



# Fudging the Books

*Daryl Wood Gerber*

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**Fudging the Books** Daryl Wood Gerber

**The Agatha Award–winning author of *Stirring the Plot* returns to the Cookbook Nook in Crystal Cove, California, where February brings Pirate Week, National Chocolate Month—and bitter murder...**

Pirate Week is sweeping through Crystal Cove and keeping Jenna Hart and her bookstore, the Cookbook Nook, plenty busy. But she's not too swamped to also host the local Chocolate Cookbook Club's meeting—especially because the guest of honor is her friend, candy maker and cookbook author Coco Chastain.

Jenna whips up a delicious event amidst the rowdy festivities, but the mood is soon broken by robberies, simmering tempers, and a dead body—Coco's editor, Alison. The suspects turn out to be more plentiful than a pot full of gold doubloons, so to prove Coco isn't responsible for the dastardly deed, Jenna will have to stir up some clues and figure out who's the real sticky-fingered killer...

**INCLUDES RECIPES!**

## Fudging the Books Details

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Author : Daryl Wood Gerber

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# From Reader Review Fudging the Books for online ebook

## Jenndian says

Another great installment in a great series! This time it's February in Crystal Cove, so not only is there lots of chocolate and romance, it's also, pirate week! Gerber's writing is as wonderful as ever and there are plenty of plot twists. Her characters and scenes leap off the page! Gerber is a very gifted writer with three-dimensional characters that as a reader you find yourself caring about. Great book, some laughter and a great whodunit!

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## Lisa Ks Book Reviews says

The Cookbook Nook Mystery series is one I keep at the top of my favorites list. When I finish reading a book in this series, I get right online to find out how long I'll have to wait for the next. For the record, the wait time between books in a cozy mystery series is normally around a year. But with this series, it feels like more like two years. So, I can say with all honesty, the worst part of this book was finishing it and beginning my wait!

With perfect settings like Crystal Cove, and the Cookbook Nook and its café, it was wonderful to become lost between the covers of this delightful mystery.

Author Daryl Wood Gerber really throw everything into this story. In this installment, one of my favorite cast of characters is dealing with pirates, thieves, and chocolate! Oh...and murder of course! Fast paced, full of twisty turns and tons of surprises, FUDGING THE BOOKS, is my new favorite in this series. I know, I say that a lot, but when it's true...hey, it's true!

Fans of this series and of author Daryl Wood Gerber/Avery Aames are going to go mad over the sweet bounty that is FUDGING THE BOOKS. If you haven't read the other books in this series, you can start with this one and not feel lost. But please, do go back and read the others too!

And check out the back of the book for yummy chocolate recipes, and the sneak peek of FOR CHEDDAR OR WORSE, book seven in the Cheese Shop Mystery series by Avery Aames.

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## Tina at A COZY GIRL READS AND WRITES Blog says

Ahoy Mattie's, it's Pirate Week in Crystal Cove, With pirates having a rich history in Crystal Cove and cookbook store owner, of The Cookbook Nook Jenna Hart is at the helm Okay, I admit it I get caught up speaking pirate-ese while writing this review too but it's not to be helped after reading this book. Different events will be going on in Crystal Cove and The Cookbook Nook is no exception. Between running the Chocolate Book Club meetings Jenna is feeling like she is walking the plank but then an old friend, candy maker and cookbook author, Coco Chastain makes a guest appearance.

But all is not well for long and the rowdy good cheer is brought to a screeching halt when when a famous pot of doubloons are stolen, they are Spanish gold coins, yes, I had to google that one. Jenna's life would not

be complete if there was not a murder to investigate and when Coco's editor and owner of Foodie Publishing, Allison Foodie is stabbed to death with scissors, it makes her wonder if its not life imitating art because of her being a editor and Allison being stabbed with scissors.

Suspects surface like Allison's brother, Neil, her photographer, her employee who was fired all having reasons for wanting her dead but soon Coco is suspected of killing Allison and brought in for questioning. Jenna would not be Jenna if she did not try to seek out who could have possibly done this even if she still wonders if Coco could have possibly done it but in her heart of hearts she knows that someone else in Crystal Cove had it in for Allison and Jenna just needs to figure out who it is before Jenna the next on a killers list.

You can't help but being swept in the world of cookbooks and by the time you are finishing reading Fudging the books you will have a list of cookbooks to try out. Perfect for the cookbook fan, this mystery is filled with tasty food descriptions, cook book titles, a scenic atmosphere and a murder of a foodie related victim with a name to match. Being a big fan of cookbooks myself, I have been devouring many of them lately and you want to pick a few up after reading Fudging the Books. This is a favorite series of mine and it will be yours too. Foodies, Cookbooks, delicious food cooked by chef Katie and with some new and delicious attempts from Jenna of some tasty chocolate recipes complete with recipes included. A mystery that will make your mouth water.

FTC Disclosure: Thank you to the publisher and/or author for providing us with a copy of this book for review. This did not influence our thoughts in any way. All the opinions of the book and review are our own and our reviews are honest.

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## **LORI CASWELL says**

### **Dollycas's Thoughts**

February in Crystal Cove is busier than you may think. First they celebrate Pirate Week and then it is Valentine's Day. At The Cookbook Nook there are also the book clubs that meet. This month the Chocolate Cookbook Club welcomes Jenna's friend, Coco Chastain, author and candy maker extraordinaire. She brings her whole crew to the meeting and things get just a little tense. Her publisher, Allison, seems to be working on books for several of Crystal Cove's residents. When she is found dead Coco becomes the prime suspect but Jenna knows that is more to the story. She starts to stir things up as she tries to find the real killer. She is also trying to find the pirate's booty that someone made off with. Can this be connected to the murder...

When I pick up a book by Daryl/Avery I know I am in for a fantastic treat and should plan accordingly. She delivers her best story yet in Fudging the Books.

Crystal Cove seemed to be a quiet little place until Jenna came to town but she has plenty of friends to support and know all these murders are not her fault. Aunt Vera does her best to keep Jenna in line and readers giggling. She is one special lady. Jenna's relationship with Rhett is also evolving nicely. Vera's romance has hit a little bump in the road though. Bailey has a new pet thanks to her beau, Tito, and she is having problems getting him to like her.

The mystery is so well thought out and presented. The perfect amount of twists to keep us guessing. The author strikes a nice balance with the right amount of romance and humor. The characters are fun and very appealing. You want to know them better and care about their lives. All this but don't forget the food, this time there is chocolate, and lots of it thanks to Chef Katie.

The setting is wonderful too. Crystal Cove sounds like a great place to visit and I would drop a bundle of cash at The Cookbook Nook. The shop is not only full of cookbooks but cozy mysteries that feature food. Several of my favorite author grace the shelves.

This book is quite a treasure, with pirates, murder, romance, humor and food! (Recipes included.) I am already excited for my next visit!

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### **Glenda says**

I had not previously read any of the Cookbook Nook Mysteries so I was excited to read "Fudging the Books" by Daryl Wood Gerber. I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I normally read a series in order and was concerned that without having read the previous 3 books in the series I would miss out on parts of the story. I needn't have worried. To me, the author did a good job on not only moving the current story along to keep my interest, but also explained some of the backstories of the characters from the previous books. I enjoyed the fact that the main character, Jenna had a down to earth personality, and would do whatever she needed to do to help a friend in need. The mystery kept me guessing until the end. I am looking forward to reading the previous 3 books in the series now!! "In full disclosure, I was given a copy of this book by the author for a fair and honest review."

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### **Danielle Maroon says**

The setting takes places in a small town where the main character Jenna owns a bookstore with her Aunt. I love how she has her cat with her at work. It makes the bookstore feel more homey. Jenna tries to not get involved but she can't help trying to help.

I really enjoyed ready Daryl's style and it was a very cozy book that was easy to disappear into. There was a great description of all the people in the small town and how everyone knew something about everyone in the town. I also really liked how there was some type of event going on in the town to give the characters some reason to celebrate along with trying to solve a mystery. Jenna helps trying to solve the mystery along with enjoying her time in the towns festivities.

Even though I have not read any of her other books in the series, I didn't not feel like I was skipping anything for this story and have to backtrack. Although I am looking forward to reading them anyways. I thoroughly enjoyed the book, the characters and the writing style. This is definitely a book I would recommend.

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## **Gf Finch says**

daryl wood gerber books always keep you guessing until almost the last page. this one doesn't disappoint! it's a busy month for jenna hart in her cookbook shop, pirate week is followed closely by valentines day. a murder really doesn't fit into her busy schedule, but with friends being suspected she steps in to help solve the crime. with colorful characters(literally), including rosie who you can see in her purple from head to toe, and gloria whose colors change with her mood. aunt vera, in red for the month of february, give you a lot of suspects, with motive and opportunity, as the killer. the twists and turns will keep you interested enough to not put the book down until the killer is caught! great recommendations of chocolate cookbooks for the reader are included in the story line.

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## **Denise says**

Fudging the Books, no one thinks positive when they hear this statement, but in the case of this fun little cozy mystery by Daryl Wood Garber readers should hoist the mast with good news.

Crystal Cove is hosting pirate week and Jenna Hart cooks up a wonderful fest to celebrate and promote guest author and friend Coco Chastain at the Cookbook Nook store.

Things quickly change from celebration to investigation when a local is murdered, a co cove business is invaded and scandalous romance peeks from behind closed doors.

This cozy mystery keeps you walking the plank with colorful characters, some with a little too much desire to be among the best cookbook author, enough desire to kill. Just when you begin to think it is that odd mama's boy, you go for the switch in thinking it might be the wife of questionable attitude. Then again there was a heap of reason behind Coco and others to want a publisher dead.

The Cookbook Nook makes me want to open my own cookbook store when I am just a novice cook and cookbook lover. The love of books and new titles made me want to look up each book mentioned!

Then once I have my cookbooks I want to try out some of the wonderful food given at the celebrations in Crystal Cove. Thankfully the end of the book offers up a few things to try out.

I enjoyed this book, fast pace with mystery not too clear cut. There are a lot of things going on in this book, but in the end and I enjoyed them all. Looking forward to visiting some of the books I have missed in this series and going forward with any new Ms. Gerber puts out.

Full disclosure I won a copy of the book for review.

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## **Jan says**

Fudging the Books by Daryl Wood Gerber

This is my first Cookbook Nook Mystery and it most definitely won't be my last. This was a page turner whodunit where you have no idea who the murderer is until Ms. Gerber tells you. The main character, Jenna

Hart, is a warm, loving character who invites you into her personal life where you truly want to get to know her. Those close to her, Baily, Coco, Cinnamon, Katie, Aunt Vera, and the others living in Crystal Cove help you get to know the person Jenna is while learning about their quirks and interests.

Crystal Cove sounds like a perfect place to go to for relaxing vacation; just the kind of place I would like to visit. Ms. Gerber does a beautiful job of making this town come alive in the readers' eyes.

Jenna has moved to Crystal Cove to start a new life. She owns a quaint bookstore that specializes in cookbooks. If you are a lover of new recipes, especially for anything chocolate, then this book, and others in the series, is for you. I wish I was a "kitchen" person so I could try the different recipes listed at the end of the book. But my daughter is, and at my encouraging, she will make them and I will get to be a taster.

The story started out a little slow as I had some difficulty following who was who but once I got past this I wanted to keep reading until I solved the murder with Jenna. I loved the way Jenna looked at all the evidence and worked on piecing each part of the puzzle together. Daryl Gerber knows how to hook her readers and keep them interested.

Now I need to go back to the first in the series and read the books in order. I am also going to try her Cheese Shop Mysteries written under her pseudonym Avery Ames.

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### **April Schilling says**

It's Pirate Week in Crystal Cove and Jenna Hart is plenty busy in her bookstore, the Cookbook Nook. But when asked to host the local Chocolate Cookbook Club's meeting, how could she refuse? Especially when her good friend, Coco, is the guest of honor, her other friends are involved and a well know local publisher is coming to talk at the meeting as well. Unfortunately, the publisher, Alison Foodie, turns up dead. And it looks like the best suspect is Jenna's friend Coco.

I really enjoyed this book. I have to say that I was surprised at the killer, they weren't even on my suspect list. Some cool recipes and twists and turns made this book a great read! Can't wait to read the next one in the series!

**\*\*I was provided a copy of the book in exchange for an honest review\*\***

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### **Steph's Book Ramblings says**

Let me start with a disclaimer: this is the fourth in this series (Cookbook Nook) and I have NOT read the preceding books. I feel this may have affected my thoughts and opinions.

Jenna runs a cookbook/bookstore with her aunt and best friend in Crystal Cove, California. Jenna's friend, CoCo, is having a small gathering at her store to celebrate the launch of her newest book. At this party we meet A LOT of people including CoCo's publisher, editor, photographer, and several of the town's people. When CoCo's publisher, Allison, turns up murdered Jenna feels she must find out who the murderer is, especially when it seems her friend, CoCo, is the main suspect.

I see a lot of potential in this book with the characters, the setting, and the author's skills with a "Who Dun It?" but there was so much unnecessary information thrown in that it detracted from the overall story for me. Every one of the characters had some major drama or way too many hobbies that we were given details on that it was a bit overwhelming to me in the beginning of the story. Once I got past the first 5 or 6 chapters

things did improve.

I think that I would give this series another chance but that I would start at book one. I liked the characters but would like to get to know Jenna a bit more personally and I am hoping the first books delve into her character a bit more. Jenna is a great main character but there were a few times she got annoying and I think some of the suspects she was questioning would have wanted to knock her out.

Overall this was a fun, light cozy mystery with great backdrop and lots of interesting characters!

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### **Cyndy says**

Cookbook store owner / sleuth has a murder to solve. One of her friends is the main suspect, but there are plenty of others who could have done it and/or had reason to. This is an enjoyable book and entertaining throughout. The references to other cozy authors and chocolate cookbooks had me hooked.

This is the first book I have read in this series - while some authors seem to give too much history in each book of a series, I didn't get enough in this one. I felt I was missing a lot of the history of the characters and therefore missing a crucial dimension. I like the book, but I would recommend reading the first three in the series first - which I now plan to do!

**\*\*I was provided a copy of the book in exchange for an honest review\*\***

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### **Georgeanna says**

Fudging the books is bursting with intrigue. Combine a fun filled pirate week celebration with a Chocolate Cookbook Club , then add a murder to the mix to create a tale of mayhem. A sheriff named Cinnamon, a photographer named Dash, a sweet shop owner named, Coco, and a cookbook publisher with the last name of Foodie add to the delicious unpredictability of the plot. The 4 th mystery in A Cookbook Nook series is as enjoyable as the first. The story line is fresh, the characters interesting, and there are enough red herrings to keep the reader guessing until the end. While reading a series in order is generally preferable, anyone beginning with this book would find enough background detail to know the main characters without those details being too repetitive for those who know the cast of regulars. Be prepared to have your favorite chocolate handy for snacking while reading. The descriptions of treats and the included recipes will have you craving chocolate so be prepared to be chocolatized before finishing this delightful mystery.

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### **Laura Thomas says**

It's Pirate Week in Crystal Cove and it looks like one has already struck. Coco Chastain won't be making an appearance as guest of honor at the Chocolate Cookbook Club. She might just land behind bars. Her editor, Alison, is found slumped over her computer, scissors stick out of her back, and Coco is the prime suspect.

Now, on top of decorating The Cookbook Nook and setting up festivities for Pirate Week, Jenna Hart also steps up to prove her friend, Coco, couldn't possibly be the killer. Just what she needs. Another dead body.

I haven't read the other books, but that didn't hinder me a bit in enjoying this 4th book in the series. The author sprinkled bits of back story throughout while keeping the story flowing smoothly and the mystery deepening.

There were lots of suspects to choose from. I'd narrow it down to two, then had to rethink it as I was lead down some false trails, and the author added in some new bread crumbs.

Cozies are one of my favorite reads. I enjoy them in cool weather, snuggled up with a cuppa hot tea and a snuggie blanket. I also enjoy them in the summer, reading outside by the pool. They are fast, easy reads and I love a good mystery, or two, or three. LOL

A few other things I enjoy are the colorful quirky covers. Look at the sweet little kitty in the hammock. Tigger is prominent on all of the covers for this series.

The title is also fun. And it has chocolate in it. That's a main staple for me to snack on while reading. So many yummy recipes are included at the end of the book too.

And the cast. Lots of colorful characters. Some more fun than others. That's how I'm best entertained. Give me a bunch of new characters to get to know and I'm a happy camper.

While I don't feel I have to go back and read the other books in this series to continue on to new ones, I will. I'd like to meet these characters fresh from the beginning and see what they were into before.

I received this book for my honest review.

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## **Sandy says**

I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for a review but all opinions are my own.

I enjoyed the fourth book in The Cookbook Nook series. In addition to enjoying reading about Jenna and her friend's latest adventures, setting the book during Crystal Cove's Pirate Week added a fun element. And I always enjoy reading a mystery where I can't guess who the murderer is.

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