



A Paris Apartment: A Novel

By Michelle Gable

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A Paris Apartment: A Novel By Michelle Gable

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Bienvenue à Paris!

When April Vogt's boss tells her about an apartment in the ninth arrondissement that has been discovered after being shuttered for the past seventy years, the Sotheby's continental furniture specialist does not hear the words "dust" or "rats" or "decrepit." She hears *Paris*. She hears escape.

Once in France, April quickly learns the apartment is not merely some rich hoarder's repository. Beneath the cobwebs and stale perfumed air is a goldmine, and not because of the actual gold (or painted ostrich eggs or mounted rhinoceros horns or bronze bathtub). First, there's a portrait by one of the masters of the Belle Epoque, Giovanni Boldini. And then there are letters and journals written by the very woman in the painting, Marthe de Florian. These documents reveal that she was more than a renowned courtesan with enviable décolletage. Suddenly April's quest is no longer about the *bureaux plats* and Louis-style armchairs that will fetch millions at auction. It's about discovering the story behind this charismatic woman.

It's about discovering two women, actually.

With the help of a salty (and annoyingly sexy) Parisian solicitor and the courtesan's private diaries, April tries to uncover the many secrets buried in the apartment. As she digs into Marthe's life, April can't help but take a deeper look into her own. Having left behind in the States a cheating husband, a family crisis about to erupt, and a career she's been using as the crutch to simply get by, she feels compelled to sort out her own life too. When the things she left bubbling back home begin to boil over, and Parisian delicacies beyond flaky pâtisseries tempt her better judgment, April knows that both she and Marthe deserve happy finales.

Whether accompanied by croissants or champagne, this delectable debut novel depicts the Paris of the Belle Epoque and the present day with vibrant and stunning allure. Based on historical events, Michelle Gable's *A Paris Apartment* will entertain and inspire, as readers embrace the struggles and successes of two very unforgettable women.

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Editorial Review

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Shuttered for 70 years, the ninth arrondissement apartment is a treasure trove for furniture appraiser April Vogt. Plus, an extended trip to Paris allows her to avoid her troubled marriage. As April uses the diaries of Marthe de Florian to establish provenance of the pieces, she becomes obsessed with Marthe's Belle Epoque exploits, her rivalry with Jeanne Hugo (Victor's granddaughter), and her path from Folies Bergère bartender to renowned (if forgotten) courtesan. All the while, April struggles to forgive her husband's infidelity, a situation not helped by the presence of Luc Thebault, the estate's solicitor, who seems determined to make sure April doesn't work too hard. Gable's debut is strongest when Paris is the focus, whether it's suffering a rude waiter at a corner bistro in the present day or dripping in jewels and furs and being bored by Proust in a café at the turn of the century. Some of April's actions late in the book will render her unforgivable to many readers, so if sick parents and infidelity are red flags, pass on this one. Otherwise, vive la Paris apartment! -- Susan Maguire

Review

"With its well-developed, memorable characters and the author's skillful transitioning between story lines...this stunning and fascinating debut will capture the interest of a wide audience but particularly those interested in stories about women behind famous men like Melanie Benjamin's *The Aviator's Wife* or Nancy Horan's *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*. Highly recommended." -*Library Journal* (starred review)

"Gable's Paris of today and yesteryear are worlds that are easy and pleasurable to get lost in. April's and Marthe's stories intersect, at times blatantly and at times subtly mirroring or contrasting one another....This parallel construction, the sense of place and atmosphere, and Gable's often witty writing are the book's greatest strengths." -*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

"Pick it up as the perfect escape--you'll quickly be whisked away through the vividly described scenery and events of life in Paris." -*Spa Weekly Daily*

"The inspiration for *A Paris Apartment* began in 2010 when Gable's agent sent her an intriguing article with the note: 'I think you can do something with this.' A real-life Parisian flat, abandoned for 70 years, its contents frozen in time? Absolutely, she could." -Celeste Williams, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*

"Vive le Paris apartment!" -*Booklist*

About the Author

National bestselling author of *A Paris Apartment*, MICHELLE GABLE graduated from The College of William & Mary. She currently resides in Cardiff by the Sea, California, where she is at work on her second novel.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Deana Broom:

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