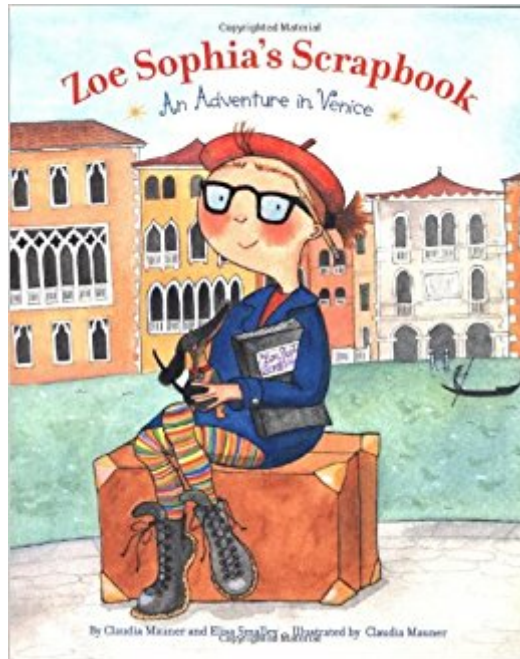




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Zoe Sophia's Scrapbook: An Adventure In Venice



Synopsis

Adventurous Zoe Sophia and her dog, Mickey, embark on a whirlwind trip to Venice to visit her great aunt Dorothy Pomander. During her stay, Zoe Sophia sees the sites, explores the city and bonds with her wonderful, quirky aunt. Featuring fun, vibrant watercolor illustrations, this engaging scrapbook captures the landscape of Venice and the importance of loving relationships.

Book Information

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Grade Level: Preschool - 7

Customer Reviews

Grade 1-4-Using the popular diary format, this travelogue takes its spunky nine-year-old heroine and her dachshund from Manhattan to visit her great-aunt in Venice. They tour museums, shop for masks, ride a gondola, and observe a glassblower. Double-page watercolor-and-ink illustrations, as well as smaller framed "snapshots," are at once aesthetically pleasing and comical. Suspense is introduced when Zoe's dog disappears, but gondolier Ludovico saves the day in an endearing scene involving concerned faces stained with spaghetti al nero. The book offers bits of information, appealing characters, and a sense of the majesty and grandeur of Italy's palaces and piazzas; it will interest armchair and authentic travelers alike. Removing the dust jacket reveals a labeled map on the cover. Pair this title with Christina Bjork's *Vendela in Venice* (R & S, 1999), Candace Fleming's *Gabriella's Song* (Atheneum, 1997), or the Classical Kids CD Vivaldi's *Ring of Mystery* for further insights into the city's charms. Wendy Lukehart, Washington DC Public Library Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 1-4. In this picture book for older children, bright, nine-year-old Manhattanite Zoe Sophia and her dachshund travel to Italy for a week to visit with slightly bohemian Great-aunt Dorothy. Delightfully balancing colorful, cartoon images of bespectacled humans, their grinning pets, and such Venetian backdrops as the opera, with a nearly breathless commentary accurately reflecting the viewpoint of artistic Zoe, the authors have created a hit for Marissa Moss' fans that other youngsters will like as well. Strong female characters, fun with "real" art and artists (as in the page devoted to Chagall), a little bit of worry when the dog goes missing, and the pervading scent of gingersnaps make for a story that is both cheerful and substantial. Zoe Sophia is a charmer, and her trip to Venice unfolds with just enough adventure and information to satisfy her peers. Francisca Goldsmith

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A delightful book written for children but appealing to travelers of all ages. Our young heroine, Zoe Sophia, travels from Manhattan to visit her aunt in Venice Italy. She and her little dachshund ride through the canals to visit palazzos, piazzas, and museums. The story is told in a scrap book format with drawings and photos, notes and graphics, travelogue style. At one point in the story, Zoe loses her little dog. This creates some suspense and mystery, but this book is to be enjoyed for its whimsy and educational value, not for its plot. I would think that anyone, adult or child, would be inspired to travel to Venice and to see all of the sites that were visited by Sophia. But for now, they can enjoy an armchair journey.

Reading this to my three-year-old granddaughter, we were both entranced! I haven't seen Venice since I was thirteen, but this book brings it alive through a child's eyes, with appropriate Italian words to practice and even a nail biting brief adventure (that turns out well).

If I were a children's writer/illustrator, "Zoe Sophia's Scrapbook: An Adventure in Venice" is the book I would write. But I'm not and I haven't, so I will sing its praises. Verse 1: What does a child do if she is clever, open-minded, and eccentric? She has a best pal, Mickey, her black dachshund, and her buddy, the doorman, Victor Gonzales. But best of all she has her great-aunt Dorothy Pomander, who lives in Venice and is a famous writer. Thus sets the premise for the book: a trip to Venice. Zoe Sophia, not so surprisingly, holds her aunt in highest esteem: each seems to be the reflection of the other. So, verse 1--a matched pair of eccentric characters. Verse 2: The artwork is simply incredible. Claudia Mauner uses watercolor and india ink. Watercolor produces soft, glowing colors with a sponged look; the india ink outlines and highlights what is needed, especially those eyebrows. Verse

3: The paintings within the artwork of the story, Chagall and Tiepolo, and the architecture rendered in watercolor, San Marco Basilica, the Ca'd'Oro (House of Gold), the Piazzetta, and, of course, the Grand Canal on the cover.. Even the gondola repair shop outside DP's apartment window looks like a Durain painting, and a portrait of DP looks like a creation by Andy Warhol. Verse 4: It is quite clever of Claudia and Elisa Smalley to create a story that includes so many tidbits of Venice: language, key famous places and what happens there, food, customs, famous jobs, architecture, paintings, opera. It all fits in the framework of the story without seeming intentionally educational. Children will learn happenstance. Verse 5: A tender minor plotline of losing Mickey, the dachshund, presents a less self-assured Zoe Sophia. I love the illustration of Zoe in bed, wide-eyed with worry, hair frazzled, with her glasses and hair twists on the bedside table. Never fear. Mickey is returned, all is well and a large group of new friends attend the opera, including dogs and cats. Another sweet aspect of the book is that Mickey and Pip, DP's marmalade cat, go everywhere with the two adventurers. Chorus: I love Zoe Sophia. If my calculations are correct, Claudia and Elisa wrote only two Zoe Sophia books. Her first adventure took place in New York with her beloved DP. I want more, nay, I demand more Zoe Sophia books!! This book is so entertaining and charming, as well as educational. More! More! More!....please...

I bought An Adventure in Venice as a Daily Deal to read with my toddler on an iPad. It was so visually engaging, with a warm, wonderful storyline, that I then purchased hard copies of both the first and second books in the series and bought extra copies to give to friends. Fingers crossed that Mauner and her collaborators produce more Zoe Sophia books in the future!

A lovely little story, highlighting some special places in Venice with sweet characters. Beautiful illustrations detailing the unique city of Venice.

An adorable book - purchased for a young neice, read it first and fell in love with the simple story and the fabulous illustrations. As someone who totally loves Venice, the book is point-on - makes a fun gift for an adult and a wonderful "travel" book for the children in your life.

Different travel book for kids

My 6-year old daughter loves this book. The cultural references in the book have led to further discussion about visiting Venice.

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