



Circe

Madeline Miller

A lush, lyrical reimagining of the witch Circe from Greek myth, told in her own voice as she finds power, love, and herself across centuries on a quiet island.

Reading level: Moderate

Best for: clubs who love beautiful sentences, slow burns, and stories about finding your own voice

Discussion

WARM-UP

1. What was the weather, snack, or blanket situation when you did your best reading of this book? Set the scene for us.
2. If you could spend one quiet afternoon on Circe's island doing absolutely nothing productive, what would that look like for you?

DIGGING IN

1. Circe finds comfort in herbs, animals, and small daily rituals. What small rituals comfort you when life feels overwhelming?
2. There's a tenderness in how Circe cares for the creatures and travelers around her. Was there a moment of kindness in the book that warmed you most?
3. The book has a lot to say about being underestimated. Did any of Circe's quiet moments of strength remind you of someone in your own life?
4. Solitude is treated as both a wound and a gift in this story. How did the book make you feel about your own time alone?

GOING DEEP

1. Circe changes so much over the course of the book without ever really leaving home. Did any of her slow inner shifts mirror a quiet change you've gone through?
2. Motherhood, daughterhood, and chosen family all get tangled together here. Which of those threads landed most tenderly for you, and why?

On the table

- 🍞 **Rustic herbed bread with honey butter**
Nods to Circe's kitchen, her herbs, and the bees of her island, perfect for tearing and sharing
- 🍲 **Slow-simmered white bean and rosemary stew**
Humble, Mediterranean, the kind of pot Circe might keep warm by the hearth for unexpected guests
- 🍷 **Fig and walnut cheese board with olives**
Easy, grazeable, and full of Aegean flavors so no one has to leave the couch

To sip

- 🍷 **Honeyed spiced wine (warm)**
A cozy mug of mulled wine with honey and bay leaf, echoing Circe's pharmaka and feasts
- 🍵 **Chamomile and lemon honey tea (no alcohol)**
A gentle herbal brew, like something steeped from Circe's own garden
- 🍷 **Retsina or a crisp Greek white**
A nod to the setting, served cool in small glasses for sipping between chapters of conversation

Run of show

- 7:00** **Soft landing**
Greet guests with warm mugs and let them settle into blankets and floor cushions, no rush to start
- 7:20** **Stew and bread**
Serve dinner buffet-style so people can keep grazing through the night
- 7:45** **Warm-up questions**
Start with the cozy reading-scene question to loosen everyone up
- 8:10** **Into the island**
Move into the theme questions, keeping the pace slow and the candles lit
- 8:50** **Deeper waters**
Bring out dessert and tea for the deeper questions, encourage long pauses
- 9:20** **Trivia and scorecards**
Wrap with low-stakes trivia, bookmarks to take home, and final ratings

HOST TIPS

- Lean into low light: lamps, candles, and fairy lights do more than any decor
- Pass a 'talking sprig' (a bay leaf or rosemary stem) so quieter readers get easy airtime
- Have a soft blanket basket by the door, no shoes required

Playlist

Soft, mythic, and candlelit: strings, breathy vocals, and slow folk that feels like firelight on stone

- 01 Saturn - Sleeping At Last
- 02 The Wisp Sings - Winter Aid
- 03 To Build a Home - The Cinematic Orchestra
- 04 Promise - Ben Howard
- 05 Bloom - The Paper Kites
- 06 River - Leon Bridges
- 07 Holocene - Bon Iver
- 08 Cinnamon - Hayley Heynderickx

Trivia

1. Who wrote Circe? (Madeline Miller)
2. In what year was Circe first published? (2018)
3. What earlier novel by Miller also reimagines a Greek myth? (The Song of Achilles)
4. Circe is the daughter of which sun god? (Helios)
5. What is the name of the island where Circe is exiled? (Aiaia)
6. Circe famously appears in which ancient Greek epic poem? (Homer's Odyssey)
7. What academic field did Madeline Miller study, informing her mythological retellings? (Classics (Latin and Ancient Greek))
8. What is the Greek term for the magical herbs and potions Circe practices with? (Pharmaka)

Rate the book

Coziness factor ☆☆☆☆☆

Beauty of the writing ☆☆☆☆☆

How much it moved me ☆☆☆☆☆

Reread-by-the-fire potential ☆☆☆☆☆

Overall warmth ☆☆☆☆☆

One word for how this book felt: _____

A scene I want to curl up inside again: _____

Who I'd press this book into the hands of: _____

YOU'RE INVITED

An evening on Circe's island

Bring your softest sweater and your favorite passages. We're gathering by candlelight for stew, honeyed wine, and slow conversation about Madeline Miller's Circe.



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