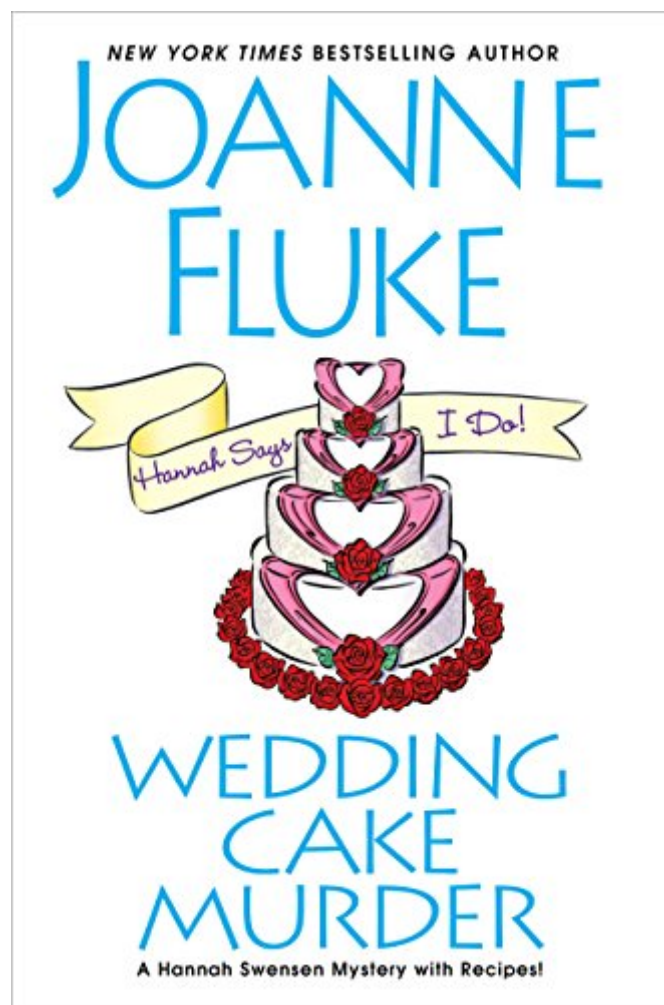


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Wedding Cake Murder (Hannah Swensen)



Synopsis

Everyone in Lake Eden, Minnesota, may have had their doubts, but at long last, Hannah Swensen is getting married! Hannah is thrilled to be marrying Ross Barton, her college crush. And her excitement only grows when she learns he'll be able to join her on her trip to New York City for the Food Channel's dessert chef contest. They get a taste of the Big Apple before Hannah wins the Hometown Challenge and the producers bring all the contestants to Lake Eden to tape the remainder of the show. It's nerve-wracking enough being judged by Alain Duquesne, a celebrity chef with a nasty reputation. But it's even more chilling to find him stabbed to death in the Lake Eden Inn's walk-in cooler before he's even had a chance to taste Hannah's Butterscotch Sugar Cookies! Now Hannah has not only lost her advantage, she'll have to solve a mystery with more layers than a five-tiered wedding cake | Indulge In Joanne Fluke's Criminally Delicious Hannah Swensen Mysteries! Double Fudge Brownie Murder & Lively | Add the big surprise ending, and fans will be more than satisfied. • Publishers Weekly Blackberry Pie Murder & Fluke offers a new twist to the series | the cookie-shop owner's character gains depth | but there's still room for recipes and for Hannah to move toward an overdue decision on the question of which of her two boyfriends she prefers. Readers will be eager for the next installment. • Booklist & Lake Eden's favorite baker, Hannah Swensen finds herself on the wrong end of a police investigation | in Fluke's good-natured 19th [installment]. • Kirkus Reviews Red Velvet Cupcake Murder & Culinary cozies don't get any tastier than this winning series. • Library Journal & If your reading habits alternate between curling up with a good mystery or with a good cookbook, you ought to know about Joanne Fluke. • The Charlotte Observer Cinnamon Roll Murder & Fans of this wildly popular series will not be disappointed. Fluke has kept this series strong for a long time, and there is still plenty to enjoy for foodie crime fans. • Booklist Devil's Food Cake Murder & Fabulous. • Publishers Weekly

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After years of being unable to decide between Norman Rhodes and Mike Kingston, Hannah Swenson is finally getting married - to Ross Barton. Hannah is busy not only with wedding details but as a contestant on the Food Channel's Dessert Chef Competition. The last thing she needs is to have to investigate a murder, but that is just what she ends up doing when one of the judges for the competition is murdered. Will Hannah be able to handle everything she has on her plate? I admit that I have had a kind of love/hate relationship with Joanne Fluke's Hannah Swensen mysteries - I love the cozy mystery aspects and Hannah as an amateur sleuth; I hate the Hannah/Mike/Norman love triangle that often overtook the mysteries (I was pulling for Norman). I had hoped that in "A Wedding Cake Murder", Hannah's upcoming marriage would finally settle the romance angle down so I could enjoy the mystery but instead, while reading the book, I found myself thinking of how the Hannah/Ross relationship didn't work for me. Outside of the fact that we are told that Hannah smiles every time she talks about Ross, I felt zero chemistry between the two. Hannah seems to know little about him and rarely questions him about anything, including his finances. There is a telling scene where Hannah recognizes the knocks of everyone including Mike and Norman but not Ross's knock which makes me wonder what kind of plans Fluke has for Ross in future books. Also Hannah shows a surprising lack of interest in her wedding preparations, letting her family do much of the work. As for the mystery itself, it was okay. I did like the food show competition - it was interesting (there are a lot of recipes included in the book), provided plenty of suspects, and a surprise or two along the way.

I have read and enjoyed several of the previous novels in this series, so I jumped at the chance to get a pre-release copy of "Wedding Cake Murder." Unfortunately, this was not the book I had hoped

it would be. First of all, after leading two men on for years, Hannah finally has decided to marry--a third man. Of course, the other two are hanging around like little puppy dogs, ready to take care of her cat or come to her rescue in whatever ways are needed. Hannah knows almost nothing about the man she is marrying, including how much money he has or where it comes from. Perhaps the biggest problem with this book is that it is a "murder mystery," but the murder doesn't even take place until about halfway through the book. It is like the author suddenly realized there is supposed to be a murder and hastily killed someone off. The murder is mentioned here and there, between wedding plans and the cooking competition, but it is not the focus of the story. The writing is tedious. For example, here is a small portion of a conversation about cardamom (Yes, that's right. A conversation about cardamom.):===== (Ross) "You mentioned your great-grandmother's cardamom bread. Does cardamom come from the Nordic countries?" (Hannah) "No, but they use a lot of it in baking sweets. It is also used in Indian cuisine, and it is often found in spice mixtures like curry. Then it's used as a savory in meat dishes." "Where does it grow?" Ross asked, obviously curious. "The biggest exporter of cardamom is Guatemala, but it's not indigenous there. A German planter imported it before the First World War. It's also grown in India, Pakistan and other parts of Indonesia.

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