

America by Vespa: From Chicago to Los Angeles on Route 66 (Viaggi, scoperte e tradizioni)

Giorgio Serafino

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I didn't know anything about America other than what my dreams had been telling me: I wanted to travel the Mother Road.

Lots of people told me not to go: Route 66 doesn't exist anymore, they kept saying, America doesn't even exist anymore.

But whenever I thought about it I felt something in my stomach that was almost pain!

I set out on an unsuitable vehicle, maybe in order to force myself to go slow. And in that big country, my dream exploded. I felt everything I'd always dreamed of beating inside my soul, changing my life forever. Along the road people hugged us, blessed us, gave us hospitality and lived our dream as if it were their own. Those hugs were so powerful that they allowed us to throw ourselves headlong into thunderstorms while lightning struck the ground only feet away from us...

I leaped into that road and found a beautiful America; on the burning hot asphalt I brushed by poisonous snakes and spiders while listening to the song of the coyotes, and together with them I gazed at the moon from that place/non-place known by the bad name of Death Valley; I touched heaven while standing in hell, motionless at the bottom of the valley while the sky from Chicago to Los Angeles ran above me. I skidded between dream and reality until I no longer distinguished between them. I almost needed help because my emotions were too strong. I traveled under a huge electric guitar suspended in the sky playing rock music.

I wrote this book for the angels I met, and to tell those who think America is nothing but war and business: Hey man, you're wrong! The Americans of the street still exist. The eyes of a homeless person, of a waitress, of a motel owner, can still see beyond, and if you look at them closely, you can see what I saw, you can see them looking beyond.

The little Vespa was my soul which humbly and slowly brought me across a country's people in a place where dreams still grow, a place where you can regrow your wings if you want and the strong wind carries you up high to where, if you're quick enough, you can give God himself a high five!

Giorgio Serafino, born in 1975, is from Civitanova Marche and lives in Montecosaro (Macerata) in a farmhouse he restored. With his wife Giuliana Foresi he has travelled in Europe, Canada (where he obtained citizenship), Brazil, Morocco (which he toured on a rented motorbike, by bus, and hitchhiking), Thailand, and Cambodia (on a motorbike). In 2010 he travelled along Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles on a 1978 Vespa 50 Special that he restored and named The General Lee. Since then, with Giuliana as always, he has travelled on the General through Thailand, Laos and Cambodia; he wrote about this experience in his second book, "Paradiso di Polvere," published in November 2013.

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