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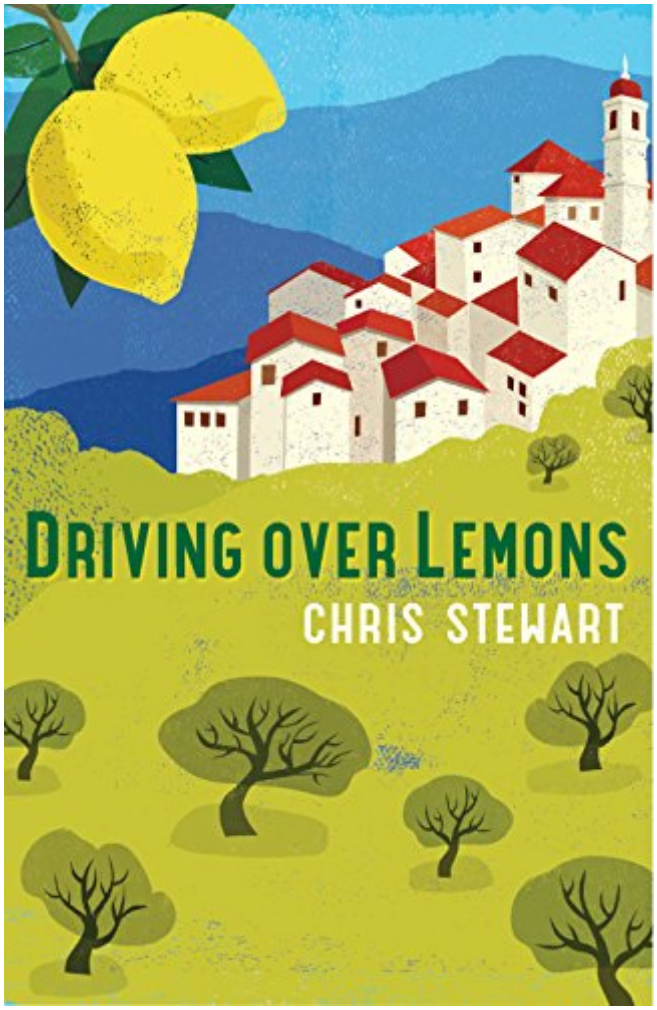
Driving Over Lemons: An Optimist In Andalucia (Lemons Trilogy)



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Synopsis

Meet Chris Stewart, the eternal optimist.At age 17 Chris retired as the drummer of Genesis and launched a career as a sheep shearer and travel writer. He has no regrets about this. Had he become a big-time rock star he might never have moved with his wife Ana to a remote mountain farm in Andalucia. Nor forged the friendship of a lifetime with his resourceful peasant neighbour Domingo...not watched his baby daughter Chloe grow and thrive there...nor written this book.Fate does sometimes seem to know what it’s up to.Driving Over Lemons is that rare thing: a funny, insightful book that charms you from the first page to the last...and one that makes running a peasant farm in Spain seem like a distinctly gd move. Chris transports us to Las Alpujarras, an oddball region south of Granada, and into a series of misadventures with an engaging mix of peasant farmers and shepherds, New Age travellers and ex-pats. The hero of the piece, however, is the farm that he and Ana bought, El Valero -- a patch of mountain studded with olive, almond and lemon groves, sited on the wrong side of a river, with no access road, water supply or electricity.Could life offer much better than that? Driving Over Lemons has sold over a million copies since publication in 1999. The title has been translated into 9 languages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Funniest book I've read in a while! I mean, there were several points in the book when I was screaming with laughter and had tears running down my face! The book makes me just want to shop around for a foreign experience myself in a few years! Foreign travel and living, can be very eye opening, educational and needs to be approached with a very, very good sense of humor! Chris Stewart's book was a blast!

Witty, self-deprecating, insightful. This is more than the formulaic move-to-a-foreign-country-rebuild-a-farmhouse-and-deal-with-wacky-local-tradesmen book. It contains a bracing dose of humor, of course (ever contemplated taking a shower in a shower stall shared by a dead goat?) but also poignant glimpses of farm life as it is lived in the Spanish hinterlands. Gritty...hard-scrabble...rustic. Also lyrical, contemplative and compassionate. I would recount passages to my wife as I was reading the book, and a day or two later, she would ask me "So what happens next with that English couple that moved to the farm in Spain?" The fact that my wife wanted to know "what happens next?" is a compliment to the book: like a delicious meal, it's nourishing by itself...but even more enjoyable when shared with someone you love.

I really enjoyed this personal chronicle of a couple (and daughter) who committed to farm life in Andalucia on its own terms. Lots of laughs and insights and beautiful descriptions of the mountains and terrain, including the challenges of surviving in this area a ways from Granada. I picked it up because of plans to visit the region, and it drew me in to the warmth and humanity of everyone Chris encountered, including the other ex-pats. Full of practical life issues, humor, and reflective commentary.

I liked this one a lot. It's a personal travelog like "Under the Tuscan Sun" with lots of unusual humor along with episodic catastrophes.

Lovely story about a couple who leave their comfortable life in the UK to renovate and run a farm in a remote area of Spain. The change is pretty drastic and they really do start with nothing facing a huge amount of work but this story is told with humour which lightens the tone. The story is

beautifully told and I found myself getting to know the local characters and being lulled by the lifestyle. It's easy to understand why Nick and Ana took on this huge undertaking because by the end of the book the reader almost loves the farm and the area as much as they do. A story about following a dream and how all the hard work makes it worthwhile.

Definitely a 5 star read in my opinion. Having moved to inland Spain a few years ago I can identify with Chris Stewart's experiences which clearly happened quite a few years before we got here, although nothing has changed that much! He writes in a style that keeps me eager to read more. I haven't finished the book yet - I don't have much time to read - but from what I have read so far I can thoroughly recommend this book to anyone who has any inkling of living in rural Spain, knows someone who moved to Spain, or is just happy to absorb the humour, oddities and quirks of the people and terrain, and animals, come to that! I am looking forward to reading the other two books in the trilogy. The book is brilliant, funny and human.

This was a fabulous read about lifestyle I had never even thought about. There's great imagery to paint the scenes, and I can see the mountains of Andalusia during the entire book. The writing is witty and engaging: there's just enough ridiculousness to keep the pages turning, while also convincing me that every single word is true.

I enjoyed this book immensely. I believe it is now well known, but I only discovered it recently by chance. It describes a personal account of the author's introduction to Spain and, in particular, life in Andalucia; told frankly and, at times, quite movingly. As a mere and passive reader I felt always that I was being spoken to directly. I thoroughly enjoyed reading about the challenges faced by the author and his wife and how they were largely overcome, and I particularly enjoyed the postscript section where again I felt I was being confided in as the author updated the reader and spoke also about the approach he took in writing the book. The locals were quite lovingly portrayed almost unfailingly, even though not always as welcoming as they might have been. For me a most enjoyable read.

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