

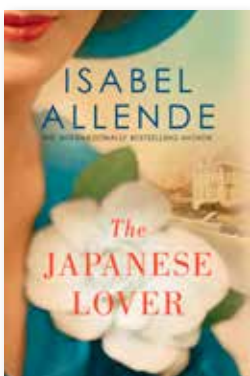
# BOOKS TO WRAP IN A BOW

Looking for great books to put under the tree this Christmas? Then look no further than these five standout reads, four of which are from Australian authors. Read about the dark secrets lurking in the past of the Edevane family in *The Lake House* by Queensland author Kate Morton. Or delve into the true crime tale of *Kidnapped*, which recounts the fascinating but horrific story of the abduction of nine-year-old Graeme Thorne in 1960 after his parents won the Opera House Lottery. Author Mark Tedeschi, who is also the Senior Crown Prosecutor in NSW, tells a riveting tale of greed, tragedy and painstaking detection work. Then, for a bit of light relief, immerse yourself in the memoir of popular television presenter Amanda Keller in *Natural Born Keller*. And Tom Keneally will intrigue you with his version of a real-life Australian connection with exiled French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte.



**The Lake House**  
Kate Morton

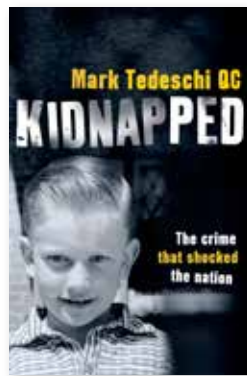
It's the morning after exclusive Midsummer Eve party of the Edevanes family in Cornwall in 1933 – and their youngest child, Theo, is nowhere to be found. After months of futile searching, the family pack up and leave their beautiful country home, never to return. But in 2003, a young female police officer stumbles into the lost gardens surrounding the abandoned house, determined to find out what happened.



**The Japanese Lover**  
Isabell Allende

In 1939, when Poland falls under the shadow of the Nazis. Alma's parents send her away to live with an aunt and uncle in San Francisco. There she meets Ichimei, the son of the family's Japanese gardener, and between them love blossoms. After Pearl Harbour, the two are pulled apart when Ichimei and his family are declared enemies by the US government.

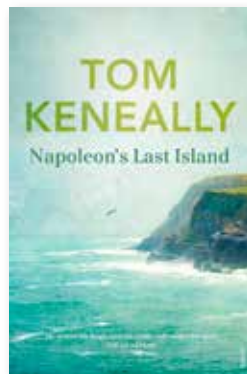
Decades later, Alma is nearing the end of her long and eventful life. Irina, a care worker struggling to come to terms with her own troubled past, meets the older woman and her grandson, Seth, at a nursing home. As Irina and Seth forge a friendship, they become intrigued by a series of letters sent to Alma, and they learn about Ichimei and this extraordinary secret passion that has endured for nearly 70 years.



**Kidnapped**  
Mark Tedeschi

When eight-year-old Graeme Thorne was kidnapped on his way to school in July 1960, Australia was gripped with fear and shock. Just weeks earlier, Graeme's parents had won a fortune in the Opera House Lottery, but this so-called good luck attracted the attention of the perpetrator, Stephen Bradley.

*Kidnapped* tells the astounding true story of how this crime was planned and committed, and describes the extraordinary police investigation that was launched to track the criminal down. Mark Tedeschi explores the mind of the intriguing and seriously flawed Stephen Bradley, and also the points of view of the victim, his family and the police, whose work pioneered the use of many modern forensic science techniques.



**Napoleon's Last Island**  
Tom Keneally

While living in exile on the mid-Atlantic island of St Helena, Napoleon Bonaparte exerted an extraordinary influence on young Betsy Balcombe. How did she get from Napoleon's side to the Australian bush?

As a young woman, Betsy Balcombe lived with her family on St Helena. They befriended and served the former military and political leader, but they were ultimately ruined by their relationship with him. Betsy's father never recovered from the ups and downs of his association with Napoleon. But his family flourished in Australia and remain renowned pastoralists in Victoria.



**Natural Born Keller**  
Amanda Keller

Alternately hilarious and moving, television presenter Amanda Keller takes us on a nostalgia-filled journey through her life, from her childhood in sunny Brisbane to her daggy teen years in suburban Sydney. She spends her heady college days in Bathurst, where wine was called 'claret' and came in a box, and finally to establishing a stellar career in TV and radio, from the challenge of turning on a typewriter at *Simon Townsend's Wonder World!* to the fun of travelling around the planet for *Beyond 2000*, despite having no scientific background and absolutely no sense of direction. Along the way she falls in love with 'a nice Kiwi boy' who becomes her husband and she tells the story of the arrival of their two hard-won sons. But without too many icky bits. 🚫