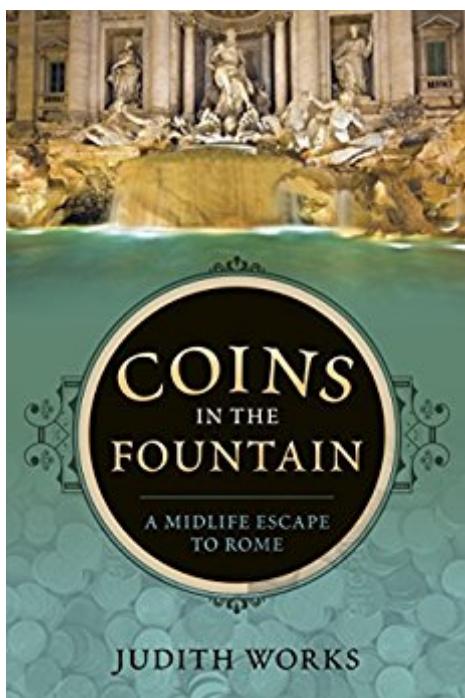


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# Coins In The Fountain: A Midlife Escape To Rome



## **Synopsis**

With middle age looming, Judith Works decided it was time for a change. But after graduating from law school at the age of forty-seven, she still faced the question “What now?” Casual conversations about far-off travels with husband Glenn became a reality with the offer of a dream job at the United Nations in Rome, Italy. *Coins in the Fountain* brings to life the challenges of acclimating to the beautiful and chaotic ancient city of Rome. Works shares her struggles of learning the arcane rules and folkways of the UN while Glenn begins his valiant effort to cook Italian-style, as they both endeavor to embrace *la dolce vita*. With an extraordinary count and countess for friends, dogs in the doctor’s office, snakes and unexploded bombs on the golf course, along with a sinking sailboat, the unexpected was always just around the corner. Through wit, wry humor, and enticing descriptions of food and travel adventures, Works takes you on a journey into the heart of what it is truly like to live in the Eternal City. According to Roman lore, if you toss a coin over your shoulder into the famous Trevi Fountain, the gods will grant you a return trip. When it was time for them to leave, Works made that hopeful toss of a coin and her wish was granted.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Thoroughly enjoyable read! The unusually fresh and sharp detail together with the fast-paced story and historical background to everyday sights and experiences is a complete delight. References to and quotations from poets and philosophers add an underlying spice to this story of middle-aged, first-time expats who have discoveries and disasters galore. The excitement of the deep deliciousness of a European life is front stage, the characters met in the course of it are a full stage show; the reader is THERE all the way through this Italian adventure in lifestyle change. The suggestions of music and wine to accompany one's reading are whimsical but apt and set a sensuous tone for a story of profound shift where only superficial change had been the original goal. I learned a lot, and just enjoyed "being there." Rome and Italian life are one enveloping delight, but the characters and mores of the UN life are an unexpected fountain of gurgling oddity. The essence of the expat life is there, the life of the true expat rather than the enthralled visitor. Ahh, somebody gets it, I thought. Very easy to read in one sitting, but even if the vigor and fire call for a break, the eagerness to get back to reading stays strong. Just wish the Kindle app indicated page numbers!!Grammar was a perfect delight, even if a blue pencil would have helped elsewhere on occasion. But this is minor next to the enormous pleasure of reading the book. I want to stop writing a review and go back and read it again!!

This book is a charming, yet thought-provoking memoir of a couple's mid-life move to Rome. Unlike some other stories by foreigners about life in Italy, Coins in the Fountain doesn't shy away from the gritty and dismaying side of Italian life. There are plenty of lovely lunches under the grape vines, but also destroyed furniture, car accidents and a shocking near-death experience in the Rome subway. There are ancient ruins and quaint villas, but also Fascist architecture and a friend's escape out of an apartment balcony. Coins in the Fountain paints a vivid picture of expatriate Italian life; the fabulous food, fascinating history and eccentric characters. There are also several intriguing sections on the couple's travels in Europe and the wife's business trips to destinations such as Cambodia and Ethiopia and the challenges she faced reconciling the deprivation there with the abundance of life in Italy. Be careful about reading this book, as it will make you want to quit your job and board the next flight on Alitalia!

Imagine embarking on an adventure that most of us only dream of? What intrepid courage does it take to pack up your comfortable life as you know it, travel halfway around the world and begin a ten-year odyssey in a foreign land? This story combines humour, poignancy, and adventure woven into the everyday challenges of adapting to a new culture, language and social order, in both a new

home and workplace. The author describes travels throughout the Mediterranean so vividly that the reader feels you are there. There is a real sense of the juxtaposition of the beauty found in the seat of classical antiquity with today's pleasures found in good food, wine, fashion and art. Intertwined is the account of incredible experiences while working for UN organizations; we are treated to a glimpse into the demands that must be met to deliver basic survival assistance to address poverty in the world. *Coins in the Fountain* is both an informative and an entertaining book that piques your interest from the first page.

Wow, this is such a delightful book. A marvelous adventure, great story, so packed with fascinating information, yet told with an incredible sense of humor, sometimes tongue-in-cheek (when not munching on an Italian delicacy), always enjoyable. I got lost frequently reading on my Kindle Fire, and ended up not knowing if the page was familiar because I had internalized the information provided, or simply because I loved each segment and longed to read more. I adored the humility of Judith's first time travels to unique and unusual places, as well as the reverence for what Italy has to offer - which is so much, and, too, the modesty of discovery and getting familiar with (not to say conquering) the previously unknown. Having spent more limited amounts of time in Rome and Italy myself, I yearned to repeat what I had done, and strike out anew on an adventure either culinary or historical or even hysterical... and use Judith's commentary and humor to guide me into fresh corners. How I love Italy, particularly the rural areas, and more so now that Judith Works has shared it all with me.

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