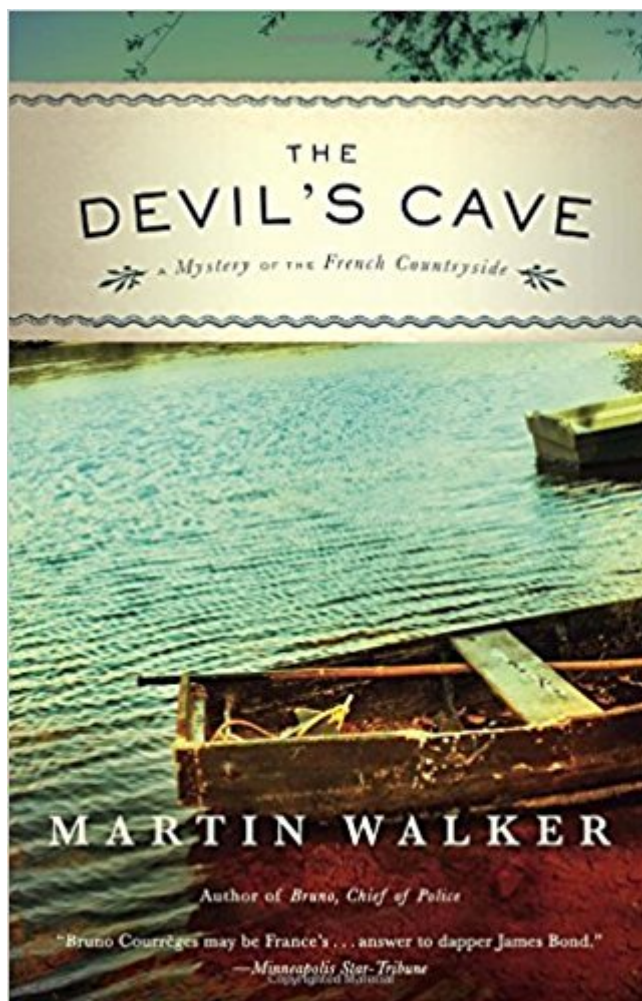


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The Devil's Cave: A Mystery Of The French Countryside



Synopsis

The sixth installment in the delightful, internationally acclaimed series featuring Chief of Police Bruno. It's spring in St. Denis. The village choir is preparing for its Easter concert, the wildflowers are blooming, and among the lazy whorls of the river a dead woman is found floating in a boat. This means another case for Bruno, the town's cherished chief of police. With the discovery of sinister markings and black candles near the body, it seems to Bruno that the occult might be involved. And as questions mount—most notably about a troubling real estate proposal in the region and the sudden reappearance of an elderly countess—Bruno and his colleagues are drawn ever closer to a climactic showdown in the Gouffre de Colombac: the place locals call the Devil's Cave.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the fifth in the series starring Benoît "Bruno" Courrèges, chief of police in a tiny village in the Dordogne region of France. The French countryside, with its glorious food and wine, provides stark contrast to the dark deeds of the crimes Bruno investigates. For example, when Bruno and his aide go fishing, hoping to discover the source of a victim's body, they take along limes to flavor the trout they catch and fillet on the river bank. This mystery has a very dark basis: a naked woman is seen in a boat floating down the river. The woman has been murdered, with a symbol traced in black on her belly. Black candles and the severed head of a cockerel are found in the boat. Bruno investigates the possible black-magic connection, unearthing rituals that go back to

a black mass enacted by a desperate mistress of Louis XIV. There are contemporary tie-ins as well to a real-estate scheme in the area. An enchanting new entry in this solid series. --Connie Fletcher
--This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

• Bruno Courrèges may be France's . . . answer to dapper James Bond. • "The Minneapolis Star-Tribune" • "Sensational . . . Gives Walker more opportunity to play tour guide, leading us through the checkered history of this astonishing region." • "The New York Times" • "A sumptuous French mystery filled with wine, cheese, and a lush Dordogne countryside." • "The Christian Science Monitor" • "Bruno Courrèges is a wonderful breath of fresh air in a world of bent cops with whiskey noses, dubious attitudes and principles. . . . A terrific addition to a compelling series." • "The New York Journal of Books" • "The Devil's Cave brings to life a pastoral setting where the gourmet menu is as spicy as the sex, and where readers can share in the timeless beauty of the French countryside, laced with a little murder." • "BookPage" • "Another tasty read." • "The Decatur Daily" • "A series that is maturing as richly as the wines and cheeses that grace its pages." • "Reviewingtheevidence.com" • "Charming. . . . Bruno, an affable gourmet and dogged investigator, is a winning lead, and Walker perfectly balances developments in his private life with the homicide inquiry." • "Publishers Weekly" • "An affordable way to have an adventure in the French countryside this summer. . . . Strikes a captivating balance between suspense and delight." • "The Washingtonian"

The Bruno chief of police series is a total guilty pleasure! Characters are well developed, interesting and dynamic. Bruno's cooking is fascinating. The crime to solve is complex and requires creative thinking and persistence. This book includes a very dynamic end sequence that takes place well below ground.

Saturday morning two weeks before Easter and Bruno Courreges, the one-man police force of the the small Dordogne town of St. Denis, is in church listening to choir practice when news comes of a nude body in a punt drifting down the river. Soon rumor has it that the body of the unknown woman shows hallmarks of a ritual Satanic killing. Then comes word of allegedly related devilish doings in the town's leading tourist attraction, the Gouffre de Colombac (a.k.a. the Devil's Cave). Or is it, as Bruno suspects, just a gambit by the owner to attract more visitors? Meanwhile, town honchos are at odds with the mayor over a proposal by a relatively unknown group to build a "vacation village with a golf course" in St. Denis. Along the way, a new puppy arrives. Isabelle returns. Bruno cooks

up some mouth-watering meals, as usual. And assorted in- and out-of-wedlock heirs scheme for control over the estate of the ill, elderly and long unseen "Red Countess," a once famous WWII Resistance courier who hung out with Sartre and Piaf and Brel in the '50s and De Gaulle called "a heroine of France." A long, tense gunfight inside the Devil's Cave ends this fifth in the Bruno series with a bang. Martin Walker's brilliantly imagined and wonderfully well written "Bruno" series, in chronological order as of July, 2014: "Bruno, Chief of Police," "The Dark Vineyard," "Black Diamond," "The Crowded grave," "The Devil's Cave," "Resistance Man" and "Children of War." Sidenote: If you go to Walker's Bruno web site, you can watch a half-hour book tour chat by the author at Washington's Politics and Prose bookstore, where he tells anecdotes and behind-the-scenes stories about the series, himself, the cop who inspired the character of Bruno and some of the real life people and history and incidents that would find their way into these books.

For mystery fans there is something so satisfying in finding a series which you love and there is a certain excitement and anticipation when a new book for the series is written. That is exactly how I felt with *The Devil's Cave*, the most recent of the Bruno Chief of Police series. I am delighted to say that author Martin Walker did not disappoint me in the most recent installment, which begins with Bruno trying to fish a dead naked woman from a raft on the River Vézère that runs through his town of St. Denis in the Dordogne region of France. Bruno continues to delight and charm, rough enough to interest and polished enough to entice. He still rides his horse Hector, tools around the countryside rubbing elbows with the local farmers and can cook a mean omelet by leaving a truffle which he dug up himself in the egg carton to infuse flavor into the eggs. While Bruno and the villagers are the heart of every Walker story, he never shorts on the mystery which always includes a bit of adventure and excitement, this time deep in a cave. If you are a mystery fan and have not tried the Bruno Chief of Police series I encourage you to give them a try.

The people of the Perigord must be a bit slow! Bruno comes to live in the sleepy place on earth and so far we've had enough international crime in the area to fill four novels - will the villagers ever make the connection? This time Bruno's crime solving skills revolve around a cave but the author missed a trick - it would have been perfectly plausible to the regular reader to discover Batman living there. No worries - we still get participants from Hollywood, Canada and the Lebanon and the usual helicopter or two. And, of course, Isabelle from the elite French international crime fighting force manages to get in on the action too. I've already read the next book in the series.

I really enjoy these books- particularly the character development and the way St Denis life has been developed over the course of the novels. Just makes me want to visit the French countryside. Of course, if I do I will be secretly hoping for a nice meal and the company of these characters. One of my favorite parts of this book is Bruno's attendance at a funeral for one of St Denis's family members- shows so much about him and the duty he feels to St Denis and its people.

I just don't seem to be able to stop reading Martin Walker's "Bruno" Series. They are extremely well written about an area and subject he is fully confident on. As a new author myself (WW2 action adventure novel "The Frenchman's Daughters) and, living close to Bruno's town I find his writing style fascinating to the point of almost living amongst the plot. I can really associate with his characters, the various antics and the gastronomy. I think after reading each book I need to think about dieting as the food element is also so good. Now downloading the next book in the series with that " here we go again feeling." Thankyou Martin. Paul Sinkinson.

This is the second in the Bruno, Chief of Police series (I now have all 5 and waiting for the next one). The second book did not disappoint: the writing is superb, the descriptions eloquent, the characters real in their foibles and strengths. Actually, I hate to call them characters: they are real people, and Bruno's dealing with them is sensitive and slyly diplomatic. Nuff said. READ THE BOOK!

As always, I find the author's delicious descriptions of Bruno's recipes an integral part of the plot. Even this pescatarian likes to read about his creativity and wonderful use of local ingredients. Then, of course, there is the beautiful countryside and local flavor, both of which add so much to the well-told mysteries. I am certainly looking forward to the next story and to a week or more actually visiting these areas.

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