

*Jubilant Journeys* is a travelogue memoir spanning decades, detailing the travel adventures of Connie and Peter Spenuzza. The stories are not strictly chronological. Rather, they follow their own delightful meandering path through the narrative of the chapter. Many of the tales revolve around genealogical research into Connie's family and ancestors. In searching relentlessly for information about Ojer Velastegui over the many years, the Spenuzza family connected threads from past to present, and into the future, and fostered their own children's curiosity.

I really liked the Italian quote that comes right before reaching Chapter Six: "Mesma faccia, mesma razza," meaning, "Same face, same race." I take a different personal view of the phrase. Instead of similar features suggesting a relationship, I see it as a nice reminder that we are all human. No matter the culture, creed, or color of skin, we all share more in common than we have true differences because we are all of the same species. I love the quote from Peter that followed not far behind this one in the chapter: "We're Californian. We have all the people in the world in our state--and we love it that way." Being Californian myself, I agree!

I love the author's description of place and her ability to evoke the certain kind of nostalgia tied to history. I so grok her "stone whispering." Ancient places, even historical places, speak to the archaeologist in me, which often inspires my poetry. I enjoyed reading about her cataloging of exotic sensory experiences that are filed away for future use in novel writing. Part of their travels were for research in writing historical novels. I've reviewed one previous book by the author. Now I want to check out the others!

Recommended for those with the travel bug, an interest in travel memoir, or just plain good story-weaving!

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