

Book Club Questions:
A Bakery in Paris

1. Lisette and Micheline's stories are, in many ways, two sides of the same coin. How do you feel their journeys are similar and how do they diverge? How do Lisette's privilege and Micheline's lack thereof impact their stories?
2. The setting, Paris—and specifically the village of Montmartre—is so central to the narrative that it becomes like a third main character. How is the Paris of the Commune different from Post-War Paris? Are there moments when they feel similar? What are some of the places in Paris mentioned in the book that struck you as particularly interesting or that you would like to visit?
3. Lisette and Micheline come to baking through different paths. For Lisette, it's an escape. For Micheline, it's a necessity and a duty. How does this impact their relationship with the bakery?
4. The romantic heroes, Théo and Laurent, are very different men. What role do they play in our heroines' journeys? Do you think they hinder or help them in their quests?
5. Père Sébastien and Pierrine play an important role in Lisette's acclimation to life in Montmartre. What are some of the lessons she learns from them? Do you think they are well meaning and useful? How do these characters contribute to the overall message about friendship and community that the novel conveys?
6. What about the role of friendship in Micheline's story? What do you notice is different about the two women in this area of their lives?
7. What is the significance of the bakery being dark green? The author emphasizes the color several times... what are some possibilities for the surface level and deeper meanings of this choice?
8. Had you heard of the Paris Commune before reading this book? Why do you think it is historically significant? Why do you think a moment of history that was so pivotal to French culture is not covered more extensively in fiction?
9. Lisette's mother has a major change of heart. Why do you think this is? Do you think it was too abrupt, or does it serve a larger symbolic purpose?
10. Which pastry featured in the book* would you most like to try?

*NB: all the recipes in the book are adapted from the original Carême recipes. For modern adaptations of these and more, go to Aimie's blog (www.aimiekrunyan.com/blog) and her social media for recipes and videos.