

Amelia recommends

Calista recommends *National Parks Guide U.S.A.*

As we roll into our cold winter season here in NH, I thought it would be fun to recommend a book that can take you to some far away, wonderful places (within the US). My son and I enjoyed this book immensely! The pictures are breathtaking, while the maps are informative and helpful. We had a blast picking out our favorite parks and hope to visit some in the years to come.

Full of fun facts, travel checklists, and more!

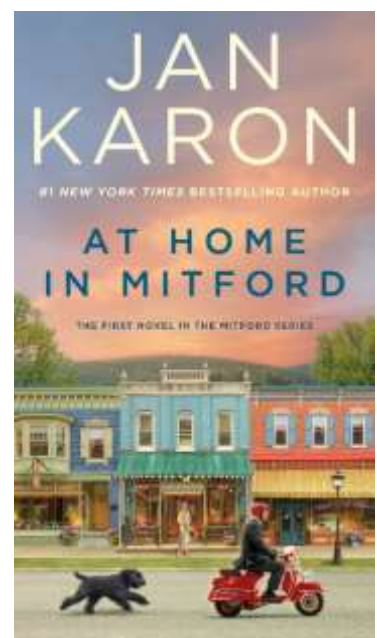
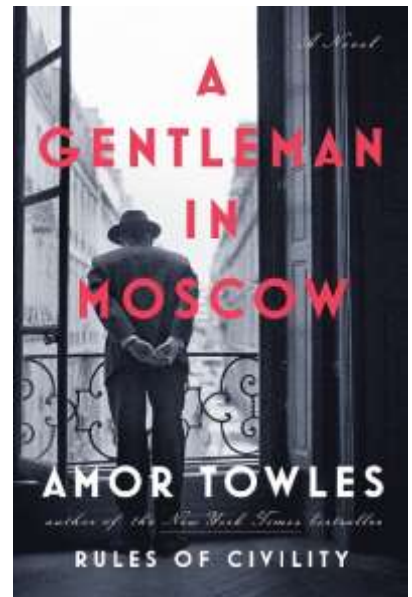
Eileen recommends *A Gentleman in Moscow* by **Amor Towles**

A Gentleman in Moscow tells the story of Count Alexander Rostov, who is sentenced to live out the rest of his life on "house arrest" in the Metropol hotel, following his "conviction" by a Bolshevik tribunal. He was convicted of being an unrepentant aristocrat and is stripped of his wealth by the new Bolshevik regime. I appreciate how he adapts to circumstances and finds contentment without losing his dignity. I also learned how structure in a book can really enhance the plot. The author says,

“Essentially, *A Gentleman in Moscow* takes the shape of a diamond on its side. From the moment the Count passes through the hotel’s revolving doors, the narrative begins opening steadily outward. Over the next two hundred pages detailed descriptions accumulate of people, rooms, objects, memories, and minor events, many of which seem almost incidental. But then, as the book shifts into its second half, the narrative begins to narrow and all of the disparate elements from the first half converge. Bit characters, passing remarks, incidental objects come swirling together and play essential roles in bringing the narrative to its sharply pointed conclusion.”

Kelly recommends *At Home in Mitford* by Jan Karon
(Mitford series #1)

So here we are in January – one of my favorite months to read. In NH it’s definitely no-guilt nesting season. What better way to



begin this season of minimal daylight hours than to begin a new series that is totally comfy and cozy?

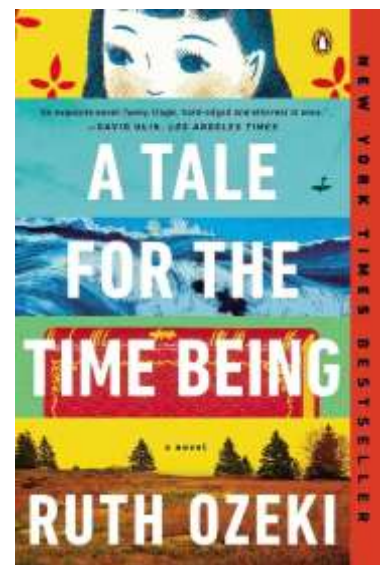
This first book introduces us to the local bachelor rector, Father Tim, who is ready for a change in his life in the charming little village of Blowing Rock, NC. Little did he know this change would come in the form of a huge dog “the size of a sofa” who moves in and won’t go away and a new attractive next door neighbor who visits quite often. Add a wayward unloved boy, a jewel theft and a 60-year-old secret and it’s a perfect recipe for a good winter’s read. The beauty of a series is being able to continue “visiting” with the characters and see their lives grow and I do love a good series just for that reason. I read this series years ago and it will forever remain a favorite. I confess to even re-reading some of the books in the series, just like visiting an old friend. Hope you check it out – we have both regular and Large Print of this first in the Mitford series.

Linda recommends ***A Tale for the Time Being*** by **Ruth Ozeki**

The discovery of a Hello Kitty lunchbox washed ashore somewhere in British Columbia is the first thread of a richly embellished tapestry. Wretched people that cause us harm. Events beyond our control that are impossible to navigate or fix. People that love us and help us learn how to live.

The author of the diary is Nao, a 16-year-old girl living in Japan by way of Sunnyvale California. She uses her diary to share her life with an unseen reader. Nao decides to write the story of her 104-year-old great grandmother, Jiko. Of course Jiko has her own story to tell and readers learn how this great grandmother came to be a Zen Buddhist Nun who makes her home in an ancient mountainside monastery. Like all good teachers Jiko helps Nao discover her individual *SUPAPAWA!*

Readers will anticipate and enjoy the layers of stories and storytelling. Footnotes throughout the novel are their own reward.



Sarah recommends **Gods of Jade and Shadow** by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

“Mythmaking. It’s greater than you or I, this tale.”

A vibrant, transporting, feminist take on the hero's journey that incorporates Mayan mythology and themes of love, forgiveness, and staying true to one's self; this is one not to be missed! It's the roaring twenties, but not in Casiopea's conservative small Mexican town. Casiopea dreams of bobbing her hair and going dancing like American girls but, instead, she is stuck fulfilling the traditional female role of housekeeper for her oppressive Grandfather and cousin. When she makes an impulsive decision to open the foreboding, ancient chest in her Grandfather's room...Casiopea unleashes more than she bargains for. This is a great crossover read for teens who enjoy stories that incorporate traditional mythology with high fantasy. ***Tip:*** There's a glossary in the back that I did not discover until after reading the book; be sure to use it on your journey.

