



Return to the Olive Farm

Carol Drinkwater

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Life and love, olive groves and bee hives in Provence - further adventures in the bestselling Olive Farm series.

Return to the Olive Farm Details

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Author : Carol Drinkwater

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From Reader Review Return to the Olive Farm for online ebook

Chris says

I loved all of these books in her series. She writes poetically and these books are both a memoir and travelogue.

Start with:

- 1/ The Olive Farm (2001)
- 2/Olive Season (2003)
- 3/Olive Harvest (2005)
- 4/Return to the Olive Farm (2011)

Read these in order. They are about this actress's life and love in the south of France, just outside of Cannes where they bought an old Olive Farm. The adventures and difficulties they encountered were many, but they had rich experiences with the colourful characters they met.

She has written others that are not in this series, but on a similar subject.

Ria says

Enjoyed these books so much, learnt so much about other ways of life, the flora and fauna of the countries involved. Fascinating reading and such descriptive writing.

The author writes with passion and conviction, a cultural journey throughout

Diane Will says

Another wonderful read from Carol. Full of the passion and love for her beloved 'Apassionata' and how perfect she wants it to be, like all of her other books in this series.

In an ideal world organic olive tree farming would be the way, but this has its ups and a lot of downs, but Carol shows us the way with her grit determination to find out more. Not all agree with the way forward but decisions have to be made for the best of The Olive Farm, despite all the negatives from 'Quashia' their faithful (but now having doubts) friend and worker. I'm so glad they got bees back to their gardens and surrounding land.

I feel like I have been on the journey with her. Thank you Carol for this exotic journey into Provence. Your descriptive writing and passion for the makes me feel like I visited there and sipped a glass of wine or two with you.

Teresa says

I have a secret to tell.... I have been renting an olive farm in Provence since 2001 when I first read Carol Drinkwater's memoir *The Olive Farm* well, in my dreams, I have!! I know that there is a myriad of travel memoirs out there, all wanting to impart their story of how a crumbling old house was restored to grandeur, usually peppered with a few anecdotes about quirky locals – just to add extra ambiance, n'est-ce pas... however, this series is very special to me as the author really is passionate about her environment and on a larger scale “our” environment which is quite frankly under threat.

“Return to the Olive Farm” opens as Carol returns from a 16 month expedition around the Med in search of the origins of the ancient and mystical Olive tree. She had written two books about her Olive quest and her travels and it is now a delight to return to Appassionata, the Provencal farm she shares with her husband Michel and to renew acquaintance with Quashia, her gardener, who doesn’t quite see eye to eye with his boss when it comes to farming methods. I love the passion which Carol obviously has for olive farming and her lust for life and for discovering the natural world.

The main focus this time is on the possibility of having a truly organic olive grove and the many obstacles towards achieving such an admirable objective, given that France doesn’t have a particularly strong record in championing the organic way. It is definitely so much easier and less heartbreakingly to take the mass pesticide/bumper crop route and you find yourself really rooting for Carol to succeed without all the usual chemical paraphernalia. I am in awe of how she keeps on going despite constant setbacks but then that could be the stubborn Irish streak, I guess – speaking as a fellow Irish woman! There’s also a wonderfully vivid backdrop of supporting characters such as Madame, the fearsome Asbestos inspector, Michael Latz, the first Organic Mayor in France, Marley, Michel’s grandson, not forgetting the honey bees.

So what else makes this stand out from the rest of the heap? I think a lot of its attraction for me stems from the honesty of the writing, the attention to detail, the intensity of the writer’s relationship with the land, the willingness to take risks, the constant interest in what other local farmers do, the lack of fear when entering traditionally male-dominated arenas, the ability to deal with recalcitrant, inebriated builders with good humour and grace!! Above all you feel like you’re observing a very intimate moment in someone else’s life as they fall back in love with a place they’d left behind.

So, I would advise you, allez vite and get caught up with this series if you haven’t already done so and if you’ve already shared in life at Appassionata, then allez vite aussi, snuggle up and get reacquainted!

Michelle says

some of Carol’s beautiful story-telling ability demonstrated in earlier books in this series has deserted her here as she relates the results of her researches into her local plants, and her frustration with the problems associated with becoming an organic farmer and with French bureaucracy at some length, but I persevered and I was rewarded by a finish that was a pleasant surprise.

Kate McKinstry says

As always, Carol Drinkwater has her own view on life and the way it should be. And as always, she writes life as it happens, without glossing over the tougher parts, with an honesty and imagery I have not found in

any other author. Her road to farm her land organically is a hard one, and at the end of the book it was not complete or resolved. But reading her growing and developing philosophy on Nature and what she can and cannot control, I found very uplifting and refreshing. Through her challenges, she always manages to maintain a sense of wonder and appreciation for the Earth when she would have reason to be discouraged.

Another fantastic book from her.

Nicki says

I've really enjoyed this last book in the Olive Farm series which brings it right up to date. it was lovely to meet the old and new characters in the author's life to read about her struggle s with going organice. i found it really interesting and quite inspiring at times, such is her writing.

Sue says

bit sad... life full of challenges and hope and love... French bureaucracy so very challenging.. to get water, to grow more olive trees, to find help, to get help to show up... interesting to read about Arab/African/Muslimimmigrants integration into France; enjoy her bits of history about Provence found in both books

Ingrid Verschelling says

Een leven tussen de olijfbomen is inmiddels het vierde boek van Carol Drinkwater, een Britse actrice, over haar boerderij Appassionata in de Provence. Dit boek vertelt over haar strijd tegen de schadelijke bestrijdingsmiddelen en haar liefde voor de natuur.

Na een reis rond de Middellandse Zee rond het thema olijven keert Carol Drinkwater weer terug op haar boerderij in de Zuid- Franse Provence. Carol en haar man Michel, een Franse filmproducer, hebben het huis tien jaar geleden gekocht, toen ze net getrouwden waren. Het huis met de olijfgaard is in de loop der jaren een productieve boerderij geworden. Het was de bedoeling om hier kinderen te krijgen met haar man Michel, maar dat geluk valt haar niet ten deel. Ze is wel stiefmoeder van de twee dochters van Michel uit een eerder huwelijk, maar dat is toch niet hetzelfde. Ze moet een zinvol bestaan voor zichzelf opbouwen, wil ze er niet aan ten onder gaan. Wellicht is haar lange reis ook een zoektocht geweest naar zingeving. Dat wordt in een ander deel verteld.

De bijenkolonie, die op Carols boerderij overwintert, is door het gebruik van insecticiden flink uitgedund. Vrienden hadden al hun spaargeld hierin geïnvesteerd en willen er niet opnieuw aan beginnen. Carol gaat zich hierin verdiepen en met haar wordt je geïnformeerd hoe sterk bijen afhankelijk zijn van een schoon milie. Carol en Michel gebruiken ook insecticiden bij de olijventeelt, omdat de olijfwilg last heeft van een vliegje, die zijn eitjes in de olijf legt. Dit wil zij veranderen: ze wil biologisch gaan boeren. Toch is dat heel moeilijk, omdat Michel en ook hun tuinman zich daartegen verzet. Carol zet samen met een groepje boeren uit de buurt vraagtekens bij de moderne oogstmethoden. Dan wordt er ook nog verbouwd op de boerderij om de hele familie te kunnen onderbrengen, want inmiddels hebben de dochters van Michel zelf ook kinderen

gekregen. Dit wordt gedaan door een stel Portugezen en dat loopt niet van een leien dakje.

In *Een leven tussen de olijfbomen* beschrijft Carol Drinkwater de natuur en de sfeer heel mooi. Ze schrijft heel beeldend. Je leert ook haar tuinman Quaisha goed kennen, een man uit Algerije. Ik vond het een boeiend boek, omdat ze zo met hartstocht schrijft over haar belevenissen. Het boek kan ook zonder kennis van de voorgaande drie boeken 'De olijfgaard', 'De olijventijd' en 'De olijvenoogst' worden gelezen. Ik ga vast de andere boeken ook lezen.

Hier kun je haar boerderij in de Provence zien: <http://www.caroldrinkwater.com/>

Als je meer wilt weten over de bijensterfte kun je hier meer lezen: <http://www.bijensterfte.nl/sites/defa...>

Emma says

Makes me want to be a bee keeper, Olive growing, fruit ???

Love Carole's work

Fay says

If this is the last of the Olive Farm series, it's ending with a bang! I think this is the best book so far. Ms. Drinkwater writes with an emotion that I didn't feel in the previous books, all of which I enjoyed. She lays herself bare in terms of her dedication to 'keeping the earth clean' even to the point of considering leaving Appassionata rather than continuing to spray against the fly that infests the olive harvest. She takes us through her struggle to find a solution to making the farm 'bio friendly.' AND .. struggle it is! The challenges that she and Michel have with the Portuguese workmen who are repairing their garage adds an element of humor, although it may not seem funny to them at the time. Having spent years with Carol as Helen on *All Creatures Great & Small*, this series presents 'the real Helen' as a determined, vastly intelligent and curious lady who digs into a challenge and just won't let go. I admire her and her writing and hope she continues this delightful and informative series.

Mark Owens says

Wonderful and inspiring series and this book is as good as any that preceded it. It has been a while since I read an installment on the Olive Farm and I was immediately reminded of why I love this author: She really takes me to the south of France and I feel every breeze, I taste every drop of oil and hear every cicada in the still Provence night. I could return to the Olive Farm again and again and again.

Lisa says

Lost interest

I enjoyed the first two books in the series, read but was less enthralled by the travel memoirs, and didn't finish this one. I liked the stories of renovation, I guess, but don't care so much about the farming and I really don't like Carol Drinkwater herself very much, with privileged, earnest condescension oozing from her. In a less interesting story this character flaw is intolerable.

Linda says

Love reading Carol's books about her olive farm. Makes me want to visit! I admire her passion for going organic which was the main focus of this book.

Carmen says

Carol Drinkwater is the actress who starred in the All Creatures Great and Small series. But in her real life, she runs an olive farm in France with her husband. This is the fifth or sixth one in the series, I've skipped some, in which they buy and renovate an old farmhouse and farm. Carol questions her usage of pesticides in this book and wavers over whether they should sell this farm and buy another at a higher altitude that doesn't need so much pesticides. It is as engaging and humorous as her other stories.
