



Coffee, Tea, the Gypsy & Me

Caroline James

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When Jo Edmond's husband runs off with their nanny, Jo resolves to make a new life with her baby son. She purchases Kirkton House a run down guest house and, with the help of a colourful cast of locals, establishes a thriving country house hotel. She opens during Fair Week, a 300 year old gypsy tradition hated by the locals and loved by every tinker and traveller in the country.

Romance is the last thing on her mind, until the enigmatic John Doherty walks into her life...?

Coffee, Tea, the Gypsy & Me Details

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From Reader Review Coffee, Tea, the Gypsy & Me for online ebook

Helen Baggott says

This was definitely a fun read – and I'm so pleased the author has revised and re-published it.

Caroline James has thrown a veil of fantasy over the harsh realities of how a single parent deals with raising capital to buy a new life for her and her son. And isn't that what fiction is for? I don't want to read about deprivation, self-pity and soaring interest rates. Seduction, sex and success are mixed with more than a few glasses of Cointreau as the heroine looks for support behind the bar.

Some of the plot is fanciful, but if I want to know how hard it really is to run a hotel, be a mum and find love (if not passion) I'd reach for a different book and my own bottle of Cointreau. Gritty realism may not be found here, but escapism and a good yarn will be.

As involved as I was with the plot, it was only towards the conclusion that I realised how much I'd come to enjoy my time with Jo, her friends, those gypsies and their roving eyes...

Rita Sheppard says

This is a wonderful story of two divorced women who come together and become great friends through happiness and heartaches.

Jo and Hattie are both strong characters who have learned to survive on their own. They work together in tune with each other's thoughts and feelings which is a delight to see. The two must fight their battles and live to meet another day which is a struggle at times.

I read the sequel, Coffee Tea The Caribbean & Me, before this one and I'm sorry that I did. While I loved the sequel and it was good on its own, it would have been better to have the background to Jo's and Hattie's relationships.

I heartily recommend both books to anyone wanting a feel good book with real feelings and women who have backbones.

BestChickLit.com says

If you've ever dreamed of owning your own quaint little guesthouse out in the sticks, of being the perfect hostess or just being an independent woman then this could be right up your street. Admittedly, more focus could have been placed on the hardships faced running and business during an economic crisis, whilst also being a single parent, but the book is escapism at its best. The idyllic setting and country folk no nonsense attitude gives the story a familiar cosy feeling, while the large volume of characters suggests style similar to Fiona Walker.

Jo, the main character, is a strong and worthy heroine. Her romance with John, who flits in and out of the story, would have benefitted from more detail, but it is a slow burner that enjoyably simmers in the background until the climax – look out for the funny scene in which Jo's complicated love life comes to a head, it's sure to have you chuckling. A few genuine shocks crop up along the way, a refreshing step away from the usual predictable twists, which helps to make the book a genuine feel-good read that emphasizes the fact that you can succeed at anything that you put your mind to.

Reviewed by Charlotte Foreman on behalf of BestChickLit.com

Anne says

Coffee, Tea, The Gypsy & Me is great fun to read. Caroline James has produced a story packed with realistic colourful characters who jostle to take centre stage in the novel.

Jo has been dumped by her husband and finds herself on her own with a small child and many memories, she can't keep the thought of her ex-husband Greg and his new young nubile lover out of her head. How dare he have a great time in the Spanish sunshine whilst she is left in cold, dreary England to pick up the pieces? Jo has to pull herself together and when the opportunity arises, she buys a run-down house with the dream of turning it into a luxury country hotel.

Surrounding herself with a cast of wonderful characters, from the buxom, straight-talking Hettie, to the mysterious dark-eyed stranger who sets her heart fluttering, Jo sets to work and creates the perfect hotel.

This is a really amusing read. I'm impressed that this is a first novel, although there are a few nags here and there - a tad too many heaving cleavages and leering older men at times, but on the whole it's a fun way to spend a couple of days reading time.

Sue Smith says

Just read this cover to cover in one sitting. Delicious book! Great characters in a story packed with warmth and humour. I was quickly drawn into the lives of Jo and Hattie and the colourful cast of people that pass through Kirkton House Hotel. I Laughed and I cried (some good plot twists) and couldn't stop reading until I got to the end to see what happened to everyone. I notice some other reviewers mention grammatical errors? Well I never spotted any. It may be because I read the 2nd edition. A must have holiday read.

Megan Readinginthesunshine says

This was such a fun read! I sat down yesterday morning to read it and I'd finished it by late afternoon, I just could not put it down! Wow.

Caroline James has created a beautiful story, and one of my favourite parts was the setting. Caroline's descriptions of the countryside and life in the 1980's were so well written and described that I felt as though I was transported back in time and dropped right in the middle of the scenes. In my mind I could see the setting, hear everything around me and I literally lost myself in the book for many wonderful hours. The Fair

was fascinating to read about, I personally am very interested in Gypsy culture and traditions, so I especially enjoyed that this featured in the book.

Jo was a very-well written character, I warmed to her straight away, and I loved her personality, I feel that as a character she was perfectly written. All throughout I really got behind her and I wanted her to succeed with the guest house and with everything in her life. Hattie is just fantastic - I enjoyed the relationship between Jo and Hattie, I loved reading about their friendship and seeing it progress in the story.

There is always something happening in every chapter which makes the story a compelling, interesting read which you won't want to put down! There is romance, laughter, friendships, family and country life in store with this book, and I am so thrilled that I was able to read this! Coffee, Tea, The Gypsy & Me is a truly enchanting read.

Jo says

Perfect

Light fluffy fiction perfect for miserable early February. Beautiful ladies, flirty gentlemen, gypsy fair, romantic encounters and more champagne and Cointreau than can possibly be good for anyone! Loved this book - just what the doctor ordered.

Mandy Baggot says

Jo is a struggling single mother in the 1980s having been dumped for the 16 year old nanny by awful husband Greg. She has baby Thomas to look after and a burning ambition to make something of her life. Along comes the chance to invest in a country hotel. Having received money from the sale of their pub business Jo takes a chance!

Enter buxom Hattie, a down-to-earth character who becomes Jo's best friend and hard-working employee. She provides most of the humour and some scenes that melted my heart.

Now a slim-line successful owner of a country hotel, Jo starts to attract all sorts of male attention but it's the mysterious John Docherty who steals her heart.

Capers at the hotel, supportive underwear and a cast of loveable characters will have you lapping up this story. A wonderful read recommended for lovers of Cathy Woodman.

Sharon M. Turner says

Fall in love!

Alone, with a tiny baby, a dog, a new plan and future, clawed out by hard work and guts. Jo has been abandoned by her husband, leaving her with a new baby and a small amount of money and lots of ambition, has brought a grand old building that she has built into a beautiful high class hotel with the help of a few

friends. Could true love be far behind? This is a really feel-good story.

Carol W says

1987

Jo is a single mother of a little boy, not of her choosing, after all her weasel husband ran off to Spain with the nanny!

Jo is a strong character who decides to pick herself up and make a life for herself and her son. When her friend Robert shows her a run down hotel, Jo jumps at the chance to turn it around and make it a success.

Enter Hattie, who seems to appear just like a fairy godmother and help Jo, not only with the hotel business but also with a change of image for Jo.

The annual Gypsy horse fair is coming to the village. There are mixed reactions to the event, locals are not too keen. Meanwhile, Jo does very well from the horse fair when it brings some business at the hotel and a new love interest into her life. John is handsome, charming and very attentive towards Jo, but she feels this could not go any further, he is a Gypsy and wanderer.

The story takes us through a year in the life of Jo, Hattie and the traditional country hotel. As to be expected in a busy hotel, there is an array of colourful characters coming and going.

Extra business comes in via a shooting party.

Just as things are looking up, the recession hits the hotel hard and her ex husband turns up looking for a second chance. Should Jo cut her losses and sell up or stick with it? Should she give Greg a second chance? Will John return to her life and settle?

I found this story engaging from page one and enjoyed this delightful weekend read right the last page. I warmed to all the characters. John was especially handsome and oozed charm. I hated the villain of the piece, Greg.

I look forward to more from this author.

5 out of 5 for me! Loved it!

Review copy - This did not influence my review in any way

Jill says

Hot from the beginning

I love the way this book progressed. Had me not wanting to put it down. I had to find out how the business did and how the different love stories worked out.

Abbey says

Plot

When Jo Edmond's husband runs off with their nanny. Jo resolves to make a new life with her baby son Thomas. She purchases Kirkton House a run down guest house and with the help of a colourful cast of locals, establishes a thriving country house hotel. She opens during fair week, a 300 year old gypsy tradition hated by the locals and loved by every tinker and traveller in the country.

Romance is the last thing on her mind, until the enigmatic John Doherty walks into her life...

My Opinion

I really enjoyed reading this book, I couldn't put it down. Made me giggle from start to finish and i loved that it was a behind the scenes of a guesthouse and what really can go on behind the walls.

I loved the main characters Jo and Hattie, they soon become very close when Jo employs Hattie to help run Kirkton House and i enjoyed reading their friendship blossom, it was lovely. I did a tear in my eye when poor Hattie loses her new love quite suddenly :(... however it was great to see she found happiness again at the end.

I was very excited to read about Jo and how she sets up Kirkton House and finds staff to help who actually enjoyed working there. It was also lovely to see that Jo does find a new love at the end especially with her horrid ex husband who ran away with their nanny who then tries to suck back in to Jo's life however doesn't go to plan the way he wanted it to.

I disliked Jinny Atkinson very much, she was an awful snotty cow who wanted everything her own way and took a horrible liking to Jo all because of John Doherty.

The best parts about the book were reading about the traditional 300 year old fair that the gypsy's have every year with their own horse races, fights & general gossip which goes on for a week. and the other best part was the young chef who grows the herbs for the kitchen however... You must buy the book to see what happens!

This book was a fab read and i would recommend everybody to read it, You won't be disappointed.

Tracey Owen says

Fantastic book

A Great book couldn't put it down. Once you start reading it you can't stop!!!! A good feel good story

Leslie says

I first discovered this Wonderful author when I read. So You Think You're a Celebrity Chef?

On amazon these are subtitled as A feel-good novel of friendship and love. And they are.

This story, set in 1987 tells how Jo recovers from being dumped by he husband, for her newborn's Spanish Nanny; turns her life around, makes new friends and opens the best country house hotel in a year. And she also falls in love with a remarkable man; or at least lust.

This book paints an accurate picture of 1987 in the UK; fashion, celebs, politically economically. The book shows hard work and struggles and happiness and tragedy.

I loved it

Miriam Wakerly says

I was intrigued by the title of this fun book, since I have written two novels with a Gypsy theme. This novel is pure escapism and I found it a very relaxing, entertaining read. Some of the plot was a bit far-fetched but that's allowed in a rom-com kind of book and did not spoil the reading. References to Gypsies - especially the Appleby (renamed)Horse Fair were interesting and I would love to know Gypsies' opinions on this representation! I have never been to the Fair so am not qualified to comment - I am sure Caroline must have done her research.
