



## **Wined and Died**

*Cricket McRae*

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## **Wined and Died** Cricket McRae

Something is brewing in Cadyville, and it's not only dandelion wine. Sophie Mae is intrigued by a recently discovered cassette recording in which a therapist fearfully contemplates her client's murderous threats. When the same therapist ends up dead, Sophie Mae is lured--despite her husband Barr's warnings not to get involved--into an intoxicating investigation that explores the age-old art of mead and wine making.

**Featuring recipes you can try at home, including one for Homemade Ginger Beer!**

### **Praise for the Home Crafting Mystery Series:**

"This series continues to add depth to its engaging cast of characters, and the home-crafting details remain a delight and an inspiration."--*BOOKLIST*

"The writing is sharp and skilled and Sophie Mae is an appealing, smart character."--*RT BOOK REVIEWS*

"Fans of Rosemary Harris and Maggie Sefton will appreciate McRae's crafty series."--*LIBRARY JOURNAL*

## **Wined and Died Details**

Date : Published July 8th 2011 by Midnight Ink (first published July 1st 2011)

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Author : Cricket McRae

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## From Reader Review Wined and Died for online ebook

### Kristi says

If you enjoy crafty cozies like Monica Ferris' Needlecraft series or perhaps Susan Wittig Albert's China Bayles series, but have an eclectic taste in crafting interests I think this series is worth reading. This craft-centric cozy mystery series took a little while to grow on me. I think it took a couple of books to really connect to the characters. Unlike many crafty cozies, this series highlights a wide variety of crafts instead of just one. There are always a handful of tips and recipes for DIY bath and beauty products in each of the books but deep down, she loves learning and exploring DIYing of all types.

Obviously, given the title of this 5th story of the series, she explores brewing her own beverages. In this installment, Sophie Mae is a newlywed and her bath products business is growing.

Taped notes from the office of a recently deceased therapist surface and Sophie Mae discovers a client had spoken of a possible plan for murder, but details are vague and sketchy and the therapist herself sounds unsure how serious her client was. Sophie Mae concludes that someone in the family who runs a local meadery may be at risk and begins thinking that the client may have murdered the therapist too! Her husband Barr, the lead detective in Cadyville, is spread too thin and doesn't subscribe to Sophie Mae's theories so she heads out to do some sleuthing of her own to some surprising results.

In the end, the plot did not strike me as terribly complex, though I did not fully settle on the culprit until very near the reveal. I enjoyed the book and seeing Sophie Mae and Barr's married relationship form and the growing pains of her business. The sprinkling of brewing information was interesting to me as we have done a bit of it ourselves and I think that actually helped carry the story a bit. Ultimately, I think my prior connection with the characters and the crafting elements carried this book for me more than the mystery element. I still look forward to see what Sophie Mae is going to dip her fingers into next!

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### Bonnie says

This is the 5th book in a series but the first that I have read and it was fabulous!

Sophie Mae makes soaps in her basement, takes care her housemate's 12-yr-old daughter Erin who may be too smart for her own good, is married to Detective Barr Ambrose and has a penchant for digging up information that leads to a possible murder.

The story begins in an antique shop, travels through the process of making soaps, Mead (Honey wine), Dandelion wine and root beer; there is an actual recipe for root beer at the back of the book which I may have to try.

The writing style of Cricket McRae flows easily. Once I had a chance to sit and spend more than a few minutes of reading time I was finished before I knew it. I loved the characters and look forward to beginning at book #1 to see what I missed in their development.

This series is a delightfully charming read; a definite must read!

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## **Spuddie says**

This is one of the few "cozy" mystery series that I not only tolerate, but actually enjoy. I can't really put my finger on why as it does have many of the usual cozy elements to it that normally make me cringe or else piss me off. But I've enjoyed this one, perhaps in part because the main character is a soapmaker and I am too. (But that can't be the sole reason because I've tried reading other soapy cozies and never got past page 50.) At any rate, I'm sad that there is only one more left in this series; at least I presume it's 'dead' since the last one was published several years ago now.

Sophie Mae once again gets herself into a mess when some mini cassette tapes purchased at a yard sale (her cop husband bought them to use for his recorder at work, thinking to erase them and tape over them) end up having some sensitive information, anecdotal notes recorded by some sort of mental health therapist. She tries to contact the therapist, aghast that they'd end up part of someone's yard sale, only to find that the woman died a month previously. And so it goes. LOL

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## **Jennifer Hill says**

Interesting twists on this one

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## **Courtney says**

This was the book that initiated my reading of the first four in this series, as I won it as a Goodreads first-reads give-away.

My review of this installment of the Home Crafting Mystery series is probably extremely similar to the last one (or two). I thought this one showed some improvement in how the mystery opened up to Sophie Mae. In the other books, she is as subtle as a jackhammer...almost to the point of being intrusive and obtuse. Obtrusive? (Totally thought I made that up, but apparently it's an actual word AND I used it correctly! Ha!)

Early in this book, Sophie Mae was forcing herself into the story line/mystery, as per usual, but she backed off a bit toward the second half and let the story unfold naturally. Miss Marple was never so obvious, and she is the quintessential amateur (busybody) sleuth. Sophie Mae may find a way to just let the mystery come to her instead of announcing herself with a marching band.

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## **\* Jennifer says**

I love this series and I was really excited when Wined and Died arrived. But I had a really hard time getting into it. I think it was the tension between Sophie Mae and Barr - it's a cliché in cozy mysteries having the protagonist go behind the detective's back. But still, that only last about mid-way through the story and then I found I could get right into it and enjoy it as I usually enjoy all the books in this series. The plot was well thought out and the ending was a good one, I thought. I'm hoping there will be another and looking forward

to reading it.

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### **Abigail says**

I had a hard time getting interested in Sophie Mae's personal life, but I think that might have more to do with not having read the first books than Sophie Mae herself. Her detective work, however, was awful. And I'm sure that's realistic -- if I were suddenly thrown a murder to solve, I'd probably be worse. But at times I wanted to shake her. The mystery itself was interesting, and I liked the backdrop of her interest in crafting. An ok read, but probably not the series for me. Also, Barr's string ties -- dear Lord no. Just no.

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### **Patty says**

I've enjoyed this series from the very beginning. Sophie Mae is a hardworking self-employed craft master. She makes soap and lip-balm and candles and, well, you get the picture.

In *Wined and Died* she get involved in a local family "meadery" or a winery that makes mead wine. It all comes about when new husband Barr purchases some mini-cassette tapes at a local thrift shop. 11 year old Eric listens to the tapes and starts asking questions that gets Sophie to asking questions about the death of a local psychotherapist.

There is a good mystery here, a family that has dysfunctional down pat, and a lot of good tips on making wine, mead and root beer.

I was completely pulled into the red herrings that McRae threw out and so really didn't even come close to guessing the murderer.

Looking forward to more in this series.

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### **Dominique G. Riddick says**

#### **Wined and Died**

I love Sophie Mae's character, from crafting to crime solving. I enjoyed this book with the winery, and found myself look to taste Mead wine. I would recommend this book and series.

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### **Susan says**

Sophie Ambrose is responsible for her house-mate's preteen Erin while Meghan is on vacation. When Erin finds that the blank tapes Barr, Sophie's new husband, has bought have been recorded on, she's interested--too interested, Sophie thinks. Then she realizes that the tapes belong to a therapist, making notes on her patients. When she tries to return the clearly confidential tapes, she learns that the therapist is dead. This leads Sophie to investigate one of the leading local families, which apparently harbors both a victim--and a

murderer.

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### **Jeannie and Louis Rigod says**

This book was so easy to read that I sailed through the book. The subject that became part of the crime was Mead. I have drank mead and found it too heavy and sweet to me. In this book, we learn that there are many forms of mead and I might try some of the suggested types in the future.

Our newlywed sleuth and her hubby are presented a crime when they visit a second hand store and purchase, what they thought were, blank cassette tapes. They aren't all blank, and there is a warning on some to a specific family in Cadyville.

Erin figures in this book quite prominently and cleverly. I love that she is a sweet-natured young lady in this series.

The Crime happens and just who committed it is Sophie Mae's worry as she deals with new employees, an increase in business, watching Erin, and worrying about Barr's overworking.

The book is crisp and has wonderful homemade recipes for Ginger Beer and bath aides.

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### **Michele Minor says**

Sophie Mae accidentally hears about a murder when her husband buys a set of old cassette tapes at a thrift store. She finds out that the therapist had died recently and it sparks her curiosity if her death had anything to do with what was on the tapes. She tries to find out who killed the therapist and whose life is in danger all while running her own business of making homemade beauty products. She also learns about mead and mead making during her own investigation which the readers learn about as well. She is also babysitting her housemate's eleven almost twelve year old daughter who is interested in the crime as well. There is no sex or dirty language in this book and it is a cute murder mystery. There is also a recipe for Ginger beer in the back of the book.

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### **Han Le flueff says**

A thoroughly enjoyable easy-to-read cozy mystery. Nothing too complex or challenging here, but a decent murder mystery nonetheless. The information and recipes for brewing ale and mead were great - it made me want to go out and buy some delicious honey fruit mead for myself!

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### **La says**

The fifth book in the Home Crafting Mystery series, Wined and Died takes you into a cozy world of home and murder. Although our intrepid heroine, Sophie Mae Ambrose, runs a home soap business in Cadyville, Washington, she still finds time to cook fabulous meals, explore winemaking and dip into herb gardening

while pursuing a mysterious poisoner. I love the fact that we get to explore one of the downs of a small business, the inevitable poor employee. While this mystery twists and turns to the end, Sophie Mae's love of learning about different crafts seeps out of the book and infects the reader. When I finished this book, I wanted to learn more about concocting herbal teas and winemaking, which are not as distant from each other as one might think. At the end, the book contains recipes and instructions to make two different bath products and ginger beer. I can't wait to try them all! A thoroughly enjoyable and quick read, I highly recommend this book to anyone who loves crafting of all sorts and a cozy murder to go alongside.

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### **Amanda says**

Enjoyed this a lot - great story - and I actually started reading it on Saturday 8-20 so I didn't read it in one day (Deb Rother!), but close :)

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