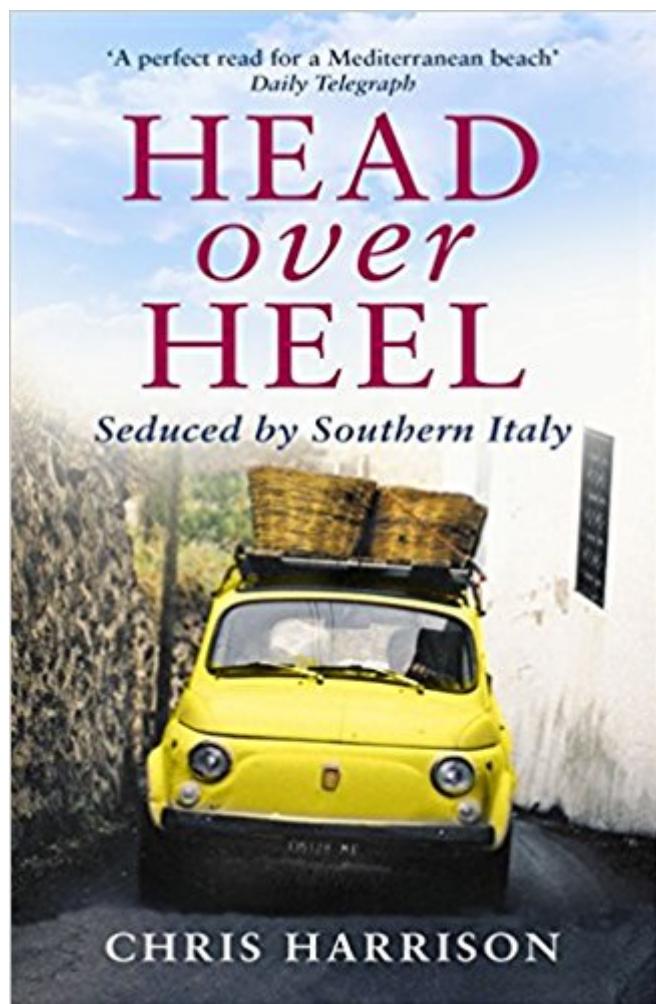


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# Head Over Heel: Seduced By Southern Italy



## Synopsis

WINNER OF THE GROLLO RUZZENE FOUNDATION PRIZEWhen Chris travelled from Sydney to Dublin, he never dreamed his life was about to change forever. There he meets Daniela - one L, smile as you say it to pronounce it correctly - and it's amore at first sight. Before he can say si, he's uprooted to follow her to her sun-kissed hometown of Andrano, Puglia, tucked in the heel of southern Italy. The whitewashed houses, olive groves and cobblestone lanes are beautiful, but soon Chris is getting to grips with everyday Italian life. There's infuriating bureaucracy, an anarchic road system and - biggest challenge of all - Daniela's mamma, who's determined to convert him to the Catholic faith and build an extension on her house where the couple might live *la dolce vita*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An intriguing book, very well written, well structured, entertaining and sometimes even challenging... a delightful and often humorous account of the author's evolving relationship with Italy as he comes to grips with everyday reality there... anecdotes provide both humour and vivid images of Italians and Italian life. *Judges of the Grollo Ruzzene Foundation Prize* This is a funny and touching tale about the cultural divide with a sweet and passionate love story at its heart. For all those who have ever had a brief holiday in Italy and said, 'You know, I could really live here,' read this and know that it may not be that easy. And for those who know Italy intimately and love her all the same, enjoy *Head Over Heel* and its taste of *la dolce vita*. *The Courier Mail* Harrison manages to get right under Italy's skin without stereotyping the people he meets and situations he finds himself in... Many have written books about their experiences living in foreign climes but few have done it as

entertainingly, beautifully and - surprisingly - romantically as Harrison does here. ©Sydney Morning Herald & Melbourne AgeDramatic, sensual and affectionately amusing, Head Over Heel is as good as a holiday. ©John Bell, The Bell Shakespeare Company

Chris Harrison is a London-based journalist and English teacher. He has written for many publications, including the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, The Courier Mail and Sports Illustrated. A keen sportsman, he is also a qualified aerobatics pilot. Head Over Heel was the winner of the Grollo Ruzzene Foundation Prize. Visit [www.chrisharrisonwriting.com](http://www.chrisharrisonwriting.com)

I love all of Italy. Its sameness and differences from region to region make it both interesting and challenging but always mesmerizing and fun. The author truly makes us feel the emotions of change, loving someone, and acceptance no matter where the experiences occur. The tale starts in the big northern city of Milan, but he especially expresses how deep the roots go in a small southern Italy town where he tries to fit in while falling in love with his future wife, her family and the inhabitants. The transition is exasperating at times while being adventurous, amusing and ultimately more fulfilling than originally anticipated. This book makes me want to return once again to the wonderful towns south of Naples where the people, places, food, wine, and incredible geography warms the heart and mellowes the soul. Bravo on telling this beautiful, true yet realistic story.

This ebook was an enjoyable read and I look forward to reading the second part which I understand is in the works. It's certainly a different portrayal of Italy compared to other authors who constantly talk about "la dolce vita" and everything sweet that Italy has to offer. In this book Chris Harrison is at times brutally blunt about the differences between Australia and Italy. It's for this reason that I only give four stars instead of five. At times I found it condescending that the author feels that Italy is not up to par. It's just that they do things differently compared to other countries like his. It's clear to see that the author will not make Italy his permanent home because it's just too different than the lifestyle that he was brought up in. I don't fault him for this, I have visited Italy enough times too that I would never move there for more than several years either. Having said this, I do recommend reading the book and I'll be buying the next one in his saga as I am interested to read what his final decision was that made him leave.

This caught my fancy because it was about Southern Italy -- these types of books always seem to be about Tuscany. I expected something really light and fluffy. But although it's definitely a book to

read on vacation or at the beach, it's really well written. Much of it is an amusing outsider's look at Italy, its attitudes and customs, but there are also poignant moments, too.

I could barely get to the end of this book. The author is so self absorbed that it is hard to care about his love interest or her family. He mixes Italian with English which gets lost in translation. More thought should have gone into describing the personality and appeal of Daniela.

I bought this book because I was going to stay a week in Puglia and knew almost nothing about the area. This book is delightful! He falls in love with a girl from a small town, then comes back to be with her, living in southern Italy and Milan. His descriptions are very engaging and some of them made me laugh out loud, they were so good. This book made a nice companion to my trip, as his adventures with Daniela take him all over Puglia and also for a short while, to Milan. He writes with such affection--for Daniela and her family and friends, but also for Italy, with all its wonderfulness and its frustrations.

First of all I will admit that I have read many books in the Travel Memoir genre, and most of those are about Italy. Within that small group, most authors will write about the beauty, food, architecture...all those things that we know Italy is already famous for-and the tales they tell are meant to seduce you and to make you want to visit. The approach Chris Harrison has taken is different. Yes, he talks about the beauty, architecture, and the food, but he also presents the gritty side of Italy. The side that only one who has lived there can understand and appreciate for what you can learn from it. The reader that will appreciate this book most is someone who has lived there for a short time as I have, or the British/Australian/American ex-pat who currently lives in Italy and has a love-hate relationship with the country. I have spent the winter in Milan and know just how dreary it can be there, but unlike Chris I also appreciate Milan for the hidden loveliness that can be found behind the pollution stained exterior of most buildings. Harrison also is brutally honest in writing about the discrimination between the North and the South of Italy, but tempering the ugly realities of that situation with a description of a wonderful, warm 'festa' that unites both North and South by the end of the book. I say BRAVO Chris Harrison for being able to put into words the feelings of so many of us that have lived there and tried to explain how Italy all at once frustrates and fascinates us. Lest this review seem too serious, I must say that I laughed out loud many times while reading this book-more so during the parts where he explains in detail his frustration with the government and bureaucracy as it does seem too ridiculous to be true...but it IS real life and humor is sometimes

the only way to deal with that level of irony. An enjoyable read from cover to cover.

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