



# *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

Martin County Library System Book Club Kit:

## *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

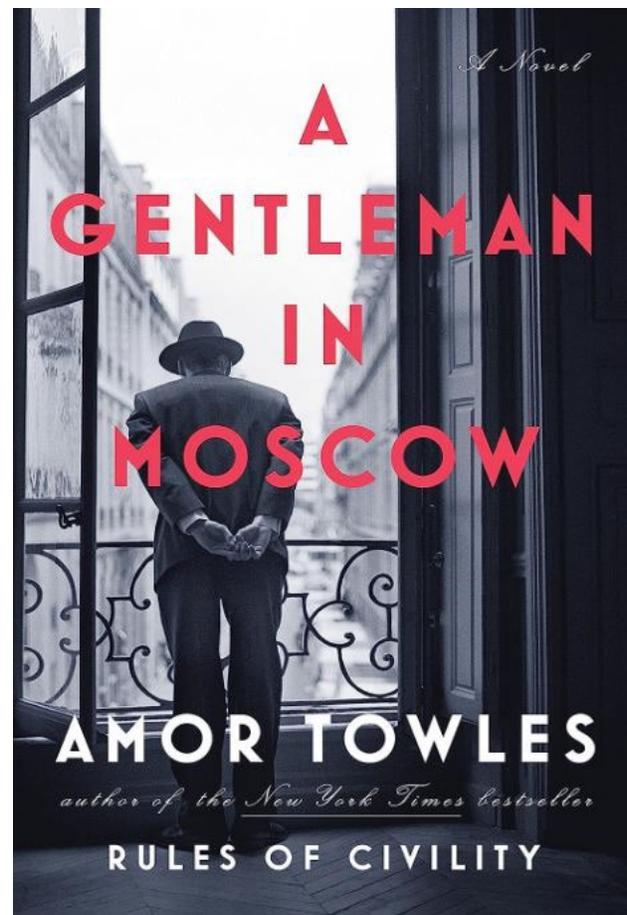
Included in the Kit:

- [Book summary](#)
- [Author biography](#)
- [Discussion questions](#)
- [Recipe suggestions](#)

### Book summary

With his breakout debut novel, *Rules of Civility*, Amor Towles established himself as a master of absorbing, sophisticated fiction, bringing late 1930s Manhattan to life with splendid atmosphere and a flawless command of style. Readers and critics were enchanted; as NPR commented, “Towles writes with grace and verve about the mores and manners of a society on the cusp of radical change.”

*A Gentleman in Moscow* immerses us in another elegantly drawn era with the story of Count Alexander Rostov. When, in 1922, he is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, the count is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never



also available to  
download from Libby



# *A Gentleman in Moscow*

by Amor Towles

worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him a doorway into a much larger world of emotional discovery.

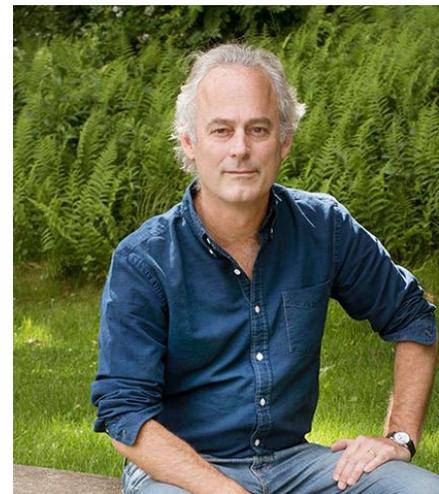
Brimming with humour, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the count's endeavour to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.

Source: Goodreads (<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/34066798>)

## Meet the Author

Born and raised in the Boston area, Amor Towles graduated from Yale College and received an MA in English from Stanford University. Having worked as an investment professional for over twenty years, he now devotes himself full time to writing in Manhattan, where he lives with his wife and two children.

Source: Author's website (<https://www.amortowles.com/amor-towles-bio/>)





# *A Gentleman in Moscow*

by Amor Towles

## Discussion Questions

1. What was your initial impression of Count Alexander Ilyich Rostov? How did your perception of him change over the course of the novel?
2. The Count chose to stay in Russia following the revolution. Why do you think he stayed while other members of his family left? Do you think he should have made a different choice?
3. It's difficult for the Count to accept his sentence and lifetime confinement. How do you think he was able to make peace with his situation?
4. How is the Count insulated from the turbulent history of Russia? How does he view the historical events happening in the world?
5. In what ways was the outside world brought to the Count? Can you point to specific scenes in which the Count was able to imagine and experience Russia despite his imprisonment?
6. How is the Count changed by his confinement in the Metropol? In what ways does he retain his identity as a gentleman and aristocrat? In what ways does his identity change?
7. Which characters have the greatest impact on the Count's life? Reflect on how he might have interacted with these characters in his former life.
8. How is Nina the Eloise of the Metropol? What does she bring to the Count's life and what does he represent to her?
9. How does the Count decide to create a life of purpose despite his confinement? Do you think he lived a happy life in spite of, or perhaps even because of, his imprisonment?
10. How do you think the Count's life would have been different had he left Russia following the revolution?

Source: BookBub ([bookbub.com/blog/a-gentleman-in-moscow-book-club-questions](http://bookbub.com/blog/a-gentleman-in-moscow-book-club-questions))

# *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

## Recipes

### Russian Tea Cakes

- 1 cup (226g) unsalted butter, partly melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup (62g) icing/powdered sugar, plus extra for rolling
- 2 and 1/2 cups (312g) plain/all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup (95g) finely chopped nuts

Preheat the oven to 350F, and line a baking tray with parchment paper, or a silicone mat. Set aside.



Whisk together the butter, vanilla, and icing sugar until smooth and combined. Add the flour and salt, and mix to form a soft, but not sticky, dough. Fold in the chopped nuts. Roll the dough into tablespoon-sized (0.7oz) balls and place them 2 inches apart on the prepared baking tray.

Bake for 12 - 14 minutes until firm but not brown. Transfer them to a wire rack to cool slightly. Roll the warm cookies in icing sugar and allow to cool completely on the wire rack. Once cool, roll them in icing sugar again.

Source: Marsha's Baking Addiction ([marshasbakingaddiction.com/russian-tea-cakes/](http://marshasbakingaddiction.com/russian-tea-cakes/))



# *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

## Non-Alcoholic White Russian Mocktail

- 1/4 C cream
- 1/2 C whole milk
- 1/2 C Dry Sparkling vanilla soda
- 1-2 ounces coffee or kahlua flavored syrup (depending on sweetness add less or more)
- fresh cranberries optional
- fresh rosemary sprigs optional
- 1 drop peppermint oil optional

Add Dry Sparkling vanilla soda (or any other vanilla creme soda will do) together in a rocks glass with ice. Add coffee flavored syrup (or coffee). Add cream and whole milk then stir.



Source: This Vivacious Life (<https://www.thisvivaciouslife.com/christmas-white-russian-mocktail/>)

This document may be reproduced upon request in an alternative format by contacting the County ADA Coordinator (772) 320-3131, the County Administration Office (772) 288-5400, Florida Relay 711, or by completing our accessibility feedback form at [www.martin.fl.us/accessibility-feedback](http://www.martin.fl.us/accessibility-feedback)