



**Tess of the
d'Urbervilles
by Thomas Hardy**

Tess Durbeyfield is a luminous beauty who is violated by one man and forsaken by another, but she refuses to remain a victim. Her struggle to endure despite the abandonment of her true love, and despite her desperate attempt to attain happiness, propels Tess toward a tragic end.



**Frenchman's Creek
By Daphne
du Maurier**

Seeking to escape the stifling London court society, the beautiful headstrong Lady Dona St. Columb flees to her family estate on the Cornish coast. Her new freedom swiftly brings her into contact with the dashing handsome French privateer Jean Aubrey who sweeps her off her feet and into a world of adventure on the high seas very different from her dull and boring life at court with her husband Sir Harry. Together with Jean Aubrey and her enigmatic servant, William, Lady Dona conceives a daring plan to steal a ship right from under the noses of the English authorities. The theft enrages the authorities who make every effort to trap the French pirate. However, as the noose begins to tighten around the lovers, Lady Dona is faced with the dilemma of duty and children with Sir Harry, or the freedom and excitement with Jean Aubrey.



**The Thornbirds
By Colleen
McCullough**

This is the chronicle of three generations of Clearys, ranchers carving lives from a beautiful, hard land while contending with the bitterness, frailty, and secrets that penetrate their family. Most of all, it is the story of only daughter Meggie and her life-long relationship with the haunted priest Father Ralph de Bricassart-an intense joining of two hearts and souls that dangerously oversteps sacred boundaries of ethics and dogma. A poignant love story, a powerful epic of struggle and sacrifice, and a celebration of individuality and spirit.



Source: Romantic Novelists' Association

*2008JRR

**The Ten Most
Romantic
Books**



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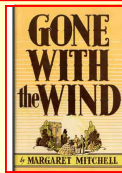
Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Set in Georgian England, Mrs. Bennet raises her five daughters - Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia with the purpose of getting married to a rich husband that can support the family. They are not from the upper class, and their house in Hertfordshire will be inherited by a distant cousin if Mr. Bennet dies. When the wealthy bachelor Mr. Bingley and his best friend Mr. Darcy arrive in town to spend the summer in a mansion nearby their property, the shy and beautiful Jane falls in love for Mr. Bingley. Lizzie finds Mr. Darcy a snobbish and proud man, and she swears to loathe him forever, however this is the beginning of their wonderful love story.



Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

After living a miserable life with her aunt, orphaned Jane Eyre is sent to Lowood, a residential school for children of limited means. Jane takes the advice of her friend and over many years studies seriously, eventually advertising for a position as a governess. She obtains a position in the home of Mr. Rochester. She soon realizes there is something odd in the house. As she and her new employers develop a deep affection for one another, the secret of the Rochester household threatens to keep them apart.



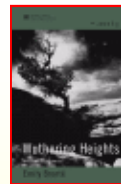
Gone With The Wind by Margaret Mitchell

The epic tale of a woman's life during one of the most tumultuous periods in America's history— the Civil War. From her young, innocent days on a feudalistic plantation to the war-torn streets of Atlanta; from her first love, whom she has always desired, to three husbands; from the utmost luxury to absolute starvation and poverty; from her innocence to her understanding and comprehension of life.



Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier

When Maxim de Winter brings his shy new bride to his beautiful stately home on the Cornwall coast, it seems like all her dreams have come true. But she soon finds that Manderley is haunted by the shadow of Maxim's first wife, Rebecca, who died the year before. As the hot summer fades, the mystery of Rebecca's death grows, weaving a spell of fear and foreboding. In a series of climactic revelations, Rebecca's memory is finally laid to rest, but at what cost?



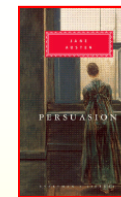
Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

The Earnshaws are Yorkshire farmers during the early 19th century. Mr. Earnshaw returns from a trip to the city, bringing with him a ragged little boy named Heathcliff. Earnshaw's son, Hindley resents the child, but Heathcliff becomes a companion and soulmate to Hindley's sister, Catherine. After her parents die, Cathy and Heathcliff grow up wild and free on the moors. Despite the continued enmity between Hindley and Heathcliff, they're happy— until Cathy meets Edgar, the son of a wealthy neighbor.



Katherine by Anya Seton

This classic romance novel tells the true story of the love affair that changed history; that of Katherine Swynford and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the ancestors of most of the British royal family. Set in the vibrant 14th century of Chaucer and the Black Death, the story features knights fighting in battle, serfs struggling in poverty, and the magnificent Plantagenets: Edward III, the Black Prince, and Richard II, who ruled despotically over a court rotten with intrigue. Within this era of danger and romance, John of Gaunt, the king's son, falls passionately in love with the already married Katherine. Their well-documented affair and love persist through decades of war, adultery, murder, loneliness, and redemption. This epic novel of conflict, cruelty, and untamable love has become a classic since its first publication in 1954.



Persuasion by Jane Austen

Persuasion follows the romance of Anne Elliot and naval officer Frederick Wentworth. They were happily engaged until Anne's friend, Lady Russell, persuaded her that Frederick was "unworthy." Now, eight years later, Frederick returns, a wealthy captain in the navy, while Anne's family teeters on the edge of bankruptcy. They still love each other, but their past mistakes threaten to keep them apart.