



One Weekend
Shelley Banks

Book Club Kit

About the Book

For twenty-five years, Evie, Gaby, Laura, and Anna have shared the kind of friendship that survives careers, marriages, motherhood, heartbreak, and the passing of time.

Their annual girls' weekend is meant to be an escape — a chance to relax, reconnect, and temporarily leave behind the pressures of everyday life.

But beneath the laughter and familiar routines, each woman is carrying secrets that threaten the foundation of everything they thought they knew about each other.

Over one unforgettable weekend on Mt Tamborine, long-held truths begin to surface, forcing each woman to question who she is, what she truly wants, and whether friendship can survive honesty.

About the Author

Shelley Banks is a Brisbane-based author of contemporary women's fiction. With a background in communications and a passion for storytelling, she writes emotionally resonant novels that explore relationships, identity, and personal growth.

Her other works include:

- Finding Home
- The Long Way Around
- The Diary and the Green Dress

She is also the creator of September Sprouts, a blog featuring both fiction and non-fiction pieces designed to inspire readers to explore new perspectives.



Themes to Explore

- Friendship & loyalty
- Secrets & identity
- The invisible pressures on women
- Self-worth & reinvention
- Love in different forms

Discussion Questions

1. Which character did you relate to most and why?
2. Did your opinion of any character change significantly throughout the novel?
3. The women have known each other since high school. How has their shared history shaped their adult relationships?
4. How important is honesty in friendship?
5. Were any of the secrets justified?
6. What role does nostalgia play in the novel?
7. How does the setting of Mt Tamborine contribute to the atmosphere of the story?
8. What does the novel suggest about emotional isolation?
9. Which character seemed happiest on the surface? Were they actually happy?
10. Did the novel change your perspective on any issue explored in the story?

Discussion Questions

11. How do the women support one another, even when they don't fully understand each other?
12. Which scene stayed with you the longest after finishing the book?
13. What does One Weekend ultimately say about women's friendships?
14. If the story continued beyond the ending, where do you imagine each woman would be in five years?
15. What do you think the title One Weekend symbolises beyond the literal trip?

AUTHOR Q&A

What inspired the idea for One Weekend?

I was interested in exploring the idea that even people who are very close can still carry hidden struggles and secrets. I also loved the concept of placing four lifelong friends together in one contained setting and watching what happens when the distractions of everyday life are removed. The girls' weekend became the perfect backdrop for emotional honesty, tension, reflection, and connection.

Which character came to you first?

Evie came to me first. I could clearly picture someone who appeared to be coping on the surface while quietly struggling underneath. From there, the other women developed around her, each bringing different personalities, fears, strengths, and emotional experiences into the story.

AUTHOR Q&A

Did real places inspire the setting?

Yes. Mt Tamborine heavily inspired the novel. I wanted the setting to feel warm, lush, peaceful, and slightly removed from ordinary life. The mountain scenery, rainforests, cafés, antique shops, and views all helped create the reflective and emotional mood of the novel.

Which character was hardest emotionally to write?

Evie was definitely the hardest emotionally to write because so much of her pain is internalised. Writing someone who is trying to appear “fine” while quietly unravelling underneath required a lot of emotional restraint and subtlety.

Were any scenes particularly difficult?

Yes, several scenes involving emotional confrontation were difficult because I wanted them to feel honest rather than overly dramatic. Some of the quieter moments were actually the hardest to write — particularly scenes where characters realise things about themselves they’ve been avoiding for years.

AUTHOR Q&A

Which character surprised you most while writing?

Laura surprised me the most. Initially, I saw her as the more carefree and humorous member of the group, but as I wrote, I realised how much vulnerability, loneliness, and emotional resilience existed beneath her humour.

What themes were most important to you?

The themes most important to me were friendship, emotional loneliness, identity, honesty, self-worth, and the invisible emotional pressures many women carry. I also wanted to explore the idea that people can lose parts of themselves while trying to meet everyone else's expectations.

What do you hope readers take away from the story?

I hope readers feel emotionally connected to the characters and reflective about their own relationships and friendships. More than anything, I hope the novel reminds readers that people are often carrying far more than they let others see, and that kindness, honesty, and connection matter deeply.

Reader Reflection

Share your:

- Favourite character
- Favourite quote
- Which secret shocked you the most
- Your dream girls' weekend destination
- Which friendship dynamic felt most familiar

Creative Engagement

Create an atmosphere inspired by the cosy mountain weekend:

- Cheese platters
- Red wine
- Herbal teas
- Rustic breads
- Chocolate desserts
- Grazing boards
- Warm comfort food
- Autumn-inspired cocktails

Optional theme:

- Create a "girls' weekend away" atmosphere with candles, blankets, flowers, and acoustic music.

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**A single weekend can change everything—even
twenty-five years of friendship.**

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