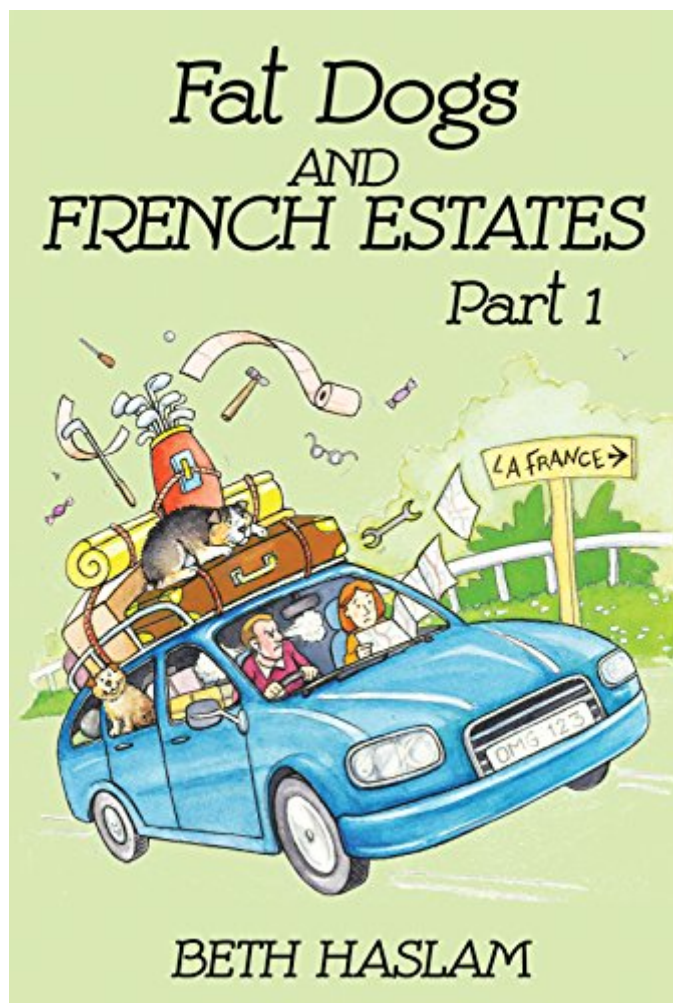


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Fat Dogs And French Estates - Part 1



Synopsis

Buying a country estate in France seemed such a simple thing to accomplish. When Beth, her irascible husband Jack, and their two fat dogs set off, little do they know that it will become such an extraordinary adventure. Surviving near-death experiences, they drive thousands of kilometres around French estates steeped in history and crazy aristocrats. Will they find their dream home, or return to Britain defeated? This is the hilarious first instalment in the Fat Dogs series.

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Customer Reviews

Oh. My. God. What horrible people. Poor France. What IS it with these awful people moving to France so they can spend all their time running down this amazing culture? The husband, described as irascible, is simply a relentlessly rude and abusive bully. And the author, his wife, doesn't seem to get that she's being mistreated. Apparently it's all hilarious to her, tiptoeing around this jerk for fear of setting him off. Bizarre. Even their dogs are horrible... and I love dogs. But these two have no

training whatsoever and are totally out of control in public. One of them attacks anyone wearing black trousers. Do they leash the crazy dog to protect others? No. I think at least three times, the dog attacked someone, but the couple laughs it off and refers to the victims as sissies who simply overreact to being attacked. Really? It's almost as if this author wrote these books solely for the opportunity to insult the French people and diminish their culture. I kept hoping they'd inflict their tasteless behavior on someone who would put them in their place. So petty is the constant diatribe, that I simply stopped reading. Absolutely ridiculous. And wildly exaggerated as well, I suspect. And hey, if you've been shown ten properties with run down homes not up to your standards, then clearly you cannot afford what you're looking for!

Wow, I seem to be the only reader so far who did not like this book! It's not awful at all, and sometimes Beth Haslam can be very witty. But, in short, her writing style is too long-winded, and oh my, the over-statements and the repetition of any incident she considers funny! She is sometimes plainly irritating. Normally I adore these books where people emigrate to France, usually buy a run-down property, battle with French bureaucracy and count the pennies carefully. Beth and husband seem just a little too well-off to keep my attention. There seems to be no problems with money, no pennypinching. They stay in fancy hotels. They definitely do not view tumble-down farmhouses. The mansions they see might have hideous aspects, but nowhere, it seems, would it be necessary for them to do anything more to the place except paint it and get rid of ghastly furniture and accoutrements. And in getting from one property-for-sale to another Beth describes every bend in the road, every hairpin turn, every rock ... Yikes. Especially irritating was Beth's continuous attempts to make her grumpy husband sound amusing. I could not work up any empathy for this character. He comes across as a very difficult old man, and Beth either really is, or pretends to be "the long-suffering wife" who smooths over his outbursts and impatience. Beth tries far too hard to be witty, and she does not know how to tell a story more concisely. It is not necessary to repeat funny stuff -- we get the joke the first time round. The overall impression was that she was determined to write a book about "our French adventure", but she simply does not have enough subject matter, so the descriptions of the search for a house with "hunting grounds" is endlessly drawn out. It does not measure up to the many far-better books on the same subject. I love animals, but the book starts with an endless tale of the two dogs, of horses, and of golf: I was really, really bored by all that. And as their journey goes on, and at least one dog keeps making a nuisance of himself, I felt like shouting, "For God's sake, why didn't you leave the two mutts in a kennel until you were settled?" Many people might find the doggy do's funny, but it's only funny the first time around.

I pitied the poor home-owners (keen to sell) who had to put up with the dogs running around, while these two rather impossible characters inspected house and grounds. Confession: I could not finish the book. Beth needs a ruthless editor, and simply better stories to tell. Sorry.

You can see why the French don't like some of the English. I won't be reading any more of this book. The husband actions are intolerable. To food, his wife and most of anyone different than him.

This book lost me in a sea of details. Not my cuppa!

This could have been a lovely story, as evident in the passages where that awful Jack is not mentioned. It got to a point where I wanted to wring his neck. But she claims to adore him but she should keep it to herself. As for the 6 months of planning behind the property search, I have never seen or heard of such a collection of weird places. Provence and Languedoc have a wonderful range of properties for every taste that can be found in 6 minutes on the Web. Sorry Beth but it does not add up.

To disjointed. Not a smooth read

I enjoyed the easy read. Was disappointed that the book didn't end but rather goes straight onto the second part, therefore having to buy part 2 to get to the end of the story.

Wish I had my money back. Unpleasant abusive husband, cowed wife who inflicts her ill-behaved pets on everyone she encounters. Note to self -- read sample of EVERY book before purchasing... Addendum -- subsequently found this: Beginning French: Lessons from a Stone Farmhouse. If you're one of the disenchanted with "Fat Dogs..." you may (as I have) find delight in reading about a loving, well-behaved family's experience in France. This is a treat and based on the first half of the first book, I'd cheerfully read any additional works by the authors... money well spent....

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