



French Impressions:: The Adventures of an American Family

John S. Littell

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Filled with fascinating details of expatriate life, "French Impressions" is a riveting account of an American family's (mis)adventures abroad. Photos.

French Impressions:: The Adventures of an American Family Details

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Author : John S. Littell

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From Reader Review French Impressions:: The Adventures of an American Family for online ebook

Patty says

Hilarious book about a New Jersey family who moves to southern France for one year.

Melissa McShane says

Mary Littell was like a less-famous version of Shirley Jackson, and both of them have an approach to childrearing that I can relate to. French Impressions:: The Adventures of an American Family cracks me up. Whether Mary is setting off the Great Mayonnaise War, inadvertently giving her two-year-old son hard cider, or running to the curb in her nightgown because she forgot to set the trash out, her adventures with her family in southern France never fail to cheer me up.

Tina Dalton says

Set in 1950, this is the true story of an American family living abroad in France for a year. Although the setting is different, the struggles of this family trying to live in a foreign land feel so familiar!! Who knew 1950's France had so much in common with present-day China? Crazy drivers, waste-not-want-not attitude, kids and men peeing wherever they happen to be and people pointing and staring at the crazy Americans.

Wendi, thank you SO much for sending me this book. I've thoroughly enjoyed it. I want everyone to read this book, if for no other reason than the pure fun of it! I keep trying to decide who to send it to next? My mom? Gwen? Mariannette? You'd all love it!!

Nora says

Where do you buy mayo?

Terry says

In 1950 Frank and Mary Littell decided to uproot their 2 sons, ages 4 and 18 months, and spend a year in southern France. Their laugh-out-loud misadventures are reported in Mary's voice; many of them are due to her inability to learn French. Dealing with two young sons in such an unusual setting also contributed to the chaotic existence they experienced.

Mark Gaulding says

This was a perfectly lovely reading experience. The book has an amazingly contemporary voice. Wickedly, intelligent and charming humor is one thing that the Littell family had in spades. I chuckled and occasionally guffawed my way through this book. Very interesting observations of a post-war France. I didn't want to read the last page of this book.

Jayme says

very funny!

Dvora says

I bought the book to read because it's about an American family that went to live in France -- specifically in Montpellier -- for a year in 1950. I'm also an American and I came to live in Europe, except that I didn't come for a year, I came to stay. Still, I'm always curious how others deal with their lives abroad and this book held a special interest because my father had studied at the University of Montpellier back in about 1930, and I've been to the city a couple of times to see where he had spent those years so I thought it would be fun to read about the city from the viewpoint of someone who lived there.

It wasn't. Mainly, the book is not particularly well written. It has the feel of writing done by a high school student. Its very basic, pedestrian writing is peppered with things that are supposed to make you laugh, but I didn't laugh, except at one story where Mary got very drunk. Many paragraphs, too many paragraphs, end with a gratuitous sentence that could well have been left out. S'il vous plait.

For the most part, Mary seemed to me to be an ignoramus who not only didn't so much as make a list of a few pertinent French words to take with her when she went out on her errands, she clearly had no interest in learning the language at all. Nor was she interested in learning anything about French food or how to cook. She was determined to buy canned goods and was able to do so because she found a local shop that stocked some cans and since no one else was buying them, she had the whole stock to herself. When she went to visit Marseilles, her attitude to trying bouillabaisse was one of fear, not interest. At the end of their year, when her husband was offered a very well paid job in Paris, her only thought was to return home, to America, land of white bread where she could speak English in peace and have her American groceries delivered. And at the end of it all, neither she nor her husband ever encouraged their two boys, both of whom had become fluent in French, to practice that language (her husband did speak French), throwing away that golden opportunity for the two boys to remain bilingual.

Zut!

Amy says

Fun story about a young American couple and their small child and the year they lived in France. Funny and

enjoyable.

Amy says

Charming and laugh-out-loud funny. A must-read for Francophiles!

Cheryl says

This is an incredibly funny book -- laugh out loud funny! I read it several years ago and I am still laughing about some of the scenes when I think about them. John Littell wrote it from his mother's notes of their years living in France when he was young. Oh my gosh, it's a delight!

Mary says

I am in charge of choosing the book for my book club in January and this is the book that I decided to read. Let's see if it is as good as I remember . . .

1/4/09 - I still really enjoyed it. It made me really want to visit France again. I'm going to keep it at 4 stars instead of 5. There were just a couple of parts that dragged just a bit for me this time.

Original Review:

I absolutely loved this true account of a family's temporary move to France. It was lighthearted and extremely funny. This may actually be a five star book, but having been so long since I read it I thought I better stick with four.

Jennifer says

John S. Littell uses his mother's diaries to tell the story of their family's move to France in the early 1950s. Amusing and heartwarming.

Kimberly says

I could really relate to this book because I have boys that are the same ages as John and Stephen. It was a really fun read. I can't decide if it makes me want to live abroad more or not at all.

Sue says

I thought this was a very well written book, full of fun and adventure. It is something I wish I had done when our children were small, but maybe someday I will make it to France.

