appreciating differences and opening your eyes to what is around you, than a deep look at the Italian lifestyle.

This is quite a long book (458 pages), but it is an easy and involving read. I felt I got to know the main characters, and certainly fell in love with the villa and its surroundings. There are some wonderful surprises in the book and I enjoyed the positive, often humourous, style of the book. Lovely!

Anne says

This book was absolutely brilliant. I loved it from the start to the end. I could relate to a few of the women involved and as I was reading it , I was THERE with them . I have been to many places in Northern Italy and

I adore it there but never too the South. This area is popping up in many ways in my life at the moment . A great read.

Rachel Scott says

Took a while to get into it but quite enjoyable in the end.

Liz Chapman says

Well done to Maeve Haran for a book with people in it who are 60+ and showing that they are not in their slippers and going gaga ! The setting in Italy is lovely and I can almost smell the flowers and lemon blossom and hear the sea. It brought back lovely memories of a holiday in Sorento . I liked the fact that sex for the over 60s came into the story and the fact that at retirement age couples do look at each other differently especially when they have been working and leading almost separate lives. The old story that the man looks for a younger model and the old harridan of a mother didn't seem to be to cliche and although the ending was predictable it was satisfying. I would read another one of Maeve's books.

Kirstie says

A very light hearted read

Great to have a Book based on ladies over 60s but as with most chick lit I just feel myself being patronized by the author slightly.

As expected it ends up nice and neat but the added bonus with this book is the beautiful setting that is very well described making you want to nip off to Italy

Treena Beavers says

Fun easy reading, great characters set in some beautiful scenery.

The description of the bustling markets, lemon groves and fantastic home and ornate gardens made me feel like I was sat at the next table watching the antics.

Stephanie says

Sunshine, warmth, the scent of lemons.....

Springtime in glorious southern Italy can go to your head. Especially if you're escaping not just miserable weather but an overbearing husband, the embarrassingly public loss of your company, an interfering mother who still tries to run your life or the pain of a husband's affair with a girl young enough to be his daughter.

As the sun ripens the lemons in the groves that tumble down the hillsides and the Mediterranean dazzles

beneath them, bossy Angela, extrovert Sylvie, unconfident Claire and mousy Monica leave their trapped lives behind, and begin to blossom in quite unexpected ways.

Packed with memorable characters, AN ITALIAN HOLIDAY is a witty and entertaining reminder of why going a little mad in the sunshine can sometimes be exactly what you need.

Karen Lewis says

Fabulous fun in the sun

Absolutely full to the brim of fizz, this is a beautifully written picture of pure escapism. Sun ,sea and a touch of scandalous scoundrels. I totally loved it .

Elisabeth says

Four very different English women find themselves thrown together in Southern Italy in a gorgeous villa just South of Naples. Tycoon Angela, caterer Claire, interior designer Sylvia and librarian Monica all have very different reasons for wanting to escape England (and it's not just the rotten English weather) all find themselves bound for 'Le Sirenuse' beside the dazzling Mediterranean Sea.

At first things between the four women are quite tense but as they settle down they begin to realise that they all have something to learn off each other. As their time at the villa goes on they become friends and realise that they make a good team.

Through ups and downs, disappointment and romance the women develop a strong bond between themselves and discover things about themselves that they would never have done if they had stayed in England.

A perfect beach read set in a fictional Italian town on the Amalfi coast. It certainly took me back to the place where I had recently spent an idyllic holiday.

Fans of Katie Fforde, Lucy Diamond, Carole Matthews and Milly Johnson would love this book.

Bev Taylor says

sometimes u have to go thru the clouds to reach the sun

meet 4 completely different women. bossy angela, a driven businesswoman who is married to her business only to have it sold from underneath her. extrovert sylvie, a house designer with a flamboyant taste - and an errant husband who she found with his arse in the air above a young intern. unconfident claire, a caterer who feels unappreciated by her husband and has her son and daughter in law living with them whilst they r flat hunting. finally, mousy monica, now a widow and under the thumb of her mother

they r each offered a place in a villa in italy by steve who owns it to escape their problems and lick their wounds. what they end up doing surpasses all of their expectations and proves that going a little mad in the sunshine can sometimes be exactly what u need

a wise and witty novel with great characterisation that shows u r never too old to follow your dreams

everything way too co-incidental but just go with it! u will find yourself rooting for them!

bev

Bubblestarlet says

I really enjoyed this book. I got all caught up in the plot and characters lives... and the setting in Italy probably helped too! Was one of those when you are always keen to get back to it and are sad when it had ended. I have not read any of this author's work before, but based on this one, I certainly would read more

Angelica says

I rather enjoyed this. A good beach read, very much in the tradition of The Wedding Officer: A Novel of Culinary Seduction or Under the Tuscan Sun or those innumerable books about women who go abroad and find themselves.

Plot wasn't great, characters were generally okay, but there was a lot of fun, vivid description, moments (that naked nymph in the fountain scene was a hoot), and a lot, a lot of heart.
