

The Mango Murders

Book 15 of the Key West Food Critic Mysteries

Discussion Questions

1. **Setting as Character:** How does the tropical backdrop of Key West influence the tone and atmosphere of the story? In what ways does the setting contribute to the mystery?
2. **Hayley's Expertise:** Hayley uses her culinary knowledge to aid in solving the crime. How important is her career as a food critic to the investigation? In what other ways does her profession help or hinder her?
3. **The Explosion:** The pivotal moment of the story is the explosion that transforms a party into chaos. How did this event shift the story's tone and escalate the stakes for Hayley?
4. **Themes of Rivalry and Envy:** The mystery revolves around professional rivalries and "recipe envy." How do these themes play out among the characters? How do they relate to the world of food and culinary competition?
5. **Family Dynamics:** How does Hayley's relationship with her mother, Janet Snow, impact the story? Does their mother-daughter dynamic add complexity to Hayley's investigation?
6. **Secrets and Lies:** The story reveals secrets involving island politics, caterers, and vendettas. How does Hayley navigate through these different layers of deception? Were there any twists that surprised you?
7. **Culinary Symbolism:** Food is not only central to Hayley's career but also to the story's mystery. How does the author use food as a symbol throughout the novel? What do you think the "mango-infused delicacies" might represent?
8. **Island Politics:** How do island politics play a role in the unfolding mystery? What does the novel suggest about the social and economic tensions in Key West?
9. **Culinary Investigation:** How does Hayley combine her culinary expertise with detective work? Do you think her approach to solving the mystery is unique because of her background?
10. **Character Growth:** In what ways does Hayley grow or change throughout the course of the novel? How does solving the mystery challenge her personally and professionally?

I hope these questions help guide your book club through a rich discussion of the novel's themes, characters, and plot twists! But most important of all, have fun!