



The Outer Banks House

Diann Ducharme

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As the wounds of the Civil War are just beginning to heal, one fateful summer would forever alter the course of a young girl's life.

In 1868, on the barren shores of post-war Outer Banks North Carolina, the once wealthy Sinclair family moves for the summer to one of the first cottages on the ocean side of the resort village of Nags Head. Seventeen-year-old Abigail is beautiful, book-smart, but sheltered by her plantation life and hemmed-in by her emotionally distant family. To make good use of time, she is encouraged by her family to teach her father's fishing guide, the good-natured but penniless Benjamin Wimble, how to read and write. And in a twist of fate unforeseen by anyone around them, there on the porch of the cottage, the two come to love each other deeply, and to understand each other in a way that no one else does.

But when, against everything he claims to represent, Ben becomes entangled in Abby's father's Ku Klux Klan work, the terrible tragedy and surprising revelations that one hot Outer Banks night brings forth threaten to tear them apart forever.

With vivid historical detail and stunning emotional resonance, Diann Ducharme recounts a dramatic story of love, loss, and coming of age at a singular and rapidly changing time in one of America's most beautiful and storied communities.

The Outer Banks House Details

Date : Published June 8th 2010 by Crown (first published 2010)

ISBN : 9780307462237

Author : Diann Ducharme

Format : Hardcover 294 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Romance, Literature, 19th Century

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From Reader Review The Outer Banks House for online ebook

Madelyn says

A novel that holds ones interest. It is about the coming of age of two very different young people in the South just after the Civil War. Abigail is from an almost bankrupt plantation and Ben is a handsome young barefoot fisherman. It is a story of conflict and of death and forgiveness.

Linda says

I think this was too much of a romance for my taste. It has an interesting premise, but A few years after the Civil War ends, sixteen-year-old Abigail and her family move to their new house on the Outer Banks. Her parents decided that she has time to teach the young man her father has hired to be his guide while there. Of course she hates him in the beginning and then falls for him.

They deal with racism and class issues, but both grow and become better people. Too much floating through life.

Melinda says

Ducharme's lush descriptions of both people and environs really captivate your attention. The post Civil War adjustment well depicted. Various themes are woven throughout the narrative. Abigail comes into her own, ripping off her rose colored glasses and standing her ground, metamorphisizing into a fine young woman. It was a relief when Abigail made the transition to her own person drawing her own conclusions and wants. Her lack of warmth and emotion from her parents made her an even more compelling and sensitive protagonist.

I wish we learned more of Ben. We were handed a rough sketch but not enough depth into his character and what was given was a bit of a contradiction. I failed to see the depth of Abbey and Ben's attraction, especially after the horrific incident. I honestly don't understand how Abbey could have seen past Ben's part, such a brutal slaying. As bright as Ben was how could he not see what was going to happen given Mr Sinclair's racial opinions. Ben should have reached out to Jacob seeking guidance especially with their deep rooted friendship.

The end was predictable, a tender story of two people against all odds, proving opposites attract.

Shelley says

Wonderfully written!

Wow! I couldnt put this book down. The characters were strong, inspiring and frightfully real. A tale of as old as time....young woman falls for a man beneath her station, a fragile mother, a family on the verge of despair, but triumphant in the end. The scenery bursts with life. Wonderful writing.

Charmaine Mackenzie says

It took a while to get into the rhythm of the book, since it is narrated by the two main characters. But I did get sucked in and spent the whole week end reading it. I wish I had visited the Outer Banks before this, but now I am determined to go there sometime soon.

JILL Kaye says

Outstanding and disturbing book! Set in the Outer Banks just after the Civil War. A story of unlikely love, compassion, hate, racism, classism, and innocence. Man's inhumanity to man never ceases to amaze.

Emily says

(**Slight Spoiler at the end)

Well, this book was a little slow for me. It's a great piece of literature though so I would definitely recommend it to anyone who likes historical fiction. Last summer I took a vacation to the Outer Banks which is pretty much the only reason why I picked up this book to read. I gave it four stars because of what the book is about... racism and acceptance. There were some subplots and details that were mentioned but could have been further explored in the book in which case, I felt that they shouldn't have been mentioned at all. I honestly did not like Ben all that much and don't think that Abby should have stayed to be with him. She should have stayed simply because she needed to get away from her toxic life in order to become a stronger, newer self. I definitely thought that Ducharme could have focused more on Abby's personal development as a young woman who didn't fit the mold of society and her growth. I loved the moments when she was teaching in the schoolhouse and how she grew to understand that people are people. She had such a fiery soul and kind heart, I would have loved to see more of it when Ben wasn't around.

Ann says

Would be 5 with a little better editing. Two examples:

Yes, racism and racists certainly existed in the 19th century but the terminology is 20th century and would have been unknown to the protagonists.

Live oak is an extremely tough wood and usually as bent and gnarly as the tree itself. No way Ben could have single handedly built a cottage of live oak in a couple of weeks.

Good depiction of what the Outer Banks would have been like 150 years ago.

Jan Lehman says

Wonderful story

Sometimes you just want to read a good story ,told well. Loved the setting,relatable likeable characters and interesting twist the author has created on this coming of age story. The experiences of southerners after the civil war ,adapting to an entirely new. Society was challenging and some rose to the challenge and some never did.

Beth Sponzilli says

I'm glad there is a sequel to this book because I thought it ended quite suddenly. I can't wait to visit this area, although I know it's very different now. Too bad a 1868 version cannot still exist. This story was about romance and relationships overall, but also described the history of the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island while telling the story. I really like the character Ben. He was hard not to like.

Kellie says

I really liked this story. The setting is 1868, just after the Civil War, Outer Banks. Abby is a strong willed 17 year old who, once she steps foot on the shore, falls immediately in love with the place. Her father is a plantation owner who just lost all of his slaves to freedom. His hunting guide, Ben, wants to learn how to read so he asks Abby to tutor him. Abby is not at all happy about this request but she obediently obliges. She reads Robinson Caruso to Ben. Passages from the book prelude every chapter. I liked the correlation. The tumultuous times influence the plot in a big way. The author does a wonderful job placing you right on the shores of the Outer Banks. I was pleasantly surprised by this book and I am so glad I read it. Highly recommend reading this at the beach. You can really get caught up in the pages.

Tara Chevrestt says

This was a really enjoyable novel rich in North Carolina history. Three years after the end of the American Civil War, Roanoke island is in major disrepair, Cape Haterras is about to be constructed, something sinister is planned for the people living on Freedman's Colony, and Abigail Sinclair is discovering herself in a little cottage on the Outer Banks.

Abigail has never known life beyond her sheltered existence on her daddy's slave run plantation. A summer spent on the Outer Banks opens her eyes, mind, and heart to a whole new world. While her father is making trouble for the newly free men (sort of an early KKK thing in the works), Abigail falls in love with a dirty man who makes his living by the sea, Ben. While she teaches him his letters, Ben makes Abigail start thinking for herself. Meanwhile, a rich doctor-to-be suitor, Hector is trying to win her hand in marriage and naturally, her parents are pushing the match. Just how far is this new independent thinking Abigail willing to go tho? Will she choose happiness with Ben or propriety with Hector? Or will fate decide for her?

I like how Abigail opens her mind and accepts others towards the end of the novel, even going so far as to educate the newly freedmen and women on the sly. She became a very admirable character and I also

appreciate how this novel shows the effects of hatred and racism on a community. I found the romance a bit unbelievable tho. I never really felt or got the connection between Abigail and Ben. Something was just missing, so four stars instead of five. I do recommend it tho.

Courtney M. says

This books started off amazing. I love historical fiction and this books seemed so promising. Even though it bordered YA lit for me, it was gearing up to be a great story involving 17 year old Abigail, her place in high society now that her father's plantation is almost bust, and her relationship with Ben, a poor local boy. Throw in the southern attitudes about the recently freed slaves after the Civil War and I was hooked!

I have to admit that as I got towards the middle/end I was a tad disappointed. I thought the author could have done a lot more with the snooty Maddy Adams character, and the climax of the story over on Freedman's Island was definitely a let down. I also found it hard to believe that a girl grown up in such privilege as Abby would be content living in a 1 room shack in a fishing village. I also found it hard to believe that upper-class, proper Abby would so readily sleep with Ben. Their love story was so sweet and tender and that scene seemed out of place and not tender at all. The way it was written really cheapened their relationship.

Basically, I felt like the first half of the book built this amazing story and then all of sudden the story was rushed to tie up all the loose the ends and "everyone lives happily ever after".

Misfit says

Nags Head, The Outer Banks, North Carolina – the Civil War is over and the slaves freed. Once prosperous plantation owner Noland Sinclair builds a cottage at the beach and brings his family for the summer. Noland asks his daughter Abigail to tutor local fisherman Benjamin (Ben) Whimble. Abigail is repulsed by a very smelly, unwashed, barefooted Ben, but he proves an apt pupil and the two soon strike up a friendship. Abigail's mother is more interested in her own problems than those of her children and papa Noland is busy scheming with an early-day KKK group to find and punish a runaway slave – and he hopes to involve Ben in his nefarious scheme. Hector Newman, an affluent doctor's son courts Abigail and he plans to wed her despite the Sinclair's current financial status.

Ben continues to challenge Abigail into thinking about the hypocrisies of her parents and friends and the two become very close – which man will she chose? And that's pretty much it in a nutshell. While the book had a lot going for it story wise – setting, social mores, bigotry against the freed slaves, etc. – it just didn't quite deliver what I'd hoped for. Abigail's parents were painted just a tad too *black*, I would have preferred the characters fleshed out a bit better. As for the grand love between Abigail and Ben? I loved the idea, but again it just didn't quite come off as well as I'd hoped – I didn't pick up on much chemistry between the two, let alone how quickly she got over her revulsion to his very dirty smelly person (or did he start taking baths all of a sudden and I missed the boat again?).

A good book and a nice first outing for this author, it just doesn't have enough pizzazz for me to give it a higher rating. 3/5 stars.

Tanya says

A little over 3 stars than 4 for me because the writing style was very good and I think this new author has lots of potential. Knowing the area of the Outer Banks and having recently vacationed there as well, made the historical novel most appealing from the getgo.

It is a few years after the Civil War; Abigail Sinclair is 17 years old and her family is at Nags Head for the summer. While there, Abby tutors a young fisherman type boy around her age. A friendship, and more, evolves but the story seems to stray off into a racist theme. This was not developed properly I felt and it took away from the era of the time - made it more modern than it would have been then?!

Anyway, very good beach read with lots of regional background for lovers of OBX. The ending isn't tidy or perfect and I liked that - it gave the reader something to consider and ponder a possible outcome.
