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## Q&A

# DI MORRISSEY

Australia's most popular female novelist Di Morrissey takes readers spiralling through generations of loves, deaths and tragedy in her latest novel, writes  
**Blanche Clark**



**Why did you decide to set your new book in Malaysia?**

When I lived in Singapore I went to Malaysia regularly to film TV commercials. My father served in Malaya during the war and a family friend grew up on a rubber plantation and shared her memories with me.

**Was there much research involved?**

Heaps. I went back to Malaysia and spent time travelling through the country, visiting all the places that I mention in my book. But I also needed to research those issues that affect Malaysia today, so I talked to a lot of Malaysian experts in their fields.

**Your main character Julie discovers her grandmother's shocking secret. Is there a secret about yourself you'd be willing to share?**

I'm afraid I don't have any shocking secrets!

**You are relishing the role of grandmother; did this influence your book in any way?**

I am known as Gigi, but this had nothing to do with the book, which is about a young Australian woman and I have nothing in common with the character of Margaret, her grandmother.

**What special moment have you enjoyed in the Manning Valley recently?**

A visit from all my children.

**Are you still campaigning to raise awareness about the threat to the Kimberley coast of Australia?**

Very much so. And not just trying to save the Kimberley. Too much of our country is being dug up and sold out from under our feet.

**What book have you enjoyed reading recently?**

*Singing Saltwater Country* by John Bradley

**Where do you see yourself in five years?**

Still writing, researching, travelling and enjoying my family.

***The Plantation*, by Di Morrissey, Macmillan Australia, rrp \$33.**

**Find out when Di will be in Melbourne at [www.dimorrissey.com/events.html](http://www.dimorrissey.com/events.html)**

**Read an extract from *The Plantation* in tomorrow's Sunday Herald Sun.**