



Sweet Baklava

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After years of looking for a place to belong, Paula Andrews finally finds her niche in Tarpon Springs, Florida. Her soap and candle shop flourishes, and her friendship with the Papadopoulos family gives her the love and support she never got from her own family.

The only thing missing is a romance--or in the grand hopes of the Papadopoulos family, a proper marriage. Preferably with Nick, their favorite son, currently serving in the Air Force. Paula, however, has doubts. After all, he's been gone a long time and loves flying. Their lives have grown apart. Would he still feel anything for her?

When Nick comes home on leave, sparks fly, and not just with Paula. Nick's father wants him home, helping with the family sponge-diving business. His mother wants him back in the family, back in church. Nick just wants Paula . . . and the Air Force.

So who's going to give in first? And what will it mean for their love and future?

Sweet Baklava Details

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From Reader Review Sweet Baklava for online ebook

Celestial says

I am so happy with this book.

The story is SO sweet. Paula and Nick are such lovable characters. Their romance is beautiful. :) The Papadopoulos family is hilarious and will definitely give you a My Big Fat Greek Wedding vibe.

This book is just PERFECT! I love it so much! :D I don't think I have anything I dislike about this book. I want Debby Mayne to write some more books similar to this.

I totally recommend to contemporary Christian fiction lovers. The book is very clean, and I think girls from thirteen and older are fine reading this. This book is on my to buy list I love it so much. :D

Lorraine says

Sweet, easy-to-read romance. I loved the closeness and support Nick's Greek family shared.

Vicki says

GAAAHHHHHH!!!!

This is one I wish I hadn't picked up, and then I wish I had put it down way before I finished it. I love Greece and baklava (and Greek men!!) so I thought it would be OK. WRONG!! I kept waiting for a plot, but by the time I finally admitted to myself there wasn't going to be one, I had already invested so much time to it that I felt compelled to finish it. It had its moments, but it tried too hard to be a Christian romance that most of the time it was just plain boring.

Barbara says

I can't believe I actually finished this book. (This is one of my character flaws; if I start a book, I have to finish it no matter how bad it is.)

This one gets one star for so many reasons that I don't even know where to start.

I don't know what was worse: stereotypical ethnic characters, a totally ridiculous plot, dilemmas that are unrealistically solved, and most glaring - the lack of acknowledgement toward the Greek Orthodox religion. For crying out loud, the story is set in what's probably one of the largest Greek communities in the country with the majority of characters of Greek ancestry, and yet their religion is totally ignored. (Why is it assumed in so many of these books that evangelical Christian is the only way to go?)

As a Roman Catholic (with 1 Greek Orthodox gal married into our family) I immediately thought to myself "this is an entire Greek evangelical family? I don't think so!" There is only one mention where Nick's mom says it's okay for him to attend church w/Paula as long as he also went to church w/his family. That was it.

Oh, if you use the baklava recipe at the back of the book, use butter. Baklava ALWAYS gets butter, not

shortening.

Shae says

I had to stop reading this a few chapters in. It was boring and subtly religious with no real plot. Rarely do I not finish this book but I just could not go on.

Mercedes Cordero says

Almost inedible. Beware, there might be spoilers ahead (if you can say that there are spoilers in such an uneventful story).

This is the story of a selfish girl who says she is still in love with the boyfriend who abandoned her to enlist in the Air Force, never to call or write to her again; as well as the story of a boy who comes home for vacation from his Air Force job or whatever, and is smitten by the girlfriend he left behind 10 years ago. He has always loved her, and she has always loved him. He never stopped loving her, ditto for her. He tries to win her back. And tries, and tries, and tries, and, yes, he tries some more. And she refuses, and refuses, and refuses. And he loves her even more because she is soooo determined. So again he tries, and tries, and tries. And she falters a little bit, but then refuses, and refuses, and refuses. And he can't believe how much he loves her, and now loves her even more because she is soooo determined, but also kind, and smart, and speaks her mind. So once again he tries, and tries, and tries. And she kind of gives in, but not really, and then refuses, and refuses, and refuses. The boy's vacation is over, so he returns to his job. The girl realizes how selfish she has been so she finally gives in, and they (and everyone in their lives) live happily ever after. No big story, no big conflict, no big problem; just a few months in the life of this couple, this boring couple. The girl, Paula, is so undeserving of all the high praise she gets that it is very tiring and irritating. She's so smart, so funny, so intelligent, so kind, so wonderful, so perfect. Only she's not, and the great ideas she comes up with, are ideas that others had first but that she failed to see their value at the time. Then, when she tells her big idea, everyone is, like, "Wow, she's so smart. She thought of everything." In their relationship, she is the Marcia and Nick is the Jan (you know, from the Brady Bunch movie)

A couple of other things bothered me: Nick and Paula's backstory is not told or explained well. And in the beginning for Paula the fact that Nick joined the Air Force and left without telling her is a very big deal. I mean, of course, she felt abandoned. And Nick had a reason for it too, and the reader gets to know the reason, but Paula never brings it up with Nick, and it is NEVER again mentioned. So in the end, Paula has no idea why Nick left without telling her, and apparently, she doesn't care anymore. And what I really hate about that is that the author made us care about it, only to drop it later. And that is too bad because at least it would have created a much needed conflict between Paula, Nick and Paula's mom.

For a story so bland as this one, it really is way too long.

Melissa says

How can I not love a romantic story about a non-Greek woman marrying into a large, gregarious Greek family whose main purpose seems to be feeding her? ;) This is a fun summer read filled with genuine, kind, (somewhat officious) characters always looking out for the best interests of their family. The best part is the attached Greek recipes at the end of the book!

Linnette says

The story over all was a good, enjoyable read. It was a little frustrating. It seemed to take forever for the heroine to come to her senses. I couldn't really identify with her enough to understand why she was so in love and yet so against making a commitment. But, maybe it's just me. It simply didn't make sense to this romantic girl's heart. I like the characters, I like the setting, I like pretty much everything about the story except her prolonged reluctance. Just didn't seem realistic to me - not when you have such a great guy who is so totally in love with you and you understand each other so well.

Tisa says

First time in a very long time that I put a book down and did not even think about finishing it. Very early on I felt it got very preachy. I did not realize that this was a hard core Christian novel. I will be trying the recipes at the end of the book though, that was the best part of the DL.

Paula Phillips says

Wanting a novel that has romance and greek food and lots of celebrating ? Sweet Baklava takes us into the heart of Greek Community in Tarpon Springs , Florida. They are all preparing in celebration for the return of Nick Papadopoulos - who has spent the past two years in the Air Force . After graduating college, he ran to the airforce leaving behind Paula who was smitten for him. Now Two years later , Paula owns a successful soap and candle business and nearing Christmas things in the shop are looking up and that's going to be the excuse she uses throughout the novel to stop her from getting reunited with Nick. However the Papadopoulos family have other ideas up their sleeves as they plan ways to rekindle and matchmake Paula and Nick together. Will they succeed in bringing the pair together as it proves time and time throughout the novel that without each other -to be corny "their lives are incomplete". A very light-hearted chick lit novel that in ways brings to light the thought that thank goodness you are not greek , as their matchmaking skills includes the whole clan chipping in.

Lori Wolff says

Cute story about finding who you are and what the people around you mean and how God plays such an important role every single day so let him do it.

JoJo says

I don't know why people give this such low reviews. I really enjoyed this book. Of course I would have liked Paula not to take forever to finally decide that she wanted to be with Nick for the rest of her life. I'll admit

that some details were lacking and time jumps happened too fast and sometimes without notification. I love that there are recipes at the end and I absolutely adore baklava. If you like a cute Christian romance you'll find it in this book. You'll also find a meddling family, lots of quirky people and develop a craving for baklava because of how many times it's mentioned.

Maria Love says

I love a sweet love story and Sweet Baklava reminded me so much of my own high school sweetheart (now husband). Fun read and I was thrilled that they shared some recipes at the end of the book.

Em says

It wasn't an overtly religious story, but it was religious. Fair warning.

The relationship between the two protagonists actually confused me a lot. There was an awful lot of hot and cold. Things would seem to be going great, but then the main male character would just stop doing anything, and give the main female character "space." Maybe that is how things really are, but it felt, to me, like the author was just trying to make the romance part of the story last for as long as the rest of the story.

I did love the collection of recipes at the back of the book. I'm not a huge Greek food fan, but I love baklava, and have since I first had some in middle school. With the recipes from the back here, I can actually try making my own. The only thing that would have made me happier, recipe-wise, is if some of Paula's candle and soap recipes had also been included. Baklava + spa goodies. What could be better?

Effie says

I am so over inspirational book using ethnic characters to add local color but not staying true to those ethnicities. (I'm looking at you, Fools Rush In).

The author wanted a big Greek family to use in this book, and she sets it in the Greek community of Tarpon Springs, Florida. The heroine is falling in love with her Greek friend, who has returned home after many years. His family is big and wacky and Greek and bakes up whole pans of baklava. Which is terrific. But then the author forgets about reality. Either she didn't bother to do much research or she simply wanted the Greek background while still staying close to her inspirational storyline.

As a Greek myself, the story is so unrealistic that it made me very, very angry. Tarpon Springs is the largest Greek community in the United States. Yet no mention is ever made of the Greek Orthodox church. The hero attends bible study and services at the heroine's good, supportive evangelical church and is perfectly happy there. Most Greeks simply don't do that. They attend the Orthodox church and marry there no matter what their spouse's faith is. I can only think of one person among my family and friends who was married in a different church. Many of us attend other churches now, but we're still a small minority. That no one in his family brought up the fact that he was attending a different church and wanting to marry in a different church sent up all kinds of red flags for me. This author doesn't know what she's doing. That would have been a good conflict right there, instead of meandering off into the conflicts we're presented with in the story, some of which are not well resolved.

If you're going to write an evangelical book, then do so. But please don't pull in other faiths and force them into your mold simply for a good story. It does a disservice to those other faiths.

And please, please, please, do NOT go by the recipe at the back of the book. Baklava is made with butter. Period. The addition of shortening is just wrong. Even my American husband recognized that.
