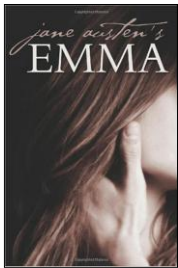


Romantic novels

Since Valentine's Day is in February, I thought we should look at some great romantic reads. This genre places its primary focus on the relationship and romantic love between two characters. Endings are emotionally satisfying and usually optimistic although this isn't always a requirement.

There are many kinds of romances – historical romances, contemporary romances, literary romances, time-travel romances, science-fiction romances, Christian romance, and even paranormal and gothic romance. Most of the following could also be read by any reader so are not exclusive to romance readers.

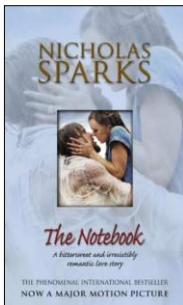
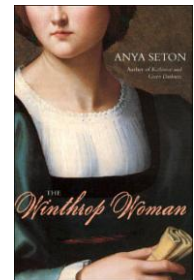


Austen, Jane. Emma.

Jane Austen finished six novels in her lifetime. Wealthy, spoiled and opinionated - Emma is her most infuriating but also most loveable heroine. Emma's misguided matchmaking attempts go seriously wrong but she eventually finds guidance from the quiet, serious Mr. Knightly.

Seton, Anya. Katherine.

Anya Seton's classic written in 1954 is about the great love story between John of Gaunt, an English prince and his mistress, Katherine Swynford. This novel has everything – war, adultery, political intrigue, murder, redemption and even the Black Death of the 14th century. Some of Seton's other books are also very entertaining.

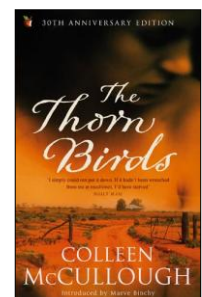


Sparks, Nicholas. Notebook.

If you want to get your heartstrings seriously pulled, try this one. It isn't literary but I guarantee you'll need a box of tissues by the time it is finished. Alison, who has Alzheimer's and lives in a retirement home, has an old lover come and read her a notebook written many years ago during an unforgettable summer. Who did Alison really end up with – the romantic rascal or the attorney she's engaged to?

McCullough, Colleen. The Thorn birds.

An epic novel published in the 1970s about the love between Australian Maggie and the rather arrogant Father Ralph. A great book about the challenges and heartbreaks of forbidden love...





Green, Graham. End of the affair.

Set in London just before and after World War II, this book examines religion, love and duty. It is about the mysterious ending of a great love affair and the reasons why. This book is a thoughtful examination of the relationship between the sexes in a literary format.

Golon, Anne. Angelique.

This series originally published in French in the 1950s and then translated into English in the 1960s has all the touches of classic romance: a fiery, beautiful heroine, swashbuckling heroes, and exotic settings. Although I haven't read the series in 45 years, it is still better than many modern romances. If you like the Outlander series by Diane Gaboldon, you'll enjoy this series just as much. It has everything but time travel.

