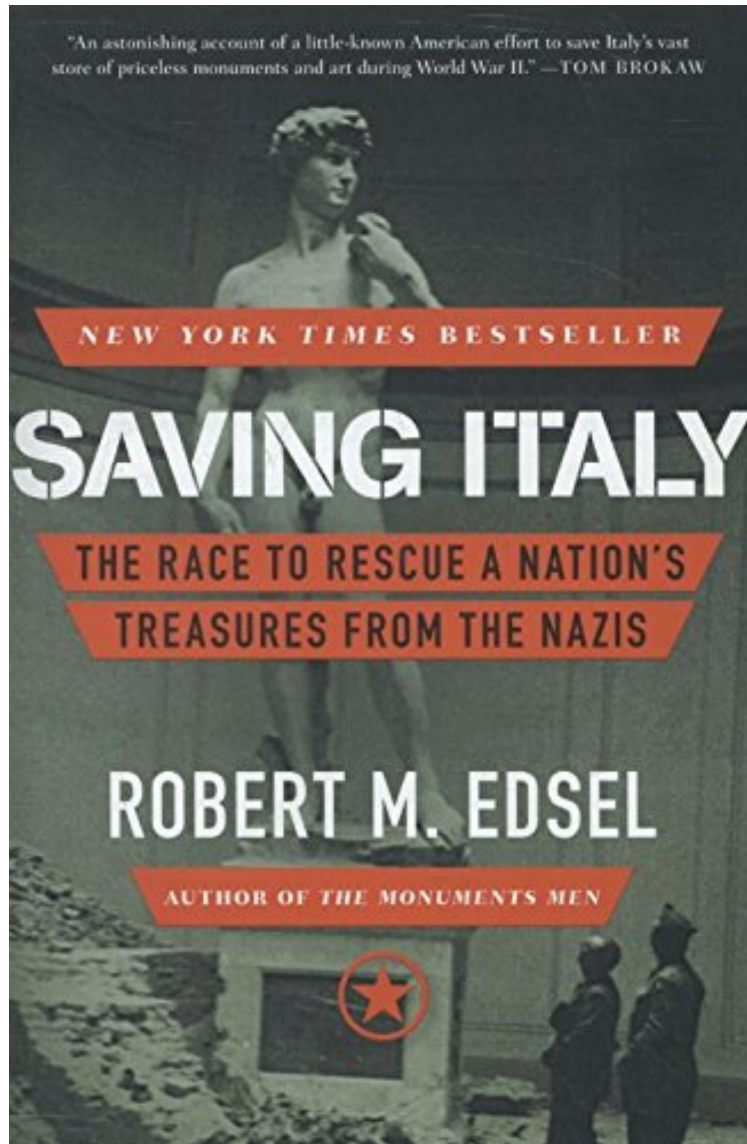


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Saving Italy: The Race to Rescue a Nation's Treasures from the Nazis

Robert M. Edsel

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Robert M. Edsel : Saving Italy: The Race to Rescue a Nation's Treasures from the Nazis before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Saving Italy: The Race to Rescue a Nation's Treasures from the Nazis:

49 of 50 people found the following review helpful. Loved Saving Italy!By KikiI couldn't put it down! Saving Italy is a page turner with a compelling narrative that often keeps you on the edge-of-your-seat with suspense. The drawings that Monuments Man Deane Keller sent home to his young son offer a revealing insight into the man's mixed emotions about his eagerness to help save the treasures of a country he loved in the midst of war, coupled with the loneliness and isolation he felt being separated from the family he adored. The passion and impulsiveness of Monuments Man Fred Hartt help the thrilling adventure of Saving Italy come alive. Edsel does a great job bringing out the very human side of his complex characters, including a little known Nazi General, Karl Wolff. The book is well-researched with many author interviews noted, but is presented in a way that reads more like an espionage novel. I highly recommend Saving Italy not just to those who love art or WWII History, but to anyone looking for an inspiring story about the human spirit and the sacrifices people make to follow their passion, risking their lives for a cause greater than themselves. Five stars doesn't seem like enough!30 of 30 people found the following review helpful. Amazing Characters; Amazing Story!By JesseThis is an amazing story about a part of WWII history that I was not familiar with. The author did a great job researching and writing this compelling narrative about a "new kind of soldier" empowered to protect rather than destroy. I have read many books about the war but can't remember one that included so many rich details. The characters practically leap off the page. The story is fast-paced, reading more like fiction. As a reader I felt like I was almost part of the adventure. One of the most interesting plots in Saving Italy involves a secret Nazi surrender of Italy in which the art work is held hostage while an SS General negotiates with American spies. I was surprised and riveted by these details. Overall, this is an exciting read and I would highly recommend it. (And I can't wait to see the Clooney movie based on the author's last book, The Monuments Men.)Saving Italy: The Race to Rescue a Nation's Treasures from the Nazis22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Terrific Story, You Will Feel Good After reading It.By H. F. MiglinoWhat an amazing story! My father lived in Italy during WWII and I never spoke with him when he was alive about how it was in Italy during the war. Many cities experienced much destruction, including Naples, Milan, Florence and Monte Cassino. In 1980 I saw DaVinci's fresco The Last Supper and there were photos of the destruction of the church where the fresco was. Did not dawn on me that it was allied bombs which blew up the church but the bombing was of the train yards right near the church. Even in a brutal war men realized the importance of these masterpieces, men on both sides of the war. The story that is told is incredible and I am surprised it took this long to get this story out there. I see where a movie is being made on this subject and will be released in December. Interwoven in the story is the German surrender in Italy and how complicated it was, the Germans just could not surrender that easy. Also did not know all the bridges in Florence were blown up by the Germans (rebuilt after the war) except for the Ponte Vecchio (which Hitler loved that bridge). The bombing of the abbey in Monte Cassino, allied forces had no choice but to bomb it. All the men searching for these masterpieces, college professors, museum curators, what a story. Thank you Robert Edsel for writing this story.

From the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *The Monuments Men* "An astonishing account of a little-known American effort to save Italy's...art during World War II."?Tom Brokaw When Hitler's armies occupied Italy in 1943, they also seized control of mankind's greatest cultural treasures. As they had done throughout Europe, the Nazis could now plunder the masterpieces of the Renaissance, the treasures of the Vatican, and the antiquities of the Roman Empire. On the eve of the Allied invasion, General Dwight Eisenhower empowered a new kind of soldier to protect these historic riches. In May 1944 two unlikely American heroes?artist Deane Keller and scholar Fred Hartt?embarked from Naples on the treasure hunt of a lifetime, tracking billions of dollars of missing art, including works by Michelangelo, Donatello, Titian, Caravaggio, and Botticelli. With the German army retreating up the Italian peninsula, orders came from the highest levels of the Nazi government to transport truckloads of art north across the border into the Reich. Standing in the way was General Karl Wolff, a top-level Nazi officer. As German forces blew up the magnificent bridges of Florence, General Wolff commandeered the great collections of the Uffizi Gallery and Pitti Palace, later risking his life to negotiate a secret Nazi surrender with American spymaster Allen Dulles.Brilliantly researched and vividly written, the New York Times bestselling *Saving Italy* brings readers from Milan and the near destruction of *The Last Supper* to the inner sanctum of the Vatican and behind closed doors with the preeminent Allied and Axis leaders: Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Churchill; Hitler, Göring, and Himmler.An unforgettable story of epic thievery and political intrigue, *Saving Italy* is a testament to heroism on behalf of art, culture, and history. 61 illustrations; 3 maps

From BooklistAlongside the Allies' push north against the Nazis, there was another war fought in WWII Italy, a battle to preserve the country's rich cultural contribution to Western civilization. With Leonardo da Vinci's iconic *The Last Supper* nearly demolished by a bomb, protecting the nation's art became an urgent task, requiring hundreds of paintings and sculpture to be hidden throughout the country (Michelangelo's *David* was entombed in brick). The group assigned to save the art in Italy was made up of 40 American and British "Monuments Men." Edsel (who has trod this ground before, in *The Monuments Men*, 2009) clearly presents the war in Italy as a battle not just to occupy

the land but also to preserve the country's culture. In urgent and precise prose, he puts the reader in the cockpit, the foxhole, and the cramped offices of those charged with saving the artwork. Most of the pilfering and destruction of art treasures was done by the Nazis, of course, but Edsel points out that the Allies were not blameless, either. This is a must-read for WWII buffs and anyone interested in the fight for art history. --Bridget Thoreson It is amazing that so much of Italy's timeless art survived the sordidness of World War Two. Robert Edsel has written a poignant, fascinating story, bringing to life the heroic soldier-scholars who saved Italy's treasures. --Evan Thomas, Bestselling author of "Ike's Bluff" and "Sea of Thunder" Saving Italy is an astonishing account of a little known American effort to save Italy's vast store of priceless monuments and art during World War II. While American warriors were fighting the length of the country, other Americans were courageously working alongside to preserve the irreplaceable best of Italy's culture. Read it and be proud of those who were on their own front lines of a cruel war. --Tom Brokaw Robert Edsel has written a captivating, and at times hair-raising, book on the audacious Allied effort during World War II to save the priceless art treasures in Italy. It is impossible to imagine what Western civilization would be today without these cultural masterpieces. Edsel has written a gripping, heroic story of the Monuments Men who saved them from certain destruction. --Susan Eisenhower As Robert Edsel shows us in this valuable book, the artistic patrimony of the western world was a hostage to Hitler's legions in 1945. Saving Italy rescues an unlikely troop of American heroes from obscurity, chronicling the exploits of a band of art professors working for the U.S. military as they saved Tuscany's masterworks, museums and cathedrals from oblivion as Nazi Germany's southern flank crumbled. --James D. Hornfischer, bestselling author of "Neptune's Inferno" Robert Edsel weaves a suspenseful tale worthy of an Indiana Jones plot. He pulls you into a dangerous web of intrigue in which the Vatican, top German SS generals, American OSS operatives and Italian officials are entwined in top-secret negotiations to end the war. A must read for any WWII history enthusiast. --Gordon H. Nick Mueller, President/CEO, The National WWII Museum Eventually the deranged plots of the Nazis called forth a new breed of adversary, their college degrees in art and antiquities hardly imposing yet suddenly critical, their extraordinary confrontation with evil quickly proving capable, in this inspired account, of recasting the war in Italy into a barn-burner of a history. --Hugh Ambrose, bestselling author of "The Pacific" An amazing story, superbly told. The narrative and research are exceptionally well done. Edsel has done a great service not only to tell the story of the Monuments Men and the work they did in Italy but also to remind mankind what the Germans did. I believe that Saving Italy is a major contribution to the history of World War II. --Carlo D Este, bestselling author of "Patton: A Genius For War" Edsel's recovery of the history of the Monuments Men makes for a remarkable and fascinating story. As more recent conflicts have shown, the havoc that war can wreak upon our artistic heritage has unfortunately not diminished and there are important lessons in this book for policy makers and all who care about the preservation of the world's artistic legacy for future generations. --Timothy Potts, Director, the J. Paul Getty Museum Edsel's knowledge and appreciation of art amplifies this celebration of the unheralded group of men who ensured the safety of Italy's greatest treasures. Saving Italy is a teeming work...by an author passionate about his subject. --Matthew Price Edsel is very good on how the officers charged with identifying what had happened to Italy's art went about their work. He gives a vivid flavor of what life must have been like as they searched among the ruins. --Alasdair Palmer What a dramatic story! --Andrew Nagorski Dramatic . . . lively narrative. --Andrew Nagorski Revealing.... That the Monuments Men were able to do as much as they did, amid a war with more urgent priorities is remarkable. --Hugh Eakin Riveting narrative history. A teeming work...by an author passionate about his subject. --Matthew Price Dramatic...lively narrative. --Andrew Nagorski Revealing... That the Monuments Men were able to do as much as they did, amid a war with more urgent priorities is remarkable. --Hugh Eakin Dramatic lively narrative. --Andrew Nagorski Dramatic lively narrative. --Andrew Nagorski "Revealing That the Monuments Men were able to do as much as they did, amid a war with more urgent priorities is remarkable. --Hugh Eakin" Riveting narrative history. "An absorbing, thoroughly researched gallop of a history book. --Noah Charney" A teeming work by an author passionate about his subject. --Matthew Price "A suspenseful tale worthy of an Indiana Jones plot. He pulls you into a dangerous web of intrigue in which the Vatican, top German SS generals, American OSS operatives and Italian officials are entwined in top-secret negotiations to end the war. A must read for any WWII history enthusiast. --Gordon H. Nick Mueller, President/CEO, The National WWII Museum" Edsel's recovery of the history of the Monuments Men makes for a remarkable and fascinating story. As more recent conflicts have shown, the havoc that war can wreak upon our artistic heritage has unfortunately not diminished and there are important lessons in this book for policy makers and all who care about the preservation of the world's artistic legacy for future generations. --Timothy Potts, Director, the J. Paul Getty Museum "An amazing story, . . . superbly told. --Carlo D Este, bestselling author of Patton: A Genius For War" About the Author Robert M. Edsel is the best-selling author of The Monuments Men and Rescuing da Vinci and co-producer of the award-winning documentary film The Rape of Europa. Edsel is also the founder and president of the Monuments Men Foundation, a recipient of the National Humanities Medal, and a trustee at the National WWII Museum. After living in Florence for five years, he now resides in Dallas, Texas.