



TOP **AUTHORS**
WORTH
FOLLOWING
this

2018

WE EXPLORED, TRAVELED, HAD A
CUP OF COFFEE & INTERVIEWED
SOME OF THE BEST AUTHORS
FROM 2017 FOR THE BOOKS YOU
SHOULD NOT MISS READING

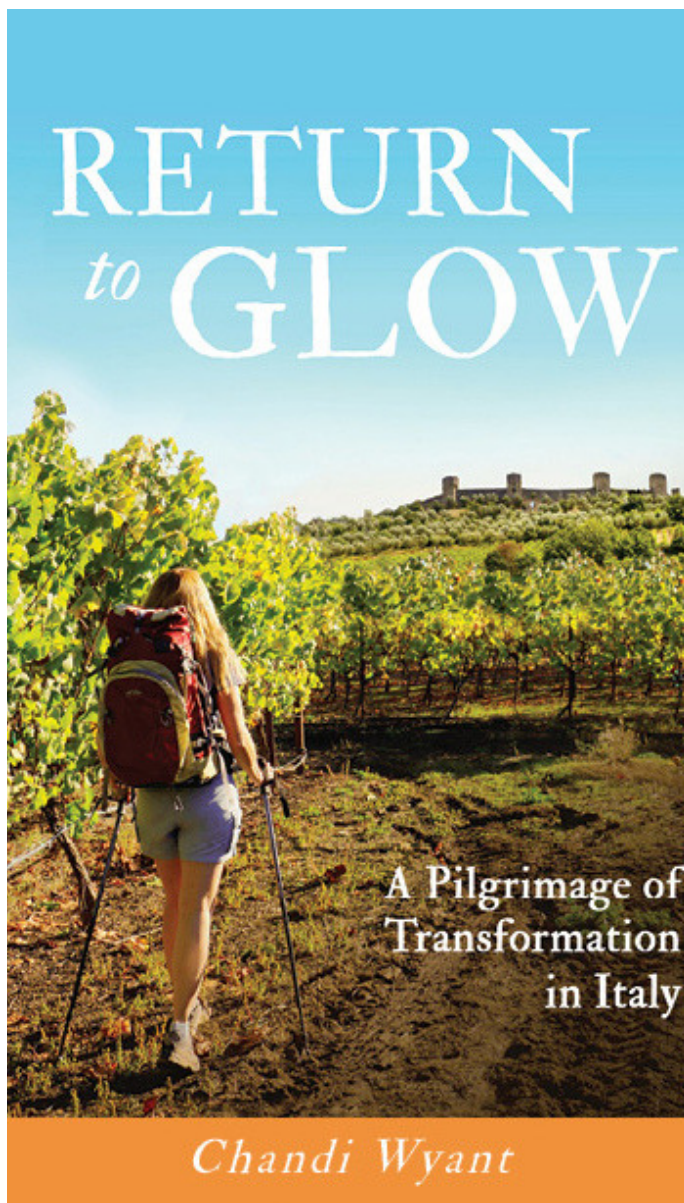
DÉ MODÉ | JAN-FEB 2018 EDITION

CHANDI WYANT, ITALIA

AUTHOR OF RETURN TO GLOW - A PILGRIMAGE OF TRANSFORMATION IN ITALY

Chandi is a world traveler, photographer, writer and historian. She's lived in Qatar, India, Italy, Switzerland and England and has been returning to Italy with unremitting passion since she first lived there at the age of 20. Her memoir about her 40-day pilgrimage walk in Italy was published in the spring of 2017 and has been featured on numerous travel websites and podcasts to rave reviews. Chandi has a master's degree in Florentine Renaissance history. She loves teaching history and helping people have a great time in Italy via her trip planning services.

Her favorite things are swimming in warm turquoise sea and biking around Florence, Italy. Chandi likes to hike, paddle board and visit wineries. She enjoys food and wine — consuming it and writing about it.



Q. When did you first realize you wanted to be a writer?

When I was about 7 years old I started writing stories. Then from age 19 to 21, I traveled all over Europe & Asia and kept journals. I constantly wrote up my travel adventures, always wondering about someday writing a book.

Q. How long did it take you to write your book and what genre do you write in?

My memoir, *Return to Glow*, came out in April of 2017, and took me more than five years of on and off writing. The total writing time, if I don't include the gaps, was probably three years. The genre I write in is memoir. *Return to Glow* was my first and I am working on another.

Q. What is your work schedule like when you're writing?

I work best late at night. During the day I get all the other details of my life taken care of, and when I finally feel I can focus on my writing, it is often 10:00pm or later. If I am on roll with my writing, I will stay up working until 2:00am. I eat chocolate to keep me going!

Q. Where do you get the ideas for your books?

I get my ideas from my travels.

Q. What do you like to do when you're not writing?

I enjoy teaching history, and doing travel planning for people who need help creating their trips to Italy. My favorite things in the world are swimming in warm turquoise sea and biking around

Florence, Italy. I also like to hike and paddle board, and visit wineries. I enjoy food and wine—consuming it and writing about it. And I adore travel—particularly “slow travel” where I experience a place and a culture in an in-depth way.

Q. Do you have any suggestions to help me become a better writer? If so, what are they?

Don't expect it to be easy. Expect to work hard. Develop a thick skin. Get beta readers for your manuscript, and set your ego aside and be seriously open to feedback. Learn what a narrative arc is and how to create one in your story. Get help from a professional developmental editor, or take a class. Be patient and be persistent and treat the project like a degree program—there is more to learn about writing a good book than most people would think!

Q. Do you hear from your readers much? What kinds of things do they say?

I have received fan emails which is always heart-warming. In early January I received one from a man who said, “One of the most wonderful things that happened to me in 2017 was the chance to read your book.” This was special to hear particularly because I originally thought that my book would be much more appealing to women.

Q. As a child, what did you want to do when you grew up?

A writer, a photographer, and a traveler.

Q. What other authors are you friends with, and how do they help you become a better writer?

The authors I look up to, I don't know personally, however, I can learn from them by studying how they crafted their books.

Q. How do your books get published?

Two main options: Traditional or Indie. Indie publishing has become an accepted and perfectly respectable method these days. However, I don't recommend just throwing a book up on Amazon that only you have worked on.

I recommend doing all the due diligence that will make your book look like it was published by a traditional publisher. That means hiring developmental editors, copy editors, and getting the cover design and the interior formatting done by professionals.

Q. Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strong?

No, not if you are writing novels or memoir. (If you are writing dry medical journals, OK.) Being a writer of novels or memoirs takes artistry, creativity, passion, and an interest in the human psyche. Writing takes courage, and no genre of writing takes more courage than memoir. To write a good memoir you've got to be vulnerable on the page and how will you do that if you're not willing to delve into emotions?

I put this quote at the beginning of my book by Brené Brown: “Courage means to tell the story of who you are with your whole heart,” it is a great summation of the process of writing memoir.