

Cozy Mysteries to Fall Into, Wyckoff Living, October 2025

by Brielle Bleeker, Wyckoff Public Library

The leaves are falling, dark skies are creeping in earlier each evening, and the spooky season is upon us. It's the perfect time to read a story filled with thrills and chills. But if scary suspense isn't quite your thing, there's still something out there to fulfill your sleuthing interests: cozy mystery. A subgenre of crime fiction, cozy mysteries offer readers a whodunit story, but in a more lighthearted, often humorous tone. And with the popularity of this genre soaring, there is an abundance of books to choose from.

For those who enjoy a good series, there are many to fill your reading time. *Finlay Donovan is Killing It* is the first in a series by Elle Cosimano following stressed-out, single mom of two and struggling novelist Finlay Donovan, who finds herself entangled in a real-life murder investigation. Fast-paced with witty dialogue, Cosimano will keep you laughing from first page to last.

Every Time I Go on Vacation, Someone Dies is the first in the *Vacation Mystery* series by author Catherine Mack. Set on the gorgeous Amalfi Coast of Italy, the story is a modern day Agatha Christie where every character is a suspect. Bestselling fiction author Eleanor Dash sets out on her Italian book tour only to find life imitating art when she finds herself embroiled in a real-life murder mystery.

Bringing a bit of nostalgia to the page, author Rachel Ekstrom Courage is bringing Blanche, Dorothy, Rose, and Sophia back to fans through the *Golden Girls Cozy Mystery* series. *Murder by Cheesecake*, the first in the new series (soon to be followed by *Death on the Lanai*) offers the perfect escape and fun-filled whodunit along with a blast from the past for readers.

The Retirement Plan by debut author Sue Hincenbergs is "the perfect cocktail of well-plotted, good-hearted, murderous fun." Three best friends turn to murder to collect on their husbands' life insurance policies, but in a plot twist, the husbands have a plan of their own. Filled with dark humor and enough twists and turns to keep the pages turning, it's a must for fans of this genre.

A group of soon-to-be-moms-turned-detectives is the basis of *The Expectant Detectives*, a series by author Kat Ailes. The quiet village of Penton seems like the perfect place to embrace the quiet life while awaiting the birth of her first child, but for Alice, along with the other moms in her prenatal class, the town turns out to be far from idyllic. When a dead body shows up and the women find themselves suspects in a murder investigation, they take things into their own hands as they try to clear their names.

"The bridge is out. The phones are down. And the most famous mystery writer in the world just disappeared out of a locked room two days before Christmas." Welcome to *The Most Wonderful Crime of the Year* by Ally Carter and the perfect romance-mystery set during the holidays.

Clever, funny, fast-paced, and filled with suspense, it's the perfect book for readers looking for a bit of holiday twists and turns.

Author Jesse Q. Sutanto has quickly become a go-to for hilarious mysteries brimming with fun, heart, and characters you'll be cheering for long after the last page is turned. *Dial A for Aunties* follows four meddling Asian aunties to the rescue and *Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers* is set in a tea shop in San Francisco's Chinatown where amateur sleuth Vera Wong believes she can solve a murder mystery quicker than the actual police. The books are each the first in two series by Sutanto, and have proven so popular, both are being turned into TV shows.

The Ex-Girlfriend Murder Club by Gloria Chao follows the hilarious shenanigans of "three women dating the same man who band together to get revenge, but when they discover his body, they'll need to solve his murder before they go down for it." With a cover that screams fun, it's a can't-miss escape through words.

With comparisons to *Knives Out* and *Clue*, and a title that will stop readers in their tracks, *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone* by Benjamin Stevenson is a "clever blend of classic and modern murder mystery" and sure to keep readers coming back for the next in the series.

Recently made into a Netflix show, *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman has become a fan favorite. "In a peaceful retirement village, four unlikely friends meet weekly to discuss unsolved crimes; together they call themselves the Thursday Murder Club." With multiple titles in the series, the stories are sure to keep readers enthralled and viewers captivated.

With a wide array of titles that keeps growing, the cozy mystery genre is here to delight readers looking for a lighter whodunit story to keep their attention. Visit the Wyckoff Library to check out all of the above recommendations and more.