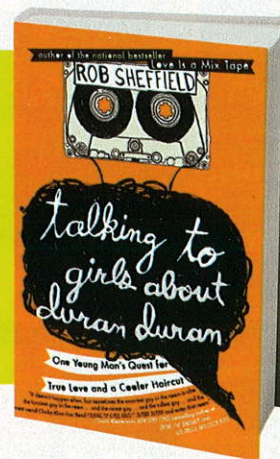


Downtime

The read you'll both love

Talking to Girls About Duran Duran by Rob Sheffield

Music journalist Rob Sheffield realized early on that music, for him, was the language of love. He careers from one relationship and one artist to the next in this '80s-nostalgia-drenched memoir. Read it first, then pass it along to your guy. Whether he's a metalhead or a Meat Loaf-lover, it's sure to lead to some fun overshares.



GREAT BOOKS FOR YOUR VACAY

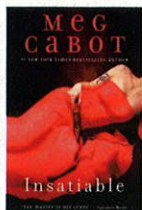
It's August—we hope you're hanging out somewhere near a body of water with some reading time ahead of you! Take a cue from our fiction forecast and choose the book to suit your summer mood.

FORECAST: Sunny and breezy



Seven Year Switch by Claire Cook

When life gets tough, sometimes even the tough hit the escape button. Jill Murray is content with her man-free existence and fiercely proud of raising her daughter, Anastasia, on her own. So when her ex reappears, she panics and jets to Costa Rica to figure out what she really wants. Best way to handle a crisis? Debatable. A lot of fun to read? Definitely!



Insatiable by Meg Cabot

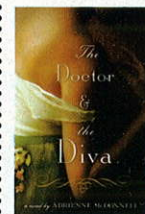
Twilight-mania got you feeling hot and bothered? Sink your teeth into this just-for-fun vampire novel about single city girl Meena Harper, who realizes that the Prince Charming she unexpectedly meets is not only a Romanian prince, but also a more-than-500-year-old vampire who's the son of Dracula. Since Meena's got psychic powers that make her a little supernatural herself, it just might be the perfect match.

FORECAST: Hot. Very hot.

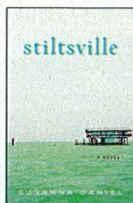


The Doctor and the Diva by Adrienne McDonnell

Desire has a dangerous side, a fact this sumptuous novel delights in. It is 1903, and Doctor Ravell is a physician well known for his almost mystical talents in helping couples conceive. Opera singer Erika is desperate to have a baby, but as the months pass and Ravell becomes more and more obsessed with helping Erika and her husband, everyone's desires start to intertwine in this explosive tale. Read the book now, then place bets on when the movie version will come out.



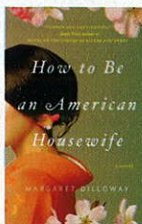
FORECAST: Cloudy with late-breaking sun



Stiltville by Susanna Daniel

Married couple Frances Ellerby and Dennis DuVal live in a modern-day Eden—a house held up on stilts a mile offshore of Miami. Separated by choice from society's mainstream buzz, even they can't be sure whether their close-knit relationship is inspiring or stifling. This soulful novel will inspire you to reflect on your own definitions of house, home, and what really makes a couple close.

How to Be an American Housewife by Margaret Dilloway



Nope, this novel's not a *Mad Men*-style throwback but a nuanced debut about what happens when expectations and cultures collide in a family. Shoko is a Japanese immigrant who spent her adult life trying to be the perfect American wife. When her grown daughter, Sue, gets a divorce, Shoko feels that Sue has thrown away the American dream. Does she have a point? And what is the American dream anyway? Put out the snacks and the shiraz and get ready for this novel to spark a late-into-the-night book-club gabfest.

The Red Queen by Philippa Gregory

The author of *The Other Boleyn Girl* returns this summer with a novel that's just as sexy and scandalous (and, yeah, smart), this time about the Tudors. When Margaret Beaufort (Henry VII's mother) becomes a royal widow at the age of 13, the fate of the kingdom rests on her slight, adolescent shoulders. All ye who are lamenting the ending of Showtime's *The Tudors*, this book will help.

