



## Vintage

*Olivia Darling*

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## **Vintage** Olivia Darling

Madeleine Arsenault, Christina Morgan and Kelly Elson are three women who dared to make it in a man's world. Swept into a world of feuds, back-stabbing, sabotage and seduction, have they got what it takes to survive? There's more than just reputations at stake.

## **Vintage Details**

Date : Published July 1st 2008 by Hodder & Stoughton (first published 2008)

ISBN : 9780340950791

Author : Olivia Darling

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## From Reader Review Vintage for online ebook

### Chloe says

Vintage follows three women who enter the man's world of wine-making, well champagne making to be exact. Madeleine Arsenault is the daughter of a French champagne-maker, and is left his vineyard when he dies. Madeleine wants to produce a vintage wine of her own, and is determined to prove her critics, who don't believe a woman can create a great wine, wrong and to rise to the top of her game.

Kelly Elson, a chambermaid in a hotel is also left a vineyard in a will, but unlike Madeleine, she doesn't want anything to do with it. Under the guidance of trustee Hilarian and vineyard keeper Guy, she decides maybe there is something to be done in the wine business after all.

Finally, we have Christina Morgan, an American supermodel whose marriage is in tatters, much like her career. Christina only takes on the vineyard as she has nothing else to do, but quickly realises she enjoys the work of making a new bottle of wine, and is determined to make a success of her vineyard.

The three female lead characters are all incredibly different, yet all have the same aims despite their different backgrounds and initial attitudes to their situations. Written in the third person, the book flicks easily between the characters in a comfortable reading style which transports you into the glamorous lives of the women. By the end, you are left feeling real empathy for all the women, and are completely absorbed in the story, feeling every emotion along with them. My favourite was certainly Madeleine, with her steely determination to succeed against the odds. However, all were likeable (although not at first in my opinion!) and even though they are all so different, worked well inside the story together.

I must admit it took me quite a while to get into this book. The start wasn't overly captivating, and left me a bit cold, so much so that I was able to put it down and not be desperate to pick it up again. However when I got past the first quarter of the book, it took a turn and drew me in – I just didn't want to put it down! You were suddenly thrown deep into the lives of the women – almost as if the author suddenly grabbed hold of what she was writing and took it on a complete u-turn from average to amazing!

The book does contain some quite graphic sex scenes as well, which don't seem out of place in the book. They aren't overly gratuitous and manage to fit in perfectly where they are written, so it doesn't seem like they are there purely for the sake of it. There is some coarse language used, but that seems to be commonplace in novels these days, so nothing too unusual there. Despite these scenes, romance isn't actually a main theme through the book, more a sub-theme, but it fits in well with the book and adds a different angle to the story as well as the wine-making side. Luckily, the author doesn't go into too much detail about wine-making, giving us just enough knowledge that we can understand the very basic processes without boring us!

Overall, once I got past the shaky start, I was thoroughly gripped by the book and really enjoyed what I was reading. The story was easy to follow, despite quite a lot of characters appearing throughout the book, and I think this is a credit to the author Olivia Darling. A very sexy fun read, not to be taken too seriously, but makes for very pleasant reading! I really enjoyed it and I was actually quite sad to turn the final page!

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## **Holly says**

For a salacious read, this was quite well-written and researched. I enjoyed reading this escapist novel about women, wine-making, and competition. The author does know how to talk about wine. Warning - the sex scenes are graphic so I wouldn't share this with teen readers. Many people would probably consider this a beach read.

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## **Shelby (shelbyymay) says**

I loved it! It was cleverly written in that it could link the four main characters stories together through methods and other characters. Alas, the whole book and individual stories relating to champagne and wine is unique and interesting! recommend!

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## **Vanessa says**

Very good! I just was a bit upset at the ending

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## **Janusch says**

As far as chick lit goes, this is a pretty good book, dealing with themes a little more varied (and interesting) than the regular, straightforward girl-meets-boy stuff.

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## **Gemma says**

I bought this book for a salacious beach read but ended up enjoying the plot, the characters and learning about wine making more than the raunchier parts of the book. The plot follows three different women - one young English girl, a French woman who works in finance and an American supermodel - as they struggle to make a mark in the world of sparkling wines. It starts a little slowly but the plot is well formed and it becomes un-put-downable by the end. Overall, a fun and raunchy read with lots of information about wine-making.

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## **Jo Woolf says**

What a fab book, brilliant strong female characters, rose above it all in the face of adversity, making them stronger than before. I was gutted at the end when Mathieu Randon did not get his comeuppance and loose everything! Really enjoyed it.

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## **Libby Waterford says**

Entertaining but a tad disappointing. Didn't love the way she wrapped up all the story lines. The women all seemed to grow and end up with the right guys, but what was the deal with Axel?

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## **Redfox5 says**

Who would have thought Champagne could be so exciting? This was the kind of book that kept pulling me back to it despite the callings from the internet and the playstation. I got swept up in the competition and the best girl won :) However I don't feel that one of the characters got his just desserts but maybe Olivia Darling was leaving that open for another book. I hope so. I would certainly read a sequel.

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## **Robin says**

This appears to be a beach read extraordinaire! And, among all the glitz, glamour, and backstabbing, one might learn something about the culture of champagne.

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## **Aileen says**

I did not think I was going to like this book, it was very slow to begin with however throughout the book, it did get better, and I was desperate to finish it to see what would happen. Definitely recommend.

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## **Carol says**

2.5 stars. If you're looking for a beach read or something for a long flight, this would work. I picked it up because I like to learn more about wine and how it's made. The novel was overly long, I scanned through some paragraphs. The sex scenes seemed to be added after an editor probably recommended the author needed to "spice" up the story - but those are few and you can skim over them. Three women, all gorgeous, young and unmarried become in charge of the 3 different wineries located in Napa, France and England and become embroiled in a 5 year challenge to win a tasting award. Some of the secondary characters were interesting and funny. All in all, the author may have been better off to narrow it to one glamorous heroine/wine maker and tell her story. Can't recommend for a book club read.

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## **Elaine Hitch says**

This really deserved 2.5 stars. I kept reading it, but skimmed much. Too much fluff and silliness. Sex scenes

that dragged on (seriously - badly written sex scenes). The only character I really cared about was Kelly. Murder mystery thrown in that was just kind of dropped.

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### **Dhfan4life says**

Okay, I don't know what to say about this book other than I have never wanted to kick somebody in the nuts so bad after reading a book in my life!

So here's the skinny, there is 3 chicas that in one manner or other come into owning a vineyard. Of the 3, Madeline, the French woman whose dad had more debts than common sense, seems to have a grasp on what she is doing given it has been her family biz since forever and a day. And after I got over trying to settle into the story, I was initially rooting for. She had her head on straight for a while til it flew off somewhere never to be heard from again!

Second chica is this late teenish/early 20ish hotel maid/mini prostitute Kelly that learns through wine critic/fellow trustee/friend of her alleged father's, that she has been left this old timey manor house and a vineyard named Froggy Bottom. In a word this chick was the ultimate brat of the year but she does win the award for the most improved character in the book.

And lastly the third chick is some hot shit super model, Christina. She gets her villa/vineyard through a divorce to some actor she realizes that she never loved anyway. And initially I was expecting a super vapid airhead type that wouldn't know grapes from rocks. But to some extent she cruised along with some sort of sense, morality, til her head flew off as well.

Sprinkle in 3 wine critics which sponsored(and one of which even mentored Kelly) that make one hell of a high wager about which chick will make the best sparkling wine for that year's winefest event. As stories would go and as luck would have it, the head chairman of the fest hears about the wager and bumps it up even higher. So all 3 critics really have something riding on their chick doing the best that can ever win(I will say though that I was happy who won as she totally deserved it with all that was going on).

Oh and can't forget to add a dash of a bad guy, wouldn't be a story without one. And oh what a one he was. Dude pretty much owned so many people in 3 different countries. And they never even saw it coming which is most unfortunate. Hell even got away with things from his past that really made me want to strangle someone. I won't even add in his little rape scene and how the chick curled up next to him like a pet cat or something. Just ugh. Or as I said kick someone in the nuts.

But what really, REALLY, REALLY, made me give this book 1.5 stars is the simple fact that I can't believe some of the decisions that both Madeline and Christina made at times. Some of them were purely logical and others were just so out of the blue and made no sense. I'm all for taking charge of your sexuality. But when you blatantly throw your morals out the window on a whim for no reason at all. Just made no sense, to me at all!

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### **Karen says**

Very entertaining beach-read pitting 3 burgeoning vineyards, one each in France, England and Napa against

each other to produce an award-winning sparkling wine. Lots of skullduggery and wrangling for power/position & winning a bet with a large sum attached, ensues.

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