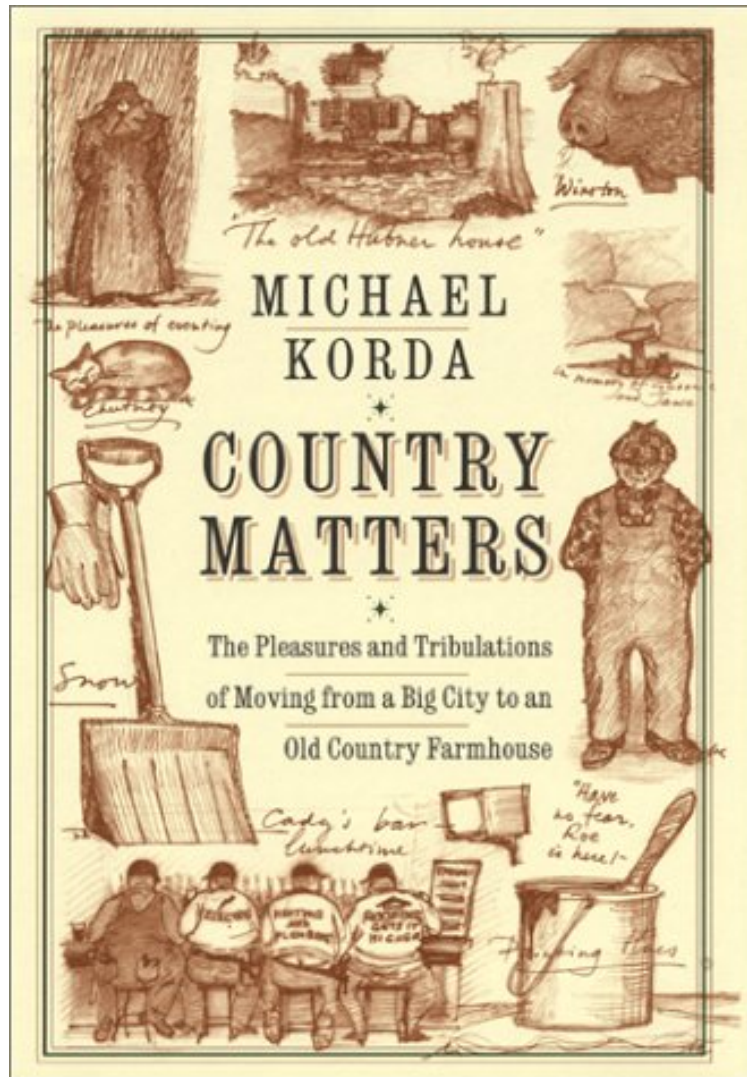


(Free and download) Country Matters: The Pleasures and Tribulations of Moving from a Big City to an Old Country Farmhouse

Country Matters: The Pleasures and Tribulations of Moving from a Big City to an Old Country Farmhouse

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Michael Korda, Success Research Cor : Country Matters: The Pleasures and Tribulations of Moving from a Big City to an Old Country Farmhouse before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Country Matters: The Pleasures and Tribulations of Moving from a Big City to an Old Country Farmhouse:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Liked the book.By JaniceI liked the book. I really enjoyed reading

it. I do think that some of the criticism noted here is expected; however, it depends on what side of the story you are reading from. I am reading from the side of Mr. Korda. We, too, have a second home in New Hampshire. We are called, among other things, 'flatlanders' and 'yuppies'. (We live outside of Boston) We have many quirky folks in our small town in NH. I have come to love and admire them all. If I wrote about them, you might get the sense that I, too, felt above them in some way. Not true. I am in awe of them. They are the salt of the earth. They know who they are and they follow their own paths. Not like here in suburbia, where everything seems homogenized. They are much more colorful, much more interesting, know a lot about a lot and have oodles of common sense. They take care of each other, know a lot about each other and reach out to one another. Much different from the affluent suburbs where no one really knows anybody, they just know what each other has so they can make sure that they can one-up them all the time. It is not very neighborly. In the country, they may do that to some degree, but not as much. Maybe someone might have a bigger tractor or a better snowmobile. But that is about it. They are simply kinder people. We would like to live there full-time, but jobs keep us nearer to the city. But we escape there as often as possible. It, too, is considered to be on the "wrong side of the tracks", but that is what makes it so special. I do believe that Mr. Korda feels the same way, too. It may not have come across that way, but I felt it as I read it. Sometimes we read more into things than are really there. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I don't know \$**t about septic...lol :) By Farm Chick I live in a 100 year old farmhouse, I have horses and I don't know \$**t about septic...needless to say I really enjoyed this book :) 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Starts with Promise and runs out of Steam By G. Johnson The New York Times sparked my interest in this age-old literary subject--city dweller finds renewal in the country, with all the highs and lows and informative or interesting tidbits of making the transition. My interest in this subject goes all the way back to Crazy-White-Man (Sha-ga-na-she Wa-du-kee) by Richard Morenus, published by Rand McNally and Co. in 1952. So, I am not a newcomer to the genre. In fact, my wife and I recently put the finishing touches on a 3-year restoration of a century-old lodge on an island in Maine. Therefore, I do not place a low rating on this book without careful thought and regret. Usually, one thinks that if the Times views a book as newsworthy, it will be a bit special. In this case, I think it is Korda's professional connections in the publishing industry (and not the merit of the piece) which earned the publicity, and possibly the initial printing. Korda would like the reader to believe that he is about to introduce them to the quaint, evolutionary transition of a (very, very sophisticated) city couple and a country estate from strangers to partners, each helped to reach the synergy by a cast of colorful local citizens with special skills and memorable characters. The book fails, however, to continue its early, promising pace, and eventually trails off into a series of random recollections, failing to develop the supporting characters in favor of repetitive, gratuitous references to Mrs. Korda's achievements as a horsewoman, and Mr. Korda's irrelevant pride in having read the classics. In the end, the country life which Mr. Korda portrays seems as shallow and trite as the city life he almost left behind. He is more often a disconnected observer than influential participant, and leaves the reader wondering whether, for the Kordas, the country really matters.

With his inimitable sense of humor and storytelling talent, New York Times bestselling author Michael Korda brings us this charming, hilarious, self-deprecating memoir of a city couple's new life in the country. At once entertaining, canny, and moving, *Country Matters* does for Dutchess County, New York, what *Under the Tuscan Sun* did for Tuscany. This witty memoir, replete with Korda's own line drawings, reads like a novel, as it chronicles the author's transformation from city slicker to full-time country gentleman, complete with tractors, horses, and a leaking roof. When he decides to take up residence in an eighteenth-century farmhouse in Dutchess County, ninety miles north of New York City, Korda discovers what country life is really like: Owning pigs, more than owning horses, even more than owning the actual house, firmly anchored the Kordas as residents in the eyes of their Pleasant Valley neighbors. You may own your land, but without concertina barbed wire, or the 82nd Airborne on patrol, it's impossible to keep people off it! It's possible to line up major household repairs over a tuna melt sandwich. And everyone in the area is fully aware that Michael "don't know shit about septic." The locals are not particularly quick to accept these outsiders, and the couple's earliest interactions with their new neighbors provide constant entertainment, particularly when the Kordas discover that hunting season is a year-round event -- right on their own land! From their closest neighbors, mostly dairy farmers, to their unforgettable caretaker Harold Roe -- whose motto regarding the local flora is "Whack it all back!" -- the residents of Pleasant Valley eventually come to realize that the Kordas are more than mere weekenders. Sure to have readers in stitches, this is a book that has universal appeal for all who have ever dreamed of owning that perfect little place to escape to up in the country, or, more boldly, have done it.

.com Despite the fact that Michael Korda was city born and bred (and, as editor in chief of Simon Schuster and a bestselling author, part of Manhattan's elite), when he decided it was time to put down roots, he wanted land, trees, and a place in a community with history. The house he bought with his wife, Margaret, in Pleasant Valley, two hours north of New York City, was built when George Washington was president. It came with two barns, 20 acres, a backhoe, a bush hog, a York rake, a dozer blade, a bluff, and a slightly deaf old man named Harold Roe. Since Korda couldn't handle a hammer (plumbing and heating problems in his past merely involved calling the building super and keeping a

20-dollar bill handy), Harold became a permanent fixture, wielding large equipment, destroying the flowers, and showing the couple everything they needed to know about the real country. Pleasant Valley, it turned out, was on the "wrong" side of the Taconic Parkway. It was "red and black plaid hats with earflaps and insulated bib-front overalls country," as opposed to Ralph Lauren estates country. Despite the blue-collar atmosphere (or rather because of it), the Kordas have been there for two decades. Becoming locals hasn't been easy, however. Korda relishes the moments that mark him as an insider--hanging out at the local diner, buying a Harley-Davidson, and most importantly, buying pigs. Pig watching in a place like Pleasant Valley is a truly bonding experience, which Korda describes with his characteristic dry wit: Pig watching is not something anybody does in a hurry, as we came to learn. You have to shift your trousers down a bit, loosen up your belt a notch or so, give your belly a little breathing room, light a cigarette if you're a smoker, and look at the pigs for a good long time. Then you sigh, nod your head, and say, "Them's nice pigs, them pigs." Then you look at them some more. You get the idea. A natural raconteur, Korda makes the quirks of living in an old house and the quest for local status in an insular community highly entertaining, and he proves once again that, while he may not be handy with tools, he certainly knows his way around the written word. --Lesley Reed

*From Publishers Weekly*This is the latest installment in Korda's series of autobiographical books, which include *Charmed Lives*, a look at his famous theatrical family's history; *Man to Man*, his frank book about surviving prostate cancer; and *Another Life*, his collection of reminiscences about his two decades as editor-in-chief of the publishing house Simon Schuster. This chatty book describes how Korda and his wife bought a 200-year-old farm in a small town in Dutchess County, N.Y., about 90 miles north of Manhattan. Over the 20-odd years chronicled, the Kordas use a mixture of guile, hard work and perseverance to ingratiate themselves with the locals and truly make the place their own. Many of the episodes, often comedic, document the various renovations of the farmhouse and the mental and physical barriers the Kordas cross in exchanging a glamorous New York lifestyle for one filled with pigs, horses and grubs. Korda, who was born in England, brings a foreigner's eye to his surroundings and on more than one occasion draws distinctions between the genteel rural life of his forebears and those of the lower-middle-class Americans he is surrounded by. Only occasionally does Korda lapse into cliché, drawing attention to pariahs such as Dunkin' Donuts and Americans' propensity to drive large, unwieldy vehicles. But the overall effect is charming and oftentimes witty, and in this sense his newest follows in the tradition of other bestsellers, like Peter Mayle's *Provence*, about dislocation to a place peopled with foreigners and strange ways. (Apr. 16)

Forecast: Korda's celebrity and reputation as a literary gentleman will help propel sales among those in the know along the coasts and in the cities. Handselling from booksellers (especially in upstate New York and Connecticut) and national advertising will provide additional sales.

Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.*From Library Journal*Twenty-one years ago Korda, editor-in-chief of Simon Schuster, and his wife, Margaret, bought an 18th-century farmhouse in Pleasant Valley, NY. Initially, Korda bought the place as an escape from his hectic New York City life; over time, it was a commuter home, which eventually became his primary residence. This interesting, touching memoir, read by Michael Page, chronicles the transformation from the author's high-profile life in Manhattan to country living and includes his witty take on owning pigs, raising and caring for horses, and renovating an old farmhouse. Humorously, he discusses his slow acceptance into this blue-collar neighborhood, the unforgettable friendships, and sharing in common events. His wife, once a fashion model, becomes an avid and competitive horseback rider. A well-written tale that gives the listener a sense of Korda's hard work and perseverance to ingratiate himself with the locals and truly make this country home a place of his own. Recommended. Carol Stern, Glen Cove P.L., NY Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.