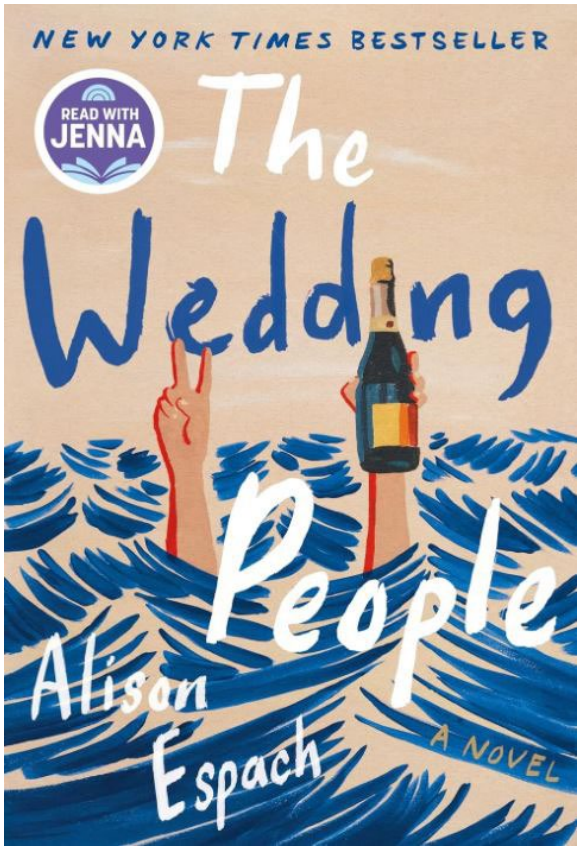
The Wedding People
by Alison Espach

Martin County Library System Book Discussion Kit:

The Wedding People by Alison Espach

Included in the Kit:

- Book summary
- Author biography
- Discussion questions
- Recipe suggestions



Book summary

It's a beautiful day in Newport, Rhode Island, when Phoebe Stone arrives at the grand Cornwall Inn wearing a green dress and gold heels, not a bag in sight, alone. She's immediately mistaken by everyone in the lobby for one of the wedding people, but she's actually the only guest at the Cornwall who isn't here for the big event. Phoebe is here because she's dreamed of coming for years—she hoped to shuck oysters and take sunset sails with her husband, only now she's here without him, at rock bottom, and determined to have one last decadent splurge on herself. Meanwhile, the bride has accounted for every detail and every possible disaster the weekend might yield except for, well, Phoebe and Phoebe's plan—which makes it that much more surprising when the two women can't stop confiding in each other.

(Source: https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250899576/theweddingpeople)

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Meet the Author

Alison Espach is the New York Times best-selling author of The Wedding People, a New York Times Editor's Choice, a TODAY Show #ReadwithJenna Book Club pick, a Barnes and Noble Book Club Pick, and the #1 Indie Next Pick for August 2024. The Wedding People will be published in over twenty countries. She is also the author of Notes on Your Sudden Disappearance, a Chicago Tribune and NPR "Best Book of 2022," as well as The Adults, a New York Times Editor's Choice and Barnes and Noble Discover pick. Her fictional audio series In-Depth Market Research Interviews with Dead People is an Audible Original. She has written for McSweeney's, Vogue, Outside, LitHub, Joyland and other places. She lives and teaches creative writing in Rhode Island.



Alison received her MFA from Washington University in St. Louis. She has been a writer-in-residence at the Ucross Foundation for the Arts, Millay Arts, The Wassaic Project, the Cuttyhunk Writers Residency and the San Miguel Literary Sala.

(Source: https://www.alisonespach.com/bio)

Discussion Questions

1. What is your favorite part of attending a wedding—the ceremony, the food, the activities, or the guests? Which wedding moments from the book stood out to you most?
2. Imagine if your wedding lasted a whole week! Where would you be, and what sort of activities would you plan?
3. What is the craziest thing you ever saw at a wedding? How do some of the scenes in The Wedding People relate to experiences that you have had attending a wedding of your close friends or family?
4. Have you ever had a chance encounter similar to the way Phoebe and Lila did? What was that like? Did it have any similarities to the start of Phoebe and Lila's relationship? Do you still have a relationship with that person?

5. Try naming all the literary icons scattered throughout The Wedding People. Which author do you think had the closest correlation to Phoebe?
6. How did you feel when Matt showed up at the hotel? Were you expecting it? Why or why not?
7. In what ways does The Wedding People reflect cultural or societal attitudes towards weddings and marriage? Does it challenge or reinforce traditional views? Do you think each of the character perspectives change over the course of the novel, and if so, how?
8. Have you ever had to fill in for a wedding party spot like Phoebe does when she steps in for Lila's Maid of Honor? What was that experience like? Did you feel equipped for the job?
9. If you could be one of the wedding people, which person would you be and why?
10. Phoebe and Gary grow close throughout the novel. What do you think about this relationship, and do you think it will continue in the future? Why or why not?
11. Early in the novel, it's mentioned that literature tends to have circular endings, and the endings are always a reflection of the beginning. What's the biggest change for Phoebe, Lila, Gary, and Matt by the end? Would you consider the book to have a circular ending? If so, how?

(Source: https://images.macmillan.com/folio-assets/rgg-guides/9781250899576RGG.pdf)

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Recipes

Sausage Stuffed Mushrooms with Gorgonzola



Ingredients:

- 4 large portobello mushrooms
- 4 Italian sausages, (10.5 oz/300g)
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped, plus extra for garnish (20g)
- 1/4 cup parmesan, freshly grated (30g)
- 1/4 cup gorgonzola, cubed, plus a little extra for garnish (55g)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- salt and pepper, to season

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350F/180°C.

Saute the onion until soft and translucent in a medium sized pan. Add the sausage (removed from their casings) and chopped garlic and fry until browned (about 2 mins). If there's a lot of excess fat then spoon some out of the pan so it's not too wet. Add the sausage mixture to a bowl and leave to cool slightly. Next add the gorgonzola, parmesan, parsley, and pepper to the bowl and mix to combine with the sausage mixture.

Rub the portobello mushrooms in a little oil and sprinkle them with salt. Stuff the mushrooms (stalks removed) with the sausage mixture, place on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes. Serve with extra parsley and gorgonzola if desired.

(Source: https://www.insidetherustickitchen.com/sausage-stuffed-mushrooms-gorgonzola-walnuts/#wprm-recipe-container-2145)

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Recipes Continuation

Apple Spice Cake



Ingredients:

For the Wet Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened (8 Tablespoons)
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs,
- 1 cup applesauce (I prefer unsweetened)
- 2 apples, peeled, cored, and grated (I like Honeycrisp or granny smith apples)

For The Dry Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups (270 grams) flour
- 2–3 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease a 9×13″ metal pan with butter or spray.

In a medium bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Whisk together flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. In a large bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer, cream butter and sugar with a hand mixer or spatula 2-3 minutes, until light, fluffy, and well combined. Mix in eggs, one at a time till well incorporated. Stir in applesauce and apples. Add the dry ingredients mixture and gently stir or mix till all dry ingredients are just mixed in. Don’t over-mix.

Pour cake batter into the prepared baking dish. Bake at 375 degrees for 30-40 minutes or till a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.