



The Surprising Life of Constance Spry: From Social Reformer to Society Florist

Sue Shephard

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A riveting new biography—the first in 30 years—of the influential floral artist and founder of the Cordon Bleu cooking school

"Dress by Schiaparelli, photographs by Cecil Beaton, flowers by Constance Spry—The decorator of the moment, the photographer of the moment, the florist of the moment—what more could you ask?" Thus *Vogue* magazine described the wedding in 1937 of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, but most people today, if they have heard of her, associate Constance Spry with the cookbook bearing her name. But Connie was much, much more than the author of a bestselling cookbook. She was deeply unconventional, extremely charming, and very determined; Spry's life took her from a poverty-stricken childhood to running a hugely successful business as the florist of choice for the highest of high society, organizing the flowers for royal weddings and for the Queen's coronation. Along the way she escaped a violent marriage, had a lengthy affair with a cross-dressing lesbian artist, and built a hugely successful flower business—a pioneer for working women at a time when few women had careers. Sue Shephard tells her extraordinary story with insight, wit, and flair.

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