

BOOKS

Booking for Your Vacation

As summer approaches, a student's thoughts turn to escaping the classroom. Travel books help you plan—and daydream—about getting away

It's a bright winter morning in Rome, and the American college student wants to see more than the hustling crowds in St. Peter's Square. The path to authentic street life cannot be discovered from the government tourist office, and one of those once-over-lightly guidebooks doesn't help much. But here, in the pages of "Romewalks" (Holt, \$9.95), is a suggested tour of the Trastevere section, with "an historical and artistic heritage as captivating as any in Rome's historic center." A stroll along the Via dell'Arco dei Tolomei reveals children rushing off to school while grandmothers hang laundry from balcony railings and jabber across narrow alleyways. At 24B, a hand-lettered sign warns that at 6 each morning, Raphael the baker leaves his home laden with baskets of bread bound for market—so please don't block the doorway. Ah, sighs the traveler, this is Rome.

Whether you want to tour Paris in a day or camp out in the Maine wilderness, you'll find that the best guidebook is the one most specifically tailored to your interests. The travel bookshelf is crammed with several hundred titles—more than 300 new ones in 1986 alone—designed to help everyone from the most hapless novice to the well-seasoned veteran and from the camera-strapped generalist to the fact-seeking scholar.

Guides carve up the globe in a dizzying variety of ways. **Fodor's Europe 1987** (\$14.95), for example, packs the whole Continent into a very large nutshell. As for countries, you can find the familiar—the informative **Blue Guide: Scotland** (Norton, \$19.95)—or the exotic—the colorful **Insight Guides: Nepal** (Prentice Hall, \$16.95). Regional approaches include the brand-new **Cadogan Guides: The South of France** (Globe Pequot Press, \$12.95)



The grand tour: Castle Neuschwanstein near Fussen in West Germany (above), a view of the countryside (right) from Cathedral St. Lazare in Autun, France

PHOTOS BY SUSAN ACKERMAN