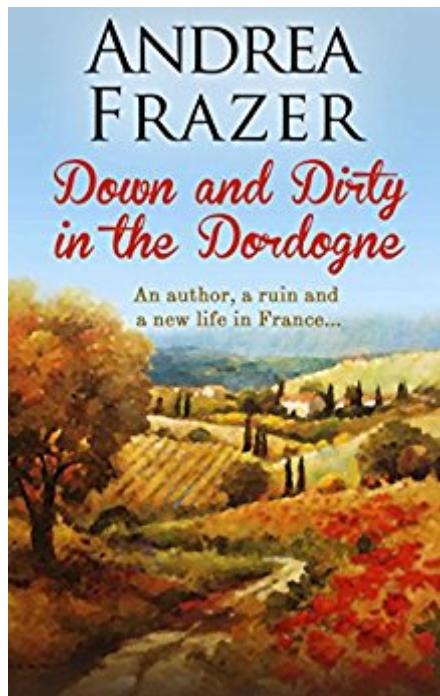


The book was found

Down And Dirty In The Dordogne



Synopsis

This is the story of how two middle-aged Brits gave up a nice life in Blighty after falling in love with a delightfully dilapidated old French property. It's no mean feat trying to restore a cavernous barn of a house (hovel) during the worst financial crisis of the modern age, especially when you're faced with dodgy builders, red tape, rowdy locals, health problems, recalcitrant relatives, a house in England that simply won't sell, and a multitude of escapologist cats - not to mention some resident skeletons. Andrea Frazer gives the lowdown on the ups and downs that befall two fish out of water as the couple take the plunge and move across the Channel.

Book Information

File Size: 508 KB

Print Length: 234 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 1783754176

Publisher: Accent Press (May 22, 2014)

Publication Date: May 22, 2014

Sold by: Simon and Schuster Digital Sales Inc

Language: English

ASIN: B017YA729U

Text-to-Speech: Not enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #828,841 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #23 in Books > Travel > Europe > France > Dordogne #544 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Europe > France #684 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Europe > France

Customer Reviews

I am a fan of Andrea Frazer's works of fiction, so when I saw this book I bought it without reading the description. Turns out it is a non-fiction account of the Frazers' adventure in buying and restoring an old home in France. There were many interesting accounts of the people and experiences they encountered. I have to give them huge kudos for their tenacity. This truly must

have been a labor of love for them to work so hard against so many odds to make this dream come true. I wish them many happy years in their home. One thing that I didn't especially enjoy or understand were the many accounts of their pet cats being killed. I lost count of how many they buried over the course of this story. In each case they were devastated, but would almost immediately go out and get several more cats. I would think that at some point they would realize that perhaps they should have a few less cats and simply have them be indoor pets. Perhaps it's a cultural thing though.

The story started out pretty good but went downhill toward the end. The couple found a house (loved hearing about the potential purchasing candidates), purchased, renovated and lived in new house. I did not enjoy a few aspects of the book. Such as, the couple acquired and lost a lot of cats, however, they still acquired more. The author had some nasty things to say about family and friends that seemed a little mean-spirited. The author attended a neighborhood picnic and believed she would be asked to do physical games, so she ran home crying like a spoiled child and had to be consoled by her spouse that physical performance was indeed optional. I would like to say that I liked the overall story premise and for the most part francophiles will enjoy.

I love Andrea Fraser's books; particularly The Falconer Files. As a cat fancier I especially love their inclusion in the series. So knew that the author must also be a cat person. This book confirms that assumption, however very disappointed at the seemingly callous disregard for their lives. I enjoyed reading about the house renovations, but couldn't take constantly reading about the loss of another poor cat.

While the parts of the book about the renovations are interesting, I don't think I've ever read a book by an author who is so snarky about everyone. I cannot even imagine how her in-laws felt after how she wrote about them. In fact, as an American who lives in French-speaking Switzerland now, I happily translate menus when friends and family come to visit instead of tossing a translation dictionary at them. That just seemed outright mean to me.

I really enjoyed this book. Purchased it as I had already read a lot of Andrea Fraser's crime books. A fascinating and very funny insight into her life and the transfer from England to France and all the trials that entailed. Looking forward to reading the follow up that is promised at the end.

A pleasant book showing the perils of moving to France and buying a fixer upper. I always wonder how people manage to do this without a million dollars.

Excellent read - highly recommended

not bad

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