



# The Winter Sea

Di Morrissey

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## READING GROUP GUIDE

### About the book:

Escaping an unhappy marriage and an unsatisfactory job, Cassie Holloway moves to the little Australian coastal town of Whitby Point. There she meets the Aquino family, whose fishing business was founded by their ancestor, Giuseppe, an Italian immigrant, some ninety years before. Life for Cassie on the south west coast is sweet as she sets up a successful restaurant and falls in love with Giuseppe's great grandson Michael. But when the family patriarch dies, a devastating family secret is revealed which threatens to destroy her dreams. Cassie's future happiness now rests with her quest for the truth.

### Discussion Questions

1. The novel opens with the image of Giuseppe staring at his reflection in the water thinking, "he saw the face of an old man staring directly at him." What do you think the author is trying to convey about the connections between past and present?
2. *The Winter Sea* spans a great deal of time— from Australia in the early 1900s to the present day. In what ways do you see the culture change over the course of this century?
3. An element of chance changes the course of Giuseppe's life, steering him toward Australia instead of America. How do you see this notion of chance play out through the novel? Does it affect the course of Cassie's life?
4. Di Morrissey uses evocative language to conjure the lush town of Whitby Point. It's almost a character unto itself. What role do you think it plays in the narrative?
5. Cassie took a risk in leaving her marriage and her life in Sydney. In many ways she's trying to reinvent herself. Is there a time in your life when you've taken such a risk -- or wanted to?



6. The author uses interweaving storylines, one set in the past and one in the present. Did you like this structure? How did it affect the unraveling of secrets?
7. Did you find Cassie's life choices satisfying? Why or why not?
8. At the end of the novel, Cassie learns that her family is not quite what she's thought. If you were in Cassie's shoes, how would you have reacted upon learning about Patrick's secret? Can you relate to Cassie's reaction?

**About the author:**

DI MORRISSEY is one of Australia's bestselling international novelists. She trained as a journalist with Australian Consolidated Press and became Women's Editor for The Daily Mail Group in London. She had her own television program in the United States on CBS and was a regular presenter on Australia television. In addition to radio broadcasting, she has written for TV, film and theatre. She is the author of 23 bestselling novels and lives in Manning Valley, New South Wales, Australia. Visit Di at [www.dimorrissey.com](http://www.dimorrissey.com)

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