

A World of Curiosities by Louise Penny

A French bistro-style meal reminiscent of Olivier and Gabri's menu in unmapped and sleepy Three Pines, where Inspector Armand Gamache lives. Too bad the Quebec Surete is compromised by corruption and there are so many murderers about. Luckily, Olivier's Bistro offers comfort and companionship after a long day solving crime. We will begin with a cocktail de la maison and hors d'oeuvres, followed by a classic country entree, salad course, dessert, and cheese. Wine will flow and conversation about books, mystery, and everyday adventure will ensue.

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

Join us for a flashback to the 50's and 60's with a "not so average woman". Enjoy canapes of stuffed mushrooms, deviled eggs and maybe some finger sandwiches. Have some wine or maybe a little "40% ethanol in H2O". Main course of (what we hope is) "the perfect lasagna". Dessert is still in the works.....icebox cake or baked Alaska?

Gather by Kenneth Cadow

"A resourceful teenager in rural Vermont struggles to hold on to the family home while his mom recovers from addiction in this striking debut novel." This is a 2023 National Book Award Finalist and even though it is categorized in the teen and young adult genre, I found it extremely touching and wide reaching. It's especially hits close to home since the author (Kenneth Cadow) lives in Norwich. Enjoy a family style meal around a farm table.

Bruno, Chief of Police by Martin Walker

Join us for a murderous romp through the southwest French countryside. Benoît Courrèges, aka Bruno, is a former soldier turned policeman, who has embraced the pleasures and slow rhythms of country life in the idyllic village of St. Denis in the South of France. But a series of murders, intrigues, and other crimes soon interrupt his peace and quiet. In the 'Mystery of the French Countryside' novels, Bruno must balance his beloved routines—living in his restored shepherd's cottage, shopping at the local market, drinking wine—with his thrilling detective duties. This novel sets the perfect backdrop and inspiration for a delectable French meal and conversation with your neighbors.

Wolf Hall by Hilary Mantel

The first book in Hilary Mantel's remarkable trilogy about the life of Thomas Cromwell, chief advisor to Henry VIII, provides the setting for a meal inspired by the culinary delights of Tudor England.

The Eyes & The Impossible by Dave Eggers

At turns funny and profound, this 2024 winner of the Newbery Award is told from the perspective of a pupusa-loving, free and very fast dog named Johannes. Join us for an evening exploring the magic of storytelling, appreciating the world through new eyes, and savoring the delights of pupusas - many, many pupusas.

The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store by James McBride

As this novel unfolds, it becomes clear how much the people of Chicken Hill have to struggle to survive at the margins of white Christian America and how damaging bigotry, hypocrisy, and deceit can be to a community. Jewish soul food will be served, maybe even a matzo ball gumbo!

Small Things Like These by Claire Keegan

Nothing is more deeply filling than great Irish literature AND a traditional Irish Sunday dinner. Claire Keegan's beautiful novella gives us a message of hope. Her hero's moral strength is grounded in kindness, and his courage proves that one individual may change the world, even in the face of institutionalized evil. Please join us for a delightful evening celebrating Keegan's perfect writing and a grand Irish supper.

How to Say Babylon by Safiya Sinclair

The hosts: Longtime Norwich residents who enjoy good books, good food, stimulating conversation, and tasty wines.

The book: How to Say Babylon: A Memoir by Safiya Sinclair about a poet and her childhood in Jamaica with 3 siblings and her Rastafarian parents. It is a moving and fascinating story.

The meal: Offerings may not reflect cuisine of Safiya's native Jamaica but will be tasty, nutritious, and offer selections for both the vegetarian and carnivore.

The benefit: In addition to having loads of fun preparing for the dinner party, we welcome the opportunity to host a fundraiser for our local library and foster community engagement.

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer

This gorgeous book about nature and science is a vision of a new world, of reciprocity, gratitude and seeing the living world for what it is. Come enjoy delicious indigenous recipes from the Sioux Chef as we share our own stories of how we have been shaped by the land and culture we come from and discuss our connections to the Earth and ways we can reciprocate and sustain Her.

The Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese

The Covenant of Water is a beautifully written historical fiction novel spanning multiple generations in Kerala, India. Join us for a delicious meal of South Indian food and enjoy conversations with new friends. There will be a wide range of dishes including vegetarian and non-spicy options.

The Last Chinese Chef by Nicole Mones

Enter the world of elite cuisine in modern China through the story of an American food writer in Beijing.