



Points of Departure

Emily O'Beirne

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In this young adult novel, best friends Kit and Liza have been looking forward to this trip forever.

Five girls, five tickets overseas. It's exactly what they all need after the final slog of high school. But when Kit's suddenly forced to drop out, Liza's left with three girls she barely knows.

There's Mai, committed only to partying. There's Tam, who already has her doubts about leaving her sick father behind. And there's Olivia, so miserable about screwing up exams she's not even sure she wants to get out of bed, let alone on a plane. Meanwhile Kit's stuck working double shifts to pay off a debt, wondering if she'll ever get it together.

All Liza wants from this trip is to discover a new version of herself. She just hadn't planned on doing it without Kit by her side.

And they're all learning that travel isn't just about the places you go, but who you're with at the time.

Points of Departure Details

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From Reader Review Points of Departure for online ebook

Tiff says

A breath of fresh air, that's what this book was to me. Points of Departure by Emily O'Beirne captures the spirit of friendship and adventure in the most charming manner possible. This is the story of five young women who are bonded by an epic adventure to see the world post-high school graduation.

The book starts off as the five ladies get ready to take this grand adventure to Europe and Thailand. The bad news is that Kit, the organizer and touchstone of the group is going to have to bail. Kit's partying ways have cost her. She must spend her trip money on the neighbor's statue that was destroyed after wild, but not epic party. This is where apprehension sets in with the four reaming girls, Tam, Liza, Olivia and Mai.

Tam, Kit's cousin, is a cherry farmer's daughter from Tasmania. She has spent her life in a small secluded town. Set to attend culinary school, Tam is using this vacation to study the world's cuisine. The last year has been especially rough for Tam and her family. Her father was diagnosed with cancer and has only recently begun feeling like his old self again. Tam is impatiently waiting for the other shoe to drop.

Olivia, Kit's best friend, is the daughter of one of Australia's most favorite authors. Olivia has spent her life in her workaholic mother's shadow. She has had her sight on being a successful lawyer forever the only problem is she is pretty sure she's destroyed that chance after flubbing her final exams.

Liza, Kit's other BFF, is a runner. Not just any old runner either, she is amazingly fast and amazingly talented on the track. She has spent most of her childhood and teen years traveling the country racing the 800M dash. Recently Liza has come to the conclusion that she may be done with racing, she doesn't have the competitive streak or desire to run to win as a college athlete.

Mai, well she's just Mai. Super intelligent, obsessed with social media and just wants a big party and lots of hookups before college begins. She is the one character that we do not read the perspective of.

Points of Departure is brimming with liveliness and strength. The book effortlessly hops between the friends as they deal with life, failures, success and love. There is a romance too. It's quite good and quite touching but I'll let you figure out who that cute couple might be. :)

lucie says

Points of Departure follows four girls on their travel adventure and it was easy and pleasant to read.

At first I was little bit confused because I didn't know anything about the main characters, but author revealed their background stories and struggles in every chapter and that's why I couldn't stop reading - I wanted to get to know them, even when there wasn't a main storyline. It was interesting to watch how they're finding a way to their life-decisions.

But I am quite disappointed. I expected a drama between those girls, because I cannot imagine how four girls

can live so peacefully for this long time together. I wish one of them was problematic a little bit and make the story more interesting.

All and all, I enjoyed this book and I'm already picking up my next destination for travelling, but I think I will never read it again.

I received a free copy from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Karina says

I love reading about travelling. And this book delivered it quite right. I kinda love the book. I mean this is my third book from this author and yea, I love the way Emily writes. I love that the characters have their own struggles and tried their hardest to overcome it. But I think what I love the most is the love story between the two girls. Sadly because there are several POV the love story is kinda limited. I want more of their story.

So, 3.5 stars from me!

ARC for Netgalley

Starsandsun18 says

So, it's Tam on the cover right?

As expected it's very well written. This is more of Travel/Friendship book than Romance but it's still enjoyable for me.

4 POV's and I'm glad Mai's not on that list because I would skip it if ever she has one (No offense).

5 individuals planned their after Graduation Europe vacation, the only problem is.. well, Kit is the main person that connected them and right before they're supposed to go, Kit suddenly backs out. How can they jive together without Kit to glue them?

Mai is the most annoying on the group but she also has a side that you'll love. She likes to party and chase all the beautiful males that she meets.

Tam, she's the most intimidating on the group. She's hesitant to leave her dad because of his condition. And she also has a long time crush on the boy who works for her father.

Olivia, I think she's the popular type on all of them given because both of her parents are successful especially her mom who's a well known author she tends to please everybody because she's afraid that if she didn't they will not like her. She's also the love interest of Liza. :)

Kit - a walking disaster but everyone loves her, right before their vacation something happened and that's the reason she can't go with them.

Liza, well she's my favorite next to Tam. She announced 2 bombs to her parents: she'll quit to run and she's a lesbian.

She's been running since forever and she's also one of the best in the team but she's not happy anymore.

She and Olivia are really cute together. I want to read more from them. :(

4.5

Catherine says

Emily O'Beirne knows how to write interesting, real, fun characters that I could read about for days! I'm a huge fan of her A Story of Now series and now am a fan of this book. She finds the perfect mix of personalities to add something special to the story making the characters the champions of her books. I honestly think if she wrote a story about a group of people watching paint dry I would be entertained!

This story was unique having four character points of views on a travel experience overseas. I thought every character was well done and added something to the group dynamics. You are scratching the surface of each characters story because we are covering so many different stories which normally I think I would have been frustrated with because I like diving in deep to a story however I really found that this story worked. Yes, as I am a sap and love my romance stories I would have loved more time with the romance and the characters but that wasn't what the book was about and I'm ok with that. Yes I would read a second book about them though and then mix them in with the A Story of Now characters (just a thought)!

I did finish and just wanted more from the group, that's my biggest complaint. I want more! So I decided to re-read A Story of Now series to continue my Emily O'Beirne experience.

I would go as far to say, for me, she is the best in creating a group of unique characters that have the best chemistry as a group. I am always so in love with every one of her characters and am completely pulled into their world I honestly feel like they are real! I hope that made sense.

Tanya says

Point of Departure is about five girls (Kit, her two best friends Olivia and Liza, her other friend Mai and Kit's cousin Tam) who are spending the summer traveling to different countries (Portugal, Italy, Slovenia, England and Thailand) before going to law school together. Unfortunately, Kit has to drop out of the trip when she finds herself in debt and the other girls go without her.

The book is told in third person from the view points of four of the characters. We don't get to see Mai's point of view. Along the way, the girls have doubts about going, become closer friends, find love and have some neat experiences. I loved the descriptions of each city and the hotel or hostel that they're staying in. I could picture each place.

If you like books about friendships, travel, family, and love, I'd recommend this one. This is the second book I've read by this author and I wasn't disappointed. I received a free copy from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own.

Marie says

I really, really enjoyed this book. Girls getting on an adventure, travelling through Europe, friendships growing, a side of romance? I'm ALL for it. Points of Departure really is a story about the characters, though, I enjoyed getting to know each of the girls and loved seeing them develop thorough the story. I especially loved Olivia's struggles and pressures she puts on herself, Liza was a second favorite though. If I loved the characters, I wish that we got to get more of the countries and cultures vibes thorough the story - traveling was more of a background to each of their development. Also, the book is told from everyone's POV (Liza, Olivia, Tam, Kit) BUT Mai. It feels weird somehow that she was left out?! Other than that, Points of Departure was a fun contemporary read I'd recommend for sure :)

Full review coming soon on Drizzle & Hurricane Books

Kristi Housman Confessions of a YA Reader says

I received a copy of this book from Netgalley for review.

Huge warning. Do not read this book if you are in the mood for travel and adventure. This book made me wish I could leave tonight. It made me wish I could go back to when I was eighteen and travel with friends. Maybe through Europe or even just across the US.

Points of Departure is about five girls. One girl, Kit, is friend with the other four, but they barely know each other. Kit has to bail on their trip and the four are left together to travel. Each girl is different, but they are all trying to find themselves and figure out who they want to be now that they are adults. The story is told in all their points of view.

I kind of ended up loving this book and I might have traveling dreams for the next few nights.

Meh says

One of the things I really admire in this author is her capability of writing good stories that happens to have queer characters in it, instead of writing stories just for their queer characters to be in it. Her stories are good, and the fact that the main characters are bi or lesbians is just that, a part of the story and not the story itself. It's just an important fact to help you understand their journey.

It's truly refreshing to see that kind of approach in the GLBTA literature. I read her previous 2 books and after finishing this one she has just officially established herself as one of my favorite writers in this genre. I can only truly hope more people will find, buy and read her books so she will receive the recognition she deserves to keep on writing fresh, interesting and meaningful stories like this one.

Very pleasant and highly recommended reading experience.

Inge says

I requested *Points of Departure* a few months ago when I was really digging travel stories, but for some reason never got around to it. I'm glad I kept a hold on this story, though, because I ended up really enjoying it. Our four (five) main characters are all very different girls with their own flaws and talents, but each likeable in their own way – they were also really diverse in terms of race and sexuality, so I really appreciated that.

Overall, this story was just really nice and *pleasant* to read. There wasn't anything that really bugged me. Though because I requested it for the travelling, I would've liked the culture/drama ratio to be a bit more even – it sometimes felt like the country they were in didn't really matter. Still, the events felt natural and not unnecessary. Sometimes you have drama just to have drama and this was not the case. I was genuinely rooting for these girls, and found the ending to be really satisfying, although a bit dragged out.

Thank you NetGalley / Ylva Publishing for providing me with a copy

Bee says

Quite The Novel Idea ~ Words from the Clouds

3.5 stars

I was fairly excited to read this book. It's Aussie YA, which I'm always eager to read more of, and it's an LGBT novel on top of that. Judging from the blurb it would focus on friendship, and I love friendship books. **So did this book live up to my expectations? Yes and no.**

Yes

I liked the growing friendships in this book. **I really enjoyed seeing Liza bond with the other girls during their travels.** I also liked the travel aspect of the story. There's also plenty of diversity in the cast, which is always awesome. I liked the characters themselves and at times I really felt like I was with them in the places they visited.

No

My main issue with this book lies with **the writing. At times it felt very awkward and the dialogue didn't really flow naturally.** It just didn't feel right and it took me out of the story a few times. Next to that I found

that the different POV's weren't very distinct. Their voices were all pretty much the same and there wasn't really anything that set them apart from each other. Multiple POV's are hard to pull off, I know that. But maybe don't go for 4 different POV's next time? I'm not a fan of more than 2 POV's to begin with so I rarely encourage anyone to do more than that. The only books that successfully – and without any problems from my part – pulled off more than 2 POV's for me are Six of Crows by Leigh Bardugo and the Lunar Chronicles by Marissa Meyer.

So should you check this book out? YES. Because I always encourage people to read more diverse Aussie YA books. They're out there and they're worth reading. And just because this particular book didn't blow me away, doesn't mean anything really. Because there's a chance you'll love this SO much more than me, which I sincerely hope. So if you're a fan of YA contemporary books about travelling and friendship, check it out!

Elke says

3.5 stars

This is the story about five Australian girls going on a big, awesome backpacking adventure. That is until it turns out that Kit, the glue of the group, the girl who brought them together and knows all of them, can't go. Now the other four girls have an added stress factor to this holiday, and that while each of them already has their own worries.

I think this is the **first Australian book I've read?** It was nice but sometimes threw me off and I had to re-realise that I didn't have to assume temperatures were in Fahrenheit, for example. It was nice not to have to do the calculations, for once :)

I loved the idea of **exploring where you're meant to be in life**, that there are a lot of options and that those are all okay and worth something. That you can figure out what you want and that it's okay if it takes a while.

I did have the feeling that having **five points of view was a bit much** for a book of this length. I had trouble remembering who everyone was all the time. The same goes for the group dynamics, they were nice and interesting, but not always given enough time because the scene and point of view switched often and took time to adjust to. For example, I read in another review that there were actually only four girls out of whose perspective the story is told, and I hadn't even noticed that trying to keep up with all the changes. Oops. The letters or emails from friends and/or family back home were nice, it was a cool way of bringing things, but especially there it usually took me too long to figure who it was about and what the story of this girl was again. **I had the feeling that the number of perspectives and shortness of the book also left a lot of things un(der)developed.** The girls all had their own backstory, but that didn't change nor matter much, or at least not with all of them. For instance, what do we even know of Mai?

I liked that it **wasn't all light and fun**, that it was also about acceptance, not being too hard on yourself, fitting in, homesickness, loss and more, **but balanced well**, in a book full of new adventures and experiences, funny and cute moments and **five girls trying to find their place in the world.**

Lexxi Kitty says

I received an ARC of this book from NetGalley and Ylva Publishing in exchange for an honest review.

This is the first book I've read by this author.

Five young women all of whom, I believe, are 18, are nearing the ends of their high school years. One, who is a friend to them all, and the glue that holds the various parties together, has come up with a plan to travel together. That would be Kit. Kit has roped in Liza, super athlete/runner/lesbian/BFF of Kit; Olivia and Mai (they seem to get lumped together for whatever reason; they hang out in the same social group – Olivia and Mai – they also are deeply into 'law' and taking that when they go to 'uni'); and Tam – Kit's cousin. All but Tam are from Melbourne Australia, and all attended the same high school. Though Liza has mostly been off on her own training and running so, while she knows all of them, she only is friends with Kit. Tam, obviously, knows Kit, being cousins, and Liza – and is from Tasmania (an island state of Australia; until I looked that up just now, I was thinking Tasmania was a separate country).

Beyond 'Australian', the ancestral make-up of Olivia, Tam, and Kit is not given. Liza, beyond being 'Australian', is half-Dutch and half-Sri Lanka (known to me as the place Arthur C. Clarke lived before his death; an island off the coast of India). Being half-Dutch and half-Sri Lankan apparently corresponds to being 'Burgher people', which is picked up along the way. Mai, another person born in Australia, has a Vietnamese mother and Chinese father.

So that's the main cast of characters. Four of which have their own point of views in this book (I've off and on wished Mai had her point of view as well, because she seems quite interesting; constantly excited; etc. I'm sure if we did have her point of view it'd be filled with self-doubt and angst, because, hey, that's what everyone else is, but still. I live with the dream that her POV would not be that).

Shortly before the five are to take off on their trip, Kit has to inform them (separately) that she will not be able to go. Because she has, once again, messed up her life. The money she had saved up for the trip is gone. Gone to massive debt brought on by rent money being due, and damages to a statue that has to be covered. So the glue that was holding the group together will not be able to go. Don't worry, though, her point of view remains. Three of the four going on the trip give the reader their versions of the on-going trip, while Kit gives readers some insight into being a young woman living in Australia.

Right, so – Melbourne and Tasmania are encountered first by the reader – since that's where the characters are 'coming from'. Then there's a stopover in Hong Kong (just the airport). Then off to Portugal (Algarve, Lisbon), Italy (Florence, Trieste, and Venice), Slovenia (Bled, Ljubljana), England (London), and Thailand (Kata, Phuket).

Algarve Portugal

(view spoiler)
Lisbon Portugal

(view spoiler)
Florence Italy

Trieste Italy

(view spoiler)

Bled Slovenia

(view spoiler)

Ljubljana Slovenia

(view spoiler)

Kata Thailand

(view spoiler)

Phuket Thailand

Before starting the trip (weeks, months? I forget now), Liza has informed her parents of two issues 1) she's a lesbian; 2) she is giving up running competitively (or is thinking of giving it up). Tam is super worried about her father (he's recovering from cancer); and, somewhat on the spur of the moment, begins a relationship with a nearby young man named Matt – so she's super distracted by that while on the trip. And Olivia's super distracted by knowing that she messed up her VCE (whatever that is), the tests people going off to 'uni' apparently take to decide their courses of study (at least that's what I got from context; otherwise I'd think of them as the Australian equivalent of the SAT; except that the SAT does not determine courses of study); and is worried about how her friends (social group; and specifically Mai) will react; plus she's super duper interested in reestablishing some form of relationship with her ex-best friend and ex-boyfriend Will. Mai? No idea. We do not have her point of view (from things said here or there, she might have some worries about the VCE results as well, perhaps). To a certain extent, without being inside Mai's head, all we know is that she's very chatty, excitable, boy crazy, and has a need to constantly party (probably connected to how restrictive her parents are – being on the trip frees her from them).

So, fairly early on the reader learns that they are following along as three supposedly heterosexual women who mostly do not know each other vacation abroad – plus one lesbian with limited social skills. Oh, and not everyone on the trip knows that Liza is a lesbian.

On one level, the book was somewhat difficult to follow along because everyone who has a point of view has reasons to be super depressing and angst filled. And the only one who doesn't seem to be that way, doesn't have their point of view expressed directly (though may or may not be as angst as everyone else). On the other hand, the angst/drama is both reasonable and not overwhelming.

In terms of the trip/vacation/etc – I did get a feeling, a certain sense, of the various locations. Not a very deep sense, but more than just a vague feeling of movement. It's about on par as a bunch of 18 year olds traveling around (there's one scene that I can use as an example – Tam and Liza are on a bench in London. The sky, as might be imagined, since it is London, is dreary and it has just finished misting. Both are tired and dealing with issues. They just sit there on the bench looking at stuff directly around them. At one point one mentions to the other that the changing of the guard is about to occur. Neither can get the strength to get up, so they both continue sitting there staring at squirrels and thinking thoughts within their heads).

There's certain 'things' of an Australian nature that I never did learn. Things that may or may not have been explained or explainable from context. Some I just never figured out. Like I have assumptions about the VCE. But there's an item of clothing that Liza is constantly putting on or taking off that I haven't a foggiest idea what it could possibly be. And I Googled it. Got nowhere. So, what the bloody hell is a 'slinget'? Bah, I

misspelled the word when I put it in my status updates. It's a singlet not a slinget. What the hell do I know? I've never seen the word before in my life. (I've seen people on tv put that on to wrestle, but I didn't know what the garment's name was).

So, if I understand correctly, Liza was running around wearing something that looks like this here:

Though probably looked more like this

Long and short – this was an enjoyable read. Though filled with teenagers with teenager like angst/deep feelings filling them. If I was to deduct any points specifically, it would probably correspond to how Mai lacked her own point of view. In the end I kind of liked her best of all. I'm sad now.

July 14 2016

Paula Phillips says

As a fan of travel and backpacking type novels as I personally have always wanted to give it a go and I have done an OE sort of trip around America which I loved and am headed back there next year, I have loved reading about them and one of my favourite places to read about is Europe as that is on my bucket list to visit - one day. In this book we meet five friends who are all connected by one female in particular - Kit. Kit was supposed to come on holiday with them as it's their last trip of freedom before university but of course , things have gone south for Kit once again and she has had to bail. Kit was going to be the glue of the trip for the girls. Now the girls must team up together and work in harmony in order to have an amazing trip away. We have Liza - who is trying her best to come out of the closet and sees this trip as a chance to find her true self , Mai - who is finally free of her strict parents and sees this trip as a freedom ride to drink, party and sleep with whomever she wants to, Tam - Kit's cousin has been busy looking after her dad and their farm after he was diagnosed of Cancer - this trip is for Tam to go out and spread her wings and do something for her as we read Tam's adventures in the culinary sector throughout her trip and Olivia - who needs this trip to figure out who she is and what she wants to do with her life after bombing her exams and stuffing up her three-five year plan in life. Points of Departure was not just a travel romance tale but a story of friendships and discovering who you truly are away from the pressures of family, life and your future . The other thing which is awesome about travelling in groups is that it is always a way to which you can make friendships who will stay with you forever and become lifelong buddies.

lov2laf says

Real...that's what this book feels like. Four very different from each other and do not know each other 18-year-old girls go on a 5 city travel journey around Europe after graduating high school, with a fifth friend that brought the four together in the first place staying behind at home.

Each character is well-defined and going through her own struggles but nothing is overly dramatic and what is dramatic doesn't necessarily get a rosy, sweet wrap up, either. It's what happens. Sometimes the results are satisfying and sometimes they're not...and I appreciated that the author let things fall the way they did.

I'm not a fan of ensemble POVs in a book but O'Beirne made it work and I hit my groove about half way through. I think other readers may actually enjoy that aspect. I was partial to Liza and kept wanting to stay with her. Oh, well. :)

I also liked that this book had "plain" looking characters without perfect bodies. And there's some ethnic diversity with Liza having a partial Sri Lankan ethnicity and Mai being Asian.

This definitely had a YA feel but there are mature themes explored and it captured the transition from high school to university really well. Any sexual activity is fade-to-black so nothing too racy in that dept. And, it's not really a lesfic either since most of the characters are heterosexual and are seeking/developing their own relationships. However, there is a lesbian character and perhaps a bi character where a f/f romance develops.

I found 'Points of Departure' to be a good, satisfying read. 4.3 stars.
