



# The Vintner's Daughter

*Kristen Harnisch*

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## **The Vintner's Daughter** Kristen Harnisch

A captivating historical-fiction debut: ambition, betrayal and love take a spirited young woman from the verdant Loire Valley to turn-of-the-century Manhattan to the wide open spaces of California wine country

Loire Valley, 1895. When seventeen-year-old Sara Thibault's father is killed in a mudslide, her mother sells their vineyard to a rival family, whose eldest son marries Sara's sister, Lydia. But a violent tragedy compels Sara and her sister to flee to New York, forcing Sara to put aside her dream to follow in her father's footsteps as a master winemaker.

Meanwhile, Philippe Lemieux has arrived in California with the ambition of owning the largest vineyard in Napa by 1900. When he receives word of his brother's death in France, he resolves to bring the killer to justice. Sara has traveled to California in hopes of making her own way in the winemaking world. When she encounters Philippe in a Napa vineyard, they are instantly drawn to one another, but Sara knows he is the one man who could return her family's vineyard to her, or send her straight to the guillotine.

A riveting, romantic tale of betrayal, retribution, love and redemption, Kristen Harnisch's debut novel immerses readers in the rich vineyard culture of both the Old and New Worlds, the burgeoning cities of turn-of-the-century America and a spirited heroine's fight to determine her destiny.

## **The Vintner's Daughter Details**

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Author : Kristen Harnisch

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## From Reader Review *The Vintner's Daughter* for online ebook

### Bookworm says

It took me a couple of chapters to get into *The Vintner's Daughter* by Kristen Harnisch. This is a historical that starts off in late 1800's in France. At seventeen, Sara Thibault is the youngest of two daughters, and she lives in her family's vineyard. Her father runs the family business and when he finds himself desperate to sell or go bankrupt, he leaves the vineyard with cargo for sale but he dies in a mudslide. He leaves his wife and two daughters in debt. The eldest daughter, Lydia then marries for money but finds herself in an abusive relationship.

The two sisters end up running off to America to start anew after a tragic event occurs that threatens everything. Involved in the storyline is Philippe Lemieux, who is looking to avenge his brother's untimely death and Marie Chevreau, a midwife who befriends the sisters. By a twist of fate, Philippe and Sara's paths cross and she fears this man could be the key to her undoing.

After the slow start, the story picked up its pace.

Sarah was strong from the start and even though she was the younger sister, she was the wiser one. The story takes us through France, New York and California as Sara struggles to make a living. Although most women in her predicament find work as maids or seamstresses, in her heart she was a vintner's daughter and only wanted to continue her father's legacy.

The story takes some complicated twists and turns and I wanted to know what would become of Sara. I found it interesting reading about how she came to America, changed her name and tried to find work in a place where she was left to fend for herself. It made me think of the struggles people go through when coming to this country, especially back in those days. I also enjoyed reading the details about wine making and the vineyards.

Marie Chevreau was another character who I found intriguing, she is a midwife who dreams of becoming a doctor. The sights she sees in the story are particularly sad and difficult to imagine. "Old-school" midwifery has always interested me and I like seeing this topic in historicals especially. Prohibition and women's suffrage are also woven into the plot.

I enjoyed this one overall. *The Vintner's Daughter* is first in a series and I am interested in seeing where the author takes these characters next.

disclaimer:

This review is my honest opinion. I did not receive any type of compensation for reading and reviewing this book. While I receive free books from publishers and authors, such as this one, I am under no obligation to write a positive review. I received a free review copy of *The Vintner's Daughter* by Kristen Harnisch via [caitlinhamiltonmarketing.com](http://caitlinhamiltonmarketing.com)

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### Jenny Q says

**Double Giveaway! Enter to win *The Vintner's Daughter* & *The California Wife* @ Let Them Read**

## Books!

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### Rebecca Rosenberg says

CALLING ALL LOVERS OF WINE! If you love wine (of course you wouldn't read this book if you didn't) and especially love learning about making wine: how the grapes are grown, when the vines are pruned, harvesting the grapes at the exact right time to capture nature's essence, blending wines to maximize flavor... okay, I admit. I'm a total wine geek. That's besides the fact that Kristen Harnisch captured the magic of wine making in such an eloquent way, you don't even realize you are learning so much! Besides that, she weaves in troubling issues of domestic violence, parental favoritism, midwifery, the Chinese labor force, and the beauty and bounty of the Loire Valley and Napa Valley. The only thing that could have improved her story, is if she used Sonoma Valley, because as everyone knows, Sonoma makes better wine.... just sayin.

Thank you, Kirsten, for this well-researched, well-crafted story of our American heritage of wine making. Yes, I am from Sonoma. :-) and yes, my next novel is Champagne Widows! Stay tuned.

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### Regan Walker says

Historical Romance set in France and California's wine country

It begins slowly but soon becomes a good story and an interesting mix of genres. It's marketed as historical fiction but the first half reads like women's fiction—it's Sara's story. The hero and heroine aren't together in the same place until the last half of the book and that last half is pure historical romance. Running throughout is Sara's spiritual journey and the inspirational theme of forgiveness.

It begins in the Loire Valley in 1895 when Sara Thibault's father is killed in a mudslide and her mother sells their vineyard to the Lemieuxs, a rival family, crushing Sara's hopes to one day make the vineyard her own. Worse, her sister, Lydia, marries Bastien Lemieux, the evil eldest son of the buyer's family. One night, fighting off her brother-in-law's brutal attempt to rape her, Sara kills Bastien. Afraid of poor justice, Sara escapes to New York with her pregnant sister.

Meanwhile, Bastien's brother, Philippe, who long ago left France, lives in California where he intends to grow his Eagle Run winery into the largest in the Napa Valley. When he receives word of his brother's death in France, he resolves to bring the killer to justice.

Still on the run, Sara ends up in Napa working in Philippe's vineyard. When she realizes she is in the vineyard of the brother of the man she has killed, she knows she must seek his forgiveness but she cannot bring herself to tell him who she is. To add to her problems, she is falling in love with him and he with her.

The story is well written, well researched and rich in details of the wine-making business. I learned much. Unlike his brother, Philippe is kind and noble of heart. He is instantly taken with Sara and not only her expertise about growing grapes and making wine. She is clever and witty and handsome. Some wonderful secondary characters add to the tapestry. A recommended read.

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## **Eileen says**

Don't count on learning more about this book by reading it. The Vintner's Daughter's book jacket will inform you about the plot, and you can anticipate the predictable, ridiculous ending. Why did I succumb to the book jacket's charms and read the entire book? I think that I like historical fiction. It was somewhat interesting to incorporate information about the wine industry on two continents, the women's suffrage movement, and the impending prohibition. The book jacket mentioned that the book compares with *Gone With the Wind*. I will agree that they both have strong competitive protagonists. This book, however, can barely compete with the writing style of *Gone with the Wind*.

Even though I can't believe that Philippe Lemieux deals with the crisis so easily, I still enjoyed a portion of the book that believes in happy endings and fairytales. If you're up for light reading, go for it.

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## **Stephanie says**

I used to refuse to read Historical Romance for a long time. For many reasons I won't go into here today but let me tell you, lately, I have been picking up some great ones. *Vintner's Daughter* was the perfect choice for me. Though there are a few minor problems I had with the story that needs to be mentioned.

I found the story to be a bit overly predictable at times and I wanted some twist and turns to surprise me. In addition, I felt a couple of scenarios to the plot could have been a bit stronger and fleshed out more.

Though I love a strong female heroine's in a story. They need to be flawed as well to make them believable. There were at times I felt Sara was too perfect to be true. Though I liked her a great deal and admired her courage and steadfastness.

One of the themes in the story was about the Suffragette movement and although-in my opinion-it played a back seat in the story, I found it an interesting addition and I would have liked it to play a stronger role. I am hoping it will in the sequel. We will see I guess.

Another theme weaved into the story was about the looming prohibition to come and how Sara and Philippe explores way around the survival of the wine industry is quite fascinating and intelligent. I am looking forward to the outcome of that-if it will be explored in the sequel. I hope.

I could feel the attraction between Sara and Philippe coming from the pages as their relationship grew. I liked how this was told and glad the author did not push their relationship too hard and too fast. Harnisch's gives the right momentum and gives the reader time to enjoy the interaction between them.

I enjoyed the story and I felt there was some really strong character development. I thought the supporting characters were marvelous. Not only that, the story flowed well and I found myself thinking about the characters long after I put the book down. There is also the fact that the main story takes place in Napa Valley and I always find that reading about Vintners and the life they lead are highly interesting.

Harnisch gives the reader a grasp of what the 1800's was like for women and provides the reader with insight of the grape-cultivation of wine. This is a great debut and I am anxious to read, *The California Wife*.

I have rated this book three stars and received a copy from NetGalley for an honest review.

Stephanie M. Hopkins  
www,layeredpages.com

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### **Stephanie says**

I was pleasantly surprised to read this beautifully written story of an independent girl who wishes to make a name for herself as a wine vintner after her father dies tragically and the family fortune and business is stolen from her..The parts of the wine making business details during the late 19 century I found fascinating and gave me an appreciation of the history of both French wine making and California's historical and celebrated Napa Valley...The author, whose characters are based on her own wine making family, is writing a 3 part series on the story and Im looking forward to reading her next books..I read this for a book group and am looking forward to the conversations around it..I loved the story and the characters..

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### **Connie Mayo says**

Kristen Harnish's research and affection for turn-of-the-century wine making in France and California floats off the page in this sweeping story about a young woman determined to hold onto her family's winery. Fans of historical fiction featuring strong women will find plenty to like here. There is a definite element of romance in this book, which is not something I seek out but will satisfy many readers. Fun for your summer reading list.

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### **Rose says**

I did enjoy this book, particularly the life of family winemakers in France, and in Napa. This was interesting to hear of how Vinters run a farm, and the whole processes of crops, and all the elements that co-inside with the techniqualetes and minute details.

I did however found the book as a whole a little too predictable at time, but found the character development done well and appealing

Perhaps in all I just found it a bit too heavy sided on the romance part of the story as it progressed. I am not sure that I will continue on to the second book.

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### **Astrid Arditì says**

A story of love and heartbreak, unfathomable loss and blazing hope. I especially loved Sara's character, her mix of naïveté and sheer stubbornness, her passion and devotion. And of course, Philippe is pretty dreamy...

Can't wait to read the sequel!

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## **L.G. says**

\*\*\* Disclosure: I received a copy of this book as a gift from the author.

Although I'm an avid reader, I must confess that I tend to shy away from literary fiction, preferring genre fiction or romance. That said, if you're like me and you have to pick just one literary read this year – pick this one! You'll be glad you did.

This story has a smooth, delicious pull that draws you in from the first page. Sara is a strong and likable character who is ahead of her time. She knows her own mind and hungers to become a vintner in turn-of-the-century France when the highest aspiration expected from a woman was to marry well. But it doesn't stop there.

The book has interesting and wonderful characters that fill the pages with life from start to finish. Kristen deftly weaves in historical detail and wine-making in a way that absorbs and teaches without being heavy-handed. The story is tight and doesn't waste time meandering between plot points like some literary fiction I've read, rather it carries you along in a swiftly moving tale.

Just like the cover, the settings are lush and well-drawn, conveying accurate and engaging depictions of the Loire Valley, New York City, and Napa, California, making the historical aspects truly enjoyable.

Bottom line, this is a story of betrayal, retribution, love, and redemption. It will enthrall, entertain, and move you. Enjoy! Chenin Blanc not included...

See full interview with the author on my blog: <http://www.lgoconnor.com/site/october...>

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## **Dee says**

Well, someone on the cover of this book compared it to "Gone With The Wind" and described it as a "pleasure". Were we reading the same book?? This is nowhere near GTTW. Just another silly story of girl loves boy, troubles separate them, reunite them & they live happily ever after. I found the characters shallow, one dimensional and just too perfect to be believed.

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## **Sonja says**

1895: Sara und Lydia wachsen unbeschwert auf ihrem Weingut in Frankreich auf. Sara interessiert sich sehr für den Weinanbau und wird von ihrem Vater dabei unterstützt. Als Saras und Lydias Vater stirbt, ändert sich das Leben der beiden jungen Mädchen. Lydia heiratet Bastien, den Sohn eines Weinhändlers; das Weingut selbst wird verkauft. Doch Bastien ist ein gewalttätiger, grober Mann, unter dem Lydia sehr zu leiden hat. Sara möchte ihrer Schwester helfen und wird bei dem Versuch, mit ihr zu fliehen, beinahe von Bastien vergewaltigt. Sie kann sich wehren, doch Bastien wird dabei tödlich verletzt. Nun müssen die beiden

jungen Frauen auf jeden Fall fliehen, denn sie werden des Mordes beschuldigt...

Mein Leseindruck:

Es hat mir großen Spaß gemacht, dieses Buch zu lesen. Spannung, Drama und Romantik vor einem historischen Hintergrund, das ist für mich eigentlich die perfekte Mischung! Ich habe Sara und ihre Schwester Lydia sehr gerne begleitet und habe mit ihnen mitfühlen können.

Der Schreibstil ist sehr angenehm. Das Buch hat sich leicht und flüssig lesen lassen, zudem war es auf keiner Seite langweilig.

Es gibt noch einen zweiten Band, auf den ich mich sehr freue, aber man kann diesen ersten Teil auch als abgeschlossene Geschichte lesen.

Von mir gibt es für dieses Buch auf jeden Fall eine klare Leseempfehlung!

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### **Linda says**

This book started out with promise. I like wine. I like historical novels. Too bad it deteriorated into pure harlequin romance schmaltz. So predictable. Girl meets boy girl falls in love with boy. But - there are insurmountable obstacles. Will they be overcome? Let me guess. - of course

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### **Kathleen Kelly says**

The Vintner's Daughter is a Historical Fiction novel that starts out in France, the Loire Valley, and the main character, Sara Thibault, who still lives at home with her family and spending her days helping her sister prepare for her wedding and working in the family vineyard. Her passion is assisting her father tending the grapes in their winery. She is very proficient and loves what she does. Her sister marries into the Lemieux but not is all it is supposed to be. Lydia's becomes a punching bag for her husband and a terrible tragedy happens that causes Lydia and Sara to flee to America.

They arrive and end up in a convent in New York awaiting the birth of Lydia's baby. Another tragedy occurs that forces Sara to flee to Napa Valley where her plans are to purchase some land and start a winery of her own. Unbeknownst to her, she ends up on the vineyard of Phillippe Lemieux, Lydia's brother in law. The story continues from there with an instant attraction to Phillippe. Should she stay? If she does her whole world could fall apart. This is a story of betrayal, ambition and love that will definitely have you rooting for Sara as she comes to terms with her life.

I found this novel to be very readable, enough suspense and romance to keep me turning the pages. A plot that is believable and the subject matter very well researched by the author. I read it in a few sittings and thoroughly enjoyed it.



