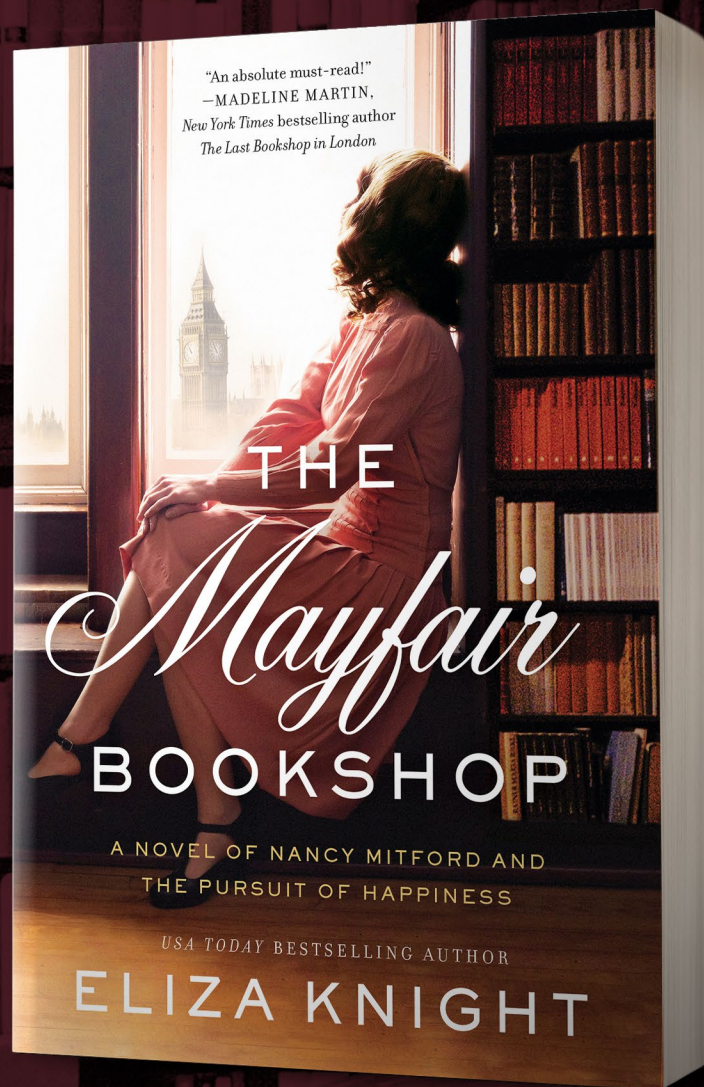


YOUR PLANNING GUIDE FOR *THE MAYFAIR BOOKSHOP* BOOK CLUB EVENT

including a deleted scene, recipes and more!



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Meet the Mitfords

The infamous Mitfords were a large family, starting with their matriarch, Sydney Bowles (Muv), who married David Freeman-Mitford (Farve) in 1904. David was one of many children, and the second son to Algernon “Barty” Freeman-Mitford, 1st Baron Redesdale. Sydney’s father was the founder of the magazine *The Lady*, which employed both David and eventually Nancy Mitford. In 1915, David’s older brother died in the Battle of Loos, which left David as the sole heir. David didn’t seem to have a good grasp of finances, as he frequently bought and sold property, more often than not, with financial disadvantages. As a result, Sydney was very frugal, even raising chickens and selling the eggs. Their seven children often complained of being poor, not well educated and having their house seamstress make their clothes rather than designers. When asked about this in a later recorded interview, Diana clarified that they were poor in comparison to their rich aristocratic friends, but that they had large houses, servants and an allowance, so not poor in the sense most of us would consider when using the term.

Nancy was the eldest of the Mitford children, born to David and Sydney on November 28, 1904. She was perhaps the instigator of all the nicknames, which I toned down within the novel for simplicity. Nancy was alternatively known as Naunce(ling), The Old French Lady, The Lady, Dame, Susan, Soo (the latter two of which she and Jessica couldn’t remember the origins of). As an adult, Nancy did complain about her lack of education, as she and her sisters weren’t sent away to school, but instead educated by a series of governesses and their mother. The children did, however, have free rein of a very large library, of which they took full advantage. While Nancy might have thought herself uneducated, her prose and witty commentary suggest otherwise.

Pamela “Woman” was born on November 25, 1907, just a few days shy of Nancy’s third birthday. Nancy wasn’t happy to no longer be an only child, which

she teased her sister about relentlessly. (Nancy was sometimes called cruel by her siblings, who didn’t always enjoy her mockery.) After she suffered from polio as a child, Pam lost some mobility in her leg, which lasted throughout her life. Where Nancy was seen more as an acerbic personality, Pamela was often calming—which is probably why on her deathbed, Nancy was happy to have her sister by her side taking care of her. Pam is the least talked about sibling in the family and tended to prefer a quiet country existence. Pamela’s husband, Derek Jackson, was a renowned physicist. In fact, he was a visiting professor at the Ohio State University during the time that my grandfather attended (though he was not a student of Jackson’s). In the library at OSU, there is a collection of videotapes, slides and letters that belonged to Jessica Mitford. When I discovered this during my research, we were at the height of the pandemic, so I wasn’t able to visit until after the book had already been completed. But, I did visit with my oldest daughter (a future librarian), who works in the Rare Book Room of the university, and it was amazing!

Thomas “Tud” was born January 2, 1909. Unlike his sisters, who were educated mostly at home, he went to Eton, bringing home friends who would later be popular in the Bright Young Thing era and become close to his sisters, Nancy in particular. It’s actually rumored that Tom had a brief affair with Hamish St. Clair-Erskine, who was Nancy’s fiancé for a time before she married Peter Rodd.

Diana “Honks” joined the Mitford family on June 17, 1910, and would become one of the most controversial of the siblings. Despite being six years younger than Nancy, Diana was well known in the Bright Young Thing crowd as well. She was quite often modeling for various photographers, including Cecil Beaton. At a young age, she married Bryan Guinness, heir to his family’s fortune, but ultimately grew unhappy and shockingly chose to divorce him after the birth of their second son. In the book I mentioned that Bryan took the blame,

Meet the Mitfords (continued)

which was standard during that time. In another unprecedented move (and much to her mother's disappointment), Diana became the mistress of Oswald Mosley, the leader of the British Union of Fascists. They spent a lot of time together with Hitler, and Diana even spent time with the dictator and Unity without Oswald. Hitler was even a witness at their secret wedding. Nancy and Diana did not ultimately agree on politics. Nancy likely felt guilty for what she told Gladwyn Jebb, and her culpability in Diana's subsequent arrest. However, more likely to have been responsible for her arrest was the letter sent by Diana's former father-in-law, as well as her association with Hitler. Nancy never told her sister about her confession, and Diana did not find out until after Nancy had passed away. Though they were at odds during the war, they became close again later in life, when Diana lived in France. I think what saved their relationship was not talking politics in the end, as they were never on the same page. Some dinner conversations are just off-limits.

Unity Valkyrie "Bobo" was born on August 8, 1914 in London, though she would brag later that she was conceived in Swastika, Canada, as it was the symbol of the Nazis, whom she idolized. At some point in her teen years, she became enamored with Germany, Hitler and Nazi ideals. She convinced her parents to enroll her in a language school in Munich, where she became obsessed with meeting Hitler. Which she did, even growing close enough to have lunch with him and visit his house, and was eventually secured an apartment from an evicted Jewish family by Hitler. The gun she shot herself with was also a gift from Hitler. It was rumored they were lovers, but there is nothing to necessarily substantiate that besides conjecture. Even if Eva Braun, Hitler's girlfriend turned wife, did write a jealous note in her diary in regard to Unity. Nancy struggled with Unity's choices and beliefs. Despite not agreeing on politics, Nancy did love her sister and tried to maintain a pleasant relationship with her. After Unity's attempted suicide, Nancy tried to help her mother with her sister when and where she could.

Jessica Lucy "Decca" (yes, Lucy is named after Jessica!), was the second youngest of the Mitford siblings, born on September 11, 1917, nearly thirteen years after Nancy. She was also quite controversial, her politics swinging in the opposite direction of Diana and Unity, who were ardent Fascists. Jessica was a Communist. After moving to America and the death of her first husband, Esmond Romilly, she married Robert Treuhaft, a civil rights lawyer. While in her earlier days in the book, Nancy believes Jessica hasn't done much to fight the good fight, this becomes Jessica's mantra for the rest of her days, and she was involved in civil rights activism until she passed away. Jessica had four children—two daughters with Esmond, and two sons with Robert. Tragically, her infant with Esmond was not the only child she lost. Her first-born son with Robert was sadly hit by a bus when he was a child. She was also a writer (*Hons and Rebels*), an investigative journalist (*The American Way of Death*) and a musician, recording a duet with her good friend Maya Angelou.

Deborah "Debo" Vivien, the youngest of the brood, born March 31, 1920 (nearly sixteen years Nancy's junior), was perhaps the most traditional. Her playmates growing up were Jessica and Unity (Nancy not so nicely nicknamed them Nit, Sic and Bor, taking the middle of their names as a mean tease). Though Deborah was younger than Nancy, they were still close. When Deborah married Andrew Cavendish, second son of the Duke of Devonshire, she did not expect to be a duchess. After all, her brother-in-law Billy was young and healthy. Billy married Kick Kennedy (sister to JFK) just before he was shipped abroad for war, where he was killed in action. Deborah took her position as a duchess seriously, working to build the dukedom until her end.

The Mitford Pets



The Mitfords LOVED their pets. Nancy had a number of dogs throughout the years of her life, and loved French bulldogs so much, as did most of the family. There are so many fun stories about their pets when they were growing up, of which they had a veritable menagerie—chickens, ponies, horses, goats, rabbits, etc.

Several of Nancy's dogs make appearances in *The Mayfair Bookshop*. I'm a sucker for dogs, what can I say?

Fun pet fact: Unity Mitford had a pet rat named Ratular, which she would sneak into debutante balls along with her snake Enid to torment the other girls.

Do you have any pets? Share them with me online!
Post your pets with the hashtags: #TheMayfairBookshop
#ElizaKnight #MitfordPets

Deleted Chapter

This is the original (unedited) first chapter of *The Mayfair Bookshop*. During edits, we decided to let it go for a number of reasons. One was that we wanted to jump right into Nancy's point of view, but also, I cut Lucy's jerk of a boyfriend, Joshua, from the book completely!

CHAPTER ONE LUCY ST. CLAIR

Present Day, Washington, DC

The office was more frigid than usual. Lucy St. Clair stared down at her fingers, which had turned purple, an indication of the less-than-ideal temperature.

What would happen if she just stood up one day, marched over to the thermostat and cranked the digits up by ten degrees? Mr. Sloan would no doubt throw an epic fit, which would be entertaining, but likely get her fired. After all, Lucy was sure that some part of her contract had mentioned something to the effect of: thou shalt not touch the thermostat.

And she understood the need for 62°, since it was the perfect temperature for the rarer and more vintage books that came in through their office daily. Being cold was a necessary sacrifice for the books she loved. There was a reason she kept extra thick sweaters in her cubicle, and when winter hit in a few months, she'd have gloves and a scarf too.

The interoffice IM popped up on Lucy's computer—

Mr. Sloan would like to see you in his office.

I'll be right there. Lucy was surprised at the lack of typos, the way her fingers trembled.

She wasn't normally nervous about meetings with her boss, but lately she'd been distracted, and her work for Emerald Books had suffered, slipping from priority number one to *oh, yeah, I should probably do my job*. The sudden tragic loss of her mother, who'd died of a pulmonary embolism just days after the removal of her gallbladder, had created a whirlwind of grief she'd been trying to climb out of for months. Her ex-boyfriend Joshua had tried to comfort her, but he was out of his

depth, part of the reason they'd recently broken up. That was another distraction, considering they still worked closely together at the office.

Their seven-year working relationship had been one of rivalry. At some point, the not-so-friendly challenges had turned into a courtship that had lasted the better part of a year. Every once in a while, however, Joshua's competitive nature, and resistance to loss, reared its head. After the loss of her mother, she just couldn't take the unpredictability of their romance, and had called it quits, much to his dissatisfaction.

This too shall pass.

Lucy brushed the crumbs from her morning granola from her skirt and shook her head. Normally neat, precise and organized, Lucy felt more like what the cat dragged in with every day that passed. She walked briskly to her boss's office, avoiding Joshua's corner, and tapped on the glass door.

Mr. Sloan waved her in, hanging up the phone as she entered. Though he was graying around the edges, he still had a full head of hair and wore a fashionable, pressed suit and a literary tie. Today's featured open books with the letters floating out. Her boss cleared his throat.

As she took the seat opposite him, inadvertently making a stretching sound against the chair's leather, she swore she could feel Joshua's eyes on her back from his cubicle not far outside. "Good morning, sir." She tried to keep her voice bright and noncommittal.

Mr. Sloan put the eraser of his pencil between his teeth, assessing her the same way she'd seen him look over a rare book. Was she going to be found lacking? Lucy was a first edition of her kind. But there was always the option for a reprint. Just about

Deleted Chapter (continued)

anyone who had a love of books would want her job. A few months ago, she would have said the condition of her binding, pages and cover dust jacket were superb, like new, but now, she was starting to tear at the edge before everyone's very eyes. Probably, she had to admit to herself, not a commodity that Emerald Books would want to keep on their elite stacks.

Joshua had warned her that they'd be laying off a few people. Lucy didn't want to be fired. She loved her job as a special library curator—a job Joshua also held. It was a dream come true every day to help shape the home libraries of private collectors, picking out amazing books that some clients would appreciate, covet even, while visitors to their homes might only gaze admiringly at the spines and wonder what they cost. Rare books to a curator or collector were a gem, but to an outsider, they were a status symbol of the elite.

"Ms. St. Clair." Mr. Sloan took off his glasses, setting them on the table as he rubbed his eyes, looking as tired as she felt.

Sleep had eluded her for days. Weeks. Maybe even months.

"Yes," she answered a little too quickly, though it seemed entirely unnecessary to respond at all. Lucy drew in a deep breath, prepared for the words: we have to let you go.

Mr. Sloan sat forward suddenly. "I want you to go to London."

She wasn't being laid off? Lucy cocked her head to the side. "London?"

Mr. Sloan nodded. "There's a special project, one I intended to work on myself, but with the Norman account, I won't be able to make it happen. I want you to take my place. This is a good opportunity for you, Lucy."

This was not at all what she'd expected. "London," she said again, a little breathlessly, excitement bubbling up inside her.

"Yes. The matter involves the Masters account, and that account will, therefore, now be yours."

The Masters account! Miranda Masters was an icon—a woman others dreamed of becoming. CEO of her own television media company, elegant, intelligent, she could hold the attention of everyone in a room.

Mr. Sloan continued, "You'll travel to the Heywood Hill bookshop in Mayfair. One of the oldest bookstores in London. Opened a few years before World War II."

"Queen Elizabeth's bookshop of choice?" Lucy shook her head in disbelief. Was this really happening? "The bookshop author Nancy Mitford worked at during the war?" Nancy's book *The Pursuit of Love* was Lucy's all-time favorite, and that of her mother as well. The opportunity to stand where Nancy had been would be a dream come true.

"So, you've heard of it, good."

Heard of it? She'd cut out an article about it and glued it to her vision board years ago. It was still on her bucket list of amazing bookshops to visit. And there was a mystery her mother had pondered over the years regarding Nancy Mitford that Lucy herself had been dying to solve. A trip to London, to the very place where answers might just lie. "Yes." She kept her voice even as she tried to contain herself.

"Good. I've already visited the library space we're curating for. Here's the file, complete with pictures. Ms. Masters is looking for a wide variety of items for her new library space. She wants an emphasis on classical fiction and first editions but would also like nonfiction and coffee table books. Both substance and eye-catching stuff. You'll be charged with selecting about five hundred books—give or take. And, as you mentioned Mitford, Ms. Masters is a huge fan, and would like you to procure a special collection." Mr. Sloan pushed the thick folder across his desk. "This is a bit of a test for you, Lucy. If you recall, Gail will be retiring in the next few months."

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As if the Masters account and going to London wasn't enough of a win, a promotion was on the line as well? Lucy nodded, hoping she managed a confident expression. What would Joshua say? He'd been hankering for a promotion forever, even speculated on being offered Gail's position as manager of special projects. "You can count on me, sir."

"Good." Mr. Sloan nodded and reached for another folder. "Sarah will work out your travel details. You'll need to leave as soon as possible. There's an apartment above the shop that has been rented out for the duration of your stay. Convenient and no commute time. Which is just as well, because, you'll have two weeks. That's it."

Two weeks in London to curate a library for special projects—this was what she'd been working toward for the last seven years. A killer opportunity. And she was the right woman for the job. After all, her family was originally from England, someone having finally decided to come to the US in the mid-1950s. She'd heard plenty of stories of the Bright Young Things—the champagne-drinking bohemian aristocrats and literary darlings of the age—from her mother, especially when Lucy had been in college and partied a little too hard one night. Nancy Mitford had been a part of that set—going from one house party to the next, traipsing around London dressed in costume and treasure hunting. They were the talk of the town, their pictures and exploits splashed in the tabloids. Oh, what fun that must have been.

Two weeks in London would also give Lucy the chance to solve the question she and her mother had pondered from within the flap of a book. In her mother's copy—now Lucy's—of *The Pursuit of Love* by Nancy Mitford, there had been an inscription written by Nancy herself, which neither one of them had ever been able to figure out. Though her mother was no longer with her, Lucy couldn't help but think this was a sign, or at the very least a way for her to feel the closeness they'd once shared.

"Thank you, sir." Lucy stood, held the folders to her

chest with one hand and reached her other hand across the table.

Mr. Sloan shook her hand with a curt nod and a tight but encouraging smile. "Don't screw it up."

"I won't let you down. I very much appreciate this opportunity."

Back in her own space, she set down the folders. She'd barely flipped the first open when Joshua rounded her cubicle's edge, taking up the small entryway. His arms were crossed to appear casual, but his eyes twitched. Was he concerned she might have been sacked, or was he here for more selfish reasons? She was guessing the latter.

"What was that about?" he asked.

"I'm going to London," she said, finally allowing her smile to express the triumph and pleasure she felt.

He frowned, his arms tightening across his chest. "What for?"

"The Masters account."

His lips pressed together so firmly the color turned white. "That's a major project."

"Yes. I'm excited." Lucy kept her tone nonchalant, even as she knew he must be seething. This was what he wanted.

Joshua shook his head. "Don't go."

Lucy didn't bother trying to hide her exasperation. "What?"

"You know I'm trying out for Gail's position. If you take this account, you'll push me out of the running. Let me go. Tell Mr. Sloan that London isn't going to work out for you, that you think I'd be the better candidate."

The arrogance. . . Lucy pressed her fingers firmly into the top of her desk to keep them from curling into a fist. Even with his competitive nature, honestly

Deleted Chapter (continued)

expecting her to surrender her own ambitions was way out of line.

A tiny part of her was ready to give up the project—only for a nanosecond. After all, she didn't want to deal with him stomping around the office, or sabotaging her in some way, which wasn't out of the realm of possibility. But this was an exceptional opportunity for her. A chance at furthering her career—which her boss had made expressly clear. Mr. Sloan thought she had earned this; he was ready to see what she could do.

A tiny spark of anger flared to life inside her. She wanted this project. Had worked her ass off for it. How could she pass up a chance to go to London? The urge to escape, as though she were in a sea of cold water and someone had just offered her a lifeline, rose within.

Resolved to stand her ground, Lucy said confidently, "I'm not going to give up the project. You know I've also been working hard for this too."

He turned on his heel and marched toward the men's room, leaving Lucy to stare after his retreating form in revulsion. How had she ever dated him? Kissed him? Slept with him? The way he'd just stalked away was a

reminder of the bullet she'd dodged by finally breaking up with him.

People who cared about others supported one another. There was no justifying his behavior, even if he did want Gail's position. Even if their relationship was mostly one of rivalry. True team players congratulated their opponents on a win.

Her gaze fell to the folder, and all that it signified.

A chance to rise. A chance to answer the questions her mother had been asking for years before her death. A chance to get away from—her gaze slid toward the shutting men's room door—everything.

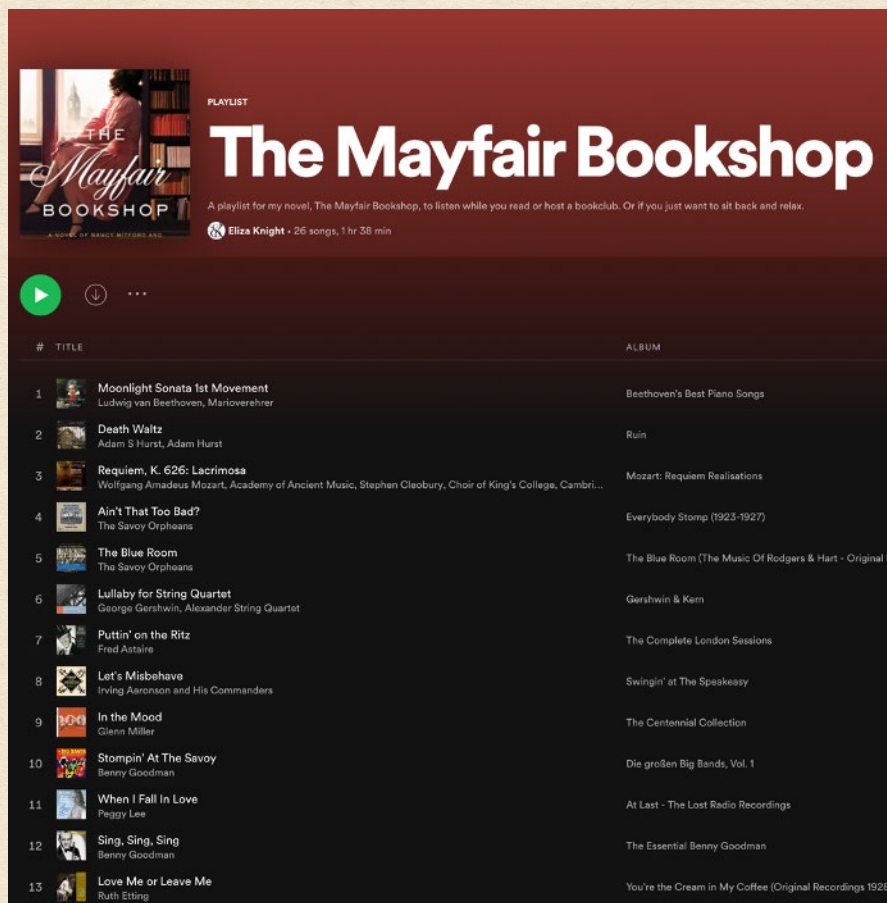
This was the right decision for her; she felt it in her gut.

It was time she started making decisions that would propel her forward instead of holding her back. This London excursion was a dream come true. Even if she didn't get a promotion.

The Mayfair Bookshop Playlist

LET'S SET THE MOOD WITH *THE MAYFAIR BOOKSHOP* PLAYLIST!

I love music, and play it most of the day! I suggest for any book club, or even while reading, that you check out this playlist I created on Spotify, which holds many of the songs I listened to while researching, writing and editing *The Mayfair Bookshop*. Search for me: **@authorelizaknight**, and the playlist is titled *The Mayfair Bookshop*.



Book Club Menu and Recipes

PARTY LIKE A BRIGHT YOUNG THING WITH THESE FUN RECIPES AND MENU IDEAS!

The Mayfair Bookshop is the perfect novel to host during your teatime book club or a cocktail hour. The following are some menu item ideas and a few recipes!

If having a brunch or teatime book club, I would suggest enjoying **blueberry scones** (Lucy and Nancy did!), **cucumber sandwiches**, **chicken salad on mini croissants** and of course tea in your favorite or special teacup.

If having an evening get-together, enjoy a **French 75** (like Nancy and Iris!) with a **charcuterie board and canapés** (served at all the fancy soirees)—my favorites are a **cracker topped with chicken salad and finished with a slice of cucumber**, **mini quiches** or **baked brie cups topped with fig jam**.

For a nonalcoholic beverage, I suggest a **LimonCello LaCroix** in a glass with a few raspberries tossed in.

A tasty treat for any time, even if reading alone, is the **Sisters Kitchen Sink Cookies** recipe listed on the next page.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE FRUIT SCONES

One is blueberry scones, specifically the official Buckingham Palace fruit scones, in which I replace the raisins with blueberries because I love them so much! In *The Mayfair Bookshop*, both Lucy and Nancy eat scones often, which happen to be one of my favorite teatime or breakfast treats.

Here is the link for the British scones: <https://www.royal.uk/royal-recipe-fruit-scones>, and here is a link that a food writer adapted with Americanized measurements: <https://unpeeledjournal.com/buckingham-palace-english-royal-scones-recipe/>

Book Club Menu and Recipes



SISTERS KITCHEN SINK COOKIES

The relationship between sisters is a huge theme in *The Mayfair Bookshop*, and so I couldn't help but share this wonderful recipe with you, dear readers!

I developed this recipe with my daughters in 2018. My oldest daughter, who is the baker in the family, was playing around with creating her own version. She even made it a challenge during her sister's bake-off birthday party, where the teams had to try baking the different recipes to see which worked best. Below is the final recipe from that endeavor.

INGREDIENTS

2 sticks unsalted butter (16 tablespoons)
1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
1 ½ cups packed brown sugar
½ cup granulated sugar
2 eggs
2 ½ teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon of pink Himalayan salt, plus more for sprinkling
2.5 cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup broken pretzel pieces or potato chips (or both!)
1 ½ cups caramel bits
1 cup chocolate chips
1 cup peanut butter chips or white-chocolate chips (or ½ cup of both!)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F. If you don't have a nonstick cookie pan, then line your pan with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.

Brown your butter until light brown in a saucepan. You'll want to do this over medium heat, whisking as it melts. Bubbles and foam will form, and little bits will turn brown. Scrape all the butter and bits into a bowl (preferably a metal or ceramic bowl; be careful because of the heat—some glass bowls aren't tempered).

Using a stand mixer (or a hand mixer if you don't have one) beat the vanilla, brown sugar and granulated sugar into the butter for 2 minutes until it lightens. Add the eggs and beat for an additional 30 seconds.

Mix in the baking powder, salt and 1 cup of flour at a time until combined.

Stir in the pretzels/chips, caramel bits, chocolate

chips, and PB/white-chocolate chips, leaving some aside to top the cookies with.

Scoop out dough, in about ¼ cup servings for large cookies, or rounded tablespoons for smaller, and place onto cookie sheet, making sure that enough space is left between cookies for baking, as they will spread.

Add more of the chocolate chips, PB/white-chocolate chips, pretzels (or chips) and caramel bits to the top if you want!

Sprinkle with additional sea salt.

Bake for about 10 to 12 minutes. (This will vary depending on your oven, and the size of cookies.) You want the edges to be golden brown. I like my centers a little gooey, so test out your first batch according to your own gooey preference!

Remove from the oven, allowing to cool a few minutes before you transfer to a wire cooling rack.

Book Club Menu and Recipes

FRENCH 75

Cookie and Kate is one of my favorite vegetarian cooking blogs, and she really brings it with this fun twist on the French 75—honey instead of sugar for the simple syrup. YUM!

INGREDIENTS

Per cocktail

1 ½ ounces of gin
¾ ounce of fresh lemon juice
¾ ounce of simple syrup (see directions for honey syrup)
2 to 3 ounces of chilled champagne
Lemon peel for garnish

Simple syrup – yields enough for 5 cocktails

¼ cup of honey
¼ cup of water

DIRECTIONS

Step 1

To make the simple syrup: Combine the honey and water in a small saucepan. Warm over medium heat, whisking occasionally, just until the honey has dissolved into the water. Remove the pot from the heat and let it cool.

Step 2

To make a cocktail (you can make multiple drinks at once): Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Pour in the gin, lemon juice and simple syrup. Securely fasten the cap on the shaker and shake until well chilled, about 20 seconds. Strain the liquid into champagne glasses and top with champagne.

Step 3

Twist your lemon peel and hold it for a few seconds to retain the shape. Garnish your glass with the lemon twist, and enjoy this drink while it's cold!

Credit: [Cookie and Kate](#)



Further Reading List

Bibliography of Nancy Mitford's Amazing Works

FICTION

Highland Fling (1931)
Christmas Pudding (1932)
Wigs on the Green (1935)
Pigeon Pie (1940)
The Pursuit of Love (1945)
Love in a Cold Climate (1949)
The Blessing (1951)
Don't Tell Alfred (1960)

NONFICTION

The Ladies of Alderley (1938),
letters edited by Nancy Mitford
The Stanleys of Alderley (1939),
letters edited by Nancy Mitford
Madame de Pompadour (1954)
Voltaire in Love (1957)
The Sun King (1966)
Frederick the Great (1970)

COLLECTED LETTERS

A Bookseller's War (1987) by Heywood and Anne Hill
Love from Nancy (1993), edited by Charlotte Mosley
The Letters of Nancy Mitford and Evelyn Waugh (1996),
edited by Charlotte Mosley
*The Bookshop at 10 Curzon Street: Letters between
Nancy Mitford and Heywood Hill* (2004),
edited by John Saumarez Smith
The Mitfords: Letters Between Six Sisters (2007),
edited by Charlotte Mosley

BIOGRAPHIES AND MEMOIRS

Hons and Rebels (1960) by Jessica Mitford
A Life of Contrasts: The Autobiography (1977)
by Diana (Mitford) Mosley
The House of Mitford (1984) by Jonathan Guinness
Nancy Mitford (1985) by Selina Hastings
The Sisters: The Saga of the Mitford Family (2003) by
Mary S. Lovell
*Diana Mosley: Mitford Beauty, British Fascist,
Hitler's Angel* (2003) by Anne de Courcy
Wait for Me!: Memoirs (2010)
by Deborah (Mitford) Devonshire
The Horror of Love (2011) by Lisa Hilton

*Nancy Mitford: The Biography Edited from
Nancy Mitford's Letters* (2012) by Harold Acton
The Six (2017) by Laura Thompson
Life in a Cold Climate (2019) by Laura Thompson

WORKS LISTED IN THE NOVEL

Vile Bodies by Evelyn Waugh
The Iliad by Homer
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum
Dracula by Bram Stoker
Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier
To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf
White Fang by Jack London
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
1984 by George Orwell
The Haunting of Hill House by Shirley Jackson
The Tell-Tale Heart and Other Stories
by Edgar Allan Poe
Rosemary's Baby by Ira Levin
Coraline by Neil Gaiman
The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood
It by Stephen King
Jamaica Inn by Daphne du Maurier
Regency Buck by Georgette Heyer
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith
Beloved by Toni Morrison
The Genius of Birds by Jennifer Ackerman
The Thing with Feathers by Noah Strycker
The Birds by Daphne du Maurier
Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy
Vol de Nuit (Night Flight)
by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
The Life of John Sterling by Thomas Carlyle
Sad Cypress by Agatha Christie
The Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett
The Call of the Wild by Jack London
The Sherlock Holmes series by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde
Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe
by François-René, Vicomte de Chateaubriand
Put Out More Flags by Evelyn Waugh
The Loved One by Evelyn Waugh

For Further Enjoyment



If you are in the Columbus, Ohio, area, the Ohio State University has a fabulous Jessica Mitford collection, which contains letters from Nancy as well.



If you're in the UK, I would highly suggest traveling to Chatsworth House for a visit, but also to dine at the Carriage House Café (where Lucy had lunch!), and of course taking a trip to Heywood Hill bookshop.

One of my favorite things to do in every town I visit around the world is to visit a local bookshop. Book clubbers should have fun talking about their favorite shops and why they love them.

If you enjoy watching book adaptations, *The Pursuit of Love* was recently made into a television miniseries on Amazon. If you like miniseries, I also suggest these two adaptations of *Love in a Cold Climate* from 1980 and 2001— though they have Nancy's sequel title, they also cover *The Pursuit of Love*.

Book Club Discussion Guide

1. Before reading *The Mayfair Bookshop* had you heard of Nancy Mitford and her works? If so, what is your favorite? If not, which one do you want to read first?
2. What do you love the most about a bookshop? What is the most memorable shop you've ever been to?
3. Every book we read has the ability to alter our lives or way of thinking, even in small ways. What is one book that changed your life?
4. The Mitford family dynamic is unique in some respects—it's not too often you have a sister who is the rumored lover of a Fascist leader, let alone two sisters—and not so unique in others (secret languages, inside jokes, etc.). In what ways did you connect with the family or see similarities with your own?
5. Nancy Mitford remained committed to Hamish St. Clair-Erskine for five years, during her prime marrying years. Why do you think she did so? And do you think she was as naïve as people say, not fully grasping that Hamish was gay, or maybe thinking that she could change him?
6. For many women, family or employment obligations, and even more often, fear of failure or loss, keep them from pursuing their dreams and prioritizing their own happiness. What is one thing you try to do on a daily basis that brings you joy? What dreams have you left unfulfilled, and what is one step you can take to realize them?
7. Nancy makes the difficult decision to tell Gladwyn Jebb about her sister's involvement with Hitler and the danger Diana poses to the UK. Would you be able to inform on your sibling?
8. Nancy really struggled with her sisters' relationships with Fascism and support of the Nazis. She loved her sisters but couldn't understand their politics. Despite this, she attempted to maintain cordial relationships. What would you do if a close family member supported the Nazis?
9. If you had the means to escape London during the blitz like Nancy could have, would you leave? Or would you stay behind to help like she did?
10. Lucy goes to London not only to work on a project that she hopes will gain her a promotion, but also to solve the personal mystery she and her mother had spent years trying to figure out. Ultimately, she decides to remain in London for a fresh start working at an incredible little bookshop. Would you be willing to leave your life behind to start fresh?