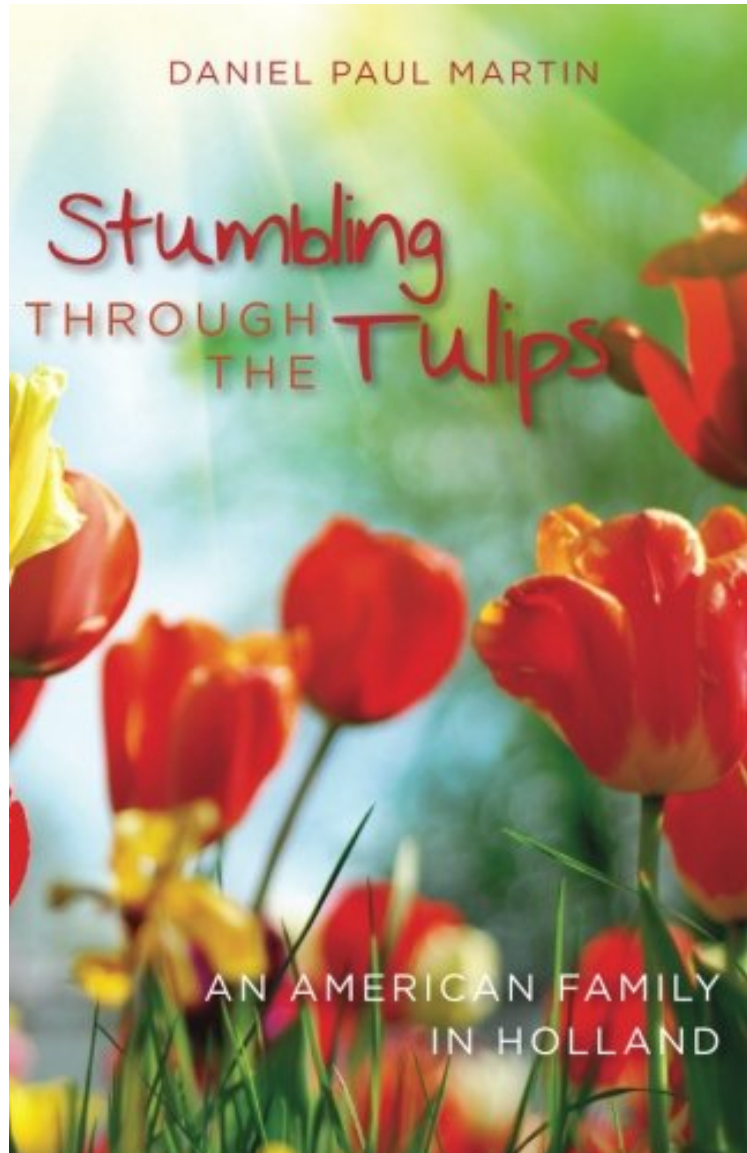


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## Stumbling through the tulips: An American Family in Holland

*Daniel Paul Martin*

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**Daniel Paul Martin : Stumbling through the tulips: An American Family in Holland** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stumbling through the tulips: An American Family in Holland:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A funny blast from the not so distant pastBy Bert van der MoerHaving worked with Dan during a part of the period he describes in this little book, there're a lot of things I recognize. I can vouch that most of what he says is more or less true - ninety percent at least. But then, each writer has

the obligation to add some fictional flavour. I enjoyed the book. Dan is not as American as other Americans - they come in various degrees of Americanism. For starters he did too much travelling abroad and can play things down better than - say - a midwest farmer who's never travelled 50 miles (they still travel in nonmetric units) from his home town. But that makes his observations very global, as if by an outside entity. What comes thru in this book is Dan's sense of humour (it was fun working with him) looking at day2day things and a lot of useful stuff for Americans who by fate or design have to live in Europe for some time. For English speaking Netherlanders (after all the book is in english) its equally interesting to have a glimpse of the mental processes of an American visitor. Good stuff. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Stumbling Through the Tulips By Naz Stumbling Through the Tulips is truly a valuable book to any Expat. This book shows that as we all becoming more and more global, we need to consider the challenges of a massive move with some sense of humor. Especially for families, this book relates how one can overcome the cultural differences into fun learning of tolerance, understanding of things new and enjoyable living. I am soooo happy Dan has published this book. Through out the easy fun reading, there are hidden points of 'change is not bad', 'people are all the same everywhere', and above all when you are put in a different environment, make the most of it with fun, laughter and understanding. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Light-hearted but informative! By Kim Wentworth Very amusing account of expats' experiences navigating the differences between countries!

In *Stumbling Through the Tulips* one father shepherds his brood through bureaucratic tangles and grocery-shopping misadventures with the universal cure-all: laughter. For globetrotting businessman Dan Martin, the next step on the corporate ladder entailed moving his wife and three children from New Hampshire to The Hague. The family majority voiced resounding reluctance, but eventually responded to the move with dash and wit. Cheer, affection, and family fun mark this memoir of high spirited, richly descriptive arm-chair travel, while demonstrating how a family can come together in a strange, new, place to discover things about themselves and their culture that they will treasure forever. *Stumbling Through the Tulips* charts every phase of this life-changing journey, from Martin's first delicate family announcement through his frontrunner days finding a home and onto the family's immersion in a world with words that stretch longer than the country, more overly friendly dogs than you can shake a foreign finger at and no discernable ice cream. Along the way, the author paints a vivid portrait of how the family copes with the challenges, the thrills, the excitement, and even the frustration of swapping out everything one knows to relearn fundamentals, from banking to Santa Claus—or Sinterklaas, rather. In the democratic spirit of this family, each member is brought to life, sharing his or her hopes, fears, talents, and special brand of humor. Wife and mother Nazy navigates homemaking with her signature verve, charming friendliness and love of shopping. Nine-year-old Melika, with tulip-decorated glasses and a nose-less Persian kitten named Pinocchio, delivers dependability and wit to keep the Martins on track. At eleven, bassoon-wielding Darius forever sounds in with his uncanny knowledge of pretty much everything (except where he left his shoes, tram pass, homework, coat..) Mitra, a teenager with sequined sneakers and a gold raincoat, effusively keeps morale buoyant by persistently delighting in whatever comes her way. Together, they are game for a good laugh in Holland – a country literally created by the Dutch people. Holland is a beautiful place with tolerant people who get things done even though their language does not contain the verb 'to make a decision'. The nearest equivalent is 'to take a decision' and taking a decision involves time, patience and consensus. It was a challenge for a family that likes to do something (now) while worrying about the details (later). This book describes the time when family spirit was forged and strengthened. Although the offspring have sprung off, The Martin Family-ness continues: they support each other professionally, creatively and in each other's passions and adventures. They are The Martin Family Team. The children who took part in the Dutch adventure have grown up. Independence and tolerance learned in Holland provided a great springboard. Mitra, following her passion, opened the best Tango School in the world. Darius became a college professor in Lebanon with a penchant for seeing all of the most obscure places in the world. Dependable Melika, after climbing Kilimanjaro and partying in Bali became a corporate lawyer in Santa Barbara. Warm-hearted, witty, carefree and full of the gems of an expatriate foray, *Stumbling Through the Tulips* is a merry entrée into a new culture that is certain to move anyone with wanderlust to get packing, simply by taking a joyful journey with the Martins.

About the Author A traditionalist, Dan Martin entered the world by birth. Following an eventful but not particularly exceptional childhood, he decided to be a permanent Georgia Tech student. He was well on his way when he met his future wife, Nazy. Attention focused, Dan completed a Ph.D. and landed a dream job: college professor. He was assembling a collection of grad students when economic reality (a baby girl) caused a career shift. Turning down a position at Federal Express ("no one will pay \$6.95 for overnight delivery") he managed a Research Center in Memphis for the Continental Grain Company, But, the Grain Company shed non-core assets: Dan talked Nazy and the family into relocating to Vancouver. Unfortunately, the RCMP was interested in the new owners and another move was mandated. Dan chose Houston. World oil prices crashed. ("Ah, those were the days.") Nimbly adjusting course (think pinball), he located a job in Hanover, New Hampshire. But experience in the oil business had activated an

“international” gene and Dan located a position in The Netherlands. More impressively, he convinced his family to relocate “just one more time”. While the family used the opportunity to see Europe, Dan buckled his swash with business trips through Asia, Australia, Latin America and Africa. Eventually America called. (The signal was amplified by Dutch tax authorities.) The family returned to New England. The “baby girl” (and her siblings) entered colleges. Dan, cured of any desire for instability, began working with the Digital Equipment Corporate – a respected fixture along Route 128. The fixture floundered when Compaq purchased DEC. Dan decided that a corporate (e.g. “overhead”) position was untenable. Prudence, and the fact that college tuition expenses were growing even faster than the dotcom bubble, dictated a move to the revenue-producing portion of the business. Having constructed his career on the equivalent of the San Andreas Fault, Dan knew that job stability was unlikely. He negotiated a return to Europe and convinced Nazy that Zürich would be great. They arrived just as Hewlett-Packard acquired Compaq. While Nazy threw herself into the expatriate community, Dan was living in Zürich but business commuting internationally. Dan followed the money by working with his customers: large banks. He clearly states that he had nothing to do with the subprime debacle or the world economic meltdown