



How to Love an American Man

By Kristine Gasbarre
ISBN: 9780061997396

Introduction

After dating self-absorbed men in New York, Kristine Gasbarre relocates to Italy to be near her new English beau and research the roots of her lovable Italian-American grandfather. But just weeks into her European adventure, the Brit takes a job in the Middle East and her grandpa, who's been an indelible force in her life, passes away.

Krissy moves back to her Pennsylvania hometown to mourn her grandfather's death and help her close-knit family care for her notoriously non-maternal grandmother. That's when Grandma Gloria reveals the untold story of her 60-year marriage and the love lessons that made her relationship so much more successful than the ones her granddaughter's known. As Krissy continues to explore new relationships, it's her grandmother's unwavering femininity and giving spirit that teach Krissy what it takes to love a man: first she has to learn the value of her own unique beauty.

Questions for Discussion

1. Krissy's life has always been very family oriented, and as she's grown up, different family members have impacted her in numerous ways. In your own experience, who in your family has had the biggest influence on shaping your life and your outlook?
2. As Krissy falls for the doctor, her grandmother provides heartfelt wisdom and advice on love and the value of a woman. What is the best love advice a parent/grandparent has given you?
3. How do Krissy and her family cope with the loss of her grandfather? What are some ways you have coped with loss in your own life? Did you find their way of coping admirable or too lighthearted?
4. Do you think American men can embody the characteristics exemplified by Krissy's Italian grandfather, or are some of these traits culturally specific? Do American men possess different traits that are unique to their culture and society? If so, do you think these traits make them attractive relationship partners?
5. Which of Grandma Glo's lessons in love did you find the most helpful?
6. After living on her own for so many years, Krissy moves back in with her parents. How can a young woman hold onto her independence in a situation like this? Based on your perception, how did the author process her "boomerang" move back home?
7. Krissy has a brief relationship with a younger man. Do you think it is possible for women to find love with men who are in a different stage of life?
8. How can you take care of an elderly member of your family while still respecting him/her as an independent adult? What did Krissy do to help her grandmother during this transition, and what would you have done in her situation?
9. Krissy falls for a man who is focused on his career. She also explains how her grandfather put his career first in many instances. Is it possible to fully love a man who loves his career more than his wife? Do you think this was the case for the leading men in this story?
10. What does Krissy learn about herself during her time at home? How did you relate to her quest for love and happiness?
11. What kept you turning the pages more: Krissy's journey with her grandmother, or her mysterious relationship with the doctor...or perhaps another aspect of the story that you enjoyed?
12. Did Krissy's story bring out an appreciation for or curiosity about your grandparents? What questions might you ask them if you had the chance?
13. Some reviewers have compared *How to Love an American Man* to Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat, Pray, Love*. If you've read both, what parallels do you see?
14. After the book's ending, what do you believe happened between Krissy and Dr. Chris?
15. Based on what you've read in *How to Love an American Man* and what you've seen in other media or from the elders in your life, what are some primary ways you think romantic relationships today differ from our parents' and grandparents' relationships?

About the Author

Kristine Gasbarre is a celebrity interviewer and a culture and lifestyle contributor to women's publications. She is a graduate of John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio and Fordham University in New York City with degrees in psychology and media studies. Krissy lives in Brooklyn, New York and is at work on her second book, a follow-up to *How to Love an American Man*. Her last name is pronounced the Italian way except in her hometown, where it rhymes with "raspberry."