



A Year in the Merde

By Stephen Clarke

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Based on Stephen Clarke's own experiences and with names changed to "avoid embarrassment, possible legal action, and to prevent the author's legs being broken by someone in a Yves Saint Laurent suit," *A Year in the Merde* provides perfect entertainment for Francophiles and Francophobes alike.

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A Year in the Merde By Stephen Clarke Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Take a self-assured Brit with an eye for the ladies, drop him in the middle of Paris with a tenuous grasp of the language and you have Clarke's alter ego, Paul West, who combines the gaffes of Bridget Jones with the boldness of James Bond. Hired to oversee the creation of a French chain of British tearooms, Clarke, aka West, spends nine months—the equivalent of a French business year—stumbling his way through office politics *à la française*. Clarke's sharp eye for detail and relentless wit make even the most quotidian task seem surreal, from ordering a cup of coffee to picking up a loaf of bread at the *boulangerie*. Luck is by West's side as he moves into a stunning apartment (with his boss's attractive daughter), but he has to be careful where he steps, as he finds he "began to branch out from literal to metaphorical encounters of the turd kind." Between conspiring colleagues, numerous sexual escapades (he deems French porn "unsexy" since "Being French, they had to talk endlessly before they got down to action") and simply trying to order a normal-sized glass of beer, West quickly learns essential tricks to help him keep his head above the Seine. Originally self-published in Paris, Clarke's first book in a soon-to-be-series is funny and well-written enough to appeal to an audience beyond just Francophiles. *Agent, Susanna Lea at Susanna Lea Associates. (May)*

From Booklist

Brit Paul West escapes his homeland to take a job in Paris marketing English tearooms to the French. Over a year's cycle he discovers that the French way of doing business thrives on maneuvering nimbly through a minefield of unique, demanding personalities. An inveterate womanizer, he finds plenty of skirts to chase and conquer. After a comic search for an apartment, he settles in the city's trendy Marais district. Urban stress in general, combined with a need to escape the upstairs family whose every move reverberates to distraction, forces West to escape to a Norman getaway featuring all the bucolic charms and a cast of neighbors and townspeople to rival Peter Mayle's Provencal rustics. West disdains French food for its love of organ meats and its fascination with revoltingly smelly cheeses. Francophobes will find much here to reinforce their prejudices; more balanced observers will find Clarke's caricatures of the French simply very funny reading.

Mark Knoblauch

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Review

"Highly entertaining...Clarke renders the flavor of life in Paris impeccably." *Washington Post*

"Call him the anti-Mayle. Stephen Clarke is acerbic, insulting, un-PC and mostly hilarious." *San Francisco Chronicle*.

"The antidote to Peter Mayle, this 'almost-true memoir' will appeal equally to Francophobes and Francophiles." *New York Post* (4 stars)

"The book is laugh-out-loud hilarious. Like the best of British comedy, *Merde* is a comedy of errors...[with] great interlingual puns, a vivacious spirit and a playful attitude about the absurdities of a foreign culture." *Rocky Mountain News*

"Combines the gaffes of Bridget Jones with the boldness of James Bond... Clarke's sharp eye for detail and relentless wit make even the most quotidian task seem surreal." *Publishers Weekly*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Williams:

This A Year in the Merde book is not really ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper you actually read a lot of information you will get. This particular A Year in the Merde without we know teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry A Year in the Merde can bring once you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even phone. This A Year in the Merde having great arrangement in word and layout, so you will not feel uninterested in reading.

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Rena Campbell:

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