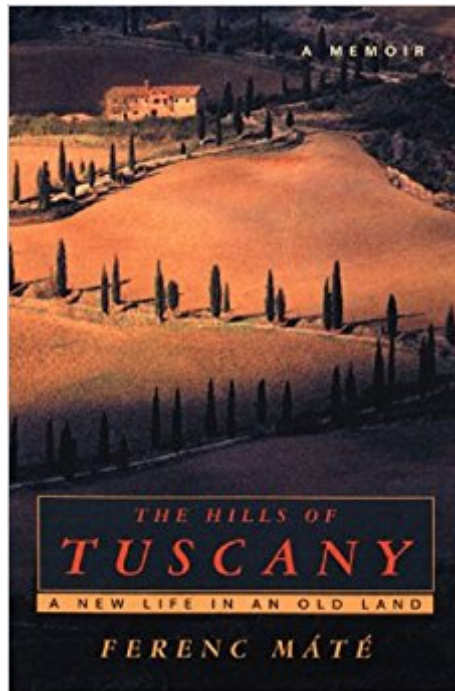




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# The Hills Of Tuscany: A New Life In An Old Land



## Synopsis

As seductive as *A Year in Provence* and *Under the Tuscan Sun*, but with the wit and charm of a 1930s romantic comedy, the true-life adventure of a couple who chucked New York for a new life in Tuscany. The MÃ¡tÃ©s arrived in Tuscany in the late 1980s knowing no Italian and with only four weeks to search for the country house of their dreams. On their last night there, after having been chased by wild boars and befriended by a country realtor who also sells pigs and coffins, they finally concluded the deal on the hood of a rusting tractor with the lawyer speaking Italian and them responding in French, English, and Hungarian, in a Tower of Babel version of "Who's on First?" So begins Ferenc MÃ¡tÃ©s's endearing, in-love-with-life memoir of their first five years in Tuscany, by turns buoyant, reflective, and laugh-out-loud hilarious. His engaging, often poetic prose describes the way of life they were looking for and found--where neighbors, community, home, and, most of all, children, form the focal point of daily life. They live in a small thirteenth-century monastery, surrounded by their vineyards and olive groves, in the spectacular hills near Siena, a few miles from where *The English Patient* was filmed. The Hills of Tuscany--steeped in mesmerizing scenery and wonderful medieval towns, full of unforgettably delightful characters and spectacular food and wine--nourishes body, mind, and soul. If you're not passionately in love with life at the moment, you'll be hopelessly so by the time you turn the last page. Illustrated

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A sensuous valentine to author Ferenc MÃ¡tÃ©s's adopted homeland, *The Hills of Tuscany* brims with lush descriptions of golden dales, scrumptious meals, rich wines, and friendly natives. After

years of nomadic roaming from Central America to Canada, MăjtĂ© (a writer) and his wife, Candace (a painter), visit Tuscany and impulsively decide that this is where they will settle down. A year later they return and begin the hunt for their dream house. As the likeable MăjtĂ©s (they're funny and suitably grateful for the chance to live in one of the world's garden spots) troll the countryside with a series of colorful Tuscan middlemen, it's impossible not to become emotionally involved in their quest. And when they finally discover the perfect abode--La Marinaia, a tastefully renovated stone farmhouse set amid scenery that Ferenc describes as "like being in the middle of a painting"--you're thrilled right along with them. Subsequent chapters follow the MăjtĂ©s' growing friendship with their neighbors, who not only help rototill the garden but also reveal where to find porcini mushrooms and truffles in the nearby woods. All in all, reading *The Hills of Tuscany* is the next best thing to quitting your job, climbing on a plane, and finding your own Tuscan dream house.

--Rebecca Gleason

Though born in Hungary, M t? (*A Reasonable Life*) has lived in several countries; in this lighthearted memoir, he recalls the early years he and his artist wife, Candace, spent in Tuscany. The two were certain on their initial visit in 1987 that they wanted to relocate to Italy and buy a home in the Tuscan hills, but it took them a year to return and begin house hunting. M t? provides an amusing account of their quest, which was made even more difficult by a lack of facility in the Italian language. After several false starts, they purchased a farmhouse ("La Marinaia") near the small medieval town of Montepulciano and gradually acquired a fluency in Italian as well as a knowledge of how to tend to their fruit trees and vegetable garden. Today, the M t?s embrace their new life and their neighbors with open hearts, taking part in seasonal community harvests, mushroom hunting and wine making. M t? includes evocative descriptions of the beautiful countryside, dotted with ancient ruins, in addition to a wealth of mouthwatering menus featuring Tuscan food and wine. B&w drawings.

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I found this book in the most unlikely manner: I was paging through an electronics newspaper ad when I saw a Kindle advertised displaying the first page of the book on it:"1 ~ THE LIGHT IN TUSCANYSeptember 1987 TuscanyWe stepped from the cool shadows of the archway into the warmth of the autumn sun. It was early afternoon, the narrow, flagstone streets were deserted, the shops closed; Tuscany was eating. Arm in arm in the autumn light, calmed by the warmth and the pitcher of red wine we had with lunch, we ambled in contented silence up the hill toward the piazza where the mosaic facade of the cathedral blazed like a million tiny stars.We had been shivering

while researching a book in the rain of Sweden, the cold of Finland, and the damp of Brittany, and in more than a month this was the first time we were warm. We stared at the mosaics. Then, glitter-blinded and "and there it stopped!! I read it and loved it, but the only problem was that I didn't know which book had been used in the photo of the Kindle! Thank goodness for Google...What an enjoyable book, with the most mouth-watering descriptions - which will send you out shopping for pasta and mushrooms and herbs and wine - and laugh-out-loud anecdotes and narratives. My one criticism - though not enough to drop a star for - is that while a lot of the Italian words sprinkled throughout had English translations in brackets, they did not all, and sometimes words that had been translated earlier in the book were used again later, and I could not remember what they meant. Personally, I would recommend the bracketed English equivalents throughout. All in all a wonderful book which makes you want to move to Tuscany and buy a villa with an olive grove, some grapevines and a view of soft and rolling hills - despite all the disasters that will probably befall you if you do throw caution to the wind and do that! Definitely five stars.

I read this book many years ago...loved it then and I'm sure I will love it on the second read, too. Aside from wanting to reread, I wanted it on my Kindle. This book speaks of a way of life that has been forgotten in America and piqued my desire to go to Italy. Now that I have had the privilege of going to Italy and visiting Montalcino (and reading his book "The Wisdom of Tuscany"-also wonderful) I want that way of life reinstated in the USA.

I've read most of these 'move to Italy(or France)' books and can say without reservation that this is my favorite. The writing style is delightful and really funny, and the author and his wife are truly likable people (he adores her and doesn't speak about her like the odd chair observed from afar like Mayes refers to her mate.) You feel very much in the middle of all the activity, because he feels that way... a nice change from the other books. The warm and giving 'Italian personality' comes through in all these books, even seen from so many different views, but in this book it blends so closely with the author's own that it is less 'reported on' and more part of the fabric of his story. He is truly at home in this place.... which means he doesn't have to tell you that. The Hills of Tuscany has a refreshing warmth and reality that make it stand out in this category. I highly recommend it.

Feel like I'm there, I taste the wine, smell the food and have fallen in love with the people, and unexpectedly, laughed out loud often!

I bought the book in hardback from about 5 years ago. After seeing a recent review on , decided to read the book again. I enjoyed the author's adventure in making new friends and discovering places close by. To me, this book seems more realistic than "Under the Tuscan Sun" in facing the challenges of finding a new home in a foreign land and culture. I enjoyed book and its message is a good reminder about the important things in life: Family, Friends, Good Food and Good Wine! Chin Chin Ciao!

We had just returned from a trip to Tuscany. The author wrote about places we had visited. I felt like I was back in Italy. A wonderful story.

Mate's writing about Tuscany is glorious! His descriptions of place, time, beauty of landscape, and the heart of the people are incredibly masterful. This book was a return to Tuscany for me after two wonderful journey's to Italy, with much time spent in Tuscany. And, of course, the delectable food!

Like most people, when I decided I wanted to read about Italy, I began with Under the Tuscan Sun. While a good book, it bugged me to a certain extent - perhaps because of the slight odor of elitism that was contained within the pages. Mate, on the other hand, invites his readers with him on a more intimate, personal journey. His wife is not reduced to some distant other person who happens to be with him, but is a partner. We get as much of an impression of their life together as we do their life in Italy. I enjoy this book immensely, and it gets reread quite often, especially when I'm feeling all too American.

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