



Last Bite

Nancy Verde Barr

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After ending a bad relationship, Casey Costello, an executive chef at a morning television show, swears off men. Who has the time anyway? She's busy overseeing a rambunctious food-prep crew in a kitchen the size of a closet; trying to please high-maintenance celebrity guest chefs; and dealing with her large extended Italian American family, who believe that the solutions to life's problems involve food. And in the midst of her high-energy, stress-inducing career—punctuated by a steady stream of parties and restaurant openings that must not be missed—she's trying to uncover why Sally Woods, a grand old dame of the culinary world and regular on the television show, is suddenly ready to jump ship and find a new station *and* a new exectuvie chef.

When Danny O'Shea, a handsome chef from one of New York's hottest new restaurants, makes a guest appearance on the show, Casey smells trouble. But feelings ignite faster than a flambé dessert, especially when Danny whips up a few surprises during a television shoot in Italy.

Narrated in Casey's smart and refreshingly disarming voice, *Last Bite* is an irresistible culinary caper, with characters whose appetites are as big as their personalities.

Last Bite Details

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Author : Nancy Verde Barr

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From Reader Review Last Bite for online ebook

Sara ♥ says

This book was very cute. I'm in love with Danny... I hope my husband doesn't mind! ;)

So the main character, Casey, is a chef who works backstage on a TV show, preparing food-preparation segments (cooking back-up food, doing all the food prep work, etc.) for an early morning talk show. She works closely with a very famous chef, Sally, who is, essentially, Julia Child (who the author worked with for 18 years). So Casey and her boyfriend have an ugly and painful breakup at the beginning of the book, and she's taking a break from men... She bought a boy gerbil, who she thinks is enough man in her life right then... haha...

But then a guest chef, Danny, comes onto the show, and he's really good-looking... but he's also REALLY flirtatious, and so she assumes he's a womanizer... And it's all great fun. He's fabulous and has a wicked-awesome Irish accent, of course! So it's a story about them falling in love and also a bit of a mystery, because strange crap is going on with Sally... and Casey is trying to figure out why she's acting so weird... And in true Nancy Drew and Ned Nickerson style, Casey and Danny work together to help Sally out of the (very serious) jam she finds herself in.

The plot seemed a bit contrived in places... Like a certain character happened to speak the foreign language that the bad guys happen to speak... (Like when Nancy Drew goes to a random country and happens to speak the obscure local language well enough to overhear and understand the bad guys' plan and thwart them...) It was a bit silly... And the character descriptions were a bit fan-fiction-y in feeling...

But overall, a cute story. 3.5 stars. I rounded up due to the extremely cute ending. ;)

Oh, and there's an Eggplant Parmesan recipe in the back that looks amazing... maybe if I make it the hubby won't know it's eggplant?

Just - The romance reader says

I would give this book 4.5 stars. For a baker and a food lover the fact that the story is one of romance centered around food really appealed to me. The characters are great, Danny O'Shea is an Irish dream. Never have I wanted to hear a man speak to me in an Irish accent sooo bad!

The story is a bit predictable, but in a good way so that doesn't take away from my rating. If you're a chef, a food lover or just a sucker for an Irishman the book is worth a read. An added bonus is that there are recipes for some of the Italian dishes mentioned throughout the book, included at the end of the novel.

Scottsdale Public Library says

If you love food and a good romance book, this is the perfect read. The author, Nancy Verde Barr, was Julia Child's executive chef, and she uses that experience to shed light on all the prep work that happens behind

the scenes during cooking shows. Although classified as romance, the romance part really is more of a side plot than the main plot. Humorous and entertaining, I only have one tip: definitely do not read when hungry!

-Jennifer W.O.-

Melissa says

This book was an easy read. It kept me interested and it gave a good 'behind the scenes' peak at what goes into creating food segments on TV. However I felt short changed by this book. The author spent so much time describing the food, the process of producing TV food segments etc. but rushed thru the romance. It almost felt like the "people romance" part was a necessary inconvenience so she could indulge her extremely detailed but boring details of the author's culinary background. Also the mob subplot was a little weird, but oh well. Overall not bad, but not great.

Jennifer says

If you love food and a good romance book, this is the perfect read. The author, Nancy Verde Barr, was Julia Child's executive chef, and she uses that experience to shed light on all the prep work that happens behind the scenes during cooking shows. Although classified as romance, the romance part really is more of a side plot than the main plot. Humorous and entertaining, I only have one tip: definitely do not read when hungry!

Pam G says

Predictable but a nice diversion for a place ride.

Margaret says

Another light "foodie" read with the usual love-hate relationship but with a mystery thrown in.

Casey Costello knows about food. She has training as a chef, but as executive chef for a morning television show, her duties are a bit different. She oversees her prep crew, fields demands from guest celebrities, makes sure all materials are ready in sequence when they are needed during a 3 minute "live" cooking segment for a large viewing audience, and she tries to juggle her personal life (at the moment, her lack of a personal life..as in a relationship). Meeting new Irish chef Danny O'Shea can only mean trouble, but oh, it is delicious trouble!!

I laughed at the wonderful characters in this book. Casey's out-spoken, food-loving Italian family is loving, troublesome, and supportive. Her best friend/cousin is determined and conniving. Her favorite seasoned regular guest(Sally) on the show is feisty, lovable, and is involved in something unsettling, but Casey can't

quite put her finger on it.

A trip to Italy to do a cooking segment brings everything to a head--the relationship between Casey and Danny and the mystery surrounding Sally. Hearts are won and hearts are broken.

The mystery was a bit over the top, but it gave a different twist to the many foodie books that I have read. While the ending was predictable, it was the perfect ending. The inside look at all the work a backstage crew does to make those so easy looking short cooking segments on television was interesting. I will never watch a cooking segment in the same way again.

Karen says

Great vacation read. Not too heavy. Characters didn't make me mad! My two favorite things in one book "food" and "romance" what's not to love.

Kristin says

It was good enough to plod through until the end...but just barely. If I would have returned it before finishing it, I likely never would have given it a second thought, wondering how it ended. The characters were "okay," the plot was "okay," the ending was "okay," but nothing about it was terribly engaging or thought-provoking. Yawn.

Sara says

This was a kick in the pants. Barr was executive chef to Julia Child for 18 years, and bases this entertaining tale on that experience. There's more than just food cookin' in the studio kitchens when an Italian/Irish/American mixes it up with a genuine Irish chef. When they take the show on the road to Italy, more strange behavior ensues when it turns out the star of the show is being blackmailed. Of course, the good guys come out on top in the end.

Rebecca says

If you've ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes in food prep for a GMA type show, this is the book for you. Throw in the Russian mob, a chef that's a cross between Julia Child and Paula Deen, an Irish-American family, a hunky Irish chef, a trip to Italy, for assistants named Tony and stir it up with misunderstandings and a light touch. The result is a delightful book that is entertaining, sweet and funny as well as romantic.

R says

My best friend BEGGED me to read this before we go to Italy in two years, so I did as she commanded. It was okay, but not what I expected. It fit her personality, as she is obsessed with well written foodie books, and this did have really great chef scenes. The actual story behind the story was a little thin though. I'll probably be telling her it was good and keeping our friendship in tact. Besides, it wasn't bad, but it wasn't great. Not a lie on either end!

Katie Keller says

Boring and way too much conversation about food prep -- we get it!

Nicole says

I would give this zero stars if I could. Kindle daily deal and just absolutely, utterly, hideous.

Written by a chef? Makes sense as the whole plot read like a recipe. Methodical. DULL. And with a crapton of bullshit that had nothing to do with anything. Good for you, you have a big hilarious Italian family. There's absolutely zero need to go on in excruciating detail for pages and pages about who is related to who and make up drama between them. Much less do this badly.

And then a weird spy sub-plot with absolutely zero sort of climax? Seems to me somebody had an idea about a novel that had zero substance to it and then decided to 'add a dash' of this and a 'pinch' of that. Oh how I nauseate myself.

I have an appreciation for a bad romance novel, and this was not even close to passing as bad. If I could get my \$2 back, I would.

Stacey says

I wouldn't have chosen this book, but Matthew picked it up at the library for me and it turned out to be just right for someone taking painkillers.
