

# THE ENJOY AGENDA

At Home and Abroad

RICK BAILEY

"Rick Bailey re-creates for us what Virginia Woolf calls *moments of being*, those bright bursts of beauty, loss, communion, and bewilderment that constitute a life. I defy you to read one of these deliciously addictive essays without gulping down the entire book."—Eileen Pollack, author of *The Only Woman in the Room*

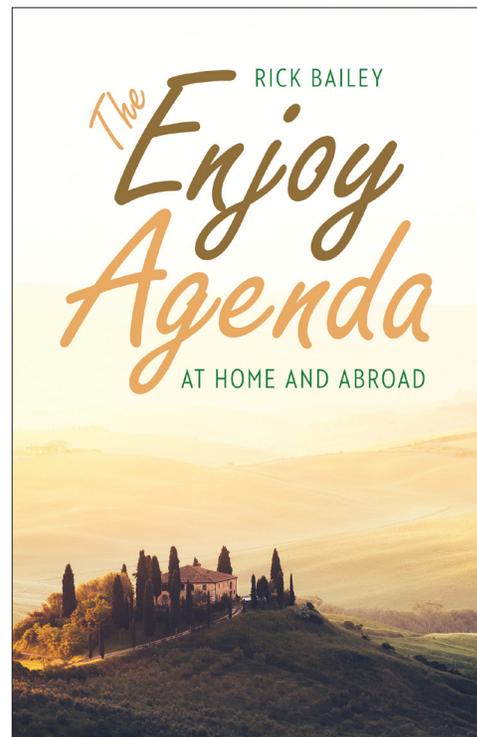
"Rick Bailey's essays overflow with warmth, humor, truth. . . . *The Enjoy Agenda* offers keen observations, nuggets of wisdom, stories of the heart."  
—Christine Rhein, poet and the author of *Wild Flight*

"It's not often I read a book of essays and fall in love with the writer and the characters in his life. But that's what happened reading Richard Bailey's *The Enjoy Agenda*. . . . It is a lovely antidote to the despair and chaos in today's world."—David James, author of *My Torn Dance Card*

Part memoir, part travelogue, *The Enjoy Agenda* takes readers from Rick Bailey's one-stoplight town in Michigan farm country to Stratford, England, to the French Concession in Shanghai, the Adriatic coast of Italy, and to a small village in the Republic of San Marino. With his self-deprecating style, Bailey recalls the traumas of picture day in elementary school and lugging a guitar to the Cotswolds and back. He reflects on food safety in China, relives a dental emergency in Venice, and embarks on a quest for *il formaggio del perdono* (the cheese of forgiveness) in the hills above the Adriatic.

Bailey, whose voice is a combination of Dave Barry and Rick Steves with just a soupçon of Montaigne, writes with humor and wit about how these experiences reflect the issues and conflicts of contemporary American life: environmental change, life in digital times, and the vicissitudes of arriving at ripe old age. Throughout *The Enjoy Agenda* Bailey asks, "Where am I and how did I get here?" a question less about geography than the difficulties and gifts of becoming a husband and ultimately a partner changed and improved by a very smart woman and challenged and delighted by a gradual but seismic culture shift.

**Rick Bailey** is a retired English instructor who taught writing for thirty-eight years at Henry Ford Community College in Michigan. He is the author or editor of several books on writing, including *The Creative Writer's Craft*, and is the author of *American English, Italian Chocolate: Small Subjects of Great Importance* (Nebraska, 2017).



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