



Dark Dates

Tracey Sinclair

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All Cassandra Bick wants is to be left to get on with doing her job. But when you're a Sensitive whose business is running a dating agency for vampires, life is never going to be straightforward – especially when there's a supernatural war brewing in London, a sexy new bloodsucker in town and your mysterious, homicidal and vampire hating ex-lover chooses this moment to reappear in your life...

Witty, sharp and entertaining, Dark Dates is a heady mix of vampires, witches and werewolves – with the occasional angel thrown in – and introduces Cassandra Bick, a likeable heroine destined to join the ranks of fantasy's feistiest females.

Dark Dates Details

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From Reader Review Dark Dates for online ebook

Victoriahoward says

Witty and fast-paced, Dark Dates is an enthralling read. The lead character is a strong woman with plenty of grit and feminist drive. Yes, she's sometimes ruled by lust rather than sense but I like that this is a book where women are allowed to show their sexuality without the stereotypical titillation. The writing is funny and sarcastic and the supporting characters are well-developed. I can't wait to read number two.

Jacque says

Vampire dating agency? I'd like to say that is a new one on me but it's not. I'm following another series that has a paranormal dating service (the title will remain anonymous) which is why I wanted to read Dark Dates. I really am enjoying the other series and I wanted to see how they compare to each other. Would there be similarities? Would it be cheesy? And my conclusion is...

I love Cassandra Bick! Oh my gosh, what a flipping riot. I laughed or snickered my whole way through. . Here's a breakdown of Dark Dates. Cassandra runs a dating agency for vampires. Her assistance, Medea, is a Wiccan and is very hot! Cass herself is a Sensitive: meaning she can sense Others (not human). Business for her is doing well until she gets a visit. The PTB in town have taken notice of her services and they want her to stop...or else. There's a supernatural war that's coming to town and just when Cassandra thinks it can't get any worse, her homicidal and vampire hating ex-lover shows up. Could things get any worse?

I knew from the very beginning, from the first words of the first chapter, I was going to love Dark Dates. Anytime Buffy is referenced, you know the author has a sense of humor. By the end of that first chapter, I knew I was going to want the rest of the series. The characters are engaging, flawed and yet completely lovable. The story line is fast paced and engaging. The humor is tongue in cheek and peppered with pop culture references, which makes it twice as funny when you realize not everybody was quite up-to-date. That will make more sense after reading the book. There's action, intrigue, and lots of biscuits to devour all wrapped up in this wonderful Brit humor.

What really makes this story shine is its characters. Cassandra is witty, sarcastic and doesn't hold back. Of course, since the story is told in her first person POV it's easily to assume she is the star player. Now while she probably was, the others certainly were nothing to sneeze at. Medea is (annoyingly) unflappable and very much just not a random sidekick. Laclos (Vampire) is charming, witty, oh who am I kidding. He's a flirt and so full of himself, but he can't help but fall in love with him and his ego. Cain is her ex (sort of) one again/off again boyfriend? Not exactly sure at the beginning, but they do bump uglies, and he is easily my favorite character. Cass is not quite sure what he is, but that is a Otherness puzzle for her to figure out. I have got to give props to the author when it comes to the sex scenes. She kept them sexy without going into details, which made them all the more hot while my mind was allowed to fill in the blanks. . There's a lot of banter going on between all these characters, that is when you could get Cain to talk and you can get a word in around Laclos' naked ego. And what would a story be without bad guys. Yes, there are a few and it wasn't until they were exposed did I figure it out.

Having never read Tracey Sinclair before, I had mixed feelings when I read the blurb but that changed immediately after reading the first sentence in Chapter 1. I have found a new addiction in Cassandra Bick

Chronicles! No sooner did I finish reading Dark Dates, I immediately jumped into the next book. I anticipate having a fairly hefty book hanger once I finish the whole series. I am screaming from the rooftops this is a series that must be read. Read. Dark Dates. Now.

I received this book from the JeepDiva for the express purposes of an honest review. The opinions and rating of this review are solely mine.

Stars - 5, Flames - 2.5

Nina says

[or two?? (hide spoiler)]

Mez says

I really enjoyed Dark Dates. It had me hooked right from the start. So hooked that I couldn't put it down and ended up reading the whole book in just one day!

Cassandra Bick, founder of the vampire/human dating agency whose name gives the title to the novel, is a very likeable hero. She's witty, strong-willed and doesn't suffer fools gladly. She also has a cat, loves cake, and doesn't always think things through, which means she ends up in several nasty scrapes as a result. What's not to love?

Tracey Sinclair gives us a book with a fast-moving, funny, engrossing plot. Despite its cast of a hero who is a sensitive, vampires, shape-shifters, monsters and all manner of "Others", the story is written in a way that makes you think "You know, this could really be actually happening!". I'm not sure how the author managed that, but hats off to her for doing so!

I loved the book from start to finish and found myself laughing out loud at Cassandra's sarcastic comebacks; even when her life is threatened, her humour defence mechanism doesn't fail her.

It's also great to have a strong female protagonist who is unapologetically "feminist" and a lot of well-developed supporting characters with their own stories to tell, some of whom - vampire and non - are pretty damn HOT, which makes for some steamy scenes, convincingly described, but never overdone and not a sequin in sight!

I'd highly recommend Dark Dates to anyone who likes the paranormal urban fantasy genre, but also to readers like myself who are relative newcomers to the vampire scene. I've never even watched Buffy, but that didn't stop me from enjoying this book immensely and I'll definitely be reading the others in the series to find out what Cassandra gets up to next. The book leaves us with a few intriguing question marks as to how Cass's future will pan out.

Five very well-deserved stars!

Louise says

Having just re-read this book, I have had to upgrade it from 4 to 5 stars as I had forgotten just how much I enjoyed it! Great humour and brilliant characters, as well as plenty of in-jokes for fans of the genre; yes, it's a book heavily featuring vampires, which are usually full of clichés, but this book is also well aware of that and plays off it to brilliant effect. A fantastic start to an enjoyable series!

Chris Chalmers says

Odd to say but this is my first vampire novel! Never been a fan of those creatures of the fright, book, film or any other way (....u always know what's gonna happen, right?)... but I came across Dark Dates by Tracey Sinclair on here, determined that I wouldn't be interested - and was completely hooked after reading 20 lines of the sample! It's fast and funny, dark as you'd expect and devilishly more-ish. Give it a whirl if you're that way inclined, and take a look even if you're not. The lady writes like a dream ...or just possibly, your very worst nightmare. Recommended!

The Book Tart says

originally reviewed on <http://thebooktart.com/book-review/re...>

I love to read paranormal romance and urban fantasy. I pick up a book from the different genres with certain expectations. The main one is that the story will have an element of the fantastical in it. Magic, supernatural beings, and/or psychic powers etc. The 2nd thing I expect is that in the PNR genre novel the romantic relationship will play a large roll in the story arc. And that the UF genre will be about the main protagonists journey and doesn't promise you happy ever after. I like both types of stories. :)

Dark Dates is urban fantasy. I got a huge kick out of the heroine, Cassandra. She is a Sensitive and knows things about people... This story is written in first person, so you're right there with Cass. I loved her humor and snark. I felt like we could be friends. She liked so many of the things I do, like cake and pretty, uncomfortable shoes and she must watch as much tv as I do with all her pop culture references to Buffy, Angel's Wolfram & Hart and Supernatural's Winchester boys.

Cassandra owns a dating agency and uses her gift to help supernaturals find partners. I liked how she saw the underworld as not too separate from the overworld (us). "I realized they weren't that different from anyone else. Some are bastards, some are sweeties - set aside by their nature they may be, but for the most part they are just like us... they were also a great business opportunity." lol So Cass interviews vampires and finds out what they are hoping for then she and her assistant Medea (whom I adored!) throw mixer events for the paranormals and humans to connect. Now some of the powerful beings in town don't like what she's doing and start threatening her.

An old flame of Cassandra's come back into her life. From some reviews I had read, I really thought I

wouldn't like Cain. But I did. He has an attitude of anything necessary to get the job done. He reminded me a tiny bit of Edward from the Anita Blake series. Casandra's relationship with him is hard to describe. There's passion and emotion but he only visits her occasionally before he's off to fight other battles. There is a lot of chemistry between them and she enjoys his visits. (The erotic content is hot but a lot more implied than spelled out.) He is mysterious and some of his secrets made me want to shake him. Would it hurt to communicate? :p He's come back to town because something bad is about to go down and she seems to be in the middle of it.

Vampires in London are being murdered and the threats against Cass and her business start to escalate. I loved watching her find strength and courage to stand up against the powers that are trying to take her out. She even uses her purse and for another attack she uses an item from her kitchen! She's resourceful and doesn't give up and keeps her snarky sense of humor. :)

Here are a few of my fav lines...

♥ "I pay my direct debit to Amnesty International. I'm aware there are mean people in the world."

His mouth twitched into a smile.

"Mean people?" I love how you can mix with monsters on a daily basis yet the worst you can say about the evil that walks the earth is that there are 'mean people'?"

The evil that walks the earth? You see what I have to put up with?

"Well, that's the whole thing with you, isn't it?" I retorted, taking his bait, the same way I always did. "You don't hunt the bad guys. You hunt a very specific set of bad guys, because you've decided their very nature makes them 'evil', so you're going all Winchester on their arses."

He looks at me blankly. "I don't carry a Winchester. I carry a Glock."

♥ "Ah. my apologies, I am Laclos."

"Of course you are. Louis and Lestat being taken."

♥ "I think I may have issues." I said into the phone. I swear, I could hear Medea roll her eyes in response.

"I think you may have to narrow that down a little."

Dark Dates has vampires, witches, shapeshifters, daemons and angels oh my! I love Cassandra and I enjoyed the secondary characters too, especially Medea and her partner. Laclos, the sexy, powerful, vampire with rock star like charisma, intrigued me and I want to know more of his story and of course, there's Cain. He is

not a comfortable man, but he's very compelling and there are hints at more emotion than he shows on the surface.... This story made me giggle and gasp in a few places. I recommend you give Dark Dates a try if you enjoy first person urban fantasy with a fiesty, sarcastic, not perfect, heroine, who doesn't give up or back down. I can't wait to see what she does next!

((hugs))) Kat

The Queen of Tarts

♦eARC provided for review

Marisa says

First, let me thank the author for providing a free copy of this book to me for review. It was immensely kind of her.

Second, I had a couple issues with the book (hence why this isn't getting a five), but considering it got a three, I still enjoyed reading it.

What I liked most was the main character and her humor. The references to Buffy and several other vampire/supernatural/etc. themed TV shows made me smile because, like Cassandra, I probably watch a little too much TV. I also liked how Cassandra could hold her own. She didn't kill the overall villain, but was sufficiently able to defend herself when faced with adversaries (view spoiler), which won points with me because I always like a heroine who can defend herself.

The main thing I wasn't too keen on with this book was that Cassandra let her hormones get the better of her sometimes. I can definitely understand not being able to think clearly in front of an attractive man (especially one without his shirt---or nothing---on), but there are some circumstances I would have liked her to focus a little less on jumping a man's bone and a little more on the problem at hand. (view spoiler)

Lastly, I'll say that I loved Medea. It's easy for friends in literature to become filler characters, though I'm happy to say that isn't the case with Medea. It didn't escape my notice that Cassandra tends to surround herself with people she knows hardly anything about (Medea, Caine...), but I am glad she got to know a bit more about Medea throughout the book and that the two of them bonded a tad. I'm interested to see what other secrets Medea is keeping from Cassandra in future installments.

Overall, I'd probably give this more of a **3.5** than a flat out three, but the writing flowed well and I'd recommend it to anyone who's a fan of the genre.

Nerdish Mum says

This book is so much fun! There were times that I laughed full on out loud (sometimes in not the most

appropriate of places... ahem). I loved all the characters and I'm already looking forward to continuing with the series.

Cassandra or Cass I swear deals with everything the same way I do - sarcasm and food! She is the perfect mix of everyday woman and one who can defend herself with whatever is nearby even if it is by accident. She feels so very real to me and I really enjoyed her honesty about what (*read who) she thought was hot and how awkward she is around people on a day to day basis.

Medea is a great sidekick character, she is powerful, intelligent and beautiful and there is even more to her than meets the eye. Katie who you meet later in the book, I'm still not 100% about yet, BUT she is definitely interesting and certainly surprised me.

Now to my absolutely favourite character - Cain. Yes he is a completely heartless a\$\$hole at times, but he's hot and he's a bad boy with a soft side and who doesn't want that in their fictional boyfriend? There are also so many more interesting things I could say but I would be spoiling far too much so that will have to do.

I can see why people would like Laclos as he is basically lust personified and who knows what will happen further into the series, but for now I am full on #teamcain.

The story is really interesting as there is a war brewing in the vampire world and somehow Cass has got herself mixed up in it and decides to try and deal with a lot herself while the menfolk (Cain and Laclos) preen and stalk about like peacocks. They do come in more than handy when they're needed though and make up for lost time.

Throughout there are some brilliant references to pop culture and I loved that I could pick some out, though I think I missed the Buffy ones as I've only ever seen the original movie but none of the TV series.

Overall a really, really good and enjoyable book and as I said I can't wait to pick up the next book in the series. I know this has been more of a ramble than usual, but this happens when I really like a book.

Tonya says

The story is written in a light, conversational style and is driven by a string of murders carried out in London. There are a few spots where the time looping in her story-telling makes the story seem a bit repetitive, but not enough to put it down or get frustrated. The meat of the story is the mystery of why it seems Cass's business and her clients are being targeted. The interesting motif about what constitutes Other and the debate on the relative goodness/morality of both humans and Others isn't something you see all that often, and Sinclair handles it with the same realism with which she paints the city the story is set in. She even has her heroine pursue a different course than is standard. (And I'll leave it at that crypticism, to avoid more of a spoiler.)

I'm happy to recommend this book to any fan of the paranormal. For those who like mystery or romance, this has something for you too. It's a good summer read--especially this summer, as London is in the world spotlight for the Olympics and Sinclair's vision of the city paints an additional layer on an already-storied city.

Julie Allen says

If you like vampires, biting sarcasm (see what I did there), mystery & a hot supernatural love triangle then this is for you.

Kara-karina says

I would say that any fan of earlier Anita Blake or Darynda Jones is going to love it. This pure joyful digging at ridiculous cliches of vampire culture... Anne Rice, LKH, mentions of Supernatural ad Buffy, - it was so much fun!

Cassandra, the main character, is more Sookie than Anita. She is a Londoner through and through, who helps newbie vampires find dates. She even organises speed-dating between them and their meals.

Her secretary and best friend, Medea, is a witch and her lover strongly reminds me of Edward (not Cullen, for God's sake! I'm talking about Ted Forrester here). Cain is a sociopathic hunter of monsters who doesn't approve of Cassandra's business but who keeps popping in her life for infrequent bouts of sex.

Then there is Laclos... Pale, dark long hair, gorgeous body, leather trousers. He is like Jean-Claude but with a healthy sense of humour. He is pompous and narcissistic, but at the same time doesn't forget that this is all for show, that he plays on cliches.

The plot is very straightforward, with a villain who is killing all the young modern vamps in London using magic and demons, while Cass and her friends are trying to stop him. On the other hand, Cass's love life is a right mess and so is her business, but she is funny and downright normal in her reactions like a young overworked slobby professional woman who lives on takeaways and has a cat, and I do not question her integrity. As a character she is familiar to all of us. There are no Mary Sues in this novel.

Male characters are a bit messier. Cain is pragmatic. That's why he doesn't want normal relationship with Cass. With his occupation and other differences including differences of opinion, he leaves her a chance to find someone normal. However, I don't think it's healthy for the woman herself.

Laclos is awkward as in I can't quite grasp his character yet, so I'll have to wait for another book to decide if he is developed properly or not.

Medea and her girlfriend are charming sidekicks, especially because Medea's girl is an NHS nurse with a huge grudge against the bankers and cuts NHS has to suffer because of the recession.

Overall this is a steady book plot-wise, but it definitely wins you over with plenty of charm and humour. I would love to read book #2 when it comes out!

Nunya says

Currently reading, but finding myself walking away and then coming back in frustration when Cassandra (and Cain but no so much) gets on my nerves lol SPOILERS! BTW this is long and I have a habit of wanting

to get everything that I was thinking or feeling while I was reading out. I know its probably hard to tell from my rants I did like reading this book and didn't want it to end.

Hmmm, what can be said? Despite not liking Cassandra and Cain, the plot and my own curiosity kept bringing me back. As I got a better understanding of who they were as characters my dislike began to lessen, but then it would get confirmed again. Sad to say that I would probably have given this book more stars if the key main players weren't so...so....*\$\$%&^\$*!

Cain I don't like him simply because he is the worst kind of extremist and he makes himself among others the exception to the (his) rule. My understanding was that non-human=Other. He is an Other, but ignores this and refers to all Others as monsters. I HATE this. Also, he had the nerve to be all its not *what* I am but *who* I am with Cass (hasn't she been arguing this very point always?!?) when revealing what he was exactly. No shit, that's a kind of common sense logical rule that seems to escape him when he's on the hunt. Later on in the book I got the idea that he targeted Others that were a REAL threat, but then reading further I got the idea that 'Naaaaah he doesn't discriminate on the hunt'. Maybe in the beginning it started that way as them being evil (you know the very first Others), but he didn't really take their descendants into consideration or something I don't know. Also there is the usual 'I was done so terrible wrong by an Other(s) that they are all the same and come from the same stock anyway so they must all be destroyed' plot. As much as I dislike him I like him and respect him waaaaaaaaay more than Cass simply because he has no shame in who he is, his beliefs, and he was upfront with what he was about from the beginning (I'm not including the messy relationship stuff. IMO he should have said he was married/separated even though he didn't really lead her on either).

I also dislike how she began referring to all vampires as monsters like Cain and not really caring what happened to them because of what has happened to her. I get it I do but still I actually thought she would be stronger than that considering her arguments against Cain up to that point. Hate the fact that she was made to

feel guilty about her argument with Cain at the end of the book as if she made a terrible mistake or something. I was like GTFOH with that! Seriously! I was all happy like finally she is breaking away from the D, but then guilt and regret. For what I don't know. Other than their character flaws I liked this book. I liked the idea of her services being needed in that community and seemed realistic to me. Even though I can't STAND those two I can't wait to read what's next and I HOPE HOPE HOPE for some more growth on their part and introductions to more Other key players...that hopefully puts those two in their place lol sorry couldn't help it lol

Kathryn Allen says

Full of supernatural delights with characters who are funny and cool and way sexy.

Juls says

Cassandra, who has a sixth sense, just wants to live her life in harmony. She knows there is more out there, that we share this world with other beings and even dated a vamp herself. Even her assistant Medea is of the paranormal variety. Knowing this she still wants to see the good in it all.

Cassandra owns a dating service that caters to vamps. Little does she know that her own livelihood is what's causing her to have run ins with unsavory characters. Not only is her company at stake but so is her life.

She is a witty and funny character that doesn't take it from anyone laying down. She wants to fight to keep what she has and even though half the time she gets lucky, she is able to physically fight off the bad guy.

Cassandra's love interest Cain has come to her every few years. He is a complete mystery to her but she will take him when he's available to her. But Cain is way more than she ever thought and there's still more secrets he's not willing to reveal. There were a few shocking revelations regarding what he is and who Val is to him. I'm not sure if their so called relationship can handle the stress.

I really loved the relationship that built around Cassandra and her assistant Medea. They were just co-workers but by the end of the book they became friends who kicked butt together. I can't wait to see more of their adventures together cuz I'm sure it's not over ;)

Overall it was a fun read.
