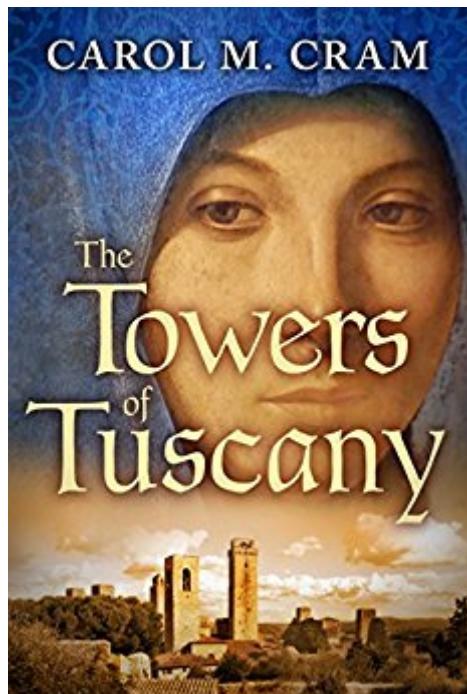


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The Towers Of Tuscany



Synopsis

Sofia is trained in secret as a painter in her father's workshop during a time when women did not paint openly. She loves her work, but her restless spirit leads her to betray her extraordinary gifts to marry a man who comes to despise her for not producing a son. After Sofia's father is crushed by his own fresco during an attack motivated by a vendetta, Sofia realizes she must escape her loveless marriage. She flees to Siena, where, disguised as a boy, she paints again. When her work attracts the notice of a nobleman who discovers the woman under the dirty smock, Sofia is faced with a choice that nearly destroys her. Meticulously researched settings and compelling characters are united with a strong heroine in this rich portrait of medieval Italy. Revised edition: This edition of *The Towers of Tuscany* includes editorial revisions.

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Customer Reviews

I liked the story and even more so as I got more and more into the book, however as much as I learned about painting in that period of time, the author went on and on about technique and preparation of the paintings. It did drag on a bit. I did like the story and the author made it easy to

imagine what it must have been like during the plague that swept through the country. I would have liked the ending to have ended a bit more polished, and without loose ends. What happened to Antonia and Francesco, also why was it that Pietro was with Francesco. He seemed an afterthought because I felt that the author was going somewhere with his character, but no, he was just there.

This is one of the best of its genre. I was a bit confused at first as to why that period in Italian architecture included all those towers, but it didn't take too long to figure it out. City states are not always peaceful, and people have to be on watch and eternally on guard. Rather than do that through military forces only, these cities were guarded by the local people who had sufficient money to build large homes. As to the transitions between one setting and another, it was smoothly handled, and the reader feels involved every step of the way. For a heroine who lost so many people she loved, this lady bravely handled each challenge as it came. I suspect that was true of that generation during which there was so much change. I loved the book and was sorry when it ended. I recommend it highly.

My great grandfather was from Lucca, Italy. Imagine my delight to learn I had inherited the Italian gene. This book was an absolute gem and I couldn't put it down. I've been to Lucca, Pisa, Florence and Venice but my heart is fondest of the Tuscany area. This story stays true to the time period and the area. The main character, Sophia, is truthful of so many strong yet human women. If you like historical romance and so much more you'll enjoy this wonderful story about the plight of women in the 1300s.

I enjoyed the lesson in painting. I loved the strong female character. I enjoyed her fathers lessons and instructions throughout the story. I grew tired of her wishy washy feelings for the men in her life, which was also understandable with her painting desires. But I did have a hard time putting the story down. The ending was abrupt.

This book was a surprise a wonderful rich beautifully written surprise. You will not be able to put it down as you share in the struggle of a brilliant you girl come woman and the painting she loved and was driven to continue at any cost. Sophia, Sandro her alter risks all in a world that refused to believe a woman had talent and the right to express it. Had she been exposed prison and death awaited her but she would not could not stop. And her daughter? Possibly having even greater talent well we'll never know.

If you enjoy historical fiction, as I do, you'll not be able to put this book down. Although it has a "Perils of Pauline" feel to the main character, it is a good read. I especially enjoyed the way her sense of color & composition constantly crept into her life. My daughter is an artist, so I could empathize with her frustration. I also found interesting her conversations with her very wise father. I was disappointed in the ending, though. I felt that it was too abrupt, & that the author didn't know how to bring the story to an end, so took an easy way out.

This story is much more than an account of the trials and tribulations of a medieval woman. It is a skillfully crafted tale that takes the reader to the medieval world of 14th century Italy. It is a society that is plagued by the treachery of feuding clans. The society is a male-dominated one in which women are allowed no freedom of expression or demonstration of creativity. The reader is taken to the workshops of artists and shown how art was practiced in that age. All credit is given to the master even if his brush never touches the working piece. Woe to the artist if it were to be known that a woman dared to practice the art. Our heroine struggles to achieve satisfaction under these conditions as her life becomes tortured with the desire to express her creativity and achieve recognition for her talents and creativity. Her life progresses from one pitfall to another. As the story reaches its climax, the Black Death strikes in San Gimignano and the horrors of the pestilence become real as we learn of the harshness of quarantine and the destruction of families. The tale is concluded with a fitting ending and, finally, an epilogue which brings it to the modern day for the very delayed recognition of the heroine's talents. A well crafted story that I fully enjoyed for its historicity and imaginative character.

I love Italy & everything's about the country. But, I covet & adore the Italian artists, Tuscany & Old Masters Towers of Tuscany, is well written with much love & both a love of the era, Tuscany & the customs & strife of a young girl, who only wants to paint, *Maesta*. Please read & fall

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