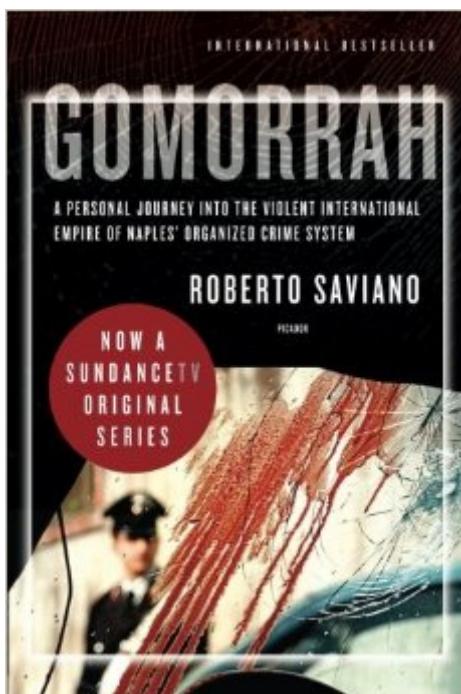


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Gomorrah: A Personal Journey Into The Violent International Empire Of Naples' Organized Crime System



Synopsis

The basis of the Sundance TV series Gomorrah A New York Times Notable Book of the YearA groundbreaking, unprecedeted bestseller in Italy, Roberto Saviano's insider account traces the decline of the city of Naples under the rule of the Camorra, an organized crime network more powerful and violent than the Mafia. The Camorra is an elaborate, international system dealing in drugs, high fashion, construction, and toxic waste, and its influence has entirely transformed life in Campania, the province surrounding Naples. Since seeing his first murder victim, at thirteen, Roberto Saviano has watched the changes in his home city. For Gomorrah, he disappeared into the Camorra and witnessed up close the drug cartel's audacious, sophisticated, and far-reaching corruption that has paralyzed his home city and introduced the world to a new breed of organized crime.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you have been to Italy, surely you have seen people who sell counterfeit goods on the street: Prada purses, Gucci belt, Armani wallet, pirated CD and DVD, etc. Surprisingly, most of them are not made in China, but in underground factories in Naples, the same type of factories that makes dresses for Hollywood stars. This is however, only the beginning of the story. This is a story of the underground economy of Naples, the desperation of its society and underclass, and the exploitation by the sophisticated yet short sighted criminals. The tales are not unlike those of the underground economy of New York and Chicago, but southern Italian style. With my busy schedule running a business, these days it's hard for me to take some time and read a book in a short time. However,

this book was so compelling I finished it in four days. There are three big criminal organizations in Italy: Cosa Nostra (commonly known as Mafia) from Sicily, Ngrangheta of Calabria, and the Camorra of Campania. This book is about the camorra. First, to answer one of the reviewers from Australia who didn't understand why the author is under 24-hour police protection: This is not the first book written about the camorra or the mafia, in Italy or abroad. However, his story telling style was compelling enough to make the book a best seller in Italy and abroad. This brought to light the dirty and dark secrets of the criminal underworld in a concrete term - something you can identify with (do they control what you eat?), it infuriates you and something you react strongly. It's not just about talking about the camorra in abstract terms, but to name names, name places, and describe in vivid details about the people, their "businesses", and places.

Behold here an unfashionable and stirring book. The pages drip with the residue of disfiguring communications left by hitmen on the lifeless bodies of their victims. I do not go in for glamorized violence and I do not watch movies with guns. Still, I turned pages of this grisly book because its message is both fascinating and urgent. The scores of deaths described are countable but only a partial number. What waste. The mafia clans of Campania, whose fractions divide business by terror, account for the fear they inspire with their omnipresent success. It is bizarre to read of this smothering and ultimately corrupting system that renovates, enriches and destroys as it spreads. A marginal insider, Savinio here unloads the weight of his learning and the roar of his disillusionment. His book puts to pasture the works that would try to rival it as discourses or discoveries on the nature of power in society. Fans of Foucault have no idea what power is about until they have read this book. The same goes for the armchair aficionado of corporate monopoly. Much of the information Savinio relates he has gathered as an inhabitant or curious, casual employee of the clans that run Italy from the graced and volatile realm of Campania. The first chapter on the port of Naples is likely to unsettle anyone who lives near a port of entry by sea, as it shows how illegal goods make it from sea to secrecy and to the market. The chapter called "Cement" demonstrates the relationship between contractors, bids, bias and regional economy. These two chapters alone seem to be stunning achievements. The final chapter treats the horrifying management and crippling dispersion of toxins through land, sea and air for the sake of immediate profit.

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