



Plum Tea Crazy

Laura Childs

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Theodosia Browning investigates a Charleston steeped in tradition and treachery in the latest Tea Shop Mystery from *New York Times* bestselling author Laura Childs.

While viewing the harbor's Gaslights and Galleons Parade from the widow's walk of Timothy Neville's Charleston mansion, local banker Carson Lanier seemingly tumbles over a narrow railing, then plunges three stories to his death. But a tragic accident becomes something much more sinister when it's discovered that the victim was first shot with a bolt from a crossbow.

At the request of the mansion owner, Theodosia investigates the tragedy and is soon neck deep in suspects. An almost ex-wife, a coworker, a real estate partner--all had motives for killing the luckless banker, but one resorted to murder to settle accounts.

Plum Tea Crazy Details

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Author : Laura Childs

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From Reader Review Plum Tea Crazy for online ebook

Paula says

Plum Tea Crazy is the 19th book of the Tea Shop mystery series by Laura Childs. In this book, we visit Charleston along with the Indigo Tea Shop. Theodosia Browning, the owner of the shop, along with Drayton, her tea connoisseur and Haley, the one who makes the delicious fare, keep the tea shop humming along. It's always busy. Theo, Drayton and others are watching the Parade of Ships from a friend's widow walk. One of the watchers falls to his death and Theo finds herself in the middle of a murder investigation once again.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Laura Childs always brings me right into the story. I can see Charleston. I feel like I'm visiting the tea shop, enjoying a wonderful cup of tea that Drayton has brewed and having a wonderful lunch made by Haley. Theo, Drayton and Haley are wonderful characters that bring their own humor and personalities to the story. They feel like family and I'm always excited to see what adventures they bring to the story. The mystery in this book is outstanding. I could not put it down. There were twists and turns kept me guessing until the last page. Even when I thought I had it figured out, there would be a new clue to point me in a different direction.

I would recommend this book to any reader who loves wonderful characters who interact so well that they seem like a family. I would also recommend this book to any cozy reader who loves twists and turns that will hold you captive until the end.

Kathleen says

“Plum Tea Crazy” earns 5+/5 Plum-infused Tea...Deliciously Entertaining!

Theodosia Browning is back, and I'm channeling my inner Sherlock with Laura Childs's nineteenth book in her Tea Shop Mystery series. I have read several of her books, so I am aware of background and character connections, but newbies need not shy away even though the peripheral storylines and character development are well established. There are enough references to keep a budding fan totally engaged. “Plum Tea Crazy” begins with the Gaslights and Galleons Parade amazing residents of Charleston with a cavalcade of tall ships, and Theo, owner of the Indigo Tea Shop, and her friend/tea sommelier Dayton Conneley are enjoying a bird's eye view atop of Timothy Neville's building. It was unexpected to be subjected to a barrage of cannon fire from two of the tall ships, but it was even more unexpected to hear a scream and witness one of the guest falling over the ledge and becoming impaled on the wrought-iron fence below. A local banker is dead, and with Theo's proven sleuthing skill she has been implored by Neville to uncover the truth. From high society fashion shows and a Plum Crazy Tea event to a Japanese art gallery and a black-tie charity ball, Theo has a lot on her plate, and adding a murder investigation we have fun...Laura Childs' style!

Come for the mystery...I continue to be a big fan of Laura Childs' Tea Shop Mystery. Her writing style with a third-person narrative is engaging gluing the reader immediately to every word—Oh, her description of the victim falling actually made me cringe with every twist, bump, and splat!—and illustrating the settings (I think I know every inch of Charleston, by now.), personal appearances, and presentation of clues. She also pens entertaining banter between characters that serve to illustrate tones, emotions, and personality. Even after soooo many books, Laura can still create a new murder mystery: method, list of viable suspects with interesting motives, the investigation, and a solution that often I didn't figure out myself. Although she has Theo methodical in her investigation, she uses friends and law enforcement/budding romance help, but

always finds some personal peril, sometimes more than once, to put Theo in and keep the action interesting.

Stay for the tea...My two favorite words, no not "it's murder", but "recipes included," and Laura has included nine easy-to-follow Favorite Recipes from the Indigo Tea Shop including the very appropriate Haley's "Plum Crazy" Plum Crisp with Cinnamon Whipped Cream. Along with information referenced in the story, she also is unique in sharing her own Tea Time Tips including my favorite "French Tea," and Tea Resources listing magazines, website and blogs, and information on American Tea Plantations perfect for the true tea aficionado.

Come for the mystery, stay for the tea, and enjoy the best Laura Childs can offer. Don't forget her writing talent extends to two other series just as engaging, entertaining, and fun: the fifteen-book Scrapbooking Mysteries and the eight-book Cackleberry Club series.

"Disclosure: I received an ARC. My review is voluntary with honest insights and comments."

Jessica says

First, thank you to the publisher's for providing a free electronic preview copy via NetGalley.

I have been aware of this series for many years, and always intended to pick up a volume. Starting with volume 19 may not have been the best initiation point, for I was frankly disappointed. 4+ star reviews, gorgeous covers, and my love of tea may have resulted in unrealistic expectations.

The pacing seemed erratic. The protagonist bungee-d back and forth between almost every possible suspect. I had the murderer figured out within a couple of chapters by virtue of the fact they were the only character outside of the series staples that the protagonist liked. The police were portrayed as incompetent caricatures. Throw in a hundred or so cliches and about a dozen random facts and voila, you have enough pages to fill out a book--just not enough for a satisfactory mystery or conclusion (in my opinion).

If you love this series, please don't let my review dissuade you. Certainly it has been proven to have an audience. Read it for the descriptions of tea, Charleston, good food, and some fashion.

However, if you love the works of Agatha Christie and Arthur Conan Doyle, or mysteries where the plot develops slowly through careful observations, involved interviews, and character development rather than hasty accusations, strident confrontations, and repartee, you might want to give it a pass.

Yvonne says

Theodosia "Theo" Browning, along with her sidekick and employee, Drayton Connelly is enjoying the Gaslights and Galleons Parade at Timothy Neville's Charleston mansion. Suddenly a body shockingly falls over the railing to his death. The victim is Carson Lanier, a local banker and this is not looking like an accident at all. Timothy pleads with Theo to use her investigative skills to find out who could have done such a thing.

Theo and Drayton are immediately on the case. They dig through Carson's life and begin to uncover his

involvement in some mysterious things. There's a soon-to-be ex-wife who seems to have a lust for money, a secret business partner and a secret mistress. There is no end to the suspect list, but Theo is determined she will uncover the true culprit.

This is the 19th book in Laura Childs' "Tea Shop Mystery" series. I haven't read the previous ones and I was hesitant to jump in this late in the game, but I loved every minute of it. I'm a fan of Laura Childs' "Scrapbooking Mystery" series and I've been wanting to try her other cozy mystery series. So, when I had an opportunity to read this one, I grabbed it. My only complaint is that I didn't start this series sooner.

I had no problem getting to know the characters right from the start. I didn't feel as if I was coming into the middle of a movie. I felt a part of the story right away. The mystery begins and ends with this book. There isn't a cliffhanger or any kind of mystery which needs to be read in order. At least I didn't feel as if there were any.

There's a romance brewing for Theo with the local detective. I'd be interested to see where that leads.

The storyline moved at a fast pace and kept me guessing almost to the end. It's very well-written. I can see me getting involved in this series from book #1. The characters and the tea shop setting are perfect for a cozy mystery. The word "charming" fits this series perfectly. I had a very enjoyable visit to Charleston, South Carolina and I plan to visit more often.

FTC Disclosure: I voluntarily reviewed an Advance Reader Copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review. All opinions expressed are my own.

Lisa Morin says

I can never get enough of this fabulous series by Laura Childs.

I remember the first time I picked up one of these books, I was automatically hooked.

I feel like I would know Theo and Drayton anywhere.

The dynamic duo not only brew up an amazing cup of tea, but their unique way of solving mysteries are just as fun.

While attending a private party, Theo watches a man drop to his death, she thinks surely it was an accident. When Theo runs to his aid, she makes a gruesome discovery which leads her and Drayton into a mysterious world of the rich, where answers are waiting to be discovered.

The recipes always sound delicious and the mouthwatering tea will have you brewing up your own special blend in no time.

Fans of this series will be delighted with Plum Tea Crazy.

I voluntarily read an ARC of this book provided by the publisher and NetGalley.

Betty says

It has been awhile since I read a Laura Child's book. I am pleased to see that the book was not full of various teas but focus on the plot. It started with excitement and moved fast with turmoil throughout the book. Theodosia was not the victim but close friends were hurt. Many of the regulars are present and her affair with a homicide detective Riley continues.

Theo is attending a party given by a close friend, Timothy Neville and Carson Lanier, a banker is shot and fell to his death from the balcony. Theo begins to explore what happened on behalf of a friend. There are few parties in the background that adds interest to the tale. She finds plenty of suspects, his estranged, his lover, a co-worker who wants his job, and his business partner. The ending will surprise. I recommend this book and series.

Recipes from the Indigo Tea Shop and tea tips are included.

Disclosure: Many thanks to Berkley Publishing Group for my copy for review. The opinions are my own.

Under the Covers Book Blog says

I received this book for free from Publisher in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Laura Childs once again has a hit on her hands. In book nineteen in the Tea Shop Mystery, Theodosia is shocked to find a murdered banker. At first, people believed that the live canons had killed him and caused him to fall onto a fence below but Theodosia soon learns that he was first shot by an arrow before he fell to his death.

This time, there are quite a lot of suspects that could have done this and Childs does a fantastic job of circling the characters and giving each one of them a solid motive. What I love about Childs writing is that she doesn't waste any time in getting the story started. Within the first few pages, the murder occurs, setting the quick pace for the rest of the book. For me, it's the expert pacing that makes me devour these books so quickly. I read this in one sitting, proving that this book is very easy to follow yet offers the intricacy of an expert mystery.

For anyone who is curious about this series, this one does have a bit of an English touch to it. This is expected since the series is about tea. However, in this book, the Asian countries do get some recognition so I really liked that as well.

Although this series is long-running, you can definitely read this series out of order. Just make sure you at least try Laura Childs if you're into Cozy Mysteries. I honestly don't think there's another author as good as conjuring up mysteries as well as Childs does.

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Amy says

I'm a huge fan of this series and wow--19 books! This one just didn't hit the mark for me. In the first two-thirds of the book, Haley acts like a gossip columnist instead of the chef and third in charge. Just didn't care for her snarky attitude but it changes once her cousin James arrives.

I know the cozy genre defies logic when the owner of the business has time to sleuth while the business continues to run successfully but when Theodosia rushes out an hour before the Plum Blossom Tea luncheon to see whether a suspect's car was parked somewhere?? That was just a bit too much for me.

I enjoyed the romance developing between Theodosia and Officer Riley; hopefully, it will continue. I am already looking forward to Book 20!!

Annie (Under the Covers Book Blog) says

Laura Childs once again has a hit on her hands. In book nineteen in the Tea Shop Mystery, Theodosia is shocked to find a murdered banker. At first, people believed that the live canons had killed him and caused him to fall onto a fence below but Theodosia soon learns that he was first shot by an arrow before he fell to his death.

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Read my alternate review at Fresh Fiction

Lisa Ks Book Reviews says

There's always a cup of trouble in the Tea Shop Mysteries. This nineteenth installment is no exception.

Some of my best times reading have been spent in the Indigo Tea Shop. I can vividly smell the smells, imagine the tastes of all the delicious offerings, hear the clink of spoons to fine bone china, as well as the

voices of Theo and Drayton. When not talking about tea, they're talking about murder. And I'm always wrapped up in every word of it!

PLUM TEA CRAZY was a great mystery. I pondered every angle of the story, reread what I felt were important clues, put forth my inner Nancy Drew, and still never guessed the killer. Well done! I honestly didn't want this book to end. I would have read it in one setting if my tired eyes hadn't betrayed me.

Laura Childs is an exemplary writer. Her books are always well plotted, entertaining, and interesting. This series is proof of that, and PLUM TEA CRAZY is the truest testament yet.

Ellen says

Plum Tea Crazy by Laura Childs.

Although this is my 18th book read in this series this will be my 9th review. It should be obvious since I've continued reading this series throughout its duration thus far that I truly enjoy the book(s) as well as the characters. I'd like to disclose a bit more of what motivates me to carry on in the Tea Shop series.

I want to be there, not just find the characters realistic or the setting pleasant, which they both are. I just plain want to enter the Indigo Tea Shop; to pass by the large baskets specially made for Theodosia's Tea Bath sets, to be led to a table near the back window by Theodosia herself. To enjoy the pleasant company of Drayton while he informs me of the tea selection that would go with each course as well as its history. The place settings I would love to dwell on and observe the decor with wreaths adorned with lovely cups around the room. Yes, I would be amiss if I didn't include Haley's delectable scones...home made and baked in the perfect kitchen just her size. All these wonderful ingredients (include the Tea Shop characters) add up to my desire to be there.

Theodosia and Drayton are forced to stand idly by while they watch in horror as a man plunges to his death. This horrific scene takes place while they're attending the Gaslights & Galleons Parade on the widow's walk from the mansion of Drayton's longtime friend, Timothy Neville. Upon a closer look Theodosia observes an even more sinister start to this poor man's demise.

The list of suspects widens and the reasons for his murder deepens as Theo & Drayton endeavor to get to the bottom of this murder.

Excellent reading that kept me focused and drew me in to the thick of it. Once again most highly recommended.

Tracey says

In a book I read recently, someone's "rules for writing and life" are cited – one of which was "don't use more than two similes per page". Laura Childs probably doesn't actually exceed that ... but her writing made me realize anew that it's not the quantity of simile but the quality that counts. For example, Robin McKinley uses lots and lots of similes, and they almost invariably elicit a reaction – they make me smile, or put a lump

in my throat, or make me laugh out loud, or make me feel that little click that comes when you see exactly what the author wanted you to see. They're an art. The similes in this book are ... not. They're different, I'll give them that (except when they're clichéd), and they're colorful (there are lots of monkeys, and even some castanets), but ...

The writing just grated now and then. The ninth or tenth time the author resorted to Batman-style sound effects – all caps, exclamation points – and one character (included to be obnoxious) did something outrageously obnoxious (even for him), I closed the book and deleted it. I was at 87% - and a good part of what remained was recipes and an excerpt from the next book. A day or so later I went back to it; I hadn't DNF'd a book yet this year, and I was close enough to finishing that I figured I might as well. But I didn't enjoy it.

WHAP! BOOM! SMASH!

I mean – who stops in the middle of a supposedly frantic moment to describe the scenery? A man falls off a roof; intrepid amateur detective races down the stairs to check it out; the narrative pauses in the middle of her sprint to dwell on the décor in the garden.

BAM, BAM, BAM!

Cardinal sin of the cozy: when the main character tells bald-faced lies about what is obviously a hobby (or else there wouldn't be a series of books) –

“Haley, we don’t [chase all over Charleston trying to solve the latest murder],” Theodosia said. “And we certainly won’t get tangled up in this one.”

Pants on fire.

WAH-HOO!

Another cardinal sin of the cozy: Remarkably slipshod running of a small business.

“Who’s minding the store?” Drayton asked.

"Haley flapped a hand. 'I was. But don't worry, everything's cool.'"

No, it's not cool if you left the shop completely unattended.

BOOM! (Or, as the camera, er, says, "boom, boom, boom".)

The characters are more caricatures than anything else. Two of them go from antipathy at first sight to practically weeping in each other's arms, in the pace of a week. The young man is the very picture of a cliched young man. The gallery owner is the Platonic ideal of the gallery owner. The aforementioned obnoxious journalist fits the mold perfectly. There are few surprises.

BANG!

As usual, there are lots and lots of nits I could pick. Like ... "Delicious," he said. Only it came out *dulishush* because his mouth was full." Isn't that pretty much how "delicious" is pronounced? Seriously.

Dictionary.com: "[dih-lish-uh s]". Say it a couple of times. Seriously. Oh, and like ... why does Our Heroine's sidekick have such a hard time saying the word "murder" when talking about the murder? And –

like ... Really? You expect me to swallow (no pun intended) the idea that someone not steeped (pun intended) in a world like this shop might consider a party ruined because you picked a funky tea? And ... really? How do you not go directly to the police immediately on receiving a threatening note? (And how could you *possibly* confuse the smells of cooked onions and cooked potatoes? Have I been doing something wrong?)

EEEEEEYOWWW!

In addition to the comic book sound effects – actual examples of which are scattered throughout this review (sorry) – there's also this:

"Holy Hannah"

"Holy crap"

"Holy cats"

"Holy smokes"

"Holy butter beans"

"Holy buckets"

"Holy sweet potatoes"

"Sweet Fanny Adams"

Holy euphemisms, Batman.

One more Cozy Cardinal Sin: When any character puts on their Captain Obvious hat to remind the audience why a bad cozy mystery is a bad cozy mystery:

"The best thing Theo can do is let her boyfriend, Detective Riley, figure it out. That's what the City of Charleston pays him for. That's the smartest thing, the safest thing, to do at this point."

YOWWWWWW!

The usual disclaimer: I received this book via Netgalley for review.

Chris Conley says

I always enjoy these mysteries as much for the tea, recipes, Charleston and its environs as the actual mystery. This one seemed to have a lot going on that kept me from sinking into it as much as usual. Theodosia and her crew are always entertaining.

Karen says

I was delighted to be selected to read Laura Childs new cozy, Plum Tea Crazy. This is the newest book in the series and is book #19. This one comes out on March 6th. I love the idea of this series, the cover and Drayton. The dog Earl Grey is also a particular favorite. In this mystery like so many in this series there is a lot going on, so much so that it is easy to miss motives and reasoning. This book is a heavily layered who-dun-it with a wonderful tea menu and recipes as well.

Pamela says

The latest offering in the Tea Shop series by Laura Childs. As always, a very good read. I love Theodosia's wild antics in tracking down the killer and this installment does not disappoint. The descriptions of Old Charleston and surrounding areas, the events and galas makes you yearn to travel. Not to mention, the fantastic teas and offerings at the Indigo Tea Shoppe.
