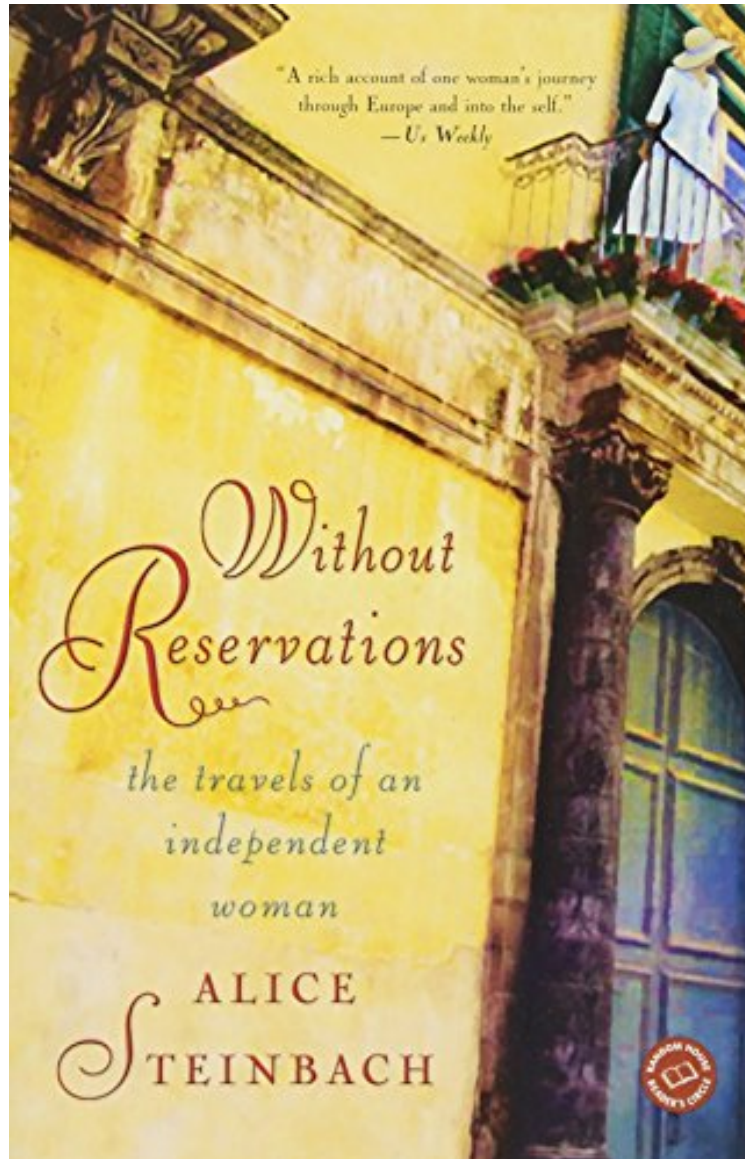


(Online library) Without Reservations: The Travels of an Independent Woman

Without Reservations: The Travels of an Independent Woman

Alice Steinbach

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Alice Steinbach : Without Reservations: The Travels of an Independent Woman before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Without Reservations: The Travels of an Independent Woman:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. a verbal "selfie"By Jennie KIt seemed less than satisfying that the writer pulled us along her entire life up to the point of her trip, then we followed her through three delightful countries. Along the way we were caught up in her life and her fears, doubts, personal triumphs and then left at the end in as

much of a fog as the scene she describes looking back at Venice. I have spent quite a bit of time in France Italy, less so in England so enjoyed reliving some of my favorite places. Had I not been there I would not have enjoyed the book as well.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed her travels a great deal and especially the added ...By ElvcamI enjoyed her travels a great deal and especially the added information about historical people and where their hangouts were. It is refreshing to think one can travel, meet people, develop relationships and enjoy a solo journey.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Nice story to inspire you.By golfspI love to read travel journals. This book is inspiring to see how an older person gets out of her box, her comfort zone, and travels on her own. I only wish I had enough guts to do the same.

"In many ways, I was an independent woman," writes Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Alice Steinbach. "For years I'd made my own choices, paid my own bills, shoveled my own snow." But somehow she had become dependent in quite another way. "I had fallen into the habit of defining myself in terms of who I was to other people and what they expected of me." But who was she away from the people and things that defined her? In this exquisite book, Steinbach searches for the answer to this question in some of the most beautiful and exciting places in the world: Paris, where she finds a soul mate; Oxford, where she takes a course on the English village; Milan, where she befriends a young woman about to be married. Beautifully illustrated with postcards from Steinbach's journeys, this revealing and witty book transports you into a fascinating inner and outer journey, an unforgettable voyage of discovery.Praise for *Without Reservations*: "A rich account of one woman's journey through Europe and into the self."—*Us Weekly* "I loved going along with Alice Steinbach as she goes off on this rare, wonderful adventure, an escape into discovering herself and some of the truly magical places in this world." —DOMINICK DUNNE "More than a chronicle of the writer's search for self-discovery, *Without Reservations* is a lovely travelogue."—*Chicago Tribune* "The best books, like the best vacations, contain unexpected delights, surprises that enrich the soul as well as the senses. This is a book about love, and longing, and the passage of time. It's about hope, and courage, and the resiliency of memory. This book is a feast. Bon appétit!"—*The Des Moines Register* "Beautifully written, clear, insightful, thoughtful . . . Steinbach's book should be taken in slowly and savored all the way."—*St. Petersburg Times*

From *Publishers Weekly* In a travel-book-cum-memoir set against a glamorous background of European cities, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Steinbach describes the months she spent traveling after she took a sabbatical from her job as columnist for the *Baltimore Sun*. For Steinbach, traveling is an exercise in reconnecting with a more independent and uninhibited side of her personality. Her not-quite-spontaneous adventure begins in Paris, where she finds a kindred spirit in a worldly Japanese businessman. From there she heads off to Oxford, where she takes a course in English village life, and on to Milan, where she meets the most charming of her fellow travelers, a young American girl soon to be married. The obstacles Steinbach faces on her journeys seem minor--overcoming a fear of ballroom dancing in Oxford and putting aside the habit of always doing "at least two things at once." Only in Milan, when she was nearly mugged, does Steinbach experience anything harrowing. Though the descriptions of each locale are thin, they are not really the purpose of this memoir; rather, the author's intent is to connect emotionally with each city and to learn "to take chances. To have adventures [and] to see if I could still hack it on my own, away from the security of work, friends and an established identity." Supplying more finely observed details might have made this a richer book, but the writing is generally optimistic, warm and genuine in a Chicken-Soup-for-Travelers kind of way. Illustrations not seen by PW. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Steinbach took an extended leave from her newspaper job to travel around Europe in search of spontaneity. She started off in Paris, where she got romantically involved with a Japanese man and shopped; moved on to London, where she shopped some more; took a course at Oxford University; and headed to Italy, where she wandered through Milan, Venice, Rome, and the Tuscan countryside--and shopped a bit more. Chapters begin with postcards sent to Alice from Alice, each with a bit of advice or a lesson learned. Steinbach, divorced and with grown children, appears to be much at ease traveling alone, making new friends along the way. Her mental journey through the past and present and the reassessment of her life, rather than descriptions of the places visited or the people met, are at the heart of the narrative. This pleasant, slightly romantic, but unremarkable journey will find an audience in large public libraries. (Photographs not seen.---Linda M. Kaufmann, Massachusetts Coll. of Liberal Arts Freel Lib., North Adams Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* In this engaging travelogue, Steinbach, a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer reeling with empty-nest syndrome, travels to Europe to "find herself" and assert her long-dormant independence. The search for self notwithstanding, she seems to spend a lot of time in Europe developing relationships and finding other people to pal around with, which makes for an interesting tale but seems to defeat her purpose. In France she begins a romance with another tourist; in London she takes up with a merry band of middle-class matrons; at Oxford she takes a course on the history of the English village; and in Milan she befriends a young American. Eventually, she does spend some time alone pondering the big questions and sending herself postcards (to record her impressions of places and events), and by the trip's conclusion she seems to have gained some badly needed perspective on her life. Steinbach doesn't take herself too seriously, though, and the light-hearted rendering of her

misadventures makes the story both lively and entertaining. Kathleen Hughes