



# The Café in Fir Tree Park

*Katey Lovell*

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## **The Café in Fir Tree Park** Katey Lovell

Maggie's café is at the very heart of Fir Tree Park. Business is booming, her lemon drizzle is the stuff of legend, her children are happy and life is good. But she hasn't had it easy. When her husband Clint was sent to prison, she had to raise Josh and Kelly alone. But Clint can't hurt them now, and there's no denying that Paolo, the Italian football coach she spies every weekend out on the green, is more than easy on the eye.

It may be summer outside, but a new arrival in Fir Tree Park sends an icy chill through the café...

## **The Café in Fir Tree Park Details**

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Author : Katey Lovell

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# From Reader Review The Café in Fir Tree Park for online ebook

## Jenni says

This is a really lovely gem of a book. Set in a cafe in a park throughout the summer this book is warm and friendly, and draws you in from the very start. There's a rich cast of characters, many of them get their turn to tell their stories (or the stories of those closest to them) as their lives intertwine. An entirely satisfying read that had me longing for warm summer days spent eating cake and drinking tea!

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## Kim says

This was a really lovely read set around a cafe in Fir Tree Park. Maggie took over running the cafe when her ex husband went to prison following a bank robbery. She has brought her children up single handedly ever since and loves baking and making her cafe look pretty for special occasions. The parties held there sound wonderful.

Each chapter is told by one of the 4 leading female characters but as they are all related or work at the cafe you hear more about all characters. The ideal read whilst drinking a cup of tea with a slice of Lemon Drizzle- even better if enjoying it whilst sitting in the sunshine,

The book deals with all sorts of relationship issues, bullying, friendships, hidden love and a wonderful cast of characters. Lovely romances develop during the book and it is just such a comforting way to lose yourself reading for a few hours. I suggest that you will need to visit the bakery aisle before starting as you will definately be craving a lovely piece of cake before you finish.

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## Gem ~ Bee says

This book is such a summery treat.

Maggie owns a café in the centre of a bustling park, her daughter Kelly works with her, as does Fern, helped out by Kelly's Aunt Pearl. Lacey starts to run in the park to train for a race, something she's never done before, encouraged by her Uncle Carrick and a quirky stranger she meets there.

Firstly, the cover is beautiful; full of vibrant colour with such a feelgood vibe immediately.

Secondly, set in the midst of a heatwave summer, it's packed with nostalgia of a childhood in the park; shady trees, cut grass, bandstands, ice-cream, and an old pavilion tea room with heaps of charm.

The part I loved most of all was the sisterhood between the characters that spans generations and the collective respect they share as their lives intertwine through heartache, hope and a love of cake.

As you'd hope (though some books weirdly neglect it) as the book focuses on a café an array of delicious cakes, bakes and café culture gets your mouth watering by the spoonful!

As each character faces challenges their stories unfold; each package carefully and perfectly unwrapped to deliver revelations, trauma & depth and in many ways life in the park will never be quite the same again.

The perfect read for kicking back in the garden or the beach, but preferably the park (with a slice of chocolate cake)!

Thanks to Netgalley and HarperImpulse for this advanced review copy.

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## **Janette says**

I really loved this book and can't wait to read more from Katey Lovell.

I really enjoyed how the story unfolded from the point of view of the four women in the book and how their stories became intertwined. It is a tale of love, friendship, secrets, relationships, dogs and delicious cakes! I really fancied some lemon drizzle cake when reading this book!

I quickly became engrossed in the story and finished the book in a day - I couldn't put it down. It was well written and very easy to read. I liked each of the characters and enjoyed reading how their individual stories became intertwined.

A heartwarming emotional book, perfect for a summer read in the garden with a cuppa and a slice of cake.

Thank you to Netgalley and the publisher for my copy in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Rachel Gilbey says**

From its gorgeous cover, to the delicious sounding cakes inside the walls of Maggie's Cafe, every page is a delight, as the lives of the four leading ladies weave in and around each other in a very clever tale.

Regardless of which of the voices/chapters you are reading, you are generally not only learning more about their character, but also of some of the others, as the lives of all four women are interlinked, but its only as the months progress, you see the full extent of everything.

We have Maggie, who can almost always be found in her cafe in the centre of Fir Tree Park, she is continually baking, and has her two children Josh and Kelly, and an ex-husband who is currently in prison. We see a lot more of Kelly than Josh, so it feels as though Kelly is the 5th lady of this book, ever present and lovely to get to know, plus a really strong support character. Maggie may have her eye on a certain football coach that is incredibly sexy sounding.

Kelly is also best friends with Fern who works in Maggie's cafe, Fern has such a strong crush on someone that she barely notices a potential boyfriend who keeps coming into the cafe. She also has self confidence issues, and a storyline involving her brother scared me to my core, as it encompasses one of my biggest most recent fears.

Pearl who is related to Kelly and her family, is still getting used to being by herself after the death of her husband. Luckily she has an adorable daschund that keeps her going. She also has a massive secret on her hands that is hinted at a lot, and then slowly revealed to the readers, before some incredibly shocking and emotional few scenes.

Then there is Lacey, who is in training for a half marathon, despite not being a fan of running. She is doing it to raise money in honour of her late aunt, and is determined to do her proud. Both of her uncles and her other aunt are very supportive, but none as much as the young man she meets early on in her training.

Over the course of a summer you will see these ladies lives change in ways you probably could not have predicted at the start of the book. I loved seeing how the story evolved and found it be a gentle and easy to follow writing style.

This is a story of friendships, of family and relationships, of which Maggie's Cafe is the centrepiece of the story. So much action takes place in the cafe and in Fir Tree Park, which proves itself as a hub for the community.

I thoroughly enjoyed following the lives of Maggie, Fern, Pearl, Kelly & Lacey throughout the book, and was glad to see for a change in books that the main characters spanned a good age range, from student to a lady in the latter half of her life. All of them are relatable to, and I was so glad I had the chance to get to know them all.

Thanks you much to Harper Impulse and Netgalley for this copy which I have reviewed honestly and voluntarily.

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### **Mary Baker says**

=A summer of love and secrets in Fir Tree Park=

I loved this book! It had everything I've come to expect from Brand Lovell: a gorgeous setting, bags of charm and an assortment of warm-hearted characters you can't help but fall in love with.

The central character is Maggie, owner of the eponymous cafe. Her incredible skills in the kitchen (and be prepared for some serious food porn!) and her warm, giving nature have placed her firmly at the heart of Fir Tree Park. Whenever someone needs a slice of lemon drizzle cake and a listening ear, Maggie is always there: everyone's confidante.

Maggie's success as a businesswoman allowed her to provide for her two children Josh and Kelly, now in their late teens, after her no-good husband Clint was sent to prison. The only thing missing from her life is love - will she find it with handsome Paolo, the Italian football coach who practices in the park?

I loved the way all the characters were interconnected, with Maggie's cafe the hub of everything. There is Fern, Maggie's assistant, who struggles to cope after her brother is diagnosed with a serious illness and is dealing with unrequited feelings for Maggie's son Josh. Maggie's widowed aunt-in-law Pearl has a secret that, with nephew Clint's parole on the horizon, could soon force its way into the open. And Lacey is just worried about getting through the half-marathon she was foolish enough to sign up for!

An adorable, sweet and often mouthwatering read infused with the warmth and fragrance of summer.

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### **Sally Coles says**

Maggie runs a successful cafe in Fir Tree Park - it is the centre of so many people's lives - she is such a great central character that everyone flocks to and she always has time for everyone. She has not had it easy though - she was married to Clint a local bad boy that caught her eye as a naïve teenager and proved to be a

most unworthy husband...now due to be released from prison so is he going to cause her trouble again!

She has two children Josh and Kelly who are both great kids - Josh is away a uni but Kelly is doing her A Levels and is in a quandary about what to do afterwards - she is secretly seeing the brother of Maggie's waitress Fern - but his parents are against the relationship as her last one was with a girl!

There are lots of different characters in the book and their stories told by themselves in different chapters giving great perspectives - a lovely warm hearted book about people in everyday life

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### **Loz says**

A very nice read for when you're in the mood for something summery, yet cosy.

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### **Fabulous Book Fiend says**

I am a big fan of Katey Lovell's writing, I loved her previous novel and am an avid reader of her Meet Cute series and this new offering did not let me down. This is a meaty story with plenty of romance, a bit of diversity and a bit of scandal and intrigue and it all balances out to be an excellent read. This is the perfect summer read as well (I read most of it sitting in the sunshine and was glad I did) because it is set in a park and will definitely make you want to get out there and be at one with nature, or just sit and have a picnic of several different kinds of cake.

This story features mini story lines for various different characters that all tie together in some way, at first you don't know how but the fact that you know they will eventually makes this a well-paced read because you are constantly reading on to find out what will happen to character A or character B in the next chapter and sometimes you don't find out until a couple of chapters time. I really like Maggie who really does bring everybody together in the form of her cake shop. She serves delicious sounding cakes and is the voice of reason for many of the other characters. She also has a bit of a romantic storyline as well and so I really felt like I connected with her.

All of the characters are easy to relate to, even those with a bit of a past and that makes this read very easy to get into. I really loved getting to know Pearl and Fern, Kelly and Carrick and it was interesting working out how they were all connected. This is definitely very easy to read because of the way it is structured, the chapters are short and so you don't realise how quickly you are reading, trying to find out how things between and for the characters are going to play out. Overall this was really enjoyable. if this is your first book by this author, then you are sure to have a good time and if, like me, you are a fan then you won't be let down. Definitely read this one now whilst it is still summer and you can go out and enjoy your local Fir Tree Park!

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### **Alison says**

Maggie is a 40-ish divorced mother of two, her ex-husband Clint is serving a 10 year prison sentence for armed robbery and she now owns and runs the cafe in Fir Tree Park.

Maggie's daughter Kelly is bisexual and studying for her A levels (English secondary education qualification pre-college for 18 year olds), she has qualified for a place at Birmingham University studying history.

Maggie's son Josh is at Oxford University.

Fern works in the cafe with Maggie, she was at school with Kelly and in the same year as Josh. On the more voluptuous side, she has been in love with Josh for years and years. Her younger brother Luke was seeing Kelly for a while but they broke it off.

Pearl is a 60-ish widow who occasionally helps out in the cafe. She is Maggie's mother-in-law's sister. She and her husband Alf never had any children and so she dotes on Kelly and Josh.

Lacey runs round the park every week, she is training for a half-marathon which she is running for charity in honour of her aunt Marilyn who died of cancer. Her uncle (Marilyn's brother) Carrick is the park groundskeeper.

The story takes place over four months between June and September 2017 and features chapters written from the POV of Fern, Maggie, Pearl and Lacey as they uncover old secrets, new love and their own worth.

I liked this book but I didn't love it. I think my main issue was that the voices of the different narrators weren't differentiated, I couldn't tell Pearl's voice from Fern's or Maggie's.

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in return for an honest review.

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## **Dash fan says**

4? Scrumptious Delights, Perfect Summer Read!

The café In Fir tree park is a beautiful story of friendship, secrets, relationships and family and of course scrumptious delights

Maggie owns the café, which she took over when her husband got sent to prison. She brings up her two children alone. With such strength.

The café which really is the community hot spot, where everyone is welcome. The story is centred around the café and the park.

Maggie makes scrumptious cakes but her famous lemon drizzle is mouthwateringly good. I can literally taste it!!

Maggie hasn't had the easiest of lives, her ex husband a real piece of work., which left Maggie with low self esteem, which makes her character so relateable.

In fact all the characters are very relateable and very likeable.

The story is told by each of the four women and you get to see their friendships form and their past uncovered as each woman is connected to the café in some way whether it be as a worker or as a friend.

It's so lovely to see. Sometimes this style of narrating can be confusing but each chapter is beautifully written and flows with ease.

This book literally has it's fair share of ups and downs and lots of drama.

It's fast paced and jam packed full of content.

Beautiful characters and scrumptious lemon drizzle, a story of finding Love and learning to love again, facing their fears, and embracing new beginnings.

A perfect scrumptious summer read.

But be warned the delightful goodies inside will leave your taste buds tingling.

I would recommend this book to readers who love Chick Lit, Rom coms, scrumptious delights, Summer reads, story of friendships and new beginnings.

I received this book from the Publisher in exchange for a honest and fair review via Netgalley.

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### **Kaisha (The Writing Garnet) says**

All reviews can be found on my blog at <https://thewritinggarnet.wordpress.com>

Ever since I had the pleasure of reading Katey Lovell's previous novel, *The Singalong Society for Singletons*, I was impatiently waiting for her new book to be released into the wild. Katey Lovell's books are like a legal addiction; as soon as you finished one, you want another! No pressure of course...

Unfortunately, this beauty didn't stay in my hands for too long as I struggled to put it down once I started reading. Maggie runs her own cafe in Fir Tree Park; a place where everyone can come to relax and eat multiple slices of her legendary lemon drizzle cake. Although most of the treats Maggie baked I wouldn't say no to. Food porn alert! Mmmmmmm cake. Maggie's life hasn't always been as fluffy as her muffins, risen like her Victoria sponge cake, or soft and addictive like her cookies. In fact, her life has been as flat as a pancake. Well, by life I mean her self-esteem (or lack of), thanks to her wonderful husband, more affairs than a baker's dozen and a prison sentence. Heart throb eh!

Part of me was expecting a calm, leisurely paced novel with more cake than Mr Kipling, so when I realised that Katey Lovell's novel had more turbulent situations than a coffee, walnut and cinnamon cake had ingredients, I truly was pleasantly surprised.

There is a lot of character swapping throughout the novel, with different chapters being led by various main characters. Usually I find that sort of thing far too confusing, however, #FirTreePark needed the differences in character point of view. It worked incredibly well, I wasn't at all confused, but most importantly, it tied all the turbulent circumstances together whilst creating another level of intensity.

I am a sucker for a bit of drama, especially when there are skeletons in the closet (as long as they don't involve me); #FirTreePark has enough skeletons for everyone. I had no idea that the storyline would reach the conclusion that it did. In all honesty, it caught me off guard a bit because it came out of nowhere, and I loved it!

The Cafe in Fir Tree Park is, without a doubt, one of my most favourite books so far this year. All of the intense moments blew me away, the characters were written absolutely brilliantly and so three-dimensional, the setting was described in such a relaxing manner, AND the different character viewpoints meant multiple



shocking revelations. What more could anyone want from a book?

Unbelievable! I adored this book from start to finish, it kept me on my toes and warmed the ice from around my heart. I am in awe at Katey Lovell's literary skills and her outstanding story telling; The Cafe in Fir Tree Park came to life and so did the characters in it.

A flawless, intense, and mesmerising novel that is full of emotion, secrets, heart-warming moments, the true meaning of love and learning how to make the most of your life before it's too late.

Life is too short to live with regrets, and life is too short to not read The Cafe in Fir Tree Park. You just have to...like right now. I'm being serious.

Fabulously flawless, written with perfection, a showstopper of a conclusion; pretty much like Maggie's lemon drizzle cake. Wow!

Thanks SO much Harper Impulse.

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### **Laura Barlow says**

I couldn't put this book down, I had to finish the whole thing in one sitting!

I immediately fell in love with several of the characters, all of which are believable, loveable and people who I want to be friends with myself.

Highly recommended and I'm excited to see what comes next from Katey :)

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### **Laura says**

Café in the Fir Tree Park is told from the POV of four incredible women. I thought initially that the only thing they had in common was the cafe. As the book unfolded it became more apparent just how connected these women and some other members of the community really are.

I loved getting to know Fern, Maggie, Pearl and Lacey better. All four women had sadness and heartache in their lives and still managed to get up each day and function. I was already inspired by these women by the end of the book I was pretty much in awe of them. I loved witnessing these women grow in strength, confidence and courage. Honestly I felt like they stood 10ft tall by the end.

I've read everything Katey has published from her short and sweet Meet Cute stories to her sexier novellas and onto her debut full length novel. This for me is Katey's best book so far. It dealt with some very real and difficult situations which if we don't deal with ourselves first hand then someone close to us will have no doubt. Katey handled these situations with sensitivity and empathy.

This book made me cry, made me laugh and made me cheer for these strong, beautiful women on several occasions. I started to miss these characters as soon as I'd finished and I know I'll think about them often.

5 stars for this empowering novel!

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### **Karen Mace says**

Add a cafe and a park to a book title and you have my interest! And this became a pleasant surprise as it turned out to be a little more than just the run of the mill light reads often associated with cafe settings, and developed into quite a moving look at a community, family and friends that revolves around life in the cafe.

It is told from a number of perspectives, which did get a little confusing, but I did enjoy all the separate strands that were nicely woven together throughout.

Maggie runs the cafe so is always baking the most delicious cakes, and has two grown up children Josh and Kelly. And Fern who works in the Cafe is also friends with Kelly from school. Pearl is a widow is often in the Cafe to help out when needed and has her own secrets that she is beginning to tire of keeping to herself. And we also meet Lacey as she starts training for a half marathon in aid of charity by running round the park, and finds the unlikeliest of training partners to help her. Ooh and it helped that one of the characters childhood crush was Matt Goss from Bros!! What good taste she has!! That is all it takes to win me over to a characters' side!!

As we follow their individual and shared stories we get to see the women facing their fears, confronting the past and embracing their futures. Set in the most idyllic location it features some very endearing characters - ooh and cake! Lots of lovely cake!! A very enjoyable read!!

Thank you to Harper Impulse for an advanced copy of this in return for a fair and honest review.

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