



Death Takes the Cake

Melinda Wells

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To help boost ratings for her show, Della Carmichael agrees to enter a televised cake competition sponsored by Reggi-Mixx, even though the company's owner, Regina Davis, is an old college nemesis. When she finds someone drowned in a mixing bowl of batter, Della realizes solving this murder will be no cakewalk.

Death Takes the Cake Details

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From Reader Review Death Takes the Cake for online ebook

Sandra says

A cooking murder mystery, this is a quick read. I used the recipe for Lemon Funeral Cake for the pumpkin cake I made for Jon's birthday on October 10. (Two bundt cakes stacked back to back, covered with orange frosting, then an ice cream cone frosted green).

Susan says

Della Carmichael knows that this cake-baking contest will be trouble. The sponsor is a woman who threatened to kill Della way back in college, and twenty years haven't changed too much. But Della's boss, who runs a cable tv operation as well as other businesses, insists, so there Della is, in the test kitchens, when she finds the murdered body of her long-time nemesis. What's even worse is that the main suspect turns out to be the husband of Della's best friend. You don't have to believe the plot to find the writing and characters entertaining. Della has a lot of back story, what with her dead husband, her attraction to his (married) former partner, her equal attraction to a handsome reporter with a roving eye, her foster daughter...Recipes.

Linda says

Very enjoyable mystery. I like Della and the other supporting characters. The mystery was good and kept me guessing until the reveal. I liked the romance thrown in. The recipes at the end sounded great too.

Jenn says

This is the second book I've read by this author, and I really like her books. They are cozy mystery, but there is allusion to intimacy so it's not as cutesy as some of the other cozy mysteries out there. The recipes included in the book are recipes I would actually eat as well.

The characters are well developed. They seem like real people. They're not one dimensional - but have good qualities as well as flaws. This makes it easy to relate to them.

The mystery in this book like in the other book I've read in the series, had depth and though I did have sneaking suspicions as to who the culprit was, it was not something that I was able to guess right away.

I especially liked the other female competitors in the cake cook off. We didn't learn as much about the male characters, but they seemed like they weren't really worth knowing.

I can't wait to read the rest of this series.

Barb Radmore says

Death Takes the Cake is the second book in the Della Cross Mystery Series. Melinda Wells has created this set of mystery books starring Della Cross, the middle aged star of a cable network cooking show. The series had strong debut with Killer Mousse and this one continues to prove her experience as an author.

After losing her policeman husband to a sudden heart attack Della is learning to make a life without him. She has the company of her large dog Tuffy and Eileen, the daughter of close friends who has grown up living with Della. She also thought she was on her way to settling into a new romance but then she discovers her man, Nick, with his arm around another woman. Her best friend is also having man trouble when her husband starts to lie and come home late. These difficulties are compounded when Regina, an unwelcome acquaintance from the past, reenters her life.

Regina and Della did not get along at all in college so Della is appalled to realize that she is the owner of Reggi-Mixx, the inferior cake mix company. Della had already reluctantly agreed to participate in a cake competition that is to be aired as a TV reality style show. Reggi-Mixx is the show sponsor so Della must find a way to use their poor excuse for a cake mix to produce a prize winning entry. The \$10,000 first prize would be a much needed addition to her limited bank account. But, when she finds Regina dead with her head in a bowl of cake mix and the murder seems close to home, she must help to try to solve it.

This book has multi mysteries- who murdered Regina? Is Nick the man for Della or a cheater? Is her friend's husband an adulterer and/or a murderer? And can Della create a winning cake? All these plot lines come together and are solved in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. While the outcomes are predictable that does not make it any less fun for the reader. Wells' varied background and experience with the visual media enables her to deftly plot the story and keep it moving. Also the characters feel honest and real which is important to a cozy. They are well developed as three dimensional people, not lifeless forms on paper. This adds to the fun of reading this book, the reader does care what happens to Della and her friends.

Kristen says

In the second installment of the Della Cooks series, Death Takes the Cake, Della Carmichael is off into a new adventure. When her boss Mickey Jordan wanted her to join a reality cooking contest show to help boost the ratings, she knew she'd gotten more into what she bargained for. The sponsor of the contest is her arch-rival from high school and the baking mix tasted terrible. Between her steaming love affair with Nicholas D'Martino and her cooking show, she discovered the dead body of her nemesis. It's up to Della to compete with tougher competition and discover who killed her and why, before she's the next on his list. This included yummy recipes to try at home.

Lisa says

Della gets entered into a cake contest where the contestants must use a cake mix she despises...and which is manufactured by a company run by an enemy of Della's from college, Regina Davis. Regina meets up with Della and seems not to remember their tiff, but when Regina winds up murdered, not only does Della uncover facts that prove otherwise but Della's friend, Bill, winds up the prime suspect! Then Della might be caught in the killer's sights. Nevertheless, Della doesn't share everything with her detective friend John nor her reporter friend NDM. In between searching for the killer, Della and Eileen are opening a fudge shop and Della is still trying to have her network show go on (though her cooking classes are on hold for this book due to renovations).

Amy Vendetti says

I am really enjoying this series. I love the fact that she has her own cooking show and I love that she has a cat and a dog in the story. :) And the characters are all so great! Can't wait to read "Proof in the Pudding" soon!

Deb says

2nd book in series. It's 3 mos after the last murder case. Della has been in a sort of relationship with Nicholas the reporter. She has tried to distance herself from John to stop the feeling between them. Mickey's only son Addison has moved to town and has organized a cake baking contest with Reggi-mixx cake mix co. Reggie the owner of the company happens to be a girl Della went to college with and turned her in for stealing. Reggie promised to get back at her someday. Now 25 years later she has a plan but is killed before she can finish her plan. Della's best friend, Liddy, husband is the #1 suspect. Della is trying to solve this murder to save her friends. There's another murder and information that puts Mickey and Iva into the hot seat also. I didn't figure out who the murderer was till the very end.

Stacy says

Della's standard poodle, Tuffy and rescue kitty, Emma are there to provide support, as is her boyfriend NDM, who has now been elevated to being called his given name, Nicholas. All of her friends are back and this is a perfect continuation of the series. Della is still awesome and the mystery is a good one with real consequences for her and Liddy.

I actually enjoyed the cooking in this one a little more and there are recipes in the back. You can see how to make those holiday fruitcakes edible and learn how to make an awful cake mix taste good with Della's Orange Dreamsicle Cake. One of the other reality show contestants is a Mary Kay consultant and I should note that we are not all quite so...pink.

there's more on my blog <http://stacybuckeye.wordpress.com/200...>

Suzanne says

I loved this book! I had been taking a break from the "cozy mystery" genre and picked up this title at my favorite indie mystery book shop, and was not disappointed. Melinda Wells does a terrific job developing the characters and visual descriptions so that the readers feel that they are practically a fly on the wall as the plot unfolds. Sometimes, it can take several chapters before I am fully engaged in a novel, but it was not the case with this book. I was immediately drawn in as Della finds herself in the predicament of having to participate in a baking challenge, despite many reservations. Della needs her job as a cooking host at the Better Living Channel to stay afloat financially, and when one of the show's producers turns up dead, this spells trouble for Della and her friends!

The book is easy to read, and it also offers fantastic recipes! Anyone who is a fan of Diane Mott Davidson, Laura Childs, and Lorna Barrett will love Melinda Wells' Della Carmichael series!

Kasia says

The second book in the series is even better than the first, from page one I was instantly transported to TV land of sugar and spice, interesting personal relationships and plenty of mayhem. I didn't read the back of the book when I started it, I went in blindly but it turned out to be most enjoyable experience. Since I didn't know who was going to get whacked I paid more attention to all the details, my brief synopsis is below but I might start reading all my mysteries that way, somehow it was more fun.

Della is on her way to culinary success and has bravely entered a cake baking contest that will be televised on the same network she works for. Her biggest challenge is the cake mix she has to use, the Reggi-Mixx developed by her college nemesis Regina Davis that is so tasteless and horrible that it stumps all the contestants. Della has never put in so much work making a cake out of something so inedible that it takes over her life until something happens to Regina. Her adversary is found with her face down in a bowl of her own batter, apparently Della wasn't the only one who didn't like her products! Everyone is a suspect because Regina never made any friends, she lied, cheated and spied on anyone that she could get something out of and few of my favorite characters from the series have fallen prey to that as well. Della still has to compete in the contest but it seems that one of her best friends is involved in the Regina drama and she has to do her best to help once again.

I enjoyed the sleuthing and the drama between her and Nicholas and John, the author keeps the reader on their toes, for some reason Nicholas always shows up in my head as one of my favorite Frasier characters, Dr. Niles Crane played by David Hyde Pierce, I know he doesn't look like the guy, but his speech and mannerism seems spot on and he adds some spark to an otherwise cute food mystery. I loved the food again and the meals and pasta suggestions that I even made some garlic and olive oil pasta for dinner once I got off the train, I was reading that bit on my way home and it gave me an idea for dinner, I loved that. The author makes sure that there is a focus on food since that's a big part of the story, its not just slapped on the cover and never mentioned, it plays an integral part of the series. The mystery was pretty good, I had a hunch who it was and ended up being correct but that doesn't always happen but I don't read these just to solve a crime, there's so much more to these books than that.

- Kasia S.

Jess says

This is the second book in the Della Cooks mystery series and it was really enjoyable for me. I like Della's character. She's practical, she admits to her age and she acts her age. It's funny to watch her try to wade through the dating world, and her new career while also trying to solve a murder.

It is a little annoying when she decides to withhold information from Big John who was her husbands former partner, and still a cop with the LAPD. As the reader I just hear myself saying, Tell him what happened and the case will be solved quicker. But no... she always holds something back. I also am interested to see what

happens with the Big John, Della, NMD triangle going on. Well it's not really a triangle, but it could be.

My library doesn't have the newest book in yet.. but whenever they get it, I will definitely put a hold on it.

Hannah says

I don't usually read culinary mysteries but the first in the series - KILLER MOUSSE - got me hooked. Della Carmichael is the reason why. She's forty-something, feisty, independent but vulnerable too. I liked the recipes and can definitely recommend Gangster Chicken Cacciatore.

Joe says

Plus cake. You lose when cake is involved.
Murder, questions and a contest cook-off.
