



A Family Recipe

Veronica Henry

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The brand-new feel-good story from bestseller Veronica Henry - a perfect mix of family, friends and delicious food.

What's the secret ingredient to your happiness?

Laura Griffin is preparing for an empty nest. The thought of Number 11 Lark Hill falling silent - a home usually bustling with noise, people and the fragrant smells of something cooking on the Aga - seems impossible. Laura hopes it will mean more time for herself, and more time with her husband, Dom.

But when an exposed secret shakes their marriage, Laura suddenly feels as though her family is shrinking around her. Feeling lost, she turns to her greatest comfort: her grandmother's recipe box, a treasured collection dating back to the Second World War. Everyone has always adored Laura's jams and chutneys, piled their sandwiches high with her pickles . . . Inspired by a bit of the old Blitz spirit, Laura has an idea that gives her a fresh sense of purpose.

Full of fierce determination, Laura starts carving her own path. But even the bravest woman needs the people who love her. And now, they need her in return . . .

Your favourite authors love *A Family Recipe*:

'An **utter delight**' **Jill Mansell**

'Truly **blissful** escapism' **Lucy Diamond**

'A **heart-warming**, triumphant story combined with **Veronica's sublime writing** - the perfect mix!' **Cathy Bramley**

'A **delicious treat of a book**' Milly Johnson

'A beautiful book. **Warm, emotional and full of hope**' Sarah Morgan

A Family Recipe Details

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Author : Veronica Henry

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From Reader Review A Family Recipe for online ebook

Paromjit says

This is Veronica Henry at her best as she weaves a story from two different family generations living at 11 Lark Hill in the city of Bath, about friends, family, adversity, and learning to handle the curve balls that life throws at you. Laura is beginning to experience empty nest syndrome as Willow, her youngest daughter who she has nursed and worried over through the years with her debilitating and life threatening Asthma, starts life as a student at York University. Her other practical and independent daughter, Jasmine, is already at university. She wonders what she will do with her life, and has diffidently thought of doing up and renting out two attic rooms on airbnb. Her widowed grandmother, Kanga, named after the character in Winnie the Pooh, gave up her huge home to Laura and Dom to bring up their family while she lives in a purpose built smaller home on the same property. Henry gives us a narrative set in two time periods with Jilly aka Kanga as a young woman living through the Blitz in WW2 in 1942 with Bath suffering severe destruction and a huge loss of life under German bombardment and with Laura in the present day.

Jilly, best friends with the more extrovert and flamboyant Ivy, uncharacteristically sneaks out of home at night to meet a trainee fighter pilot, Harry Swann, on the night Bath is bombed by Germans. Her parents are killed looking for her, and Jill is drowning in a sea of guilt and grief, Supported by Ivy, Jill does what her parents would have done, helping those who needed help and opening up her home to the homeless Norris family. She discovers she is pregnant but Harry does not want to know. Jill finds comfort in following her mother's recipes for jams and chutneys, and makes her own additions and adjustments to the recipes. The courage she finds to live life as a single mother and survive the war years is thanks to Ivy, and she eventually finds love again with a man content to bring up her daughter, Catherine, as his own. Laura's world is shattered when she learns her beloved husband, Dom, has had an affair with his conveyance solicitor, Antonia. Not being able to cope with this, Laura throws herself in two projects, that of letting out rooms on Airbnb and using her great grandmother's and Kanga's recipes to make chutneys and jams for an artisan market. Kanga has to face the heartbreaking ill health of her life time best friend, Ivy, who has always been there for her.

Laura for the first time learns to stand on her own two feet, becoming independent and becoming more self aware, as she begins to understand her marriage and her role in its difficulties. Is there any chance that she can steer her marriage and her family back to all it used to be? Henry does a sterling job in giving us two wonderful central female characters in Jilly and Laura, drawing on the family recipes and the ingredients that went into the dishes, to help them cope with desperate and challenging times in their lives. Both have to find the ingredients and strength to adjust to new realities and create a new version of family, a new family recipe, where from the ashes arises a stronger woman with a more stable and enduring sense of family, informed by a greater self knowledge. Laura's best friend, Sadie, plays an important role in her life as Ivy did with Kanga. This is just such a lovely read, Henry has outdone herself. Many thanks to Orion for an ARC.

Breakaway Reviewers says

Compelling family tale

On a Saturday evening in 1942, after having supper with her parents, Jilly creeps out of the house to meet up with a young would-be pilot; that night the Germans drop their bombs on Bath, and her parents are killed, leaving Jilly with terrible grief and survivor guilt.

Her friend Ivy doesn't let her wallow but encourages her to join the rescue mission to save those still trapped or newly homeless. Exhausted they return to number 11, Larkhill, Jilly's family home only to return to the streets the next day. Jilly is able to offer a home to Helena who with her three young children, has lost everything.

More than seventy years later number 11 is home to Laura, Jilly's granddaughter, and her family. Laura's younger daughter, Willow, is about to leave for university, which Laura is having a hard time dealing with.

Having taken Willow to York, on the way home Laura and husband Dom stop for coffee at a service station, where Laura learns a shocking truth.

This novel resonated with me as I grew up in Bath and it stirred many memories. The characters are many and varied and each plays a pivotal part in the portrayal of the lives of one family over several generations; each leap off the page, fully formed and raring to go.

Sensitively written, this is a really enjoyable novel for anyone who enjoys a family saga with a bit of drama and good old-fashioned grit. The women are strong, self-reliant and inspirational as they cope with life's vagaries, not without problems but proactively. The men come off less well.

The Family Recipe reference refers to a box of recipes Jilly inherits from her mother Catherine, and which passes to Laura and her daughters.

Pashtpaws

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.

Agi says

Laura is just about to experience an empty nest syndrome – her youngest daughter Willow is leaving for university. The daughter that Laura focused on for so many years, and worried about for so many years when she was fighting against the life threatening asthma. Jasmine, the older daughter, the much more independent and – what's more important – healthy one, has left home already to study. So Laura is now facing a question, what to do with her life – she didn't have to work, she only needed to concentrate on her husband and daughters but what now?

Laura's widowed grandmother has gave up the 11 Lark Hill to Laura and Dom and moved to a smaller house on the same property. Now Laura decides to do up and rent some of the rooms on Airbnb. It's a great distraction, as there are things happening in Laura's life that she's never expected. Is her marriage going to survive? Will Willow stay healthy at the university?

I loved how effortlessly did Veronica Henry weave two – at first sight – different stories set in different times. One of the stories follows young Kanga – Jilly – living through the Blitz in WW2 in Bath, bringing back the memories of the severe destruction, of loss. It was a beautiful story bringing to life Jilly's friendship with Ivy – the girls supported each other in their most dark moments and stayed friends for ever. Jilly has never forgotten Ivy's support, the courage she has given her when Jilly discovered she's pregnant and is going to be a single mum – she knows she wouldn't be able to do it without Ivy.

The second story is about Laura and her world being shattered by discovering that her husband is having an affair. I admired Laura's consequence and how firm she was in this situation but to be honest I also started to feel sorry for the poor Dom. Sure, as you make your bed so you must lie on it and I am not justifying him but

there came a moment that I really wanted Laura to give him a chance to at least talk to her, and honestly I was surprised that he went for this whole charade, as Laura didn't want to tell their daughters about them splitting up. I thought, hey, they're grown up, they're not children any more and using Willow's asthma as a pretext can only work for a time. Nevertheless, this situation gave Laura the chance to find herself afresh, and what a better way than to dig out the old family recipes and start making jams and chutneys in her beloved but moody Aga?

The two leading female characters, Jilly and Laura, were brilliantly written by Veronica Henry. It was great to observe Laura standing again on her own two feet, coming to terms with her new life, being so strong and becoming independent. Getting to know Kanga and her history was great, her story was so poignant and heart – breaking, and I loved how determined she was. The relationship between them, between grandmother and granddaughter was unforced, natural and genuine and I loved that Kanga wasn't one of those grandmothers that meddle in other lives. I also think that the author has managed to capture Laura at the best moment – this character could have gone two ways, as a spoiled, always leaning on somebody housewife, or a strong, determined woman who wants to do something useful with her life, and the author has she pulled it off in the best possible way. Laura was likeable and from the very beginning I warmed to her.

“A Family Recipe” was a lovely, down – to – earth family saga, with likeable and believable characters, warm and inviting. The writing style is so easy to follow, full of depth, emotions and feelings and I immediately felt a part of this story. Veronica Henry has – again – delivered a charming novel about family, friends, love, betrayal and forgiveness in challenging times. I truly enjoyed this book and I can only highly recommend it to you all, guys.

Copy provided by the publisher in return for an honest review.

Nicola Clough says

I would give this book far more than the five stars if I could as so amazingly heartwarming and full of families, friends and romance along with breakups and food. So well written it had me hooked from the first page and highly recommend anyone to read this book. So true to life and how families are and a complete delight to read.

Very well written as covers two different years and you first have Laura who is happily married and both her children are now at uni with the youngest going and she feels her home will be very empty. She also loves cooking for the family with her wonderful aga and also she always includes her grandmother who brought her up when she was little after her mum died but you also hear her story of when she was growing up. How her parents died in the war and she thought she had met mister perfect but wasn't to be and shows you how she got friends with her best friend ivy. Laura thinks all is happy but when she's on her way home from dropping off at uni she gets told that her husband is having an affair with the family solicitor. She doesn't want anyone to know and she throws herself into baking and being with friends. Her greatest comfort is her grandmothers cookbook which has been added to over time. Laura has a great idea as she knows everyone loves her jams chutneys and pickles so it gives her a new sense of purpose. Can she be happy and can she sort out her marriage out or not and can the family live happily ever after and can the grandmother be happy and does she get a surprise that may change everything.

Well worth reading.

Monica Mac says

I thoroughly enjoyed this story about the house at 11 Lark Hill and the two women who lived there, Laura and her grandmother Kanga.

Kanga survived the Blitz together with her friend Ivy, and the two of them have gotten through the intervening 75 years as well, with their friendship as strong as ever. Kanga is now living in a cottage in the garden of No. 11, close to her granddaughter Laura and her husband Dom, but maintaining her own space and giving Laura and her family theirs.

Laura is happy in her marriage with Dom but then suddenly something happens to change everything for them. She also has their second child going off to University and her house feels kind of empty all of a sudden. Laura takes inspiration from her grandmother and starts to carve a different path for herself.

This was a different story to what I thought I was going to be reading about, nevertheless I really loved reading about these two different women and their stories, and I was cheering them on and commiserating with them along the way.

4.5 stars from me :)

Thank you to NetGalley, THE Book Club and Orion for the read. All opinions in this review are my own.

Grace J Reviewerlady says

What a lovely book! Very honest and true-to-life, and so very enjoyable.

Laura lives in a lovely family house in the beautiful city of Bath. The house has been in her family for several generations and although it is quite grand to outsiders, to the family it's just home. But with her older daughter at university and her youngest daughter about to leave home for her fresher year, Laura is facing empty nest syndrome.

With both girls happy settled for the first term, Laura will have a lot of extra time on her hands and is considering doing something constructive with it but before she can come to any firm decision a crisis overtakes her life, leaving her with a whole different problem.

This is a dual-aspect novel - not only about the family, but also about the house and the generations who have dwelt there. The storylines go in several directions, resulting in a very interesting and readable novel. The characters are well-rounded, the writing is smooth, flowing and it's very entertaining. It is a book to lift your spirits and definitely leave you with a feel-good vibe. Highly recommended.

My grateful thanks to Orion Publishing for approving my request via NetGalley. This is my honest, original and unbiased review.

?hristie ♥ says

It was the thing she loved best in the world. That quiet half hour in the kitchen before everyone arrived, when she put the finishing touches to the meal and made sure everything was perfect — but not too perfect, because actually there was nothing more annoying than perfection.

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Fergus says

For all strong women who weren't born that way - who never LEARNED how to be strong but EARNED it -
READ THIS BOOK!

It'll warm your heart and nourish your soul.

All this coming from a GUY - who LOVES it!

10% finished and burning up the pages...

Rachel Gilbey says

Wow what a fascinating and enthralling story, I was hooked from the beginning, and given chapter 1 was set
during WW2 and I'm not a history fan, that is saying something.

In fact I was very interested in the occasional wartime chapter which was telling the story of Jilly and Ivy as
young women.

The present day storyline featured Laura, her husband Dom, grown up children Willow and Jas and her
grandma Kanga.

At the heart of both past and present stories is the house, its garden and the family recipes that have passed
through the generations.

The book has fabulous writing, interesting storytelling, and a knack for transporting you between the pages
so that you forget your real life exists.

Even when I wasn't reading this my mind was still on the story, it really got under my skin, and with the
various perspectives gave a good look at all the key characters and their motivations.

A top notch read from an always talented and one of my favourite authors, Veronica Henry,

Thank you to Orion and Netgalley for this copy which I have reviewed honestly and voluntarily.

Shaz Goodwin says

Review coming soon!

Michelle Ryles says

I think this is the best Veronica Henry book I have read to date. With a dual timeline of 2017 and 1942, it's like two books in one and as I discovered the history behind 11 Lark Hill, my heart was warmed by the heat from the Aga, sitting in pride of place in the busy kitchen.

Laura has always been overprotective of her youngest daughter as Willow suffers from chronic asthma. The thought of Willow going off to university in York is absolutely terrifying for Laura as she won't be able to keep such a close eye on her anymore. When Laura and her husband, Dom, are driving back from dropping Willow off in York, Laura discovers a secret that Dom has been keeping from her. Not only is her marriage under threat but also the home that has been in her family for generations.

Number 11 Lark Hill was a very different place in 1942 as the bombs fell on Bath and everyone had to keep up a stiff upper lip. Jilly fell in love the night the bombs fell but, with Harry off to fly in the airforce and suddenly finding herself alone in her home, the future isn't quite what she dreamed of as she takes in a family whose home was destroyed in the blitz. With the help of her exuberant friend, Ivy, Jilly is the perfect embodiment of wartime spirit, especially when the household is set to get a new addition.

I can't even begin to tell you how much I loved A Family Recipe. The female characters are so strong that you can't help but admire them and the whole family unit brings a smile to my face just thinking about it. The friendship between Jilly and Ivy is so heartwarming as they have been inseparable for decades. Despite it being 2017, I felt Laura showed her wartime spirit as she kept calm and carried on. Family is so important to both main characters as we discover the tears and laughter both in their past and present.

Filled with family drama across several decades, A Family Recipe is so deliciously moreish that I could have quite easily devoured it in one day, but instead I savoured every single exquisite page that I read. A Family Recipe is a mouth-watering feast for the eyes and there's even a yummy recipe for apple and date chutney that I just have to try for myself. A highly recommended read from the delectable pen of Veronica Henry.

I chose to read an ARC and this is my honest and unbiased opinion.

Sarah says

What a wonderfully heart melting read!

11 Lark Hill has been in the family for quite a few generations. It's great to see a house with so much history stay with in the family and I could very much feel the love within those walls. Sadly Laura and her husband Dom seem to be going through some difficulties but I think it reminds us of how much we can take the other one for granted.

Laura and her grandmother Kanga (Jilly) were my favourite characters. We get to know Kanga better in chapters that take us back to the war and I really admired her determination and out look on life. I'm sure everyone would love the friendship that her and Ivy have as they really do show what the true meaning of it is. Laura is someone that has probably always lent on others and hasn't had to really stand on her own two feet before. I loved how she pulls herself together though and surprises the people around her.

A Family Recipe had all the perfect and wholesome ingredients for me. It's like a good old fashioned stew and dumplings or a delicious treacle sponge and custard pudding. Something that will warm you to the very core of which you want to savour every delicious moment. A story that will warm the cockles of your heart and will remind us that whatever life throws our way, you can handle it.

Kim says

Laura is living in her family home- her grandmother sold them her house and she lives in the grounds. 11 Lark Hill sounds a wonderful house and we hear about the history as we follow a dual narrative. Kanga, her grandmother lived there through the war years. She started a recipe box which is now one of Laura's favourite possessions.

Laura is a busy mum, who has had to nurse her youngest through several severe asthma attacks and now she's due to leave for university, Laura is facing an empty nest. Secrets unravel her perfect happy home and we follow her as she makes her way through a new chapter. She is planning to open up the house to air b&b and I loved the plans she has. I could imagine booking a couple of nights stay.

We also follow Kanga and her friend Ivy during the war years with the huge difficulties that they all faced. Ivy is that dependable, loyal friend who retains a spark of mischievousness but will always have your back. I loved the whole book which drew me deep within it's pages and made me reluctant to put it down. The characters are so warmly drawn that you soon grow to love them. The recipes add to the overall warm and cosy feeling and it reminded me of the recipe journal that we compiled for my nieces 21st. Everyone wrote their favourite recipe in their own handwriting.

I always love Veronica Henry's books and I was delighted to receive an Arc of this book from Orion.

Fabulous Book Fiend says

I am a big Veronica Henry fan, and was delighted to have the chance to read her new novel. I was hooked by this one from the very first page. I have absolutely loved Veronica's style of writing and depth of expression in all of her novels that I have read, but I think that she has excelled with this particular story.

This book tells the tale of one woman at two stages of her life and of her granddaughter, the whole story being tied together by recipes carried through the years. The 'action' takes place in 1942 and present day; the narrative skilfully skips from one time to the other without confusion. In 1942, we meet Jill, who is suddenly plunged into the reality of World War II as her home city of Bath is bombed and loved ones are lost to her. In the present, her granddaughter, Laura is struggling with the departure of both daughters to university as well as the stress of an overworked and distant husband. Both ladies are soon turning to the box of family recipes to help them through difficult times.

I have only good things to say about this book. It is full to the brim with strong characters and interesting situations. Then there is all the lovely, mouthwatering foods. When Laura turns to making jams and preserves, I could almost taste them, especially the plum cheese. I would heartily recommend this book; definitely story telling at its finest.

Sylvia says

Veronica has always been one of my favourite authors, especially her earlier ones. I enjoyed this one although it was a different style. Laura and Dom are married with two children and Dom has an affair. I felt the family dynamics were very well explored and showed how sometimes things can happen without us meaning them to. The background story of Kanga and Ivy was lovely but apart from the family recipe part not really sure of the relevance. An easy read
