

ADRIAN

Australian, late 50s-60s - Recently retired librarian from the University. Uptight

Holidays..travel..not always the same thing.. This is a holiday that didn't go as planned..almost but not quite. Alison and I had recently moved. Couple of years ago. 2007 to be precise. How long ago it all seems now: George Bush thought he was winning in Iraq because they hanged Saddam. The property market was still booming, the Dow was at 12000.We did what more and more people were doing then.

Sold a house and bought an apartment. No maintenance, no gardening, and that terrible land agents' term "lock up and leave". But true enough.

The apartment was the usual sort of thing: two bedrooms, nice outlook, fifth floor, balcony. Most of the other--I was going to say "inmates" but you know what I mean-- all our age or thereabouts.

I had retired from the University Library; Alison was a librarian too—fun couple, eh?—but had given up work some years previously.

For various reasons we hadn't been able to get away on an overseas trip for a number of years, so to say we were looking forward to going to Italy was an understatement.

Italy. Eighty percent of the world's art treasures are within a hundred mile radius of Rome...it probably begs the question of what is an art treasure. Won't be long before the world accepts that most of them are in China. Anyway, for Europhiles let's say there was a ton of stuff worth our looking at. And, let's face it, Italy is Italy...