



You Had Me at Merlot: Part 1

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The first part in this hilarious four-part digital romantic comedy, from the author of *The Twelve Dates of Christmas* - winner of the Novelicious Debut of the Year award.

Elle and Laurie are the last ones standing: they're single, they're not having babies any time soon and their weekends aren't filled with joyful meetings about mortgages. For Elle, this is fine - she likes her independent life, she loves her job, and she has no desire to walk down the aisle anytime soon. But Laurie wants love and she wants it now.

So when Laurie begs Elle to come with her on a singles holiday to a beautiful vineyard in Tuscany, Elle is reluctant. *You Had Me at Merlot Holidays* promises crisp sunshine, fun and a chance to stir up some sizzling romance. Elle has no intention of swapping her perfectly lovely life for someone else's idea of her Mr Perfect, but ten days under the Italian sun with her best friend and lashings of wine? How bad could that be?

You Had Me at Merlot is the kind of love story that will have you crying with laughter one moment and nodding your head in agreement the next. Full of sultry summer nights, hilarious moments and plenty of wine, it will warm even the most cynical of hearts and have you believing in the magic of romance (and the power of a decent glass of Merlot).

You Had Me at Merlot: Part 1 Details

Date : Published July 14th 2014 by Sphere

ISBN :

Author : Lisa Dickenson

Format : ebook 80 pages

Genre : Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Romance

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From Reader Review *You Had Me at Merlot: Part 1* for online ebook

Holly says

Part 1 finished. Can't wait to read the other 3 parts! This author writes the cutest & funniest stories:)

Zarina says

<http://www.pagetostagereviews.com/201...>

*** REVIEW OF ALL FOUR PARTS - NO SPOILERS ***

Lisa Dickenson won the Novelicious Debut of the Year award for her first novel, *The Twelve Dates of Christmas*. While I haven't had a chance to read it yet (which will be rectified soon!), after reading the snort-out-loud funny *You Had Me At Merlot* I completely understand why her witty writing was favoured over many other fantastic debut novels.

Elle is one of the few people in her social circle who is still single. She is totally okay with that though, as her life revolves around her work and she loves that she can do as she pleases without having to consult an other half on everything. But when her bestie, Laurie, breaks up with her boyfriend she is not as contempt with singledom as Elle is. Laurie is determined to get married as soon as legally possible and in her desperation to find a man to help her obtain this goal she's willing to do just about anything.

When Laurie suggests a singles holiday, this sounds like Elle's worst nightmare. Being forced to spend what should be a relaxing break from work with a bunch of strangers whose sole focus on the trip is finding their perfect partners? Yikes. But plied by a getaway to the stunning Italian countryside and the promise of lots of wine, Elle reluctantly agrees to come along. She intends to visit only for the picturesque views and alcoholic beverages on offer, but with romance lingering in the Tuscany air will she too find a handsome beau to spend the hot Italian nights with?

There are not enough adjectives to express how fantastic this novel is! The writing is incredibly funny, witty and refreshing, and I would liken it to that of the equally fantastic Lindsey Kelk though that wouldn't be fair to either of the two ladies. While they both manage to make me snort out loud on the train up until the point that people start staring at me, not to mention make me swoon quite literally over the gorgeous men within their pages, they each have their own unique voice when describing their heroine's hilarious escapades. And hilarious they are.

The novel is being released in four digital parts throughout July and August. While I'm normally not a fan of short stories or books that have been split up into smaller segments, because so often the lack of page numbers results in a lack of plot and character developments, this superb romantic comedy singlehandedly shows that it can be done well. Each part had its own engrossing storyline with plenty of surprises along the way and ending on a nail-biting cliffhanger that will have you counting down the days until you can get your eager hands on the next part in the series.

You Had Me At Merlot is one of the most hilarious novels I've read in yonks and I absolutely loved it to

pieces. Lisa Dickenson's writing is fresh and a lot of fun, and I'm super excited to have found a new voice in women's fiction whose books I will be looking out for from now on!

Agi says

The books can be funny or funny. You Had Me at Merlot belongs to the highest category of funny, funny with a big F, tactful funny, hilariously funny, laughing out loud funny, making you cry with laughter funny. My kinda funny, absolutely.

And Lisa herself is one of the funniest, warmest person EVER. I often cry with laughter reading her one - liners on Twitter, so just imagine what's she done to me writing a whole book. I was in stitches. Lisa has incredible way of creating FUN out of a very ordinary sentence and describing situations that could be dull in a most witty way, and inventing situations that had me shaking my head, kicking my legs, gasping, rolling, together with a very honest, belly - laugh.

You Had me at Merlot is an instalment of 4 parts published in intervals, Part 1 - 14th July, Part 2 - 21st July, Part 3 - 28th July, Part 4 - 4th August. Be sure you won't forget to order them all!

The book introduces us to Elle. Elle is single, she enjoys being single in fact, she has a job that she loves and is good at and she hopes for a promotion soon. Elle's best friend Laurie is also single but she starts thinking that perhaps it's time to settle down. So Laurie, using many different arguments, persuades Elle to go on holiday with her. Tasting wine, driving Vespas, hot sun... And not forget that it's holidays for singles. Elle isn't thrilled but with Laurie's persuading skills she soon finds herself on a plane to Italy. A very eventful plane. Of course, Elle is going to enjoy only wine, vespas and hot sun, she doesn't believe in relationships, for sure not in a relationship with somebody that she knows only for few days and is going to leave this part of You Had Me at Merlot holidays for Laurie. On the other hand, holidays under the sun, with a glass of wine in one hand and best friend - it can't be too bad, can it? But well, life - as usual - is full of surprises and hey, never say never!

And here starts the best holidays EVER. Holiday full of, yes, wine, Vespas and hot sun, but also many, many embarrassing situations, many new friends, attractions prepared by the owner of the hotel, hot men, unexpected visits from ex - girlfriends, playing spies and making wine with their own feet. And co - singles, in the form of Elle's boss, who arrived screaming and kicking, for a good start. Dream holiday, isn't it?

I fell in love with Elle and Laurie from the very beginning. Laurie became my hero after her Botox incident, it was HILARIOUS! Elle, with her down - to - earth, doesn't give a damn attitude could be my new book best friend. She was incredibly funny, incredibly clever, incredibly loyal and incredibly gullible and incredibly prone to accident, let's mention only her photo session at the museum or her Vespa ride. Only two out of the very, very many, one more ridiculous than the other.

The owners of You Had Me at Merlot were sweet and charming and I can't imagine now a better idea for my holidays, I could pretend I'm single for ten days, no problem. The attractions they prepared for their guests were brilliant, Sebastian with his direct attitude was just the best!

And Jamie. Helloooo!!! I had lots of luck lately for the best male characters in the books ever but Jamie is just THE best. He's not only sexy ad hell, he doesn't only look like a Love God, but he can make his own wine AND chocolate. Did all my dreams come true at once? AND he has a dog, leonberger. AND he's witty. But also stubborn. Oh yes, there were moments that I wanted to shake him strongly.

All the characters were vivid, just popping out of the pages and coming to life next to you. All the other singletons on the holidays, even Elle's devil boss, who then appeared to be not devil at all, were fantastic, I giggled over them and their adventures, and especially over relentless in adoration lothario George. He was amazeballs! Lisa can create wonderful heroes that feel warm and totally realistic and are the most funny people in the world. The dialogues, the banter between them, the one - liners were one of the best I have ever read, and I know that I said it few times this year, but those are really THE BEST.

The book has absolutely the right pace and is a real page - turner. It belongs to my personal category of books that I want to finish asap but don't want them to end. Every page brought more sun and more warmth than the other, more laughter and more positive feelings. It had me hooked from the get - go and took me on a brilliant, adventurous and full of surprises and beautiful sights journey to Tuscany.

Lisa's humour is actually beyond description, what I would do to be at least half as funny as she is! But it's not only the humour that won me over, it is also the story, the plot which is simple but hooking and worked out for me, and the writing style: fresh, modern, fast, light, easy to follow and gripping too.

You Had Me at Merlot is as sunny as Tuscany itself and as tasty as the chilli wine made by Jamie. It is a MUST read for this summer, and not only for summer, I am going to re - read it as soon as I find some time. It absolutely belongs on my FAVOURITE shelf. And I will never be able to drink wine again without giggling over blind - fold wine testing. A warm, uplifting read, a feel - good read, with quirky characters, plenty of good humour, funny scenes and drooling over Jamie - highly, highly recommended.

PS. Please DO NOT count how often I used the words "funny", "the best" and "ever" in this review. Please.

Copy received from publisher in exchange for a review.

Joanne Lewis says

This had feel good factor written all over it! What's not to like? A singles holiday to the idyllic setting of Tuscany, abundant wine and just a hint of romance. A cynic determined not to fall in love- after all, she's only there to support her friend- tempted by the allure of the son of the hotel owners, who may have a darker secret to share. A light, but enthralling page-turner!

Holly Martin says

I'm finding it really hard to find the words to describe this book. Gorgeous, sparkly, smiley, sunshiney, winey, (I'm sure those last two are words and if they're not they should be), funny, (I have to mention funny, because it is quite simply hilarious) heartwarming, wonderful and fun are a few great words to describe this book, but also addictive, unputdownable and amazeballs are some other accurate words.

I have read quite a few intense books recently and it was wonderful to step into the sunshine, quite literally, with this book and experience the fun, frivolity and frolics of Lisa's wonderful writing.

Lisa just has a unique, gorgeous writing style. It's silly and funny and it stands out a mile in a sea of other

romcom writers. When the story opens with Elle triumphantly ringing her friend to declare she has learnt the dance moves to All The Single Ladies by Beyoncé, I just knew I was in for a real treat. Lisa's writing just bursts with smiles, giggles and full on belly laughs, her wit and humour just sparkles from the page.

Her descriptions were so vivid, so well defined, I could clearly see the beautiful vineyards and countryside of rural Tuscany. I've never been to Tuscany before or visited a vineyard or had any real desire to, but Lisa's beautiful writing has me yearning to visit, to drink the wine in the sunshine, to explore the countryside on the back of a vespa, eat wonderful Italian food and fall in love with the Italian men.

The characters are just perfect, Elle reminds me quite a lot of me, the silly things she says, the tricky situations she lands herself in, her insecurities, her dreams. I loved her, she was loveable, funny, kind, she was the perfect female lead.

Jamie was a gorgeous, vulnerable, hunky, strong, brooding, perfect Italian Stallion. I fell in love with him as soon as I met him.

I completely fell in love with Laurie too, Elle's best friend and the reason Elle finds herself in Tuscany in the first place. She was fiercely loyal, fun to be around and I loved her relationship with Elle. I actually wanted Laurie as my best friend. Lisa's characters are real, tangible, wonderful people.

The story was split into four parts and at the end of each part Lisa left us with some corking cliffhangers that left me screaming with frustration that I would have to wait another week to find out what happens next, and I was never disappointed when the next instalment did arrive on my Kindle, Lisa delivered every single time.

I know Lisa has a huge career ahead of her as a romantic comedy writer, and one that is already head and shoulders above her peers with her fresh, sparkly gorgeous style.

You need You Had Me At Merlot in your life, perfect to read for by the pool, in your garden or as you're sipping a warm glass of Merlot. Buy it now, I promise you won't be disappointed.

Melisa says

Really cute and light, exactly what I was looking for after some heavier books. Thanks for the recommendation, Holly!

Leah says

I was super excited to be invited to take part in Lisa Dickenson's blog tour for her new four-part serialised novel You Had Me At Merlot, and I was even more excited to be able to read it all in one go – if you saw my post last week you'll know how I feel about serialised novels! I tried to read the novel a few weeks ago, but I felt a bit disjointed with the characters, and the writing, so I put it down, but it got to the day before my blog tour and I literally had no choice but to pick it back up again and give it a second go...

This is going to be a relatively short and sweet review – I don't really have a lot to say, because it's quite tough to read a book you're just not feeling, and I just wasn't feeling You Had Me At Merlot. It's an entirely

capable novel – with a fantastic setting, characters I would normally in any other circumstances love, but something wasn't clicking for me. It's hard to explain because I don't even know why, which is always a shame. Dickenson is a wonderful writer – and she definitely knows where to set her books because Italy sounded bloody delightful (I am falling more and more in love with Italy with each book I read that's set there) and I thought *Bella Notte* sounded like the most picturesque setting; I'd move there in a heartbeat.

You Had Me At Merlot is definitely a read for when you're sitting on your sunloungers, around the pool whilst on holiday. The setting is awesome, I just wished I could have connected to Elle and Laurie more. For me, there seemed to be something missing – especially the ice-cold opening of Part 3 where I thought I'd somehow missed a step and ended up feeling as disoriented and confused as Elle. Something was definitely missing in translation from that scene. I wanted to love the novel! I wanted to devour all four parts and be hungry for more because I adore Lisa on Twitter, she's so funny and spontaneous and it kills me to not be all HAPPY, HAPPY, HAPPY over her book. I can only apologise....

Talor Pickering says

All Hail Queen Bey... Sorry I mean Lisa Dickenson, (she is Beyonce in my eyes). *You Had Me At Merlot* is just down right amazing!!! Witty, Gorgeous & totally swoon worthy *You had me at merlot* will take you on a journey all the way to Tuscany, *You Had Me At Merlot Holidays* is a vineyard holiday for singles and poor Elle who is career driven, has no need for love, she doesn't want to share her space with a boy, she wants a promotion, she wants to succeed she doesn't want to go looking for love, like her best friend Laurie who is the only fellow single lady left in their friendship group, but being the woman Elle is she goes anyway to support Laurie and be her wing woman, but things don't go as planned. Why do things not go as planned well that is because of Jamie *fans one self* Swoon!! He is tall dark and Italian and he knows how to make wine, could there be a man with better attributes, I think not my friends, I think not!

You Had Me At Merlot, is just so bloody good! You get everything you need for the perfect romantic comedy, to be honest, it felt like the book conjured up a little movie in my head I was imaging the characters as movie stars, I was picturing the vineyard I was almost tasting the wine & yummy chocolate.

My favourite things about this book was the hilarious moments that were created, from bad botox, to chilli wine to marriage proposals, it was laugh out loud funny, no it doesn't deserve just a LOL it deserves LMFAO, its that funny. The characters are so relatable, you feel like you yourself could end up doing that, you know how they are feeling, you empathise with them and that makes for good reading because you immediately become attached to the characters and this makes you unable to put down *You Had Me At Merlot*. Honestly I couldn't put it down. It was like unseeable force had clued the book in my hand.

Now *You Had Me At Merlot* comes in 4 parts, luckily for me I was sent a lovely heat bound of all 4 parts and I read part 2, 3, and 4 in about 3 hours, thats how good it is. So can I recommend *You Had Me At Merlot*, Well Yes, HELL YES!!! I think as soon as you have read this review you should go and buy it, Ill make it easier for you find the buy links below!!!

Eilis says

This is light and funny and everything you want in some good chick lit. Also, the Italian setting was much appreciated (particularly the fact that it was Tuscany). An enjoyable read.

Glenda Steel says

I loved this book!!!! The characters are so genuine with the two main females so endearing I wanted to be there with them sharing a bottle of wine and a laugh. This is such a warm story conjuring up the blissful lazy Italian countryside so well, it has left me yearning for a Tuscan holiday filled with Vesper rides, gelato and wine. A perfect summer read with laugh out loud, feel good moments to leave a warm glow. I am so happy to have discovered this author and can't wait to read more.

Louise says

i didn't realise this book was originally in 4 parts! I had a paperback version of the whole book so have read them all!

I really enjoyed this book. I've always wanted to visit Italy now I want to even more! I love Lisa Dickenson's writing style! I found myself laughing a lot when reading this book and I really enjoyed the story overall!

Megan Readinginthesunshine says

Having already been a HUGE fan of Lisa Dickenson and her fabulous writing, I was so excited for You Had Me At Merlot!

Elle and Laurie are two friends who seem to be the only ones left – they're both single, they're both not getting married or having babies or anything else remotely couple-like. Elle is TOTALLY cool with this – she's got her independent life, her job, and she's completely happy without walking down the aisle any time soon. But Laurie wants love and she wants it now. So when Laurie begs Elle to come on a singles holiday to a gorgeous Vineyard in Tuscany, Elle isn't so sure. You Had Me At Merlot holidays offers sunshine, fun and the chance of romance, and with ten days in the sun with her best friend and wine – how bad can that be?

Ohmygosh I LOVED THIS I loved this I loved this! Lisa is such a fantastic writer – she always manages to draw me in straight away and You Had Me At Merlot grabbed me straight away.

I liked Elle and Laurie from the moment I first met them, I found I could really relate to aspects of their personalities and it was a truly fun and exciting ride sharing this journey with them! Even in the first part of the book, I felt as though I had known them both for years and like they were my personal BFF's.

You Had Me At Merlot is such a feel-good book! I laughed out loud so many times and at one point I even had tears rolling down my face where I couldn't contain myself. And the romance too – I giggled, I swooned and oh my heart MELTED.

The setting of Tuscany was BEAUTIFUL – with sunshine, wine, and vineyards, I genuinely wanted to pack my bags and hop straight on plane! Honestly wine and a vineyard in a beautiful location in a book – this is genuinely the most BRILLIANT idea ever! A tip for you all: sit out in your garden on in the sunshine with some wine while you read this – it'll be like you've been transported there! Whilst reading I could see the beautiful setting, I could feel the atmosphere around me, it was wonderful. I loved the life at the vineyard, I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know all of the characters on the holiday and around the vineyard, Lisa has written a great mix of people with fun and quirky personalities and Lisa's writing constantly made me feel like I was part of it all.

You Had Me At Merlot is in four parts and I actually really liked this, as I found I could read each part in a single sitting, which is fantastic for if you're busy, on the go or reading in your lunch break or on a journey for example. I really liked the thought that I had the next part to eagerly look forward to and I enjoyed getting excited about devouring the next part.

You Had Me At Merlot is PERFECT for reading this summer! With a gorgeous setting, fun and romance – You Had Me At Merlot is a summer essential!

Koki says

Už z názvu je jasné, kde sa dej knihy odohráva. A z obálky na nás jasne kričí láska. No a kde je láska a Taliansko, to si u Katušky zaslúži pozornosť :-). Knižka, hoc útle, veru neušla mojej pozornosti. Elle sa s kamarátkou Laurie vyberú do slnkom zaliateho Toskánska, kde sa rozhodnú desať dní oddychovať. Keže ale nejde o obyčajnú dovolenku, ale o dovolenku pre slobodných, chtiac-nechtiac im chvíle pokoja a oddychu skríži cit najmocnejší. Kým U Laurie by bol tento cit vítaný, Elle sa zamilovať neplánuje. Pre ňu je muž iba zbytočnou komplikáciou v živote.

Hlavná hrdinka miluje víno, dobré jedlo a slnko. Takto plánuje tráviť zaslúžený oddych, až kým sa jej do cesty nepripletie Jamie, syn majiteľov penziónu. Práve on v nej nečakane prebudí lásku... a nielen k vínu ;-). Zvyšok recenzie nájdete tu: <http://kokina1.blogspot.sk/2016/02/la...>

Mandy Black says

A feel good funny read cant wait to read book no 2 ??

Katie Croft says

One of the only books I've read twice. Although can be stereotypically romantic at times, sometimes a little cheese is nice.
