



Italian Hours (Penguin Classics)

Henry James

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"The charm of certain vacant grassy spaces, in Italy, overfrowned by masses of brickwork that are honeycombed by the suns of centuries, is something that I hereby renounce once for all the attempt to express; but you may be sure that whenever I mention such a spot enchantment lurks in it." —Henry James

In these essays on travels in Italy written from 1872 to 1909, Henry James explores art and religion, political shifts and cultural revolutions, and the nature of travel itself. James's enthusiastic appreciation of the unparalleled aesthetic allure of Venice, the vitality of Rome, and the noisy, sensuous appeal of Naples is everywhere marked by pervasive regret for the disappearance of the past and by ambivalence concerning the transformation of nineteenth-century Europe. John Auchard's lively introduction and extensive notes illuminate the surprising differences between the historical, political, and artistic Italy of James's travels and the metaphoric Italy that became the setting of some of his best-known works of fiction. This edition includes an appendix of James's book reviews on Italian travel-writing.

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