ReadingGroupGuides
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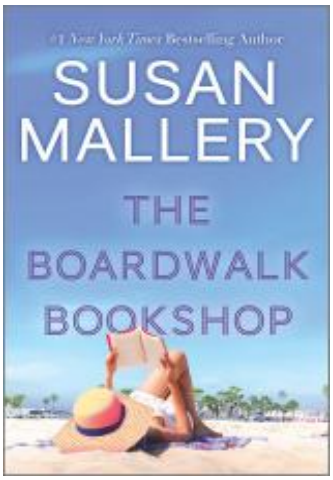
The Boardwalk Bookshop

by Susan Mallery



About the Book

With her unique brand of witty, emotional storytelling, Susan Mallery's latest is a heartfelt tale of friendship between three women brought together by chance who open a bookshop together on the boardwalk of the California beaches and ultimately become one another's family. Fans of Elin Hilderbrand, Robyn Carr and Susan Wiggs will love THE BOARDWALK BOOKSHOP!

When fate brings three strangers to a charming space for lease on the California coast, the Boardwalk Bookshop is born. Part bookstore, part gift shop, part bakery, it's a dream come true for Bree, Mikki and Ashley. But while their business is thriving, their personal lives are...not.

Bree, wounded by brilliant but cold parents and her late husband's ultimate betrayal, has sworn to protect her heart at all costs. Even from Ashley's brother, a writer and adventurer who has inspired millions. He's the first man to see past Bree's barricades to her true self, which terrifies her. Mikki has this divorce thing all figured out --- somehow, she's stayed friends with her ex and her in-laws...until a new man changes how everyone looks at her, and how she sees herself. Meanwhile, Ashley discovers that the love of her life never intends to marry. Can she live without being a wife if it means she can have everything else she's ever wanted?

At sunset every Friday on the beach in front of the Boardwalk Bookshop, the three friends share a champagne toast. As their bond grows closer, they challenge one another to become the best versions of themselves in this heartachingly beautiful story of friendship, sisterhood and the transformative power of love.

Discussion Guide

These questions contain major spoilers about the book. We recommend that you wait until after you?ve finished the book before reading the questions.

1. What did you think of the way The Boardwalk Bookshop came into being, with three business owners agreeing to lease space together? Which of the three businesses would you like to own, and why?

2. In the beginning of the book, Bree, Mikki and Ashley were really just starting to become friends, having met only six months prior. How did their friendship grow and develop through the book? What brought them closer together? By the end, how did you feel about their friendship?

3. Which of the three women grew and changed the most, and in what ways? Which of the characters is most like you? How so?

4. Bree was a wounded soul. Discuss the things that happened in her life to inflict those emotional wounds. Did your opinion about Bree change as the story progressed and you learned more of her backstory? If so, how so? What made Harding fall in love with Bree?

5. In the beginning, Ashley was worried that Bree would break Harding?s heart. That?s exactly what happened, and yet instead of being angry with Bree, Ashley pitied her, and their friendship deepened because of it. Why do you think Ashley was so quick to forgive Bree for hurting her brother?

6. For many readers, Susan Mallery is an auto-buy, while others probably read the back cover before picking up THE BOARDWALK BOOKSHOP. How about you? For those of you who didn?t read the back cover first, were you surprised when Ashley realized that Seth didn?t ever want to get married, or did you have a feeling that was coming? Would you have broken up with the perfect boyfriend if he didn?t want to get married, or could you be happy without saying ?I do?? Was Seth wrong not to propose? Why or why not? When he finally did propose, were you surprised by Ashley?s reaction?

7. Before the book started, Mikki took a solo trip to London but discovered that she didn?t like traveling alone. Have you ever taken a trip by yourself, and if so, did you enjoy it? Are you comfortable eating in a restaurant alone? For those of you who have tried online dating, how did it go? Did you think that Mikki was going to end up with her ex-husband? Why or why not? Would you have given Perry a second chance? Why or why not?

8. Which of the men in the story did you like best, and why? (We?re guessing that no one will choose Sad Guy.)

9. What surprised you while reading?

10. How did you feel about the way each storyline concluded?

Author Bio

Susan Mallery is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of novels about the relationships that shape women's lives ---

family, friendship, romance.

Library Journal says, ?Mallery is the master of blending emotionally believable characters in realistic situations," and readers seem to agree --- 40 million copies of her books have sold worldwide. Her warm, humorous stories make the world a happier place to live. She?s passionate about animal welfare, which shows in the many quirky animal characters she has created.

Susan grew up in California and now lives in Seattle with her husband.

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