



A Crime of Passion Fruit

Ellie Alexander

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Torte--everybody's favorite small-town family bakeshop--is headed for the high seas, where murder is about to make a splash. . .

Jules Capshaw is trying to keep her cool as Torte gets set to make its transformation from quaint, local confectionary cafe to royal pastry palace. Meanwhile, Jules's estranged husband Carlos is making a desperate plea for her to come aboard his cruise ship and dazzle everyone with her signature sweets. She may be skeptical about returning to her former nautical life with Carlos but Jules can't resist an all-expense-paid trip, either. If only she knew that a dead body would find its way onto the itinerary . .

"A warm and inviting atmosphere, friendly and likable main characters, and a nasty murder mystery to solve!" --*Fresh Fiction*

Now, instead of enjoying tropical drinks on deck between whipping up batches of sea-salted chocolates and flambeing fresh pineapple slices in the kitchen, Jules is plunged into dangerous waters. Her investigation leaves her with more questions than answers: Why can't anyone on board identify the young woman? And how can she help Carlos keep passengers at ease with a killer in their midst? Jules feels like she's ready to jump ship. Can she solve this case without getting in too deep?

"A perfect mix for fans of Jenn McKinlay, Leslie Budewitz, or Jessica Beck."
--*Library Journal*

A Crime of Passion Fruit Details

Date : Published June 27th 2017 by St. Martin's Paperbacks

ISBN : 9781250088079

Author : Ellie Alexander

Format : Mass Market Paperback 266 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Fiction

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From Reader Review A Crime of Passion Fruit for online ebook

Carla Johnson-Hicks says

In this outing with Jules, Torte moves into the background. She received a call from Carlos (her estranged husband) that the pastry chef on the upcoming cruise has quit and they need someone for a short four day cruise until the new hire can arrive. To sweeten the pot, her mom and "The Professor" are invited along free of charge. She can not turn this opportunity down. Not only does her mother really need a vacation, but it will give her time to decided what to do about Carlos. Of course on the second day of the cruise, Jules finds a dead body floating in the pool early in the morning. Knowing that The Professor is a detective, the captain asks for his help. There is a lot going on in this novel. First Jules needs to deal with her relationship with Carlos, she is helping the professor figure out who the dead woman is as well as who killed her, and they are sailing into an impending storm/hurricane which is dangerous for the small ship. There is a lot of suspense and mystery in this book with tidbits via email, keeping us updated on what is happening back at Torte. i am already looking forward to the next book.

The story moved quickly and even though the setting was completely changed and the story did not happen locally, it was still an enjoyable mystery with many suspects and clues. The new characters on the ship were interesting, some more than others. The descriptions of the shipboard activities and food were amazing. I recommend this book to all cozy mystery fans.

Jenna says

Setting: Aboard the Amour of the Seas, a boutique cruise ship

Characters

Juliet "Jules" Capshaw: Former full-time pastry chef on a cruise line, current co-owner of Torte, a popular local bakery and cafe in Ashland, Oregon.

Carlos: Jules's estranged husband, head chef on the Amour of the Seas

Rocky: Cruise director

Helen Capshaw: Jules' mother and co-owner of Torte

The Professor: Police chief detective and boyfriend of Helen

Plot: Before returning home to Ashland, Jules spent several years traveling the world on cruise ships, where she worked as a pastry chef. Her heart - and her feet - are now firmly planted on the ground as she takes on more and more at Torte. But when Carlos calls and asks Jules to fill in for a week aboard the Amour of the Seas, and sweetens the offer by extending an invitation to Helen and the Professor, as well, Jules can't help but set sail once more. Once on board, Jules finds herself torn between her heart and her head - should she return to the life of a world traveler alongside her husband? Or should she stay back in Oregon with her family and continue to renovate and renew the business her parents built?

The decision isn't an easy one, especially when her personal debate is sidetracked by an investigation. While taking an early morning stroll, Jules comes across the body of stow-away passenger - dead in the pool. Her already tattered nerves are even more frayed at the thought of a killer on board the boutique cruise ship. It's up to the Professor and Jules to identify the victim, pinpoint the motive, and isolate the murderer - all while sailing directly into the eye of a storm.

Pacing: Consistent

Predictability: Low

Wild Card: A Crime of Passion Fruit is the sixth book in the Bakeshop Mystery series, which is a favorite of mine. The carefully crafted stories are as enticing as the mouth-watering descriptions of what Jules and her crew are cooking up at the bakery. Over the course of these six books, I've gone back and forth along with Jules on the issue of Carlos. At first, I was ready to do away with him. Drop him off the canvas and cheer on a new path with an old flame. But then he came to Ashland and, well, the guy is charming. But now . . . I'm undecided. I'm thrilled that Jules is ready to return to land without another thought of sailing off into the sunset, and I'm equally eager to see what's next for the remodeling and expansion at Torte. However, I just don't know if I'm Team Carlos, Team Thomas, or Team Torte! (After all, a gal doesn't have to have a love interest to be happy and successful!) Needless to say, this delightful and delectable series continues to be a favorite and I'll be eagerly awaiting the next twists and turns that Ellie Alexander has in store.

Hit, Miss, or Draw? Hit!

Sheila Siarkiewicz says

A Crime of Passion Fruit is a must read! Well written characters, a touch of romance, and a mystery that will keep you guessing make this a hard to put down book. The delicious recipes included at the end are an added bonus! Definitely recommend!

Babs says

A wonderful read that anyone will love. The story kept me guessing until the end. You will feel like you have been placed on a tropical island. Jules treats everyone like they are family. When she is on the cruise ship it was great to see how things were done in the kitchen and on the ship. It has to take a well organized and strong person to cook and work in a short and crowded space.

I like the fact that the murder is on the ship and there is a wide range of suspects. The story moves quickly and will keep you on the edge of your seat.

Megan says

Another nice cozy mystery in the Bakeshop series. This one took place mostly on a cruise ship, which I found fascinating. I have no desire to go on a cruise, so I enjoyed learning a bit about it without having to do it. Once again, I enjoyed the characters (I love the supporting characters) and the easy mystery. I still get mixed feelings about Jules - sometimes I like that she seems levelheaded, other times I feel like she's just lacking emotion.

The relationship with Carlos was getting a little unbelievable to me - she's in a relationship with a supposedly passionate, handsome Spanish lover, yet there's very little intimacy and he's just so agreeable (unbelievably agreeable) to everything, even Jules breaking things off (or did she...). Not that I'm asking for explicit sex scenes because I get that these books aren't like that, but how does NOTHING happen between a supposedly passionate couple that was so in love... She says (but always remains restrained) that Carlos still stirs up feelings inside her and makes it clear that she sees Thomas as just a friend...so it also feels like there's

supposed to be a love triangle where there really isn't one.

Like I said, though, I love all the secondary characters and there are moments when I love Jules too. I like the writing style and the mysteries. The key cliffhanger is fun and I'm curious to see where that goes.

Carrie Schmidt (Reading is My SuperPower) says

Warning: This book will cause cravings for Monte Cristo sandwiches, gooey cinnamon rolls, crepe cakes, lemon jelly roll, peach coffee cake, and more delectable desserts and pastries. You have been duly cautioned.

While A Crime of Passion Fruit isn't like one of those 'special mid-season episodes' of your favorite TV show, where everyone heads to the vacation destination, Alexander does a fantastic job of including all the beloved characters anyway. Through emails back and forth with her friends and employees, Jules stays up to date with the goings-on back home, and we as readers are still treated to these great characters even in absentia. The cruise ship aspect to this novel was also well-done and in fact fascinated me. I enjoyed learning about what goes into making sure a cruise runs smoothly, particularly in the kitchens or during rough seas.

The murder mystery in A Crime of Passion Fruit has a bit of a twist in that it's not just about 'whodunit' but also about who it was done to. No one knows (or admits to knowing) the victim, and so it's as much about figuring out who she is and where she came from as it is about solving the crime itself. Being on a cruise ship – and being rather on Jules' home turf – allows the Professor (whom I love) and Juliet to work together rather than him being in charge and her sneaking around to sneak around, so to speak.

Bottom Line: Juliet, her mother, and the Professor work just as well together as characters on a cruise ship as they do at Torte, and it was nice to keep up with the other characters back home too. The mystery is well-crafted (though I had the whodunit aspect pegged early on), and the continuing situation with Carlos vs. Thomas adds a dose of romance as well as emotion. The Bakeshop Mystery series is a great choice for cozy mystery fans with sweet tooth (sweet teeth?), and this installment in particular makes the perfect vacation read!

(I voluntarily reviewed a complimentary copy of this book)

see my full review at [Reading Is My SuperPower](#)

Debbie Maskus says

I seem to gravitate to cozy mysteries. A Crime of Passion Fruit fits that bill. The story does not display a graphic murder scene. Juliet Capshaw and her mother, Helen, run Torte, a bakery in Oregon. In her past life, Jules worked on various cruise ships as a pastry chef. Now her estranged husband, Carlos, has asked for Jules assistance for a few days on the cruise ship he works. As a push to get Jules to agree, Juliet's mother and her mother's boyfriend, the Professor, will be given a free cruise. Jules, Helen, and the Professor, all board the ship in hopes of fun and relaxation, but a death of a young woman ends that dream. Ellie Alexander provides a detailed explanation of the life of the employees on a cruise ship. Lavish food and entertainment surround the passengers. The series showcases plenty of amazing recipes.

Sara says

3.5 stars. Another fun installment in this cozy mystery series! In this book, Juliet is asked to temporarily return to her former job as a pastry chef on a cruise line until the new chef can come on board. Her estranged husband, Carlos, is thrilled to have her on board again, and Juliet's mom and her boyfriend come along for a week-long vacation too. At first, it's a fun change from Juliet's usual routine at the family's bakery in Ashland, but then Juliet discovers a dead body on board and naturally gets sucked into that mystery, especially since no one seems to be able to identify the woman.

I liked the change of setting for this book. I've been enjoying reading about Juliet's adventures in Ashland, but having her on board a cruise ship for the duration of this book made for a fun change of scenery while also allowing the relationship between Juliet and Carlos to be a little more developed. Characters from previous books in this series made appearances at the beginning and end of the book, as well as throughout the mystery through their emails with Juliet. It was fun to read about Juliet's adventures working on board the ship and the busy "employee" section of the cruise ship with plenty of drama there.

The mystery in here was a lot of fun and I liked the fact that it was twofold: who was the murderer and who was the victim? It was interesting to have both mysteries to solve, keeping the story moving forward. It did seem like this mystery wrapped up a lot "easier" than previous ones, though; I guessed who'd done it fairly early on, and I thought the explanation was on the weaker side. But the story was still entertaining, and I enjoyed the book overall. A nice light summer read.

Patrizia says

4 stelle e mezza

Stavolta Jules torna sulla nave da crociera dove ha lavorato a lungo per sostituire un collega durante una mini-crociera nei Caraibi. Ovviamente ritroviamo Carlos, il marito da cui si è allontanata (e che io continuo a non apprezzare, ma questa è un'altra storia...); anche la madre di Jules e il Professore (il capo dei detective della cittadina natale di Jules) sono sulla nave ed è un bene perché una ragazza è trovata affogata in piscina il giorno dopo la partenza. Il Professore inizia a indagare e chiede aiuto anche a Jules, che deve anche risolvere i suoi dubbi riguardo a Carlos.

Una bella storia, nel complesso, anche se avevo azzeccato al primo tentativo il colpevole. non c'è niente da fare, a forza di leggere solo cozy mysteries sto diventando troppo brava...

Heidi says

Three and a half stars: An entertaining cozy mystery, but I missed the coziness of the bake shop, and the murder mystery was a little too unrealistic.

Jules is busy as ever at Torte. Between baking and the development of the basement property, she has her hands full. When Carlos calls out of the blue begging for her help on the cruise ship, Jules is hesitant to go, but when he includes a vacation for her mom and the Professor, Jules agrees. It is only five days, what could happen in five days? Once Jules is back on the ship, she realizes how busy and stressful it is to manage the pastry kitchen. Then things get worse when someone is found dead in the pool, and the ship is headed into a dangerous storm. Will Jules survive the high seas?

What I Liked:

*I am always ready to dive back into this fun cozy mystery series. Even though I missed the cozy confines of the Torte bake shop in this one, I still enjoyed the cruise ship setting. This book delivered something different in the series, and I like that the author decided to shake it up a bit.

*I have never been on a cruise, so I enjoyed my vicarious cruise with Juliet. I loved all the decadent food descriptions, as usual. The food served on the cruise ship sounded amazing, and it made me want to book a cruise. I also liked the busy hustle bustle of the ship, and all the work the staff did behind the scenes to make sure all the food is served on time and that it was delicious. This book was a fun escape.

*I liked the added suspense of the impending storm on top of the murder. Then when the storm hit, things got scary. I liked the extra layer of danger on top of the murder mystery.

*The romance has been a bit of a sticking point in the series. Even though there was still not a firm outcome in this one, I liked that Jules listened to her heart and made a decision. I so loved Carlos and the way he reacted. I have my fingers crossed that things will work out the way I want them to.

*Even though Jules was away from Torte and Oregon, she still got funny email updates from Lance and the rest of the gang at Torte, I liked that they all still remained in the story even though they were left on shore.

*The ending was satisfactory. The murder mystery was solved, and the major loose ends done up. I am excited to continue following up on the romance and the expansion of Torte.

*As always, there are yummy recipes included at the end from a Peach Pound Cake to Tropical Cookies. I can't wait to try some of the recipes.

And The Not So Much:

*I know reading cozy mysteries that the reader has to go along with certain things even though they are often unrealistic. This one strained believability time and time again. First, Juliet is extremely busy running the pastry kitchen. The work is endless and often frenetic, so I found it completely ridiculous that she constantly had time to ditch her duties to chase around the ship looking endlessly for the Professor, and questioning suspects. In reality, she probably would barely have time to leave the kitchen.

*I also didn't like the fact that the ship didn't have any type of law enforcement on board so the Professor was called upon for police work. I am sure a cruise ship would have some type of law enforcement in place. As it was, Juliet and the Professor were the ones solving the murder.

*The murder mystery itself wasn't very suspenseful, nor was it particularly hard to figure out the culprit. I had the killer pegged early on.

A Crime of Passion Fruit wasn't my favorite book in this series, but I still enjoyed the setting, the characters and all the food. I love picking up a book in this series as I know I will get a fun mystery, a cozy setting, scrumptious food and a bit of romance. I am eager to see where the next book will take the story.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own, and I was not compensated for this review.

Posted@Rainy Day Ramblings.

K.A. Davis says

I was transported to a tropical paradise from the moment I saw the cover until the very last page. Jules, owner of Torte, a bakeshop in Ashland, Oregon, has a strong sense of community and treats her employees like family. This theme is carried throughout the series and extends to her temporary stay on board a cruise ship. When her estranged husband, Carlos (and yes, I am #teamcarlos!), asks her to return to his cruise ship for a short time to work as a pastry chef, she agrees. Jules is especially happy when she finds out that her mother and beau will get an all expense paid trip as well if she helps out. I loved the description of working in the ship's kitchen and feeding vast numbers of people 24 hours a day. It certainly takes a certain kind of

person to live and work in such tight quarters and I find it amazing there aren't more real life murders taking place on cruise ships!

When Jules finds the body of an unknown young woman floating in the pool, she feels a certain responsibility to find the murderer. Her mother's beau, a detective known as Professor, quickly becomes involved and he asks Jules to assist him. Given that the murder takes place on the ship while out at sea, there is a limited number of suspects. The author does a good job of keeping the reader guessing with some twists thrown in. She also touches on the frightening issue of stalking and ties it into the story. The pace of the plot moves along nicely while interwoven with life on the ship and Jules coming to terms with her relationship with Carlos.

Of course with Jules working in the ship's pastry kitchen there are all sorts of delectable dishes mentioned in the book. I felt like I gained 5 pounds on Jules' tropical cruise just reading the descriptions! Ellie Alexander provides several delicious recipes at the back of the book. I tried her recipe for Lemon Jelly Roll Cake... easy to follow directions and the results were stunning. An easy way to impress family and guests alike!

I received an advance copy with the hopes I would review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

Sabrina says

Okay so I didn't start off with the first book in the series so I was playing a bit of catch up with some of the back story on the MC which we get snippets of. Basically she lived for a decade or so on a cruise ship as a pastry chef and married Carlos (who is a Mexican cliché and begins every sentence with Si or adds it to every sentence...) the main food chef. When she found out he had a son (it sounds like he has nothing to do with the kid or possibly didn't know himself) she freaks out and jumps ship to go back home. It only been a few months (and several murders later) that Carlos asks her to come back to the ship to help out for a week or so. She agrees and wonders why she left the ship, but how can she stay she is so in love with life on land and her home, but she loves Carlos so much how can she not stay on the ship, but she wants land....and on and on it goes. About almost half of this book is taken up by our MC's inner musings about her life at home, and her love of Carlos and should she remain at sea. Also she talks about how much work being head pastry chef is and how many hours she has to spend in the kitchen....and yet she is hardly there at all.

Anyway she was home and now she, her mom and her mom's boyfriend are on the cruise when on the first day there is a murder. Between musing about her relationship with her husband, eating something of everything she cooks, running around out of the kitchen she is helping to solve a murder...sort of. This is one of those mysteries where the MC doesn't actually solve didily but the case just comes together and all the pieces fall into place like day to day life just happening. And last it annoyed me that the MC is such a gossip...she tells everyone everything about the murder whenever she can, she even emails her friends at home and tells them everything...really I am sick of this becoming standard in mysteries of all MC's and most secondary characters.

Bree says

Ellie Alexander is one of my absolute favorite mystery authors. This series is my in my top three of all time reads and I am always eager to highlight a book by her on the blog. It was a treat to go back to Jules' pastry roots on the cruise ship, her friends and life on a ship was delightful to see.

Full Review: <https://bibliophile.reviews/book-revi...>

Carole Jarvis says

Reviewed at The Power of Words: <http://bit.ly/2tyOnGN>

I wasn't very far into A Crime of Passion Fruit before realizing that Ellie Alexander's bakeshop series would become a favorite of mine. The story is well written, intelligent, creative, entertaining, and just plain fun. Rather than being suspenseful, the focus is on logical crime deduction, a style that I love. Although this is #6 in the series – and I've not read the previous stories – it easily stands alone. I could pretty much figure out what had gone on with recurring characters. And kudos to Ms. Alexander for giving us a clean story with no profanity or graphic scenes.

The series centers around Torte, a small-town bakeshop in Ashland, Oregon – famous for its Shakespeare theater. A Crime of Passion Fruit, however, takes place on a cruise ship where Jules, at the request of her estranged husband, temporarily fills in as pastry chef. The vivid descriptions pulled me right into the setting and I enjoyed seeing a lot of the action from the crew's perspective. Shipboard activities and themes were fun and imaginative. I confess to skimming over some of the food prep descriptions, but cooking fans will find these very interesting and informative.

A series is only as strong as its lead character, and I was immediately drawn to Jules – a natural leader who enjoys working with her mom and cares about people. She loved being a chef ... “The kitchen is the great equalizer. People of all walks of life connect over food.” Secondary characters add even more depth to the story.

I especially enjoyed the romantic themes. Apparently two men are interested in Jules – Thomas, an Ashland police deputy, and Carlos, the estranged husband – and I don't know who to pull for at this point. Thomas isn't personally featured in this story, so I don't know anything about him. But Carlos ... Wow! At first, I thought their relationship was mainly based on surface-level attraction, but we see much more depth as the story unfolds. Carlos and Jules love each other, but have different life goals. This story ends in a tantalizing way for them and I'm eager to see what develops.

A Crime of Passion Fruit concludes with the hint of much more to come in the bakeshop series – Torte's basement renovation, expansion, and the wedding of Jules's mom. I eagerly await the release of book #7, Another One Bites the Crust, on January 2, 2018.

Highly recommended.

I was provided a free copy of this book through Great Escapes Tours. The opinions expressed in this review are entirely my own.

Hilary (A Wytch's Book Review) says

Juliet Capshaw gets a phone call from her sort of estranged husband Carlos, the head pastry chef on the cruise ship has been sacked and they need another for a week, to sweeten the deal Carlos has arranged for Juliet's mother and The Professor (aka the chief detective of the local police) to also have a trip. It gets to the first full day and whilst Juliet is taking an early morning walk around the ship to get some fresh air and

exercise before the heat of the kitchen, she comes across a young woman face down in the pool! All of a sudden the Professor is asked to take over and Juliet is drafted by him to be the link with the staff. So much for a relaxing time and seeing if she can still make a go of it with Carlos!
