



Swan

Frances Mayes

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Simon rode a motorcycle around the world in the seventies, when such a thing was unheard of. In four years he covered 78,000 miles through 45 countries, living with peasants and presidents, in prisons and palaces, through wars and revolutions. What distinguishes this book is that Simon was already an accomplished writer. In 25 years this book has changed many lives, and inspired many to travel, including Ewan McGregor.

Swan Details

Date : Published (first published 2002)

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Author : Frances Mayes

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From Reader Review Swan for online ebook

Karen says

This slow moving book recalls life in a small town in Georgia. Generations of family and friends bog down as the book progresses. Interesting in the end but a loose conclusion.

Barner says

It appears I like this novel more than other readers: I LOVED it. Francis Mayes, author of "Under the Tuscan Sun," has written a novel taking place at an archeological dig in Itlay, a humid, small town of Swan, Georgia, and, finally, Palo Alto, Ca. A brother and sister, close in their appreciation and love for one another, are survivors of family tragedies, and the events of the book give them an opportunity to re-define their love for and understanding of their parents and their knowledge of themselves. The language of the novel is beautiful, the many descriptions poetic, and though not all the ends are tightly woven at the tale's end, there is joy and opportunity awaiting the main characters. Granted some of the events are bizarre, but this is a GOOD read. The interrelationships of the various people in the small town are probably too real. I recommend this one.

L'aura says

Well, I didn't like it. The premise of the story is a good one perhaps, but I found the characters weak and the story disjointed. There is no "grab" to get the reader interested...to read five chapters and not find anything of interest except to catch glimpses of unrelated events. Sorry, but no vote here.

Lois says

Expected to like this one more than I did

Emily says

Starts out well and remains interesting until the end when the author seems to just want to end the book. She also kept adding characters and giving them meaningless chapters. The main characters find out after 20 yrs that their mother was murdered rather than committed suicide and they are just like "whew I feel better knowing that" and just go on with their lives.

Robin says

I found myself asking "what's the point?". The story just didn't seem to go anywhere.

Paula says

Frances Mayes evokes life in the Deep South with the skill she has already used to such effect in *Under the Tuscan Sun*. Once again she brings to life the landscape, the people and the food with affection and at the same time unravels the events leading to the desecration of a family grave. However the mystery is not the point of the book - the people are.

Sharon Huether says

Swan, a small Southern Georgia town is home to the Mason Family; who has lived there for generations. A peculiar event brought Ginger Mason home from Italy to try to understand what really happened in the local cemetery.

Her Mother had died over nineteen years earlier of an apparent self-inflicted gun shot wound. Now there were doubts after the coffin was exhumed by vandals.

Ginger and her brother J.J. sort through the memories of their mother.

Lisa says

The story itself was good, moved a little slowly, like a hot, humid Georgia summer, which when the story takes place. The ending however was very disappointing, it just stopped. There were still things left unfinished.

Leah says

I absolutely LOVE all of Frances Mayes' books and this was no exception. I went into this concerned that I wouldn't love her fiction as much as I enjoy her stories of Tuscany, but what a fabulous story. The setting is Georgia after a grim discovery of a woman unearthed from her grave. The children of this woman were told she had committed suicide, but upon further discovery, it was found that she was murdered, a relief to them after so many years. The characters in this book are so well developed, and I became quite attached to them in the story. Ginger, the daughter lives in Italy, having escaped her southern roots for a different world. JJ, the son, struggles with his inner life and relationships until he begins to find healing as he learns about his parents' past.

Such a great story of "coming home" with a little bit of mystery wound in.

Lisa says

It had some nice features, but overall it felt like the author went overboard with too, too many characters.

Mayes clearly loved her story, and loved the town she created, but I failed to see the relevance of some of the people she "brought to life." It distracted me from what should have been an interesting storyline.

Jan says

I love Frances Mayes non-fiction. Her Tuscany books are beautifully written. Swan is her first attempt at fiction. She should stick to non-fiction.

Not that this book was bad. It's a nice book, but nothing happens. In her non-fiction books, nothing has to happen to make a-day-in-the-life interesting. But when it comes to fiction, things have to happen to progress the story.

That's okay. I'll pick up her non-fictions and read them again and again any day.

Catherine Johnson says

What a delightful read, with characters that really grow on you and a plot that thickens the longer it goes on. This is beautifully written and I love how many delicious foods are peppered throughout, spot the cookbook author!

Lynn Shurden says

I absolutely loved this book. The author made the transition from Italy to Georgia easy to follow, and the hint of mystery of what really happened to Catherine was never resolved in my mind. And did J.J. go back to California to pursue his love interest.? Is there another follow-up book? So many questions, which makes me more interested in following other books with this author.

Dottie says

Well -- let's just say that the critiques of this book are misleading. This is a fine light, romantic Southern gothic tale of family members who don't always know the whole story and is told in Mayes usual fine style and language. Made for good reading in my opinion.
