

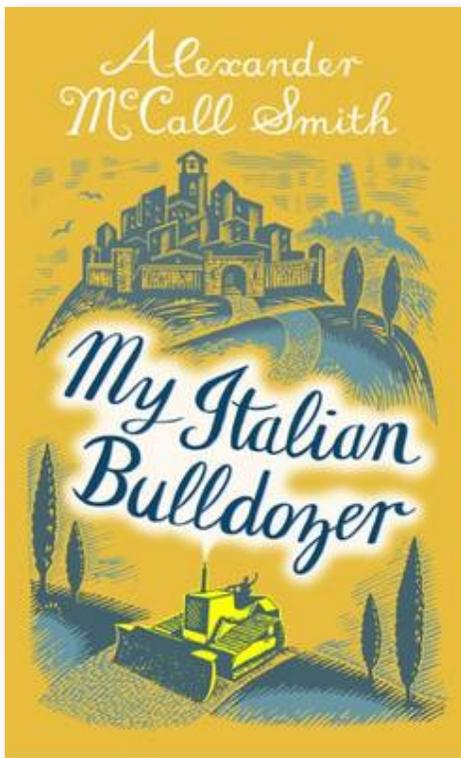


Helping you choose  
your next book

## LoveReading Reader reviews of **My Italian Bulldozer** By Alexander McCall Smith

Polygon

**Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.**



### **Rachel Aygin**

***Alexander McCall Smith's effortless writing style is a pleasure to read. His books are full of wonderful, quirky and believable characters and this one is no exception.***

*This is the story of a food writer's journey to Italy to research for and write a book on Tuscan food and wine whilst recovering from a relationship break up. Alexander McCall Smith's effortless writing style is a pleasure to read. His books are full of wonderful, quirky and believable characters and this one is no exception. The plot takes us through the beautiful Tuscan countryside and we get to "meet" the locals with all their eccentricities. The descriptions are so evocative you can imagine yourself in Italy*

*but so imperceptible you don't notice you have read them. Whilst we are entertained with curious foodie facts, the book takes a back seat to Paul's adventures with and without the bulldozer. A great summer read.*

### **Angie Rhodes**

*Paul Stuart is a food and drink writer and has just arrived in the quaint town of Montalcino in the Tuscan Hills ready to finish his already late book, and forget his girlfriend who he has just split from.*

*But there is a slight problem, the hire car is not there. He is now stuck at the airport until help arrives. Paul has a vehicle - a bulldozer!! Once he has got over the shock of the sheer size of it and the fact it IS a bulldozer the adventure begins*

***With the fantastic descriptions of Tuscany, the sights, sounds and people, Alexander McCall Smith manages to whisk you away on this amazing journey along with Paul from the comfort of your own armchair. Just perfect!!***

### **Suzanne Marsh**

*Alexander McCall Smith is one of the world's most prolific & most popular authors.*

*'My Italian Bulldozer' is a story that is characteristic of McCall Smith's gift for imagining the unexpected circumstance, this standalone novel is based on a hugely popular short story. It is a warmly comic holiday read, guaranteed to put smiles on faces. I am a real fan of Alexander McCall Smith books.*

*I can just imagine so well what the character would be like and the place where the characters are because he has a gift of describing details so well, making any reader really enjoy every page.*

*'My Italian Bulldozer' is about Paul Stewart whose girlfriend Becky, leaves him after four years of living together. Becky left him for her Mr Universe, who is her personal trainer, who she met in the gym. Paul, who is writing a book about Tuscan Wine and Cuisine, is very friendly with his editor Gloria. A mix up leaves Paul in an Italian police cell. Is Paul Stewart just a man who writes stuff about food and wine and who drives a bulldozer or can he fall in love again?*

***The balance of this book with Contemporary/crime and laugh out loud moments has everything a reader can possible want. I highly recommend buying and reading book.***

[www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)

### **Ann Alderton**

***Written with gentle charm and wit, the story of Paul Stuart, a food writer who escapes to the Tuscan hills to finish his latest book, is a feel-good read which is both compelling and engaging.***

*A charming light comedy of a novel, with a rather passive but personable hero who tends to let things happen rather than make things happen. Paul Stuart's character comes across as a bit wet and self-deluding at first, with a tendency to suggestibility and excessive soul searching. As the story progresses, however, his character becomes more assertive as he finds himself having to use his ingenuity and the brute force of the bulldozer he was given instead of a hire car to make things happen for himself and his newly discovered social circle in Montalcino.*

*Written with wit and love for the subject matter, the story is compelling and heart-warming and although Paul never really develops into much of an alpha male and appears to be quietly content with the machinations of his ex, Becky, his editor, Gloria and his Italian friends with their anti-bureaucratic frustrations, he is a believable and likeable protagonist. Not everything is explained, instead the reader is given hints as to what has happened but the Italian characters – Sergio, Onesto, Tonio, Stefano and the fugitive from justice, Occhidilupo – all deserve another story to be told about them and it is hoped that this is the first in a Montalcino series by McCall Smith.*

### **Beverley Davenport**

*Paul is a food writer going through a crisis in his love life and he travels to Italy in order to complete his latest book. His trip to Tuscany is filled with humour, mystery and romance. Paul has brushes with notorious criminals, professors, wine makers and fellow writers. He finds himself travelling to his destination on a bulldozer, a bizarre situation which he eventually embraces and comes to enjoy. His knowledge of food and wine leads to meetings and conversations with the local people and Paul becomes a local attraction. As Paul is finally finding the peace, inspiration and fine detail to complete his book, he is thrown into turmoil as his problems from England follow him to the tranquil village of Montalcino. Paul's love life appears to be as bizarre as his mode of transport leading to much speculation and gossip amongst the villagers. **Some wonderful insights into the food, wine, landscape and culture of Tuscany add to this deliciously fun read.***

## **Rachael Anderson**

### ***An easy, amusing standalone novel.***

*The central character of the novel, a successful food writer, is having problems completing his ninth book, 'Paul Stuart's Tuscan Table' as a consequence of his fiancée having run off with her personal trainer. On the advice of his editor, Gloria, he goes to Tuscany to help finish his book. Unfortunately, for Paul, his pre-booked hire car is nowhere to be found, after a small skirmish with the local police, the only option for transport is a bulldozer. He uses this to travel about Italian countryside.*

*A ridiculously silly story with a strong message. 'Make the best of what you have got.' It is a laugh out loud novel, with some hilarious moments. A comic mix of romance, adventure and food. Initially, I found the novel somewhat slow paced, however, it did liven up. I still prefer the 'Scotland Street' series, with its more relatable characters, however, 'My Italian Bulldozer' is nevertheless an easy, warm hearted read typical of Alexander McCall Smith. Great for a holiday read.*

## **Jacqueline Passfield**

### ***An amusing and entertaining romp around the Italian countryside - a delightful holiday read.***

*Reeling from the effects of a failed relationship, Paul Stuart, a food writer, escapes to the Italian town of Montalcino, with the aim of finishing his current book on the subject of Tuscan food and wine. However, things do not exactly go to plan and, from the moment Paul sets off on his trip, a series of amusing and unlikely events are set into action which result in him driving a bulldozer around the Italian countryside, and thus drawing him into events, experiences and people he would not otherwise have encountered. There follows, for the reader, a lively and light hearted romp through the Tuscan countryside, interspersed, rather unexpectedly at times, with some genuinely insightful moments, as well as a delightful peek into the quirks and eccentricities of both Italian life and character.*

*I had not read any of Alexander McCall Smith's other work to date, but this novel has inspired me to do so.*

## **Wendy Stubbs**

***A writer, a bulldozer and the Italian countryside, all add up to make an immensely enjoyable light hearted read. A slow but eventful journey through Italy, makes a fab read.***

*Unexpected events lead to Paul Stewart the writer of Food and Drink books, making his way through the beautiful Italian countryside on a hired bulldozer.*

*The journey, which he takes very reluctantly, takes him to some unexpected places, meeting the strangest and unpleasant of people. Along with a few unexpected delights.*

*Will the book, already much overdue get finished. Will Paul leave happier than when he arrived. You will have to dip into this delightful book and see for yourself. You certainly won't be disappointed. Enjoy.*

## **Edel Waugh**

*This is the story about a food writer called Paul. Paul has recently been dumped by his wife and needs to immerse himself into work if he is to move on with his life. When he gets the chance to travel to Montalcino in Italy he jumps at the chance to get away from his recent breakup, see this beautiful place and get some inspiration for his book. **This was a delightful story about the ups and downs of love, the power of a fresh start and the delightful people and scenery of the Italian countryside told with plenty of humour.***

<http://edelwaugh.blogspot.ie/2016/03/my-italian-bulldozer-by-alexander.html?m=1>

## **Alison Bisping**

*I had read the shorter version of this a few years ago and remember thinking it was ok, but that was about it. I had low expectations of this full sized novel because of that - well, how wrong was I!*

***I loved it from the moment I started until the moment it ended.*** *The descriptions made me feel I was in Tuscany (which I have never visited but it is now on my list). Yes, some of the story was predictable, some of it made me think - 'really?' - other parts had me chuckling away.*

*It's a nice gentle story about Paul Stewart, a food and drink author, who is behind with his latest food book about Italy, so he decides to immerse himself in*

*a village - Montalcino - to finish the book, hoping to be inspired by his surroundings. It works - but of course he has adventures along the way, including of course, the Italian Bulldozer - which he grows fond of.*

***Enjoy it and be prepared to fall in love with Italy - if you don't already.***

### **Manisha**

*This was a good change from my usual types of books that I normally read. I thoroughly enjoyed it. It is well written and has some funny bits which make it an easy and relaxing read.*

*I definitely recommend this book to anyone looking for something light and funny to read.*

### **Sarah Tilley**

***A delightful read - perfect for this year's summer holiday especially if you are having your own Italian adventure.***

*What a delightful read!*

*This is perfect for a holiday read, as it meanders along at a pace very suited to lying in the sun and relaxing.*

*The characters are all unique with their own foibles and sets scenes that are both funny and touching at the same time. Some laugh out loud moments as you follow Paul on his trip.*

*The landscape is very descriptive and you can almost smell the essence of Italy within the book.*

*I loved it, and will now be tracking down other books by the author if they are all as well written as this one.*

### **Mary Chapman**

***I am a lover of Alexander McCall Smith and have read so many of his books and loved them all but know this book is not going to join the list. I hate this review of this book I feel disloyal to Alexander McCall Smith as up to now I have no matter what series have enjoyed them and buy them as soon as they are out in paperback.***

*This is a short review as it upsets me so much to give it I just feel that it is so short and an easy money maker as there are people like me who would buy it because McCall Smith has written it. The only thing in its favour is that the publishers have used good quality paper doesn't feel cheap.*

*My biggest problem with this book is I just don't find it believable I don't feel convinced by any of the characters and on top of that the main character is so ridiculous it beggars belief.*

*A very disgruntled lover of Alexander McCall Smith*

### **Julie Collins**

***An interesting read, sometimes funny, sometimes sad. The characters are a strange mix but each brings something different to the story. Surprising subject matter but it works.***

*Although the title didn't appeal and the blurb sounded ludicrous I had enjoyed books by Alexander McCall Smith previously and decided to give it a chance. I am pleased I did as Paul is a character who I ended up rooting for: from his issues with the hire car company and his subsequent difficulties with the bulldozer to the way he deals with his new found single status.*

*Perhaps it is because in all of his interactions with new friends and acquaintances, his desire to treat people well shines through. He always seems to choose the right course of action in the end and it is for this reason that the reader wants him to find happiness.*

### **Phylippa Smithson**

***Read this and am confused. Is it a cookery-wine review book, Tuscan tourist guide, reflection on Italians and their culture, or a love story? Still don't know the answer.***

*Successful cookery-wine book author Paul's 4 year old relationship is at an end. His partner, Becky, has left him for her personal trainer leaving him feeling totally lost.*

*When speaking with his editor, Gloria, whose own hopes of a relationship with her favourite author increases significantly now he is at last eligible, encourages him to take himself to Italy to finish his next book and have time to come to terms with his single life again.*

*This he does and lands in Pisa looking forward to picking up his hire car,*

*booked by Gloria, to travel to his destination. The problem is there is no booking, according to the rental company and his only option is to take (although he feels he is given no choice by the eager Italians around him )into the decision to take ownership of a bulldozer.*

*What follows is a reflection on how he grows to realise all was not well in his life and that the joy of driving a bulldozer around the Tuscan countryside is not as wild a situation as he first thought. He grows to see the value a bulldozer brings over normal social forms of transport not least as it brings him into contact with a vast array of interesting Italian characters and one American lady in particular who he believes he has fallen in love with.*

*At times I was absolutely in love with this book – having been to Tuscany myself, it captured perfectly the mood, smells and colour of the region. But just could not get what the book was trying to achieve and am once again left disappointed in the writing of McCall-Smith. Glad others however ‘get him.’*