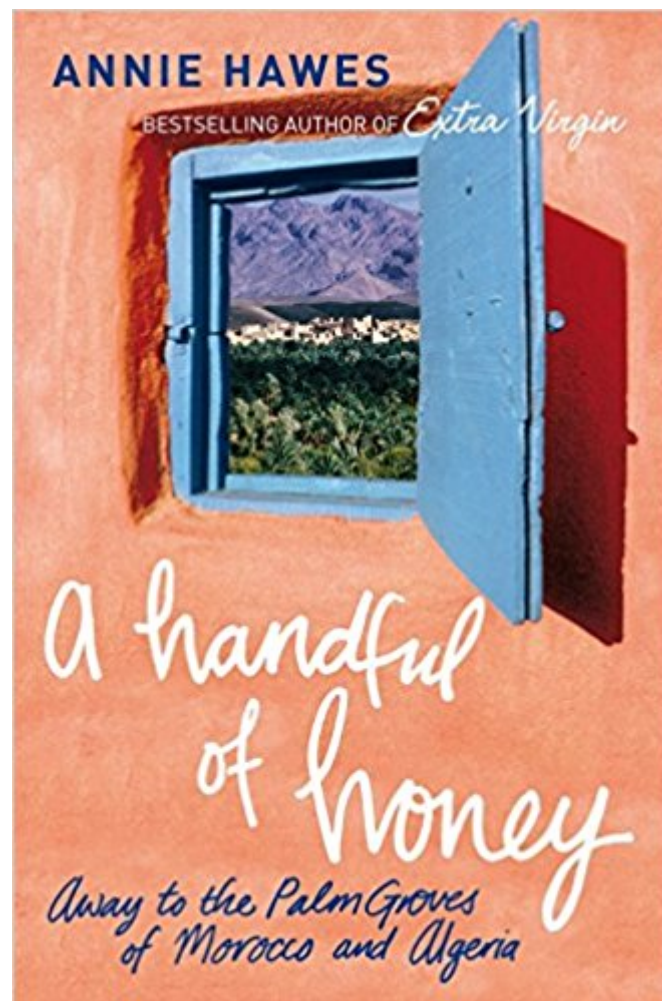




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Handful Of Honey: Away To The Palm Groves Of Morocco And Algeria



Synopsis

Aiming to track down a small oasis town deep in the Sahara, some of whose generous inhabitants came to her rescue on a black day in her adolescence, Annie Hawes leaves her home in the olive groves of Italy and sets off along the south coast of the Mediterranean. Travelling through Morocco and Algeria she eats pigeon pie with a family of cannabis farmers, and learns about the habits of djinns; she encounters citizens whose protest against the tyrannical King Hassan takes the form of attaching colanders to their television aerials - a practice he soon outlaws - and comes across a stone-age method of making olive-oil, still going strong. She allows a ten-year-old to lead her into the fundamentalist strongholds of the suburbs of Algiers - where she makes a good friend. Plunging southwards, regardless, into the desert, she at last shares a lunch of salt-cured Saharan haggis with her old friends, in a green and pleasant palm grove perfumed by flowering henna: once, it seems, the favourite scent of the Prophet Mohammed. She discovers at journey's end that life in a date-farming oasis, haunting though its songs may be, is not so simple and uncomplicated as she has imagined.

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Customer Reviews

'Charming and inspirational' "Daily Mail" Aiming to track down a small oasis town deep in the Sahara, some of whose generous inhabitants came to her rescue on a black day in her adolescence, Annie Hawes leaves her home in the olive groves of Italy and sets off along the south coast of the Mediterranean. In Morocco and Algeria she shares pigeon pie with a family of cannabis farmers, and learns about the habits of djinns; she encounters citizens whose protest against the tyrannical King Hassan takes the form of attaching colanders to their television aerials - a practice

he soon outlaws - and comes across a stone-age method of making olive-oil, still going strong. And a ten-year-old leads her into the fundamentalist strongholds of the suburbs of Algiers - where she makes a good friend. Plunging southwards deep into the desert, she at last shares a lunch of salt-cured Saharan haggis with her old friends, in a green and pleasant palm grove perfumed by flowering henna - once, it seems, the favourite scent of the Prophet Mohammed. And there she discovers, at journey's end, that life in a date-farming oasis, haunting though its songs may be, is not so simple and uncomplicated as she has imagined.

Annie Hawes, originally from Shepherd's Bush, divides her time between Liguria in Italy, the west coast of Ireland and Whitechapel in London. Her first book, *Extra Virgin*, was a worldwide bestseller and she has written two further books *Ripe for the Picking* and *Journey to the South*.

There comes a time when I'm reading one of Annie Hawes' books when I realize I'm only holding about half an inch's worth of pages in my right hand -- darn, I'm nearly at the end of the book. Has she written another one yet? Do I have to make do with other authors until her next book comes out? This book is a delectable series of impressions from a trip Ms. Hawes took in the early 90s to North Africa. I knew nothing about the region and found it as fascinating as she did. Her feeling for what is human-scale and the history of places and customs is mesmerizing. Her descriptions of food are always compelling to me. Then, as she is about to embark on a trip across the Sahara, we run out of pages. Aiee. Will there be another volume? What happened next? Just as we're getting settled in, the book ends. There's something about her writing that is satisfying in a unique way, her observations or anecdotes she chooses to share. I found her descriptions of Islamic customs to be fascinating and pertinent given the tidal wave of anti-Islamic media since 9/11/01. US media has certainly never featured any whiff of what Islam is or means, just a scary boogey-man type of entity which Israel would like the US to destroy IMHO. So ANY alternate view would be welcome. That it came from Annie Hawes based on a pre-9/11 trip she took elevates her descriptions and stories above propaganda. It's a fresh point of view for American readers. She writes of being treated as an "honorary man" since women don't travel by themselves in the region. That leads to some hysterical complications as things unwind, most notably her inadvertantly embarrassing a host who is reduced to his wit's end by her innocent behavior. There's a charm and humor throughout this and her other books that I can't say reminds me of any other writer. I can only hope that Annie Hawes will continue to write. This book is a joy. One of my favorite modern writers. Definitely worth buying and reading.

Having already enjoyed immensely, Annie Hawes' trilogy of books on her life in Italy, I had high expectations of this book and I was not disappointed. Annie writes with insight and depth of her travels through Northern Africa in the company of her two male travelling companions. She has a wonderful way of observing human nature, but not passing judgement on those with whom she meets during her travels. Her writing challenges the reader to ponder and draw their own conclusions on what she observes, but also takes us on a highly entertaining journey to places that the vast majority of her readers, will never venture.

Not quite up to par with Annie Hawes other books. To me it had more background information than needed....or, didn't balance enough "story" with the information provided. I felt bogged down in her "information". She's a good writer and that was probably the saving factor for me. I've thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed her previous books....Extra Virgin, Ripe for the Picking, and Journey to the South. From a bookworm)

This authors previous books, especially Extra Virgin and Ripe for the Picking ,where the characters were so much fun to spend time with, that this was a disappointment, as was her third in the series "Journey to the South..

I found the book interesting to see the view points of the people in the Sahara - especially before 9-11 happened. Didn't find it as charming a book as the ones written about Italy.

I love Annie Hawes' books. Reading her stuff is like hanging out with her. And she brilliantly teaches us history, geography, and culture in a completely beguiling way.

Well researched more like a travel journey

Annie Hawes exhibits her usual insight into human nature in this memoir of her trip to North Africa. The culture and inhabitants of the towns and villages that she visited are described with humor and empathy. I enjoyed this book very much and hope she has one in the works about the second half of her trip.

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