

A bouquet of Aussie (women) writers!



In need of a little self-indulgence?
 Trying to find that perfect Christmas gift?
 Looking for some guaranteed-great summer reading?

Each of these recommendations has been provided by readers, for readers. Gathered together into a glorious bouquet of Australian (women) writers to decorate your life. So pick a bloom, or two, or bury yourself beneath a bunch. You could even set yourself a challenge & see how many you can get through before the end of summer!

Fiction - on the light side...



Each Way Bet, by Ilsa Evans
 Fantastic Australian writer that got me back into reading. Follows the trials and tribulations of an average family in Melbourne. I couldn't put the book down, although I didn't want it to end.
 (recommended by Belinda)

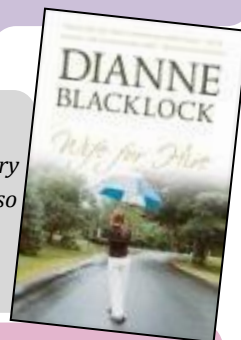


Knitting, by Anne Bartlett
 Sarah and Martha are disparate souls who meet by chance. Generously sprinkled with loving descriptions of threads, colours, textures and divine garments.
 (recommended by Marg Jungwirth)



Lucy Springer gets even, by Lisa Heidke
 First time I have read anything by this author but I was hooked from the first sentence. A mixture of the good and bad in and outside the marriage all told with great humour.
 (Recommended by Teresa)

Wife for Hire, by Dianne Blacklock
 A brilliant read with substance and humour, contemporary and old-fashioned values, real characters - a book I was so sorry to finish that I started it all over again!
 (recommended by Maree)

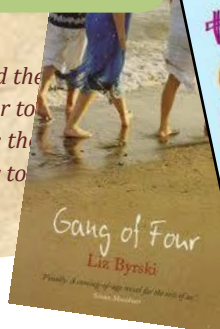


Book of Lost Threads, by Tess Evans
 Four individuals shaped by their families and past lives; each hiding something, each seeking something. By allowing friendships to develop and trust to grow, each person is empowered to set matters right. An inspiring read.
 (Recommended by Marg Jungwirth)



Summer at Mount Hope, by Rosalie Ham
 This story has so much going for it: interesting characters with real depth and dark humour, a climax that really works. Rosalie Ham is so promising - sad so few people seem to have come across her books.
 (Recommended by Jenn)

Gang of Four, by Liz Byrski
 Of lives lead and lives envisioned and how to meld the two. Of the need to sometimes step away in order to regain the self that's been eroded. Of friendships: the love and sustainability of old ones; the capacity to accept the new.
 (Recommended by Margaret)



Three Wishes, by Liane Moriarty
 As a woman with two sisters, I adored Three Wishes featuring the three Kettle sisters. A sister is one of life's true gifts and the author has captured this unique and formidable relationship in a funny and poignant novel.
 (Recommended by Kerri)



The Girl Most Likely, by Rebecca Sparrow
 Rebecca Sparrow's grasp of subtlety and situational humour complements the colourful characters she has brought to life. Young Adults and more experienced readers will both enjoy this story of finding out who you are, even if it is ten years too late.
 (Recommended by Nicola)

Fiction - a little heavier...

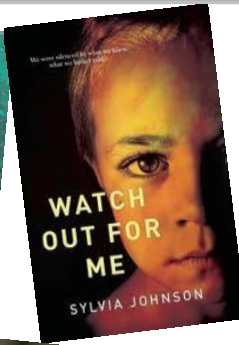


I Came to Say Goodbye, by Caroline Overington
 An amazing book which was a very sad tale but held me right through. Caroline Overington has a way with words and I have just purchased her new release Matilda is Missing, which I am looking forward to reading. A fantastic Australian author.
 (Recommended by Allison)



Broken, by Ilsa Evans
 My daughter was in an abusive relationship for 12 years, and I currently work with victims of DV. This book captures the subtleties of family violence like no other.
Sticks & Stones, by Ilsa Evans
 This book is not for the faint-hearted, it takes you on a roller coaster ride of post-separation parenting at the extreme end.
 (Recommended by Glenys Shultz)

Past the Shallows, by Favel Parrett
 My husband and I both read this after reading a review in Woman's Weekly. It contains sparse, beautiful writing and gorgeous descriptions of the coast of Tasmania. I loved Favel's writing and ability to tell a tale. I will remember this story for a long time.
 (Recommended by Tracey Mills)

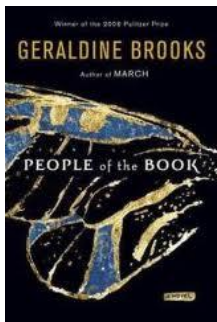


Watch Out for Me, by Sylvia Johnson
 The title recurs throughout. Is it a warning or a cry for help? Capturing the essence of children growing up in Australia in the 1960s and interchanging easily between past and present. Hard to put down.
 (Recommended by June Redmond)



After the Fall, by Kylie Ladd
 After the Fall is about infidelity and the consequences. A novel about two couples, who have been married only a few years, when the rot sets in. This is a good read.
 (Recommended by Kaye)

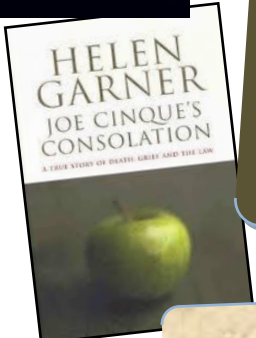
And a quartet of classics...



People of the Book, by Geraldine Brooks
 As each forensic revelation is made, we travel back through the centuries and the lives of those who created, owned, protected or were destroyed because of this ancient and magnificent book - the Sarajevo Haggadah. I fell in love with this book. 10 stars!!
 (Recommended by Marg Jungwirth)



Yes, P.L. Travers was Australian!
 (Thanks to Barbara for this information)



Joe Cinque's Consolation, by Helen Garner
 To write about such a ferocious act of evil in our midst takes courage. Garner tells this ill-fated story with such compassion that the reader is impelled to consider dropping over a casserole or offering to bring in the washing and fold it, in the hope that by doing so a mother's pain can be made that little bit less.
 (Recommended by Janice)



Ladies of Missalonghi, by Colleen McCullough
 Missy - plain, genteel, poor and brown - reclaims justice for all the downtrodden females of the Hurlingford clan. An incredible role model from pre WW1, country Australia.
 (Recommended by Margaret)

Fiction - magic & fantasy...



The Magician's Guild, by Trudi Canavan

This book has it all – thrills, race wars, magic – with an array of emotions all leading to a brilliant ending. Truly captivating and a fantastic read.
(Recommended by Jaime Meadows)

Battleaxe, by Sara Douglass

The first of the Axis trilogy, a terrific fantasy series I read about 9 or 10 years ago. Un-put-down-able. Unfortunately, like most of my series, I've loaned out the first one and never got it back!
(Recommended by Barbara Tapper)

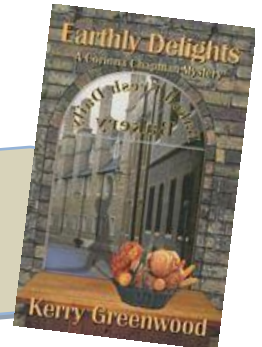


Fiction - crime & thriller...



Earthly Delights, by Kerry Greenwood

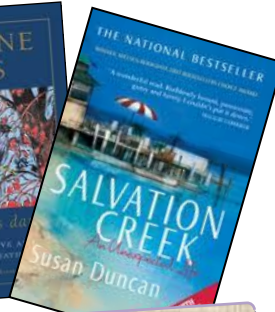
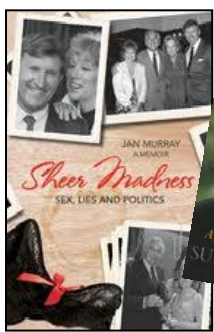
Laugh out loud funny at times... extremely poignant or hair-raising at other. Gives us Melbournites something to be proud of.
(Recommended by Barbara Tapper)



Beneath the Shadows, by Sara Foster

A subtle thriller that echoes the sadness of a woman's loss and struggle to find the truth that is hidden beneath the shadows and snow of the North Yorkshire Moors. A hauntingly vivid tale that keeps you enthralled.
(Recommended by Calinda Waters)

Biography & Memoir



A quintuplet of selections, for your reading pleasure

Three Quotes from a Plumber, by Sally White

Sally, an ordinary young mum, has a brain tumour. Her determination to achieve the best possible outcome – to live, not just survive – leads her along various paths, including to renowned neurosurgeon Dr Charlie Teo. Sally learns to place herself first, the importance of sharing her trauma, to trust her life to others, and to accept the support so freely given. A gentle telling of her own true story.
(Recommended by Marg Jungwirth)



Au Revoir, Last Tango in Toulouse, The Long Hot Summer, Sweet Surrender, The Long Table, all by Mary Moody
Mary bought a house in the village of Frayssinet-ie-Gelat and set about writing about her experiences as an Australian women living alone in a French village. She went on to produce a few more about her family life. I love her writing - a great Australian women writer.
(Recommended by Lizzy Mitchell)



To Hellas and back, by Lana Penrose
Great read. Lana tells the story of her time in Greece with the love of her life. But loves and lives don't always go together. If you've ever had to pick up the pieces and start again (and who hasn't?), you'll enjoy this book.
(Recommended by Jane Dunne)

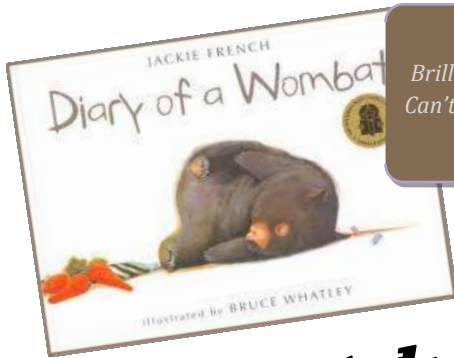


Trailblazers, by Susanna De Vries
Susanna once again introduces us to women who often go unsung. Each of her trailblazing women had a strong connection to Australia and the events which shaped it. De Vries' books should be part of the Australian history texts in all schools.
(Recommended by June Redmond)

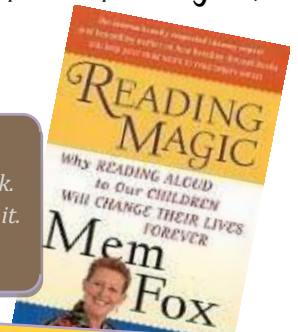
Captain Thunderbolt and His Lady, by Carol Baxter
This is not just about Fred Ward and Mary Ann Bugg, it is the story of a young colony, the jostling of the old with the new. A rollicking good tale told in a wonderful style. I would recommend it to everyone.
(Recommended by June Redmond)

for the children...

(and parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, siblings...)



Diary of a Wombat, by Jackie French
Brilliant book, more for adults than children despite being a picture book. Can't wait until my grandson is old enough to understand the humour in it.
(Recommended by Barbara Tapper)



Reading Magic, by Mem Fox (and illustrated by Judy Horacek)
Mem, writer of so many FABULOUS kids' books, elaborates on the joys (and importance) of reading aloud to our littlies. The perfect gift for new parents or grandparents.
(Recommended by Marg Jungwirth)

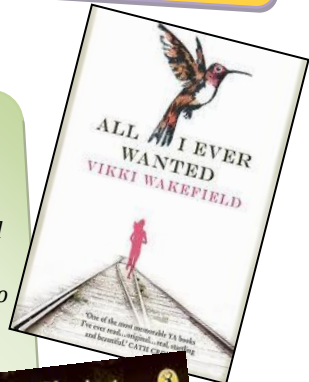
Young Adult

(either in years or in spirit!)



The Rainbow Necklace, by Jacqueline Larson
I absolutely loved this book, it has an Australian theme and depicts the spirit of Australian girls! The writing is simple and the pace fast, girls especially from eight years upwards will enjoy this book. I would love to see more of these adventures.
(Recommended by Vicki)

All I Ever Wanted, by Vikki Wakefield
Great amazing book, this should be studied in schools around Australia. Vikki got the culture so right. Love, love this book!!
(Recommended by Monique)



And for the very last suggestion in this catalogue of Australian (women) writers - as suggested by several readers - the incomparable Ruth Park with Playing Beatie Bow. A fitting finale.
Happy reading!

All recommendations contained here were the result of the *Celebrating Australian (women) writers* competition run in Sep/Oct 2011 through www.ilsaevans.com. Queries & comments can be directed to ilsa@ilsaevans.com, unless they are horribly negative - in which case please keep them to yourself. Seriously.