



Dinner For Two

Drea Stein

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Sean Callahan was a hot shot big city chef whose high handed ways got him into trouble one too many times. Now he's in a small town hoping for another shot at the big leagues.

Darby Reese is a big city lawyer who can bake like an angel. Unfortunately, a life living according to the law has left her burned out. So when the chance comes to run her family's deli in the small town of Queensbay, Darby's happy to take it.

But when the former chef du jour walks into her kitchen, she's definitely not prepared for sparks to fly. Will the two of them be able to find the recipe for happily ever after?

Book one in the Queensbay Series, a contemporary romance series.

Dinner For Two Details

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From Reader Review Dinner For Two for online ebook

Dee says

Two-haiku review:

Way back in city
He humiliated her
Now in same small town

Very nice romance
Liked the characters a lot
Free, but might buy next

Re-read in prep for rest of series

Jennifer says

Also posted to Jen in Bookland

I was quite surprised by how much I enjoyed Dinner for Two. It was late when I started the book and I was just looking for something light and cheesy to just read until it was time to go to bed. I ended up staying up until I finished the book because it was actually good.

Darby is someone who always did what her father wanted, tried to live her life so he would be proud. He wanted her to be a lawyer, so she became a lawyer. Unfortunately then she realized she hated it and wanted to be a chef and taking over the family restaurant. When her parents go away for a few weeks that is the perfect opportunity to make some changes and really go after what she wants.

Sean is the hot shot chef who has a reputation to be kind of like Gordon Ramsey - yelling at people and whatnot. He gets fired from his fancy restaurant so moves to the small town where Darby lives and goes into business with a friend. It was just supposed to be a stop over until he can move on to the next big thing and have it all again.

Right from the first moment they meet in town, even though they had met before, the sparks fly. Sean doesn't remember Darby, and Darby is still embarrassed by what happened a year ago (and angry he doesn't even remember her). They obviously have the physical attraction and man it was hot. I liked how they both kind of tried to stay away, but then just gave in to the inevitable. They quickly fall for each other, but it was not one of those insta-loves even though it is quick. I really liked them together. I liked how they were both trying to change and be better people and follow their dreams. Of course there has to be something that happens to rock the boat, but then recover from. The very end, how it gets resolved, was a little cheesy and quick, but I didn't care that much. Now on to find the next book by this author.

Patricia says

HARBORING DESIRE

This is a sultry book, but only just. A majority of the plot depends on personal interactions, friendships, and people knowing each other in that distinctly small-town way. Darby is a typical "girl who left and made it", while Sean is new in town. The only problem is, Darby didn't actually make it because that was what she wanted. It was only what she thought her parents wanted her to be. (It turns out that a lot of the time, in stories like this, true and fictional, there are misunderstandings. Sometimes, even the parents think they want their kids to get away and "be someone".) Sean has definitely been someone, and nearly destroyed himself when he basically imploded. Now, given a second chance to cook, he is putting his all into rebuilding not only a restaurant, but also himself.

There are portions of this book that move slowly, sort of like the town it takes place in. I did put it down, but always ended up picking it back up. If you want a cliff-hanger, or a titillating, scintillating hot read, this is not the book you're looking for. This is a book for lazy afternoons, for when you are baking cookies (and it'll inspire you to do that!) and need something to read in between batches. The plot is not so complicated that you need a flow chart, but since it is part of a series, there are more important characters than just the protagonists. I am now ready for the next one...

Carol says

This was a cute read overall. No huge conflict or drama. Sean was trying to leave the demons of his past behind which caught up with him and nearly ruined his career as a chef. Working with his friend Chase and being a partner in the hotel/restaurant was a new beginning for him. He didn't really like the person he was when his career imploded and was trying to change and be better. Darby was more or less trying to find her place in life. Being the good girl and good daughter all her life at twenty-seven(ish) she was tired of being a lawyer. It wasn't what she wanted for herself and she really didn't enjoy it. Having always had a love of cooking and baking she secretly took cooking classes which is how she first met Sean, even though he didn't remember her until she reminded him later in the book.

All in all the book was what you'd expect of a contemporary romance. Cute, fluffy, and sweet. I liked both characters. The secondary characters were pretty interesting and likable as well. The conflict Darby struggled with by making a different choice for her path in life than what her father wanted for her was easy to relate to. The minor bump in Sean and Darby's relationship was a little silly IMO. It felt unnecessary really, and the lack of trying to attempt to discuss is on Sean's part when Darby was cutting ties before she could get hurt annoyed me. The HEA ending was a little cheesy but what could you expect? It was what it was. Not a bad read for a few hours of escapism.

Sandy Wallace says

A Recipe for Romance

Darby Reese has ditched her legal career to pursue her dream of running the family deli in her quaint, seaside hometown of Queensbay, Connecticut. Sean Callahan, bad-boy celebrity Manhattan chef, has come to Queensbay as head chef/co-owner of the Queensbay Arms hotel and restaurant. Having been fired from his

last job because of his temper, he is determined to rebuild his reputation and find some peace within himself.

The book opens in Darcy's deli when a mixed up delivery of mushrooms causes a fiery confrontation between the two cooks. Darcy is set off by Sean's ridiculous accusation of theft and Sean doesn't realize Darcy's anger is aggravated by a previous meeting he doesn't even remember. Both characters are struggling with issues dating back to their respective childhoods.

Their road to romance is twisted by misunderstandings, insecurities and interference by troublemakers on each side. But there are good friends on both sides determined to help.

Drea Stein has written a light-hearted story perfect for reading on a sunny beach or in front of a cozy fire on a rainy day. The characters are well drawn and the dialog is snappy and believable. Even the supporting characters personalities come alive with just a few sentences. Being a New Englander, the setting had deep meaning for me and the author captured that small town essence in her vibrant descriptions of this harbor town.

If you like your romances sweet with a dash of humor and a pinch of eccentricity, you'll love "Dinner for Two." I look forward to the next books in this series.

"I was given a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review."

Ashley Berry says

3.5 stars for a great read. This is just what I needed today while I worked. A small town romance with chefs; something that I love! Give me a romance based around a restaurant business and chefs and I'm good to go. It's such a beautiful, chaotic dance with such artistry and passion. Chefs are the most temperamental people I have ever met and I love seeing them in romance novels.

The Book Worm says

Dinner for Two is not an outstanding romance novel, the plot is fairly predictable and there are no real unexpected twists and turns. It starts out at a good pace but then action stalls a bit. I was expecting a bit more from the secondary plots, especially Darby's plans to renovate her father's deli. Her parents reaction to what she did behind their backs was pretty mild in comparison to what was hinted throughout the book and there was no follow up on the potential sale to Quent and on Darby's plans to expand the business, two details I actually was curious about.

Still, it's a nice, light, fun to read novel and I actually enjoyed reading it. It won't make you smarter, but it won't burn your brain cells either. Yes, there are better books out there, but there are also much worse, so as long as you don't raise your expectations too much, Dinner for Two accounts for a few well spent hours and delivers exactly what it promises.

Barbara says

Great, lovely read.

This was my first book by Drea Stein but won't be my last. I really enjoyed this book. One of the things I enjoyed was the setting, Queensbay. The story is about Darby, who quits her job as a lawyer to run her family's deli while her parents are on vacation. She doesn't like being a lawyer and only wants to do what she loves which is cook. She runs into someone from her past, Sean Callahan a big shot chef who is also in Queensbay as part owner of a restaurant after making several mistakes in his own career. The two of them have sparks that are undeniable between the two of them and those around them.

The book is a very easy read but the characters are well developed. It moves along nicely with some twist and turns. The description of the area of Queensbay is very good and makes the setting sound perfect. I really enjoyed the book and the development between Dary and Sean and would love to see what happens in the future. There are many possibilities of future books between Dary and Sean and others in the town of Queensbay.

Deane says

Romance?

Two chefs Sean and Darby with different pasts make dreams come true with their knowledge incredible recipes. Sometimes you need a push to make it happen.

Pam says

Darcy Reece just wants to cook. She does not want to be a lawyer but her father does not understand her wish to join him at the deli, The Dory. When her mother persuades him to take a long vacation to Italy, he reluctantly agrees for Darcy to come to Queensbury and take over for a while. No one knows she had quit her job as a lawyer and had attended cooking classes for some time. Can she make the deli make a profit while Daddy is gone so he will see she can run it?

Sean Callahan is a master chef with a lousy temper. He and Darcy had a run in at a class he taught but he has forgotten her. She knows him though. He hits an employee and is blacklisted in New York. Chase, a friend, has just purchased Osprey Inn and wants Sean to come in as partner and redo the restaurant as he sees fit. Osprey Inn, of course, is in Queensbury. Sparks fly!

Karen Kearns says

CELEBRITY CHEF MEETS LAWYER REFUGEE

When a bad boy celebrity chef meets a lawyer turned small town chef, sparks fly. This is a well written book with fully fleshed out characters in a stand alone story that introduces characters fully able to be the leads in forthcoming books. Very enjoyable.

Delia Wagner says

book 1

darby and sean, reese/

her dad owns the darby restaurant, he's getting old, half owner of the osprey arms, a night club, rest in conn, darby wants to fix it up, she's a great cook, what trouble does she find ????

good book, interesting.

Nancy Brady says

Two chefs meet in the small town of Queensbay. Actually, Darby had met Sean, AKA Chef Sexy, in a culinary class a year earlier, but that was an unmitigated disaster for her. When they meet again, he doesn't remember her at all...to begin with. Sparks fly from the start. She is still angry about their last encounter; he is just angry about some stolen mushrooms. However, quickly he becomes interested in her and her delicious chocolate chip cookies and egg sandwiches. Letting down the barriers for her is more difficult, yet soon their romance is cooking.

Both of them have issues to deal with, but can they work it out? It will take a village (or at least some good friends) to get these two together permanently.

Read in an ebook format(Nook), this novel loses a star or two for the poor formatting, the typos, the constant font changes, and the chapter that is repeated. Hopefully, in the book version, these were corrected as it was frankly annoying. It's an okay romance, enough so that am willing to give the second book in the series a chance.

Becky Jacobs says

Good

The characters were very real, however the circumstances were a little out there. Time frame was easy to follow too.

Sue says

Drea Stein is a new author for me and I wasn't disappointed in Dinner For Two the first book in her

Queensbay series. The H & h are two chefs, but they don't compete. Sean is the chef/owner (with a friend) of a hotel restaurant and Darby is the chef/want-to-be owner of a small restaurant in town. They have a sort of past. Darby was in a cooking class when Sean was a guest teacher. He yelled at her for her poor preparation. Turns out her then boyfriend sabotaged her food. Now Sean (who has a reputation for being short tempered) is in Queensbay after being fired from his high-end chef position for getting into a fight with one of his cooks. He wants to change the way he acts & reacts to situations and his friend, Chase is offering him a chance to make that change.

Darby is a high-powered attorney on the fast-track at her NYC law firm. But she is very unhappy there. So she quits her job and comes home to run the family restaurant while her parents are on a trip to Italy. She intends to renovate and redecorate and eventually buy the place from her father.

Darby & Sean get off on the wrong foot but fall in love and are heading for a happily ever after. That is until Sean's PR gal, Mandy (who was a real b***h) decides that she wants Sean for herself and all the business he will bring her when she gets him a cooking show in LA. All he has to do is yell at the contestants. But Sean doesn't want to be that person any more. Anyway, he loves Darby and this small town, Queensbay.

I did enjoy this well-written, easy read. The characters are believable and Ms. Stein kept me interested in their stories. I am looking forward to reading the rest of this series.
