



# *The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post*

by Allison Pataki

*Martin County Library System Book Club Kit:*

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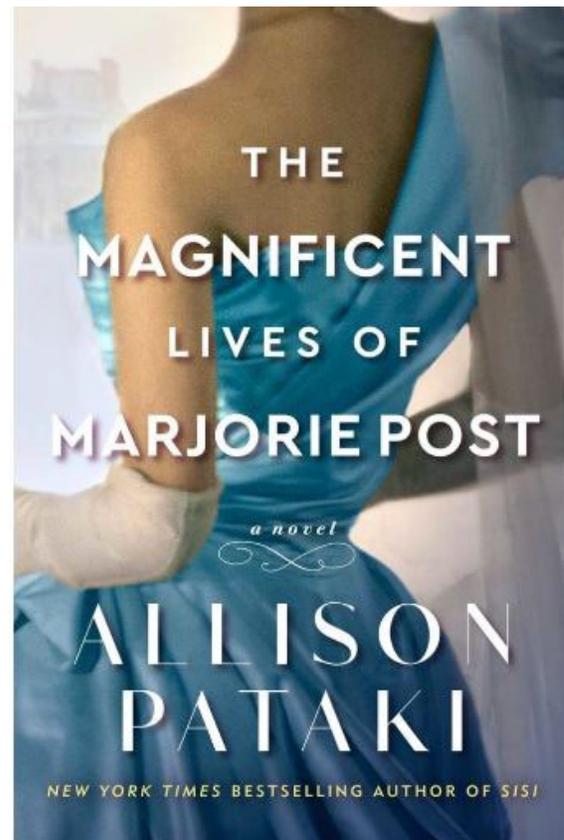
Included in the Kit:

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### Book summary

A fictionalized account of the life of Marjorie Merriweather Post.

“Mrs. Post, the President and First Lady are here to see you”... So begins another average evening for Marjorie Merriweather Post. Presidents have come and gone, but she has hosted them all. Growing up in the modest farmlands of Battle Creek, Michigan, Marjorie was inspired by a few simple rules: always think for yourself, never take success for granted, and work hard—even when deemed American royalty, even while covered in imperial diamonds. Marjorie had an insatiable drive to live and love and to give more than she got. From crawling through Moscow warehouses to rescue the Tsar’s treasures to



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outrunning the Nazis in London, from serving the homeless of the Great Depression to entertaining Roosevelts, Kennedys, and Hollywood's biggest stars, Marjorie Merriweather Post lived an epic life few could imagine.

Marjorie's journey began gluing cereal boxes in her father's barn as a young girl. No one could have predicted that C.W. Post's Cereal Company would grow into the General Foods empire and reshape the American way of life, with Marjorie as its heiress and leading lady. Not content to stay in her prescribed roles of high-society wife, mother and hostess, Marjorie dared to demand more, making history in the process. Before turning thirty, she amassed millions, becoming the wealthiest woman in the United States. But it was her life-force, advocacy, passion, and adventurous spirit that led to her stunning legacy.

And yet Marjorie's story, though full of beauty and grandeur, set in the palatial homes she built such as Mar-a-Largo, was equally marked by challenge and tumult. A wife four times over, Marjorie sought her happily-ever-after with the blue-blooded party boy who could not outrun his demons, the charismatic financier who charm turned to betrayal, the international diplomat with a dark side, and the bon vivant whose shocking secrets would shake Marjorie and all of society. Marjorie did everything on a grand scale, especially when it came to love.

Bestselling and acclaimed author Allison Pataki has crafted an intimate portrait of a larger-than-life woman, a powerful story of one woman falling in love with her own voice and embracing her own power which shaping history in the process.

Source: Penguin Random House.

([penguinrandomhouse.com/books.669275/the-magnificent-lives-of-marhorie-post-by-allison-pataki/](https://penguinrandomhouse.com/books/669275/the-magnificent-lives-of-marhorie-post-by-allison-pataki/))



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## Meet the Author

Allison Pataki graduated Cum Laude from Yale University with a major in English and spent several years in journalism before switching to fiction writing. A member of The Historical Novel Society, Allison lives in New York with her husband and family.

Source: Author's website. ([allisonpataki.com/about](http://allisonpataki.com/about))





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## Discussion Questions

1. What was your first impression of Marjorie Merriweather Post? How did that impression change throughout the course of the novel? How did Marjorie change during her lifetime?
2. Marjorie Post had many roles in life: daughter, wife and mother, businesswoman, philanthropist, press target, press darling, hostess, collector, diplomat, style icon, etc. Which was your favorite side of her? Which do you think meant the most to her?
3. A wife four times over, Marjorie sought her happily-ever-after with four radically different men. How did each marriage shape her identity? In the end, do you think she found her ultimate happily-ever-after?
4. Love, family, and feminism are all major themes in the novel. What other overarching ideas did you notice? What did you take away from reading the book overall?
5. Had you heard of Marjorie Post before? What did you learn about her historical significance from this book? Are there ways you think Marjorie's legacy has shaped your life today?
6. Marjorie Post is written from a first-person point of view. Did that help you connect to Marjorie as a character? How might the book be different if written from a different perspective?
7. In her note at the back of the book, Allison Pataki says that her job as a writer of historical fiction is to "gather up and absorb many different details and facts and then attempt to get at the emotional truths that reside therein." What emotional truths did you experience while reading?
8. What other great women in history did Marjorie remind you of?
9. Pataki writes that Marjorie was, "A life made ever richer by curiosity and generosity. A life in which I spent gladly of the riches of my heart. A life that has been a truly beautiful thing." (Page 531) What does living life to the fullest mean to you?

Source: Author's website. ([allisonpataki.com/about](http://allisonpataki.com/about))

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## Recipes

### Grape Nuts Cookies

- 1/2 cup softened butter
- 1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 3 Tablespoons honey
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup Post Grape Nuts Cereal



Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Beat butter and sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Add honey, eggs, and vanilla. Mix well. Add baking soda, salt, rolled oats, flour, and Post Grape-Nuts. Combine until just mixed. Drop rounded Tablespoons of dough, 2 inches apart onto lined or greased cookie sheets. Bake for 10-14 min. or until golden brown. Cool 2-3 min.; remove from baking sheets. Cool completely on wire racks.

Source: "Grape Nuts Cookies." Post Consumer Brands.  
([postconsumerbrands.com/recipes/grape-nuts-cookies](http://postconsumerbrands.com/recipes/grape-nuts-cookies))

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## Birds Eye Veggie Cupcakes

- 1 bag (12oz) Birds Eye Steamfresh Broccoli Florets, cooked according to package directions.
- 1 bag (12 oz) Birds Eye Steamfresh Mixed Vegetables, cooked according to package directions.
- 1 can (16.3 oz) refrigerated biscuits (8 biscuits)
- 3 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt or sour cream
- 1 1/2 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- 2 eggs



Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Evenly press biscuits into bottom and up sides of a 12 cup muffin pan; set aside. In large bowl combine cooked vegetables with cream cheese, yogurt, 1 cup shredded cheese and eggs. Evenly spoon vegetable mixture into prepared muffin cups. Bake 15 min. Evenly sprinkle with remaining cheese and continue baking, 5 min. or until golden.

Source: "Birds Eye Veggie Cupcakes." About a Mom.  
([aboutamom.com/vegetable-recipe-birds-eye-veggie-cupcakes](http://aboutamom.com/vegetable-recipe-birds-eye-veggie-cupcakes))

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