



Return to the Beach House

Georgia Bockoven

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August brings together four college friends facing a milestone. Across summer's final days, they share laughter, tears, and love—revealing long-held secrets and creating new and even more powerful bonds.

World-class wildlife photographer, Matthew, and award-winning war photographer, Lindsey, arrive at the beach house in January, each harboring the very real fear that it will mark the end of their decade-long love affair. Alone in the house's warm peace, they will be forced to truly look at who they are and what they want, discovering surprising truths that will change their lives forever.

Return to the Beach House Details

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Author : Georgia Bockoven

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Brought to you by OBS reviewer Andra

The first story was just a delight. As I frequently am when a story about 9/11 survivors unfold, I was drawn into the rebirth, if you will, of Alison (the grandmother) and Christopher (the grandson) as the reader travelled through the summer before Christopher is off to college. Both Alison and Christopher must break the bonds that bind them as a result of losing husband/grandfather and son/father when the twin towers fell. As the reader is carried through this journey, one sees that there is life after tragedy while still respecting the life they had with fallen loved ones. Alison was a very relatable grandmother...I enjoyed her re-entry into dating life....very well told.

The second story was enjoyable. I felt like I was on a vacation with three of my best girlfriend's from college. The life history of each unfolded smoothly and it was easy to follow the dynamics of the four women. One group adventure that was retold when they were younger definitely lead to a HUGE chuckle by this reader. I won't give more details, so as to not spoil the moment for you! The only negative thing I have to say is that the story just ended.....and I wanted it to continue!

The third story was excellent. This story in particular, I felt, had more depth in the character development, which was refreshing and added to the complexity of the story. The telling of long-term, long distance love affairs I believe, would be difficult to portray convincingly, but it was. Right from the get go, I got a knot in my stomach, hoping that Matthew and Lindsey could and would work it out. Once I began reading this last segment of the book, I was unable to put the book down...which lead to one tired reader the next day. The complexity of Lindsey's story was both compelling and thought provoking. It is amazing what journalists and photographers must endure (physically and emotionally) when following stories to war torn countries. This provided the backdrop for a very poignant story.

I will now put on Bockoven's The Beach House and Another Summer on my to-be-read list as her storytelling is captivating.

OBS would like to thank the author and TLC Book Tours for supplying us with a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review as part of their ongoing blog tour

Karen says

I had a long leisurely 4th of July weekend ahead of me so wanted a light and breezy read, nothing complicated, sad or with too many characters to keep track of. Chose this novel by Georgia Bockoven. It was the perfect summer reading choice as I lay in my hammock at the lake on this beautiful 3-day weekend.

Tia Bach says

Three different stories in one beautiful setting; each one explores loss, love, and discovery. At the root of each story is a character or characters aching for something.

In the first story, Allison lives for her grandson and has forgotten many of her own needs. Christopher, who adores his grandmother, can't get out from under the expectations of his family; he needs to come out of the shadows of his father and grandfather and figure out his own way.

College friends come together in the second story. As close as they are, they've been keeping things from each other. Story after story is revealed in their time together, and their bond tightens.

In the final story, Matthew and Lindsay have been leading separate lives. Although they love each other, they've grown apart and Lindsay is struggling with something. Can they find their way back?

I loved the idea of three separate stories, really short stories, in a common setting especially with such similar themes. However, it did feel disjointed, and I found myself wishing I could read three novels instead.

Georgia Bockoven does an excellent job of character and story building in few words. My favorite story was the one about the college friends coming back together, but I suspect different readers would have different favorites.

Fans of short stories and readers who want to jump right into the characters' lives will appreciate this charming and well-told collection.

Note: I received a complimentary copy for review purposes; a positive review was not requested or guaranteed; the opinions expressed are my own.

Teresa Hall says

I really wanted to love this book. Some characters, especially Grace, grabbed at my heart with two swift hands and never let go. The setting was lovely, and I want a week at the beach house myself. But despite my wish, I did not love this book. There were just too many holes in the story for me.

The book is a sequel, and the prologue requires more of the story than the reader is given. Who were Joe and Maggie? Her first in-laws? Caretakers of the house? Previous owners? I have no idea. Grace is introduced with lovely description and back story, then two-thirds of the way through the book her stepsister Rebecca appears, also with an interesting story, but out of nowhere. I even re-read the prologue to try to find her but she truly landed from a past unknown to the reader of the current book.

The structure of the book was clever and promising. The stories of the beach house renters, two summer and one winter, build a novel that was more like a collection of novellas flanked by the thoughts of the owner at beginning and end. I loved all of the renters as well as the others who enter their lives, but that became my second complaint. For the first two rental stories, I felt like the door was slammed in my face at the last moment. After investing in the characters, the story built toward climax then cut abruptly to the resolution, leaving this reader to scurry behind wondering what happened. The third story was different and did involve

the reader through until the natural end of the problems, and it was very gracefully done.

The book has so much promise. I know I would like it better if I had read the first book immediately beforehand, but I did expect the book to be able to stand alone a bit better.

Note: I received an advanced copy of this book through the LibraryThing early reviewer program in return for an honest review.

Cb Sellen says

A good beach read.

Cindy Feigert says

If you liked the first two books in this series, you will want to read this book. Again the beach house works its magic and heals broken hearts, strengthens friendships and helps people find love again. The third story was especially good.

Tillie says

Having not read the first book, it was a little difficult to capture some of the essences of the house. However, that said, it was a good book with three stories of people who came to vacation and deepened their relationship because of the magic of the house.

In June, a grandmother and grandson who are still reeling from 9/11 come to the house to spend time together before he goes off to college. During their trip they meet two people who will change their lives forever.

In July, four friends who have drifted apart, despite their telecommunications and emails, come together for a reunion. In their friendship, there are two sets of friends who tend to be closer to each other while still remaining friends with the others. During their time they discover secrets about one another that brings them closer together and discover that they are actually more similar to one of the other friends than they thought.

In January, two well-known photographers who have been having a long-distance relationship for 10 years come together to relax. Matthew is seeking to end their relationship despite his deep feelings for Lindsay. Lindsay has suffered some terrible traumas during her professional duties and suffers from a pretty bad case of PTSD. However, Lindsay meets someone who restores her faith in humanity and uncovers a deep desire to finally set down roots. They lose a close friend to a horrific tragedy, and when they travel to her funeral, they also realize that nothing is forever and their relationship deepens.

The only thing I would have liked to have seen was a better closing to the first story. Although there was a mention of the folks from the first story in the last one, I felt that there could have been a better closing - but maybe we'll see it in the next book of the series.

I enjoyed it and would recommend that you read the first one before this so you get the essence of the magic.

Michelle Kellar says

love an easy summer read.

Dianne says

Amazon blurb

Over the course of one year, in a charming cottage by the sea, eight people will discover love and remembrance, reconciliation and reunion, beginnings and endings in this unforgettable sequel to Georgia Bockoven's *The Beach House* and *Another Summer*.

Alison arrives at the beach house in June to spend a month with her restless grandson before he leaves for his freshman year in college. Over a decade before, Alison lost her beloved husband, and has faced life alone ever since. Now she discovers a new life, and possible new love.

August brings together four college friends facing a milestone. Across summer's final days, they share laughter, tears, and love—revealing long-held secrets and creating new and even more powerful bonds.

World-class wildlife photographer, Matthew, and award-winning war photographer, Lindsey, arrive at the beach house in January, each harboring the very real fear that it will mark the end of their decade-long love affair. Alone in the house's warm peace, they will be forced to truly look at who they are and what they want, discovering surprising truths that will change their lives forever.

Ferne says

Received pre-publication copy from TheReadingRoom and HarperCollins Publishers.

I know that many readers pay very close attention to book covers. I usually do not. However, I was very attracted to this cover from first glance, and then the description captivated my attention to request the novel and I was lucky enough to receive a copy.

Publisher's description:

"Over the course of one year, in a charming cottage by the sea, eight people will discover love and remembrance, reconciliation and reunion, beginnings and endings in this unforgettable sequel to Georgia Bockhoven's '*The Beach House*' and '*Another Summer*'..."

The illustration on the title page is the image in my mind as I reflect on treasured vacation memories and the dreams of vacation times yet to be. The illustration is then repeated on the pages that introduce Part 1: June; Part 2: August; and Part 3: January. There is also an illustration of a seashell which opens the first paragraph of each chapter. I became thoroughly ensconced in Part 1 and was absolutely taken by surprise when it came to a crashing halt. I immediately identified with the owner of the beach house as I turned the same age this year. Then as Alison, the first rental client met the next-door neighbor Grace with the perfectly organized binder to welcome Alison 'home' to the beach house, the story that evolved became a page-turner for me. I had long forgotten the publisher's description and didn't read the back cover of the book before reading the

novel so I missed the clues that Part 1 would come to as crashing a halt as the crashing ocean waves on the jetty.

Although I could appreciate the friendship of the women being introduced in Part 2, I wasn't ready to meet them as I was still longing to read more about Alison, Grace, Kyle, and Christopher. But as I began Part 3, I truly understood that I had started to think about the novel from the wrong perspective. As I adjusted my thoughts to the part of treasured vacation memories from early adulthood, I remembered the years that my Mother and I returned to the same beach house rental each summer after my Father died. It was a very cathartic time for us - still enjoying vacation time at the beloved ocean shore but in a different neighboring beach community to create new memories of our own and to share that special bond in the same beach house rental each year with the owners that Mother and I had developed our own unique relationship.

As I came to the different perspective to the author's presentation of the story, I can say that I loved the novel in its entirety. The author and publisher gave me a special gift in receiving this novel - not only for the gift of a beautifully illustrated paperback with perfect touches to envelope me as a reader into the setting of the story but also to ponder that there are many twists and turns in life where a brief change of perspective can bring new delights and appreciation to our world if only we were always open to more possibilities. The novel touched my heart in ways I couldn't have even perceived possible when I requested a copy to read. I can't wait to read 'The Beach House', 'Another Summer' and more titles written by Georgia Bockoven.

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As I came to the different perspective to the author's presentation of the story, I can say that I loved the novel in its entirety. The novel is about living after the death of loved ones; living not just as a 9/11 surviving family member(s); living not just as a cancer patient; living not just as a photojournalist who has seen the worst of humanity, but living, loving, giving, receiving, and best of all embracing the possibilities. The author and publisher gave me a special gift in receiving this novel - not only for the gift of a beautifully illustrated paperback with perfect touches to envelope me as a reader into the setting of the story but also to

ponder that there are many twists and turns in life where a brief change of perspective can bring new delights and appreciation to our world if only we were always open to more possibilities. The novel touched my heart in ways I couldn't have even perceived possible when I requested a copy to read. I can't wait to read 'The Beach House', 'Another Summer' and more titles written by Georgia Bockoven.

Donna Souza says

Love her stories

Andrea Guy says

Toss this book into your beach bag and head towards the water! If ever there was a perfect beach read, this is the one. I felt so relaxed while reading it.

What I really liked about this book was that it was 3 separate stories that all revolve around the beach house. There's a little intermingling between characters, in one or two stories, but other than that, everything is separate.

The first story is about Alison and her grandson Christopher. Both find love at the beach house in unexpected ways. I really felt that both of them deserved a bit of happiness too. Alison's husband and son (Christopher's father) died on 9/11. Of the three stories, I think I liked this one the best, because even though you had the sadness of the lost loved ones, it was the happiest of all the stories, and I'm big on happy.

The next story is about college friends. I wish I had friends that I could go off to a beach house with one summer. Ah bliss...even though these friends have secrets from one another. Some of these secrets are pretty big too. I enjoyed this story, but the nature of the lives of these for nearly 40 year old women, made it hard for me to identify with them

Lastly is a story about two lovers that are drifting apart. They are both extremely gifted photographers, one of nature and the other of wars/conflicts. I liked that Georgia gave the role of war correspondent to the woman.

It is their careers and some of the pitfalls of their work that are pushing them apart.

This was a wonderful read. I also loved the little bits of Julia's life that we saw in the book. (She's the owner of the house)

Everyone gets a happily ever after, which is a little bit difficult to fathom when they are only spending a month at a beach house, but this is summer reading, anything can happen then!

If you are going to the beach, don't forget this book. The short story format is perfect for lazy reading in the shade.

Jennifer Donovan says

Return to the Beach House is a perfect read for summer. It's told in chunks, as it tells the story of 3 different groups who stay in the beach house over the course of a year. That means that if you have a scattered schedule, it can easily be put down and picked back up. It's light and easy reading as well, although in the masterful way of skilled women's fiction, it tells stories that do touch the heart and the core issues of identity without feeling too heavy or sad.

The first bit of the summer is devoted to Allison, who lost both her husband and her son years ago, and her grandson Christopher. He's getting ready to go off to college but is wondering if he really wants to follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather in their memory. Is he finally ready to live his own life? Is Allison?

Then the beach house is occupied by 4 college friends. They're no longer college coeds, but transitioning into their 40s. They've tried to meet up for an extended visit every four years, but life has gotten in the way — thriving and failing businesses, illness, divorce — and it's been six years since they've seen one another. It seems like that would give them more reason get together not less. But it's easier to hide the reality of their lives over phone calls and social media. Will this visit help them open up? Will they ask each other for help where needed?

And then a couple comes for a winter visit. Lindsey and Matthew are both photojournalists and so their schedules do not give them much time together either. It also allows them to hide their true needs and wants from one another. Matthew is finally feeling ready to settle down, but he knows that Lindsey's job comes first, she's proven that time and again by rescheduling their meetups time and again. He loves her and wants her in his life, but is it possible for them to devote time to their meaningful careers and carve out space to nurture their own spirits?

Return to the Beach House: A Beach House Novel is part of a sort of loose type of series, as the subtitle indicates. I haven't read any of the other Beach House novels, and you don't need to. Supporting characters show up, and it seems that the first Beach House novel is centered around the owners of the beach house, but other than that, all seem to stand alone telling stories of those who come to the Beach House. I certainly didn't feel like I needed any more background info.

** Disclosure -- I received a copy of this book for review purposes **

Julie Barrett says

Return To The Beach House by Georgia Bockoven

I have not read the first book in this series but will probably get it to read as I like this one so much.

Story starts out in June with Aliison Kirpatrick and she's vacationing on the west coast where her grandson joins her for a month before he heads off to college.

He's into horses and he meets up with Grace-who's cooking for her dad next door who's into surfing and tending the orchid nursery. They trade horse lessons for surfing lessons.

What I love about this is the lessons about riding a horse-what not to do. I can't wait to try it for myself,

when I do get to go. Love that Alison also has a life and love her exploring of the area as the places she's going to, describing were ones we didn't stop at on our trip up the PCH.

This book is broken up into sections where each section is about a different couple that are staying at the beach house at a different time during the year.

So interesting to learn about them all, their careers and what they love about the ocean and surrounding areas. He learns things about his father and grandfather that help him to stir himself into a new direction after the summer ends.

Alison realizes some truths also....

August story: Four women who went to college reunite at the beach house and catch up on why they didn't get together at the 5 year mark. So many different problems. Love the secret they've carried with them for years.

Sad to hear of some of their secrets but glad when others are revealed.

January story: Love that this story starts out with an update from the first story! This one is about a photographer who's at the airport to meet his girlfriend.

Love the stories of the photography part. Lindsey is not adjusting to being back in the states and does not want to go back to the war zone.

House seems so different to all the occupants but it makes them feel like they are home with just one item. They must come to terms about their relationship and work....

End of the book has the author's other works which I'll be checking into myself.

I received this book from Library Thing via the author in exchange for my honest review.

Trichelle De La Cueva says

This is number three in a series of five. I've only read 1,2, and 3. This one was the most boring. I do like that it gives snippets of characters from the first two but that was really the only part I liked from this one. So far two is the best.
