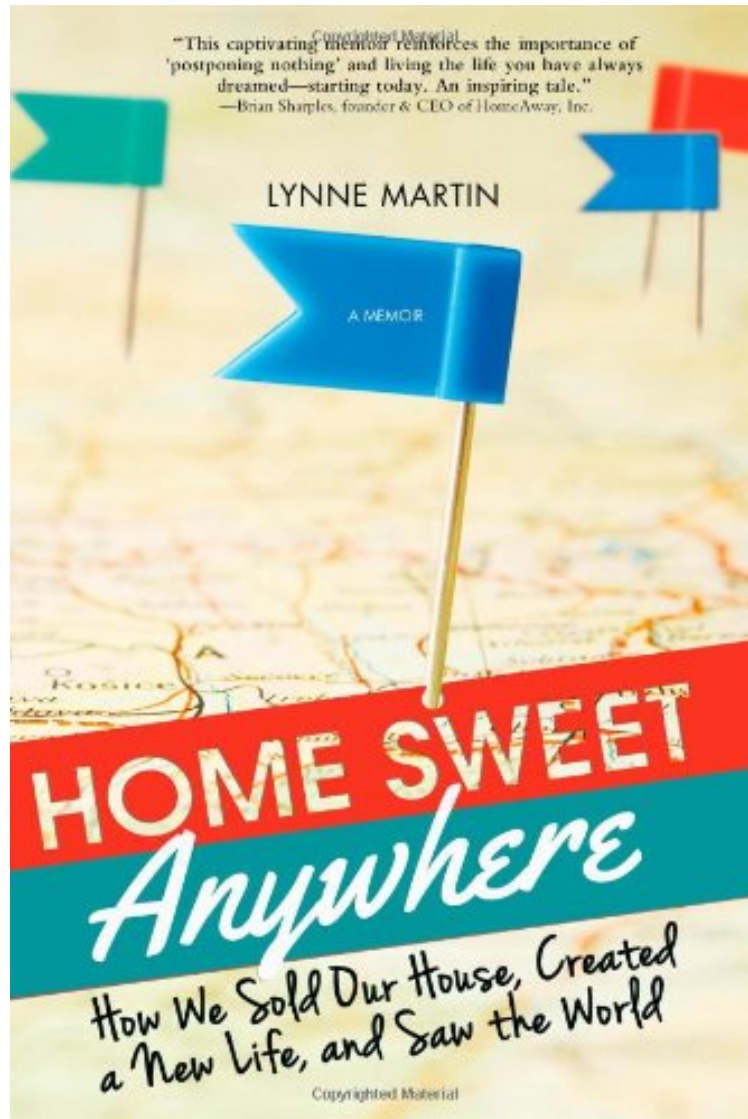


[FREE] Home Sweet Anywhere: How We Sold Our House, Created a New Life, and Saw the World

Home Sweet Anywhere: How We Sold Our House, Created a New Life, and Saw the World

Lynne Martin

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Lynne Martin : Home Sweet Anywhere: How We Sold Our House, Created a New Life, and Saw the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Home Sweet Anywhere: How We Sold Our House, Created a New Life, and Saw the World:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Not a "How To" Book, but InterestingBy SerenaThis is an

entertaining book, but it is not a "How To" book as it seems many disappointed people have discovered. It's too bad people are unhappy because I think that if they hadn't had other expectations they might have enjoyed this book. The paperback version states that it is a memoir twice on the front cover. And then the title says "How We Sold Our House, Created a New Life, and Saw the World. And they do tell you how they did it and about their travels. What this book doesn't tell you is how much money they spent which is probably more than most retired people would have to spend and probably costs more every year and depends a lot on where they decide to travel. It wasn't clear to me why they sold their house as they never stated they needed the money from the sale to finance their new lives. I guess they didn't want the worries of home ownership to follow them during their new carefree life. Many people might like to keep their homes if they can manage it financially. Others might not have the income to live as well as the Martins, but they can still live abroad and have fun doing it. And many people wouldn't want to be out of the country for as long as the Martins. For me I can see going for a couple of two month foreign stays a year. There are millions of ways to adapt what the Martins did to our own lives should we want to do it. She can't tell you how to do it, but she can tell you the basics of what they did. I was entertained by their story and I didn't feel that Lynne Martin put on airs, name dropped or had her nose in the air. I think the Martins are a very down to earth couple who have been fortunate enough to live the good life and are continuing to do so. I enjoyed the story, but I didn't have any expectations other than to enjoy it. I agree with those who were bored hearing about her budding writing career. From my point of view she ruined her travel life by having to meet deadlines and spend her days writing. Why do that? If you must, plan a few months after the traveling is done to do the writing. However, that's what she wanted to do, I think, and I hope she is still happy about it in spite of all the negative reviews. This is an intriguing book and I think it's a shame that so many people wrote nasty reviews. I don't really get it, but maybe if I didn't get what I had expected I would have been disappointed too. I wish the Martins many more years of great health while they follow their dreams.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable Travelogue By Kevin B. While not really a "How To" book, it was an enjoyable read to discover some things you may not have thought of, or given enough thought to. The country specific issues were also a good feature of the writing, which was done well. It doesn't however get into great detail regarding the many choices before you if you follow in their footsteps, which it really can't because everyone's life is different. But I believe it can help you get started in the thought process of doing it, while you huddle with your advisors on the reality of your situation. I am a DIY type of guy, but you will need help from others to make it happen, as I have learned. There are MANY moving parts if you are not yet retired. All in all, the book is well written (unlike this review), an enjoyable ride (I felt like I was right there with them and could relate to some of the issues they ran into), and a tempting strategy to live an adventurous life during a part of retirement ... Or as they say "until the wheels fall off". Buy the book!

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. More of a memoir than how-to; a lesson on not postponing long-term travel By MG The world is big, beautiful, amazing, scary, and exciting - to spend your entire life in only one or two places is, I have always thought, not a full life. Americans, spoon-fed the American Dream since childhood, rarely see long-term travel as a possibility. They buy houses and possessions, acquire mortgages and debt, and then spend most of their lives working to pay for it all. They become trapped in keeping up with the Joneses and only see the world in two week - "too weak" - vacations. But the greatest secret of the modern age is that, with today's technology, you can live and work anywhere, if you do it right. Author Lynne Martin and her husband represent the mature, retired set. In 2010, they sold their house in CA and ramped up their "home free" life - first Mexico, then Buenos Aires, Turkey (after a repositioning cruise), France, Italy, Britain, Ireland, and Morocco. They returned to CA to visit family, etc, then they headed off to Portugal. Look at the list of their travels again: their first step into Europe was Istanbul, Turkey. Compare that to your American friends whose idea of a trip is a vacation resort in Mexico, in which they never venture beyond the walls of the resort. The book is not actually a how-to book. It is mostly a memoir. Some "how to" comes out of their journeys and experiences. At the back of the book, there is a chapter: "Things the Guidebooks Won't Teach You." I would like to have seen that expanded. I know the biggest question people always have is: "How can you afford it?" #1) It's not as expensive as you think. It costs far more to live in the United States, with a house and a mortgage, than it does to live in much of the world, And, as the author has done, you can relocate throughout the year, varying your time between expensive and inexpensive countries. #2) If you are not retired or otherwise need income, the key is simply to detach your income source from one geographical location. That's what technology has given us. I made my biggest sales to American retailers while I was in Europe. Because of the time difference, I was always able to put together my sales pitch, while the buyers were still asleep, and get them first thing in (their) morning, while I was having a beer at a German castle. But you can even make long-term travel work in the service industry. I know a waitress who travels the world, funding her life along the way at restaurants. Her big challenge is Visa requirements, but she does it. Last I heard she was in Asia somewhere. If you are young, I think you should travel for at least a year before you go to college or start a career. Your experiences will be invaluable. In fact, to compare Lynne Martin's way of traveling, watch a documentary called "Map for Saturday." The film chronicles the backpackers' life and features a "mature" gentleman living that life. Inspirational, to say the least. I also highly recommend "Vagabonding" by Rolf Potts. It will put you into the mindset of being a long-time world traveler. I re-read it often as an antidote to "a society that is constantly urging us to do otherwise." And I first heard about modern-

day long-term travelers from Tim Ferriss, in his "Four Hour Workweek," which provides some how-to. Lynne Martin finishes her book by saying "Postpone nothing." That is great advice. You may think you agree but until you actually get out there, you will not truly appreciate the value of that advice. The book will not provide everything you need to know. But it will introduce you to what lies ahead for you, if you want it.

"Nearly every page has some crack piece of travel wisdom ... an accessible, inspiring journey." -Kirkus
The Sell-Your-House, See-the-World Life!
Reunited after thirty-five years and wrestling a serious case of wanderlust, Lynne and Tim Martin decided to sell their house and possessions and live abroad full-time. They've never looked back. With just two suitcases, two computers, and each other, the Martins embark on a global adventure, taking readers from sky-high pyramids in Mexico to Turkish bazaars to learning the contact sport of Italian grocery shopping. But even as they embrace their new home-free lifestyle, the Martins grapple with its challenges, including hilarious language barriers, finding financial stability, and missing the family they left behind. Together, they learn how to live a life-and love-without borders. From glittering Georgian mansions in Ireland to the windswept coasts of Portugal, this euphoric, inspiring memoir is more than a tale of second chances. Recently featured on NPR's Here and Now, as well as in the New York Times, Home Sweet Anywhere is a road map for anyone who dreams of turning the idea of life abroad into a reality.

"Engaging, witty, and insightful ... This book will make you want to pick up your pen and duffle bags! and start writing your own unique path to life." - Great New Books
"Nearly every page has some crack piece of travel wisdom ... an accessible, inspiring journey." - Kirkus
"Martin never sugarcoats the challenges involved ("I ache with longing for my family occasionally"), but she concludes: "Every day, we learn something, see something, plan something, meet someone or solve some brand-new problem." A good trade-off. And an even better book." - The Wall Street Journal
"An enchanting account of how one couple fulfilled a dream of living abroad one country at a time and invented a new vision for a second lease on life" - AAA Home Away
"The author writes in an engaging, descriptive style that makes the reader feel s/he's been invited along for the journey. And what a journey it has been. ... The book is not just about travel, it's about embracing the life you have and living it to the fullest." - New York Journal of Books
"Read [Martin's] tale of travel and get inspired to change your life!" - Jewish Journal
"This terrific book gives hope to everyone who desires the fun and freedom of dropping everything and hitting the road to foreign ports." - Jeri Sedlar, co-author of Don't Retire, REWIRE!
About the Author
In 2010, Lynne and Tim Martin decided to sell their home, disburse most of their belongings and travel the world for the rest of their lives. Lynne's popular blog, homefreeadventures.com, chronicles their nomadic life, which was the cover article of The Wall Street Journal's "Next" section in October 2012, and was featured on the front page of Yahoo.com, as well as in the Huffington Post, Fodor's Travel Intelligence, among others. Her work has also appeared in Mark Chimsky's book, 65 Things to Do When You Retire, International Living, the Huffington Post, and other publications. Lynne and her husband Tim, a novelist, have lived in Mexico, Argentina, Turkey, France, Italy, Great Britain, Ireland, and Morocco since they became home free. She now has no permanent address and intends to keep it that way until the wheels fall off sometime in the next thirty years.
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Chapter 1 Packing Up
After our life-changing trip to San Miguel, we were primed to move forward with our exciting new plan when we returned to California. We just had a few decisions to make and we'd be on our way! But wait, not so fast. Tim and I both are Librans, October babies. In astrological circles, this means it's impossibly hard for us to make decisions. And it certainly can be. Luckily though, we are both astrological anomalies, too, because big choices often are easy for us. We have bought cars in a matter of minutes and houses in an afternoon. (Is it any wonder our children would think we are flighty?) We decided to marry each other without a moment's hesitation. Likewise, we instantaneously came up with this plan to sell our house so we could kick around the world for a few years. The house obliged us. It sold in one day-during a down market. With a sign like that, we weren't about to let any astrological inclinations get in the way of our thrilling new life. So here is the story of how we went from there to here...and here...and here: We wanted to live in Paris, explore Ireland at our own pace, have an apartment in Florence, see what it would be like to live for a while in Portugal-in other words, be free! As I previously mentioned, we'd quickly realized that financially it would be difficult to just lock up our house and leave for months at a time. Maintenance problems would nag at us constantly, and a large house sitting empty is a target for all kinds of nefarious characters with bad intentions. Besides, the steep overhead would have severely limited our flexibility in where we could go and for how long. Converting the cash from the house into moneymaking investments was the sensible thing to do if we wanted to have the easiest lifestyle abroad. Our financial manager perceived the logic of pulling the cash from our house so it would work in our portfolio, instead of waiting for years for the post-2007 housing bubble market to recover. Theoretically, if we'd waited, we would find ourselves too old to enjoy life on the road. As I said, the house sold in one day. Now there was no turning back. The buyers also wanted a forty-five-day turnaround, which galvanized us into action. The day after the house sold, I found Tim in our cozy little office, hunched over his computer at 6:00 a.m. "Honey, what's up? It's not even light outside," I croaked. Without looking up, he responded, "Did you know that a repositioning cruise from Miami to Rome costs

\$2,300 for both of us? That's cheaper than airfare and we get two weeks' room and board to boot! There's one next year from Fort Lauderdale to Rome. Should we book it?" Already awake, already in manic mode. My loving husband. "What on earth is a repositioning cruise?" I asked, longing for my morning coffee. My head was already spinning. "See, the cruise lines move their ships from one part of the world to another twice a year, and they offer passengers a really good deal then. As far as I can tell, all the services are the same, but the prices are about half what they normally are," he said, grinning. "Do you want to be in the bow or the stern?" Half asleep or not, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. "Wait a minute, sweetie, you've never been on a cruise ship. You're claustrophobic, and we have zero tolerance for boredom. While we're both very friendly, we're also really choosy about our company, so what in the world makes you think we'd be happy for two weeks in a floating hotel?" This was too much for my groggy head to handle. Coffee was now a must. Tim followed me on my coffee quest to the kitchen. "Look, I know it's a risk, but as long as we're doing this whole crazy thing, let's give it a try next spring. If we don't like it, we'll fly next time. Come look at this stateroom." He steered me back to the computer as I continued to resist the idea of being confined to a monster motorboat until we landed in Rome. Or that we might be forced to chat pleasantly over dinner with people who had lingered too long at the cocktail hour. Not to mention that watching the Iceberg Follies or some other crazy musical production put on by the crew in the middle of the Atlantic or participating in endless bingo tournaments was not exactly my idea of fun nightly entertainment. To be honest, all of my notions of cruising came from one miserable three-day trip to Mexico full of drunken merrymakers, and I wasn't so sure I wanted to repeat the experience. Two weeks of that seemed like a very long time to me. Tim gently and kindly countered me, because, as always, he had done his homework and had the answers ready before the conversation even started. (His ability to be prepared for any and all questions is a quality I am begrudgingly grateful for.) "This is a freestyle dining cruise ship, honey. We can have every meal in our stateroom if we don't want to bother with other people, or we can have a table to ourselves whenever we like. We don't have to go near any of the rollicking performances of Joan of Arc on Ice if we don't want to." Meet Tim Martin, travel agent extraordinaire. He entertained me with dozens of photos of the ship: spa services, three swimming pools, gorgeous views from the dining rooms, smiling passengers being served fruity drinks in their lounge chairs. Slowly but surely, he won me over, and by midmorning, he'd booked us in an ocean-view stateroom, smack in the bow of a gleaming white behemoth of a boat. Our new life dream was becoming a reality. And with it, I realized, came a new mind-set. Travel planning quickly became Tim's full-time job, and he's very serious about it. It's always on his mind. While standing in line at the movies, he'll nudge me and say, "Hey, did I tell you that we can rent an apartment in Portugal at the beach for less than \$1,800 a month? That could take care of March." Tim still plies the Internet daily, no matter where we are, because trip planning remains an ongoing necessity. We are always balancing time, weather, our desires, and never-ending budget questions. It requires an enormous amount of his time and considerable experience to live as we do; even so, we still make occasional mistakes. But in that moment, as we stood in the kitchen and I said yes to my first cruise in years, repositioning cruises and longtime rentals were still tomorrow's realities. More urgent matters stared us in the face. Literally. To be ready in time, not only did we have to dispose of our possessions, find a home for our dog, and arrange the mundane details of life like banking, mail, wardrobes, health checkups, and inoculations, but we also had to get our travel documents together for our first "outings," which we had decided would be to Mexico and Argentina. In short, we needed to give away, sell, store, or take every item we owned in forty-five days. It was enough to send anyone over the brink, especially a pair of indecisive Librans. *** At this point, before we plunge in further, I would advise anyone who considers taking on this daring new lifestyle to prepare for some emotionally difficult moments. While indescribably rewarding, this path is not for sissies. Becoming home free is a lot like mature people starting a new marriage and moving in together. It boils down to one simple tug-of-war: "How can we get rid of your junk so we have room for my THINGS?" It's hard to let go of belongings you've treasured all your life, but you don't really need. In about a month and a half (hopefully your time would be longer!), we had to streamline our life and let go of the past, because storing all of our furniture and belongings wasn't practical. Besides, we envisioned having yet another wonderful fresh start when we finally gave up our traveling ways and did settle down again. The vision of living with light, bright, contemporary furnishings in the future made it possible for me to say good-bye to our lovely old pieces. I said "possible," not "easy." Actually doing it was another story. After finding each other again, we'd moved often, looking for the place where we'd feel at home forever. We tried Ohio and North Carolina before heading back to California, leaving a trail of books, clothes, and other beloved objects each time we moved. This time, we had to get serious. Almost all of it had to go. We vowed to each other that a 10 15 storage space would be the maximum size in which to put our belongings. A hundred fifty square feet fills up fast, which led to us becoming brutal sorters. We tried to tackle one room at a time, but soon, every part of the house lay in complete disarray, with daunting piles of "keep," "give," "toss," and "take" items requiring their own decisions. Our forty-five days were already evaporating like drizzle in Death Valley. One afternoon, I found Tim in the garage, having a good stare into the distance, a large tape dispenser in his hand and a box at his feet. "Whatcha up to?" I asked. He started, and then I noticed the huge piles of vintage CDs on the garage floor. Many were links to his history in the music business, and even more of them marked important moments in his life and career. Some even featured tunes he had written. "Well, I thought Alwyn [Tim's daughter who lived in Texas and shared his passion for music] might like to

have these. They're all on my iPod anyway," he mumbled sadly. He forced a bright smile, but I knew as I walked away that I'd seen his lip quiver when his beloved Elvis hit the bottom of the box. Every day, we collected bric-a-brac into boxes and bags for the AmVet charity truck. Every day, Tim horsed carloads to them and trunkfuls of paintings and kitchen equipment I knew I'd need at some point down the road to the storage space. Some days, it seemed as if things multiplied magically while we slept. A room we had cleared out would suddenly be full of more stuff. I'd sit there, scratching my head, thinking I could have sworn it was empty the last time I closed the door, while my possessions leered back at me, daring me to purge them. But things kept flying out the door into the eager hands of our friends and neighbors. Our children claimed most of the larger furniture and antiques. We were beginning to feel pretty cocky about our progress. But we were still left with ten thousand other decisions. Once, I trotted into the office where Tim was having an email battle with an apartment owner in Istanbul over the proposed rent, and twirled around in my gorgeous mid-calf, honey-colored, bias-cut skirt. It weighed at least ten pounds and its bulk would gobble half a suitcase. He shook his head and said, "Darling, you look sensational, but somehow I don't think you'd need that outfit in Florence in July." Sadly, I placed it on the "donate" pile. Tim's elegant cashmere overcoat-perfect for living in Manhattan, but useless in the sizzling heat of Izmir, Turkey-joined the skirt. We never gave either another thought-until I wrote this sentence. We were making headway, though. The garage stack dwindled, some of our travel plans began shaping up, and we brought our anxieties more or less under control. In spite of an escrow-closing drama, the irritations that accompany selling a house, and some panicked moments of insecurity and self-doubt-"Are we truly crazy to be doing this?!"-we were wildly happy at the prospect of this new adventure. Our union was already an unexpected gift, a breathtaking surprise from the heavens for me in the wake of losing Guy. But the prospect of being on the road permanently, the luxury to spend all of our time together while we explored exciting places and challenged ourselves with new experiences, was almost beyond my wildest dreams. I could hardly wait to finish this phase of drudgery. One day, I scurried past Tim in the hallway. He was carrying an enormous armload of books and papers, and I was bustling in the other direction on some urgent errand. He caught my eye, dropped his burden, and pulled me into a delicious bear hug. We both burst into hysterical laughter out of pure exhilaration. We were actually DOING this! Amidst all the excitement, one more enormous hurdle remained to be addressed: finding a new home for our adorable eighteen-month-old Jack Russell terrier, Sparky. Successfully finding a home for a dog was a lot like finding the right mate in human terms: the one introduced by a friend generally works out the best. We put out the word to everyone we knew, and sure enough, friends of friends made the match. The prospects owned five terriers and wanted another, something we never quite understood. Six small whirlwinds causing constant mayhem would have been too much for us, but these people seemed to thrive on the action. The instant they met, Sparky and his new owners were pals. He now lives on a fabulous twenty-acre vineyard property and spends his days happily mowing down smaller critters like lizards and snakes. The details of departing weren't our only challenges, and saying good-bye to Sparky wasn't the only farewell we dreaded. When we finally screwed up the courage to break the news of our plan to our families, each of our four daughters had listened in stunned silence as we explained our unusual decision. We fully understood their initial wariness and concerns. But to our relief, when they had time to think about it, they became wonderfully supportive and delighted with our idea. Our friends and other relatives were also shocked when we broke the news, but then they too began ask all the questions we had anticipated and planned for ourselves. For example, our loved ones were concerned about what would happen if we became ill or injured on the road. Without going into too much detail (because we did consider how to handle all the possible scenarios like that), the simple answer we gave was twofold: (1) we could become ill or injured in California, too, and (2) we'd do the same thing in Portugal that we would in Paso Robles: go to the doctor or the hospital and take care of it. Our well-rehearsed responses seemed to reassure them, and within a short time they were cheering us on, too, or at least they were polite enough to feign enthusiasm even if they thought it was a crazy idea. And we weren't without our own concerns about this scheme. Although we never doubted we would experience a wonderful new life, the act of following through with the plan required a lot of vision and determination. And courage. Ambivalence was our constant companion. We wanted badly to start on this new path, but anxiety nibbled at the edge of our delight. We had to remind ourselves constantly that this was our life. At our ages, we would not have this chance again. We would find plenty of time to rest when forced to give up our peripatetic ways. We also found that it was hard for people to understand how we could embark on this plan without going broke. "Look," we'd say to questioners at cocktail parties who slyly tried to ask how much money we had without saying so, "it really doesn't make any difference how much money you have if you want to live on the road. This is arithmetic, not calculus: just figure out the current overhead, do your homework about how much it costs to live in places that are of interest, add in transportation, and compare the numbers. All adjustable. If you have a lot of money, you live really well. If you have less, you might have to put up with a studio apartment and have a few picnic lunches or eat in at night more often. It's still an adventure either way." To this day, some people we meet become defensive when they find out what we are doing, as if our choices somehow threaten theirs. They'll say, "Well, I could NEVER give up my furniture, my dog, my car, my... (fill in the blank)." We sometimes find ourselves having to explain that this unfettered life is certainly not for everyone. It just happens to work for us at this stage in our lives. After all, the point of us sharing the story of our unique lifestyle isn't to make other people feel compelled to make drastic life changes. We

simply are highlighting the benefits of expanding your horizons, however you feel comfortable doing so. That may just mean a visit to the next town, joining a new club, or making a new friend. Each time we told our plan to someone new, we would feel a little nervous about their reaction, but soon we became accustomed to how it would go: first, the disbelief, then the questions, and finally excitement and curiosity, sometimes tinged with just a little envy. Their reactions reinforced our hunch that we were on to something wonderful and helped us maintain the enthusiasm we needed to jump off the virtual cliff into our new life.