

## Fall Drinks: Pumpkin Spice?

BY SHANNON COOK



Photo Credits: Theo Crazzolara

**I**S PUMPKIN SPICE the new pineapple on pizza? This fall flavor phenom combines heavy cream and nutmeggy spices with just a hint of coffee. I'd be lying if I said I've never encountered any pushback about my love for pineapple on pizza, similar to how I now seem to be bombarded with harsh judgments for enjoying the sweet simplicity of a Starbucks Pumpkin Spice Latte (PSL). I don't trust anyone who says they don't like it, it truly is delicious. However, these days, it seems that pumpkin-spice-flavored everything has taken over grocery shelves and coffee shops alike. The consensus is that it is delicious, but is it more than just the drink that some people criticize? Some hate the flavor and some hate the idea of it. It's an overrated, cliché suburban staple that only sparks the image of Uggs and leggings in some people's minds. Honestly, I wouldn't be surprised if we soon find high

school students slapping PSL stickers on their notebooks. Pumpkin Spice is a cult classic, rather than a simple indulgence. It isn't a drink, it's a lifestyle.

None of us can deny those delectably spicy lattes are always a hit at the Starbucks drive-through. The lines at the coffee shop seem to get longer when autumn rolls around. It's something many of us are excited about as soon as we start to feel the crisp autumn air and fun holidays approaching, but why? Do we like it or do we just like the idea of it? Is it because it hints that crunchy leaves, chilly days, and cozy flannels are soon to come? With no doubt that this flavor has taken over the coffee-loving community over the past few years. We can see this flavor expand gradually into even more of our sweets and snacks. Pumpkin Spice Oreos? Got it. Pumpkin Spice Latte? A classic. Pumpkin Spice Kit-Kats? Delicious.

Of course, there are plenty who hate the PSL trend. You either love it or you hate it, there is no in-between. Is it the most controversial drink of the twenty-first century, particularly among your average autumn-loving Minnesotans? Who knows. I've decided ordering through the online app and picking it up is better- that way I can hide my shame as I indulge in its spicy deliciousness.

## Book Review: "Outlander" by Diana Gabaldon

BY DAVINA BELLINGER

**O**UTLANDER (1991) BY Diana Gabaldon, is a brilliant novel about a World War II combat nurse, Claire Randall, who goes to Scotland with her husband, Frank Randall. In 1946, the married couple traveled to Inverness, Scotland. One afternoon, Claire visits a circle of standing stones and suddenly finds herself in the year 1743. She encounters her husband's six-times great-grandfather Black Jack Randall, who is not a good person. Suddenly, Claire falls under the hands of the Scottish outlaws and finds herself in danger from both Jacobites and Redcoats. Through this journey, she finds safety in the arms of Jamie Fraser, a gallant young Scots warrior. This turn of events leaves Claire torn between Frank and Jamie. For those who love novels about travel, adventure, history, and romance, I recommend this book, along with the other eight books in the series.

The book is told through the main character Claire's point of view, with the exception of a few side narratives. One of the things from the book I enjoyed was when Claire meets Jamie's sister, Jenny, and her family in a small farm town called Lallybroch. The Fraser clan owned Lallybroch because family is symbolic of Scottish culture. Another enjoyable part would be when readers can see the intense chemistry between Claire and Jamie building due to their loyalty to each other. One last memorable scene would be the first time Claire is in the hands of the Scottish outlaws and brought to Castle Leoch. Claire met the MacKenzie clan and their leader Callum MacKenzie. Here, she

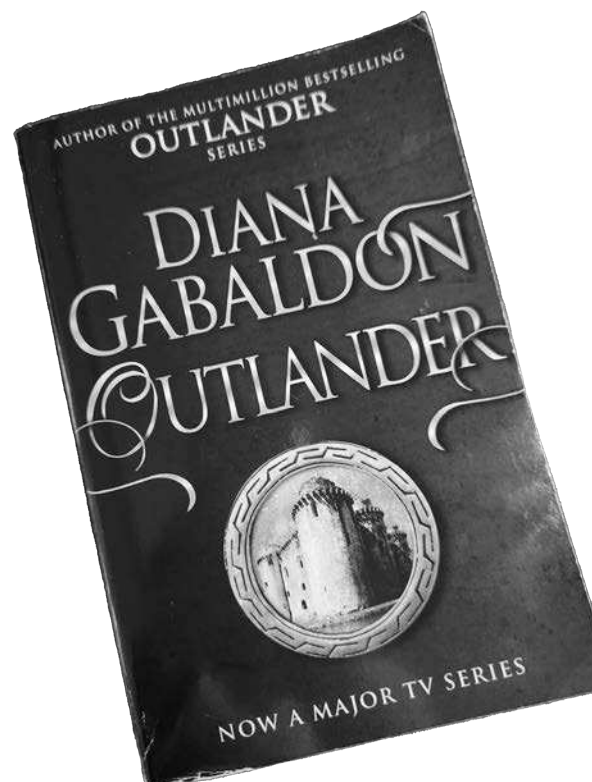


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started to learn about the family and how the soldiers are all related to one another.

One of the most complex parts of this novel is picturing the rawness that Diana Gabaldon presents in the story. For example, visually seeing and reading the scene where Jamie Fraser was sent to prison and nearly beaten to death by the Redcoats because he and the other Jacobite rebels were considered

enemies of the Crown was quite complex. The rawness felt during Claire's dilemma of choosing to stay in the past for Jamie or come back to the present and be with Frank was the most complex part of her journey. If Claire stayed, she would face the dangers of 1743 versus the twentieth century where there is more security.

Overall, I would rate Outlander by Diana Gabaldon five out of five stars. The rich history and the connections that all the characters have makes for a really remarkable read. The book series also has an adapted television series that follows Caitriona Balfe, who plays Claire, and Sam Heughan, who plays Jamie Fraser. The next season is expected to come out sometime next year.

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