Greetings!

It won’t be long before summer is over and we will be leaving for our cruise from Venice to Rome with stops at some of the most famous archaeological sites in the region. As you prepare for our journey, you might want to read up on a few of the places we will be visiting, as well as the history of its ancient inhabitants. Since the literature on these topics is vast, I will only give you a few suggestions based on books that I have found to be both enlightening and readable.

For Pompeii I recommend Mary Beard’s *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found*. Rather than writing a guide book to the site, she has chosen to attempt a reconstruction of life in that ancient city from its founding to its destruction by the eruption of Vesuvius. For those of you who want to pursue the topic further, Beard has included an extensive annotated bibliography.

For those of you visiting Herculaneum, Joseph Jay Deiss has written a wonderful introduction to its history and ultimate destruction, *Herculaneum: Italy’s Buried Treasure*. The book is well written and richly illustrated, although it does lack color photos.

The looting of Italian antiquities and their subsequent acquisition by American museums is treated by Jason Felch in *Chasing Aphrodite: The Hunt for Looted Antiquities at the World’s Richest Museum*. Due in large part to Felch’s investigative reporting for the Los Angeles Times, the Getty not only has repatriated numerous antiquities to Italy, but it also now has one of the strongest codes of ethics of any U.S. museum.

I have not yet read *Syracuse, City of Legends: A Glory of Sicily* by Jeremy Dummett but plan to do so soon. It looks like exactly the book that is needed to understand this city and its history both today and in the past.

Finally, it has been a while since I read *The City of Falling Angels* by John Berendt, but I do remember that I enjoyed it tremendously. Although it has received mixed reviews, it will probably be a good read in conjunction with a visit to Venice.

All the best,

Nancy C. Wilkie