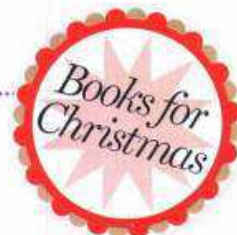




## Leila McKinnon REVIEWS

LEILA MCKINNON IS THE CO-HOST OF WEEKEND TODAY ON THE NINE NETWORK.



**TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY BY JOHN LE CARRÉ, SCEPTRE, \$19.99.**

One of the world's most iconic spy thrillers has stood the test of time. First published in 1974,

*Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* is back on shelves to coincide with the release of the film adaptation. George Smiley is a sadder man than his name suggests. Small, podgy and middle-aged, he's been kicked out of the British Secret Service and abandoned by his beautiful wife. He's the antithesis of James Bond, but does he have what it takes to discover the Soviet mole at the top of British Intelligence? Le Carré's classic is well worth a second read for the grim nostalgic glamour of the 1970s Cold War battles.



**SARAH THORNHILL BY KATE GRENVILLE, TEXT PUBLISHING, \$39.95.**

The daughter of convicts, Sarah Thornhill has grown up a comparatively wealthy young woman on the banks

of the Hawkesbury River in the Colony of New South Wales. Yet a mysterious missing brother, the strange behaviour of her father and a thwarted love affair will lead her to discover the awful secret at the foundation of her family's comfortable life. *Sarah Thornhill* is a beautifully told story of early Australia and the triumphs and struggles of its convicts, free settlers and aborigines. It's the sequel to *The Secret River*, so if you really love someone, why not put both books under the Christmas tree?



**WHY BE HAPPY WHEN YOU COULD BE NORMAL? BY JEANETTE WINTERSON, RANDOM HOUSE, \$29.95.**

At six weeks old, the baby who would become the novelist Jeanette Winterson was given up for adoption. And so started a life story that would inspire the best-selling book and TV series *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*. Her adoptive mother, Mrs Winterson, was a depressive who waited daily for the apocalypse, even embroidering her daughter's school gym bag with, "The summer is ended and we are not yet saved". It was a loveless childhood and in this autobiography, Winterson writes with humour and depth about her search for happiness, belonging and her biological mother.



**LADY ALMINA AND THE STORY OF THE REAL DOWNTON ABBEY BY LADY FIONA CARNARVON, HODDER & STOUGHTON, \$32.99.**

The perfect gift for lovers of the TV series *Downton Abbey*, a show filmed at magnificent Highclere Castle, home of Lady Almina, Countess of Carnarvon, from 1895 to 1923. The much-loved, but illegitimate daughter of a Jewish billionaire, Almina was vastly wealthy, but unaccepted in social circles. Daddy fixed that with a marriage to the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, a financially strapped aristocrat. Almina's journey from debutante to society lady and, later, wartime nurse is fascinating, as is her husband's discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb.



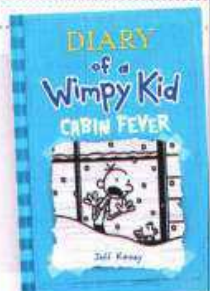
**SHANNON BENNETT'S FRANCE: A PERSONAL GUIDE TO FINE DINING IN REGIONAL FRANCE BY SHANNON BENNETT AND SCOTT MURRAY, MIEGUNYAH PRESS, \$44.99.**

This pretty hardback is more than a guide for those fabulous few who summer in the South of France. It's a mouth-watering armchair holiday in itself, complete with gorgeous recipes, expert tips on wine and food, and even advice on dealing with snooty waiters. In this book, he and his mates share their culinary experiences in some of France's most picturesque regions. Unpretentious and passionate, *Shannon Bennett's France* is perfect for anyone planning or just dreaming of an indulgent French holiday.



**POWDERFINGER FOOTPRINTS BY POWDERFINGER WITH DINO SCATENA, HACHETTE, \$45.**

For 20 years, Australian band Powderfinger topped music charts and rocked packed venues. For most of that time, they let their music do the talking, but now they've teamed up with author Dino Scatena to tell the story of the band, from its beginnings at Brisbane Grammar School through to their first major successes in 1996 and the fights that led to its emotional farewell concert last year. Packed with photos and links to online content, this book is for fans of the 'Finger, lovers of Australian music and aspiring rock stars.



**DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: CABIN FEVER BY JEFF KINNEY, PENGUIN, \$14.95.**

Reviewed by Sophie Higgins, Children's Buyer, Dymocks Sydney.

It's wonderful to have a new instalment just in time for Christmas of the series that is currently the favourite of children aged nine and above around the world. The delightfully

silly *Wimpy Kid* tales, featuring the trouble-prone Greg Heffley and his quirky friends and family, will tempt even the most reluctant young reader.

