



# The Summer Garden

*Sherryl Woods*

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## **The Summer Garden** Sherryl Woods

Falling for "Maddening Moira" O'Malley was the unexpected highlight of Luke O'Brien's Dublin holiday. So when she pays a surprise visit to Chesapeake Shores, Luke is thrilled...at first. A fling with this wild Irish rose is one thing, but forever? Maybe someday, but not when he's totally focused on establishing a business that will prove his mettle to his overachieving family.

Given Luke's reaction, Moira has some soul-searching of her own to do. Scarred by her father's abandonment, she wonders if Luke, with his playboy past, is truly the family man she longs for. Adding to her dilemma, she's offered an amazing chance at a dream career of her own.

Deep down, though, Moira knows home is the real prize, and that love can be every bit as enchanted as a summer garden.

## **The Summer Garden Details**

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Author : Sherryl Woods

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## From Reader Review The Summer Garden for online ebook

### Jeannie says

I've loved all the books in this series but I must say this particular book irritated me. I was ok with the introduction of Moira in the last book but she totally irritated the hell out of me in this one. She was so clingy and so needy for affirmation on Luke's affections and love. Even when there were so many advices given, she continued that way. While I understand how love can be and especially when u know he or she's the one, I felt irritated that she wanted to see action immediately instead understanding towards Luke's situation / career. I also feel that she is demanding a lot for their young love and trying to impose what she wants on others.

I love Luke and I adore the O'Briens and even Dillion but I just was annoyed with Moira's character and for that I can only give 3 stars for this book. There were some really meaningful dialogues in the book and I wish there was a better focus on the conclusion for Nell and Dillion.

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### Ann Croce says

The book was good but I think it was a little drawn out in some parts.

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### Sandra Patiño says

¡Terminé toda la serie de los libros disponibles en español! Me encantó en general, aunque particularmente, la pareja de este libro me pareció insufrible. el libro fue salvado por Nell que merecía su propia historia. En general una serie genial, algo azada con el ideario del matrimonio como única opción de realización en la vida con de lo que difiero, pero fueron bellas historias de amor y una gran familia entrometida. Y la serie de tv mezcla en su primera temporada el primero y el último libro en una fusión libre... muy interesant. Ojalá hayan más temporadas. Gracias Sherryl!!!! Eres extraordinaria.

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### Christina says

Hhhmmm....how to begin....well, let me just say that I did not like this book. I read the whole thing all the while hoping for something interesting to happen since there are so many great reviews. PERSONALLY, I did not enjoy any of the characters. I really didn't feel any depth to them. Sure, they mentioned things to imply depth, but I didn't FEEL it. The dialogue was boring, tedious, redundant, and lacking most of the time. There were too many conversations about things that really held no relevance or importance to the story or main characters. I found myself skimming through a lot of the dialogue when it was between other characters because it was boring & irrelevant to the plot. The way I viewed this family is a comparison to a favorite TV family. The Brady Bunch-American, PG, family that quarreled but in such a silly manner that it was just CHEESY. The O'Brian's-Irish, PG-13. The Brady Bunch was a TV favorite, but who really wants to read a book about them??? I know this is the 9th book out of a series but it's the first I've read and you can read it

without the necessity of reading the other 8....if you want to. This book was a big N-O for me. Not likely to pick up a book from this author again.

Here are some reviews from others regarding this book/series. They have a knack for words to describe how I felt much better than I did:

"Not very engaging, but ok."

"...it was easy to put down. I wasn't pulled in with a need to keep reading. It was more of an acceptable something to read to fill some time. It's mostly family interactions, conflicts, and resolving them."

"Once or twice I was tired of hearing the same argument...It needed more interesting dialogue. Conversations are ordinary, everyday things that are predictable and frequently used. Also, it could have used more intriguing, unusual, or colorful characters."

"the characters are flat and the plot predictable. Sickly sentimental. There will be no more Chesapeake Shores for me."

"the characters were SO one-dimensional!"

"These are terrible. The characters are shallow, yet you feel like you are wading through muck to get through these things."

"Poor character development (even for a romance novel), too many narrators, predictable plot, and clumsy denouement."

From a reviewer for the 3rd book explains exactly how I felt about this book:

"A lot of the dialogue in these books involves family members and friends being inquisitive about each others' relationships to the point of it feeling unnatural and offering unsolicited advice to each other. All of this is not to say that I don't like this author, only that I find her writing to be un compelling (if that's a word) and lacking in maturity. For instance, the character of Jess in 'Moonlight Cove' felt fairly one-dimensional. Will fared a little better -- I liked him -- but again, there wasn't much to give these characters real depth or to make me feel for them.

I'm hoping the earlier books in the series will be better and will be reading them in the near future. Until then, I will say that the reading is light and not unpleasant, but not as skilled as what I'd been hoping.

ADDENDUM: Have continued reading the series. The thing that comes to mind when I do is that the characters are constantly discussing things. A lot is said but not shown. I'd rather be shown why someone is the way they are or why they've acted a certain way, not just have it discussed between characters to get the point across. Not storytelling at its best, though I have to admit I'm curious about what happens to the characters."

FINALLY

SPOILER ALERT:

Seriously, who the HELL wants to have a double wedding with their grandparents?!?!?! I don't care how

close of a family you are, that's just ridiculous.

Rant and bewilderment as to how these books have such decent rating & reviews OVER.

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## **Julie Barrett says**

The Summer Garden by Sherryl Woods

This book starts where the last one left off: the trip to Ireland.

Luke did stay behind and has now returned to the US and is pretty sure he wants to open a Irish pub. He majored in history and he doesn't want to go that route. Family members are behind him all but his father. He doesn't want to start a family feud over it. His grandmother will even teach him to cook Irish meals and even pitch in at the bar some times.

He was quite taken with Moira-his grandmother's long time friend Dillion granddaughter. Moira is now working at the bar in Ireland and gets to use her photography skills. She is wondering what is going on with Luke back in the States. She is starting to get work from the photos she took of patrons at the bar. What a great business to get into, something she really liked.

Interesting to learn about what goes in a bar.

So now we find Nell courting Dillion in her hometown and Luke is with Moira. They are only there for a short time, everybody knows. They have things to get back home to.

Nell has talked to Dillion about her declining health and he's agreed to stay on longer.

Luke is getting closer to Moira and things heat up with others as the opening night of the bar approaches.

Serious health issues strike.

Love to hear about the other members of the family and their current events. Love this series.

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## **Lauren says**

I'm always in the mood for light contemporary reads, so when The Summer Garden by Sherryl Woods landed on my radar I knew it would be the perfect book for me. Luckily, it was just that, as not only did it provide a fun and cute read, but it also contained characters I adored and writing that fully brought the book to life.

The Summer Garden is the last in the Chesapeake Shores series, but since every book features a new character with previous ones in the background, it was easy to dive right into Luke and Moira's story. Luke and Moira were characters I liked from the start. Luke's drive to have his Irish pub succeed showed how resilient and strong of a guy he was, and what I also liked about him was how flawed over the Moira situation. He really liked her, but there was always this voice going in the back of his mind saying "is she worth it?", and that made him realistic in my opinion. Moira, on the other hand, was extremely strong willed and hard hearted. She was a girl who has been hurt in the past, and wouldn't let that ever happen again, no matter how much she wanted to take the leap. I loved seeing Moira begin to find herself in the United States as well as divulge into her photography business and even help Luke start up the Irish pub. Another fabulous addition to The Summer Garden, was the little love story between Moira's grandfather and Luke's grandmother. It was so much fun seeing from their POVS, and I loved watching them get a chance at true love.

The plot in this wasn't especially suspenseful or hard hitting, but I still enjoyed it regardless. I loved seeing the town and its people come to life within the pages of the book, and I also adored seeing Luke and Moira's relationship begin, as it was sweet as well as complicated. Another fabulous addition to the plot was the wide variety of side characters much of which included Luke's extended family. Each and everyone was thoroughly developed as well as likable, and from reading this one, I can't wait to rewind and see how each of their stories began!

In all, *The Summer Garden* by Sherryl Woods is the perfect read for readers who love a good little romantic story. Best of all, it's the perfect start or exit to the Chesapeake Shores series, so whether or not you're a new reader or a longtime one, you're sure to love it.

Grade: B+

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### **Kat ~ Forever Book Lover ♥ says**

This review also posted on Forever Book Lover.

This is the final book in the Chesapeake Shore series. Sherryl brought us out in style, this book had marriages, babies and as always ~ Happy Ever After(s).

Throughout the book, characters from previous series popped in with cameo appearances. This was a wonderful wrap up of the characters we have met along the way. I will miss the O'Brien's, but Sherryl knew when a series had run its course and she brought us a beautiful closure. I can't wait to see what new family Sherryl will invite us to meet, it will definitely be worth waiting for.

If you love light hearted romance, you must read the entire the Chesapeake Shore series. Each book is stand alone, but I recommend you reading them in order.

I received this advance copy in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Wendy Hines says**

This book is an easy and quick read. For those of you who have read the O'Brien series, you'll be able to pick up where you left off with loved and cherished characters. For those who haven't read any of the series yet, this isn't exactly the book you want to start with. Though the characters and plot are interesting, it took me a little bit to actually get into the book. By the fifth chapter I was actually caring about the characters and the blossoming romances, as well as businesses, but before that I had a difficult time keeping my nose between the pages.

Once you get into it, though, you'll find a town rich with wholesome, loving people that will capture your heart. The main story, that of Moira and Luke, was entertaining, but I found myself drawn more and more to the subplot and back characters. I would like to go back and read the series starting at the beginning instead of starting in the middle. The first book is titled 'The Inn at Eagle Point' and this book marks the 9th in the series.

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## **Gawelleb says**

22 ans et le rêve de se marier et avoir des enfants ? encore une emmerdeuse!

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## **Marcia Haskell says**

"Falling for "Maddening Moira" O'Malley was the unexpected highlight of Luke O'Brien's Dublin holiday. So when she pays a surprise visit to Chesapeake Shores, Luke is thrilled...at first. A fling with this wild Irish rose is one thing, but forever? Maybe someday, but not when he's totally focused on establishing a business that will prove his mettle to his overachieving family.

Given Luke's reaction, Moira has some soul-searching of her own to do. Scarred by her father's abandonment, she wonders if Luke, with his playboy past, is truly the family man she longs for. Adding to her dilemma, she's offered an amazing chance at a dream career of her own.

Deep down, though, Moira knows home is the real prize, and that love can be every bit as enchanted as a summer garden."

I enjoy most of Sherryl Woods books and this latest in the series of books about Chesapeake Shores and the O'Brien family has added to my pleasure. While somewhat predictable, this story encompasses 3 (almost 4) generations. There is a surprising romance between Neil and her childhood sweetheart, Dillon and Dillon's granddaughter, Moira with Neil's grandson Luke with lots of twists and complications along the way. Most of all I enjoy the interactions of the family members and support to each other. Perhaps I am too old, but the angst and questioning by Moira and the strict adherence to a personal timetable by Luke are a little contrived, to me. But all told, I really enjoy visiting Chesapeake Shores and visiting with the O'Briens. It does feel like a visit to a home I never experienced myself.

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## **Diane says**

Let me start by saying that the romance genre is not one that I usually read. But something spoke to me about Sherryl Woods' The Summer Garden.

Maybe it was the beautiful cover art of a garden gazebo surrounded by lovely wildflowers. Maybe it was that the heroine Moira O'Malley is from Ireland, and I am Irish. Whatever it was, it captured my attention.

This is the 9th book in the Chesapeake Shores series, but I was able to jump right in without feeling lost. The numerous members of the O'Brien family live in Chesapeake Shores in Maryland, a small town where they own several businesses- an art gallery, a hotel, real estate management, an architecture firm- and young Luke O'Brien wants to join the club by opening up an Irish pub in town.

While it took a while to get to know who is who and how they are related (maybe a family tree and town map should be included for newbies to the series in the next book), but once I did, I fell in love with the O'Brien clan.

Moira met Luke when the clan went to Ireland for a family wedding, and they had a fling. Now Moira comes to America with her grandfather, who is having a romance with his long-ago love Nell, Luke's grandmother and owner of the titled summer garden.

In true romance novel fashion, Moira is maddening, "with the sharp tongue and wry wit." She is quick to anger and a bit mercurial. Luke, being a typical guy, is happy to see Moira, but not willing to make a commitment right away. He wants to wait and see what develops, and besides all his time and energy is going into making his pub a success.

What I liked about this novel was its willingness to take on a hot topic: the changing role of women. Most of Luke's young female relatives have careers- one owns an art gallery, one owns the hotel-but Moira is not sure she wants to have a career.

She wants to have a family and raise her children. When she was a child, her single mother had to work, and Moira wants a different life for her children. She discovers a talent for photography, but her heart is not it, and she is happier helping Luke prepare to open his pub.

Moira's ambivalence reflects what many young women feel today. Many of them were raised by single moms and would like to be there physically for their children. TV's *The Good Wife* recently tackled this in an arc where Caitlyn, a savvy young lawyer with a promising career, leaves the law firm after one year because she is pregnant and getting married.

Two of the older women in the law firm, Diane, an unmarried founding partner in the firm, and Alicia, a third year associate who returned to practicing law after a 15 year absence to raise her children, are astounded by Caitlyn's decision. Caitlyn's announcement causes Alicia to reflect on her own life's decisions.

The push-and-pull between Moira and Luke got a bit tedious at times, I thought that perhaps the author was beating a dead horse, but then I reflected upon my own experience many years ago and thought perhaps she really did capture that uncertain feeling of young love.

I enjoyed *The Summer Garden*, especially after not reading many romances. The romance between Luke's grandmother and Moira's grandfather was sweet. As the former owner of a restaurant, I related to Luke's efforts getting his pub up and running. But mostly, I liked getting to know the O'Brien family and will look for other books in this series.

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## **Susan says**

Very good book. This book picks up where the previous book, *An O'Brien Family Christmas*, left off. In that book, the entire family had gone on a visit to Ireland, to see where grandmother Nell had grown up. While there, she reconnected with Dillon, her first love. Luke, the youngest of the adult grandchildren, had also gotten quite close to Dillon's granddaughter Moira. When this book opens, Moira and Dillon are in Ireland, remembering their visitors and planning a trip to America. Dillon wants to see Nell again, and Moira wants to know if there's a future for her and Luke. Back in America, Nell is missing Dillon, and wants him to come visit. She's feeling her age and is considering asking him to stay in America. Luke finds Moira invading his thoughts quite frequently, creating quite a distraction from his goals.

Luke had been at loose ends since graduating from college, unsure of where he wants to take his life. He also



feels that he has to live up to his over-achieving family, which adds another layer of stress. While in Ireland, he realized that creating his own Irish pub in Chesapeake Shores was a career that he could be passionate about. With Moira's help he did the research and made his plans. He's ready to put his plans into motion, though he's somewhat nervous about his family's reactions. I loved seeing his enthusiasm as he revealed his plans and got their support. His feelings for Moira are there, and he knows what he wants in the long run, but he is determined to get his pub up and running and successful before he will allow himself to think of a relationship.

Moira is pretty sure of her feelings for Luke, but is frustrated by the physical and emotional distance between them. She also has felt the weight of family disapproval as she hasn't settled on any kind of career. While working at the local pub, her boss encourages her to pursue her talents in photography, something she had never considered. Just as it looks like that may take off as a career, she is invited to accompany her grandfather to America. She looks at it as an opportunity to see if there is any future in her feelings for Luke.

I loved their first meeting in America. Luke had been kept in the dark about Moira's visit, and his surprise and pleasure was obvious. He's also quite honest with her, that all his time and energy is going into getting his pub ready to open, and that any thoughts of a serious relationship are on the back burner. Moira appears to be on board with this, and offers to help him as much as she can. I loved their teamwork as they brought all the pieces together. Their chemistry is still strong, and they spend as much time "together" as they can. At the same time, Moira's photographic talents draw the attention of Megan O'Brien, who encourages Moira to consider putting together a showing of her photographs.

Moira realizes that she enjoys her photography and that it is satisfying, but her real dream is to be a wife and mother. Luke is the man that her heart has settled on, but his reluctance to even consider making a commitment has her questioning the depth of his feelings for her. I got a bit frustrated with her, as she kept pushing even though he had made it plenty clear that he wasn't ready to commit to anything other than his pub. She's also torn between her desire to be a wife and mother and the pressure that she feels to make something of her photography. I loved her conversations with some of the other O'Brien women, as they help her see the possibilities, and also that being true to herself is the most important.

I loved Luke and his happiness at having finally found his place in the family. He has normal doubts and fears about the big step that he is taking, but doesn't let them stop him. I loved his happiness at having Moira there. I was somewhat frustrated by his belief that he can't have a relationship with Moira at the same time he's working on the pub.

I enjoyed the progress of their relationship, roller coaster that it was. Together, they were fantastic. Moira was fully invested in his dream, and happy to help it come true. I loved her enjoyment at working with him, and how she helped bring a bit of balance to his days. She was good at diffusing some of his crisis moments and bringing him back to an even keel. I also loved Luke's support of her photography and how he wanted what was best for her. But both had a bit of tunnel vision where their relationship was concerned. Luke refused to even think about anything more serious until he had checked all his boxes, which made Moira feel like she was second place in his life. At the same time, Moira was quite sure that Luke loves her, but she can't let go of the idea that he needs to put his money where his mouth is and commit. Sometimes she would back off her demands, but at other times it would cause her to question if they had any future at all. Some added stress was caused by an old girlfriend who doesn't want to let go. There are a couple of good scenes that show Moira standing up for what she considers hers, though Luke doesn't always come out looking very good. It takes a health crisis for Nell and a heartfelt lecture from her, for both of them to see their way to the future.

I also loved the secondary romance between Nell and Dillon. It was sweet to see them come back together after all those years. Nell's love for her family is a big part of who she is, and I loved how Dillon saw it and appreciated it. It was fun to see the reactions of various members of the family, especially Mick. The conversation between Dillon and Mick, when Dillon made his intentions known, was awesome.

I loved seeing the various members of the O'Brien family again, and how things are progressing with their lives. As always, there isn't much that stops them from stating their opinions on anything and everything that is happening in each other's lives. There were some great conversations that Moira had with various women, all of whom made her feel welcome, and gave her good advice on dealing with O'Brien men.

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### **Susan says**

And so we go back to yet again another O'Brien family story. This time is about Luke O'Brien, his discovery in Ireland and the woman he met while he was there "Maddening Moira" O'Malley.

Luke has come home from Ireland and has finally decided what he wants to do with his life...open up a truly authentic Irish Pub. While some members of the family doesn't necessarily support his idea, he really feels that this is his shot to prove to everyone (and I think to himself) that he is ready to settle down and be responsible.

Meanwhile, Moira is finally coming into her own and has an opportunity of a lifetime in pursuing her own dreams, but decides to go with her grandfather to the states to visit the O'Brien Clan. This is her chance to see if Luke is really the one for her and decide if she wants to pursue the opportunity that has just been presented to her.

As a wonderful backstory, we see Luke's Grandmother and Moira's Grandfather pursuing their own dreams of love and togetherness. Truly lovely to see the lovebirds come together in the twilight of their years and overcome all the obstacles to be together.

As in all of Ms. Woods stories about the O'Briens, the characters must work thru their fair share of family interference and concern in order to make it to the end and realize that yes indeed, they were truly meant for each other. While all of these books are meant to be stand alone, they have and will always be a part of the great Chesapeake Shores series.

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### **Celine says**

I think maybe I was sick of the O'Brien's before I started this book and didn't realize it. While listening to this on audiobook I just kept thinking how annoying all the characters had gotten with their tendency to meddle in each other's lives. I didn't care about Luke and Moira at all which is the biggest difference between this book and the rest of the series. In previous books I at least liked one of the main characters and wanted to see them happily settled. I just felt both Luke and Moira were immature and I didn't buy that they were meant to be together. The relationship wasn't developed well. I think Moira just saw Luke as a way to have the family she didn't have growing up and she didn't care much about him specifically.

Also the story line about Moira's career was not well done. Moira says what she really wants is a family and

career doesn't matter. She works in a pub in Ireland then in Luke's pub in Chesapeake Shores. She enjoys photography but doesn't know how to make that into a career. When she gets the chance to explore photography as a career it didn't seem as if she cared that much about it and was doing it more because Luke's aunt, Megan, was pushing her towards it. Initially there's lip service paid to the fact that it's okay if Moira just wants to be a mother and wife but then the book seems to backtrack and say no a woman needs to have a career and it needs to be one that's more prestigious than just working in a pub even if she enjoys working there. In the end I didn't feel as if Moira had worked out how she wanted all the aspects of her life (Luke, potential kids, photography, and the pub) work together.

I felt like as an end to the series this was pretty poor. Woods parades out past characters but doesn't integrate them in to the story enough that we feel as if we're really reconnecting with the ones we cared about in past books. Basically, feel free to skip this book even if you're a Woods fan and a fan of the O'Brien series. Unless you're a completist like me then you'll probably feel compelled to read this one and end up disappointed.

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## **Paula Ratcliffe says**

This story takes place not long after the family has returned to Chesapeake Shores after their Christmas in Ireland. Luke O'Brien is still suffering the affects of Maddening Moira who's the granddaughter of his grandmother's old flame Dillion O'Malley. The first thing Luke does is decide to bring a piece of Ireland to Chesapeake Shores by creating a Irish Pub.

We also find the beginning of the book taking place in Ireland and in Chesapeake Shores. Moira and her grandfather Dillion are planning a month long trip to America to visit Nell's world. Moira is surprising Luke with her visit. Moira has also finally found her calling as a photographer. Her boss at the local pub in Ireland is already booking events for her to photograph. Luke is also worried something is going on with his grandmother Nell, as she has stated that trip to Ireland was probably her last. Unfortunately, Luke is sworn to secrecy about what is going on with Nell, he ends up turning to his mother to find out.

Moira learns about the women in the O'Brien family when she goes for coffee with them, hearing about their downfalls and picking themselves up again, things readers have learned through various books in the series. Moira also learns that she has real ability with photography with the word from Megan, Luke's aunt who has an art gallery she learns that she has a great gift with shooting faces.

We also learn that Matthew and Laila are expecting their first child, which Matthew is ecstatic over and Laila takes a bit to warm up to the idea, not wanting to set aside her goals in life. Laila gets some sound advice on the situation by Moira and Jess.

What a great story full of romance, and learning that sometimes the words we say when professing love may not be the best but if the intention is true then love will show it's face. I loved the ending and how Nell looked at all her children and grandchildren, and the job she helped with them. So sad to see this series end!

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