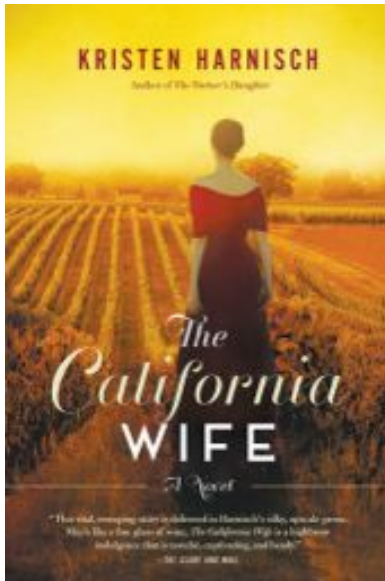


Reader's Guide for *The California Wife*



1. What is Sara's overarching challenge in *The California Wife*? What does she learn from her trials and how does she change?
2. Sara Lemieux and Marie Thibault have both endured prejudice and attacks because they are women in a man's world. How would you compare the treatment of American women today versus then? Are we better off, or do we just face different kinds of discrimination and/or objectification?
3. Why do you think the author chose to weave into the plot the storyline of Marie Chevreau and Matthew Donnelly? How is their relationship similar or different to Sara & Philippe's?
4. How does the author use the various settings—Saint Martin in Vouvray, the Paris Exposition of 1900, the streets and brothels of San Francisco, the Napa vineyards—to accentuate the characters' emotional journeys?
5. How does the author portray the institution of the Catholic Church and its role in Sara and Philippe's life? Is it a fair portrayal?
6. Which scenes from the novel did you find most memorable?
7. What, if anything, surprised you about the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906 as it's described in the book?
8. If you could sit down and chat with one of the characters over a bottle of wine, whom would you choose?
9. Team Philippe or Team Matthew?
10. Now that you've finished reading *The California Wife*, what are your expectations for the next book in the series?

\$17.95 Paperback

ISBN 978-1-63152-087-7

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