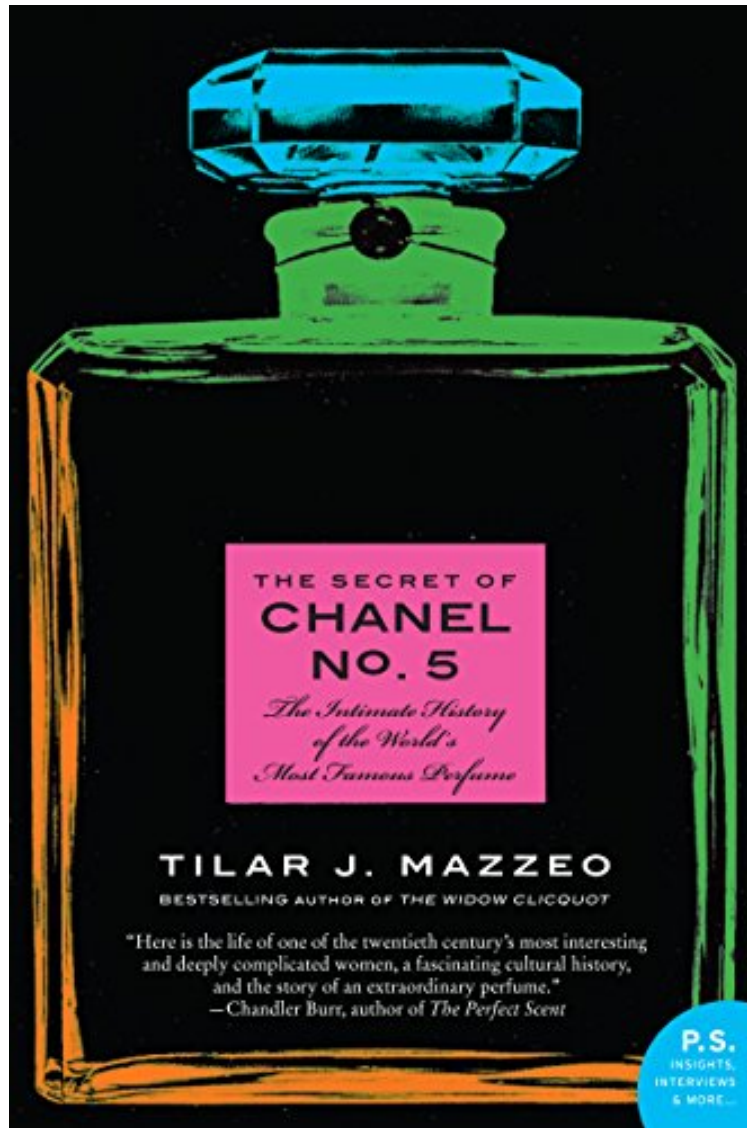


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## The Secret of Chanel No. 5: The Intimate History of the World's Most Famous Perfume

Tilar J. Mazzeo

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**Tilar J. Mazzeo : The Secret of Chanel No. 5: The Intimate History of the World's Most Famous Perfume** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Secret of Chanel No. 5: The Intimate History of the World's Most Famous Perfume:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Interesting book on a cultural iconBy Elizabeth LefflerThis book explains the history of Chanel No. 5, arguably the world's most well-known perfume (it is said that a bottle is sold somewhere in the world every 30 seconds!). The author seems to have done her research well. She examines how this

perfume became so incredibly popular, despite the fact that the actual formula for Chanel No. 5 is not exactly a secret. It has been offered by other perfume manufacturers under different names, but without anything like the same success. Clearly it's not just the scent itself that made it such a hit. Nor was it simply good marketing, since it really didn't have any to speak of for many years. It begins with Coco Chanel, and tells how events in her life came together in such a way that Chanel No. 5 was created. It then goes into how she ended up selling the rights to her fragrance, the effects of World War II on production, the falling out between Chanel and the new owners, and her subsequent attempts to regain control of the perfume that she gave her name to. The author has done a good job of showing all the different events and circumstances that occurred at the right place and time, which all contributed towards making Chanel No. 5 the icon that it is today. She stays with the story of the perfume alone, and doesn't veer off into any other aspects of Chanel's fashion empire, which is as it should be since their paths separated fairly early on. While some of the writing seems to become rather redundant, especially towards the end, the book is still worth reading just because it is an interesting story, and the author writes well.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. For true perfume aficionados only  
By Long term customer  
Not bad, fairly interesting for those who find the history of such matters important. I would give 3.5 stars if I could. For whatever reason, Chanel fragrances have always mystified me with the depth of their appeal. To me, they simply smell like "perfume", never a compliment. I think the success of No 5 was a question of the right product finding just the right niche in history. Serendipity, if you must. The book makes this rather clear. I read through once and will give the paperback away to the local library.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An entertaining read I could do without  
By K. Liang  
Nice to learn about a brief history of perfumes - but a lot of the book is repetitive (what a great talented strong tortured woman Coco Chanel was blah blah), and it feels a lot like corporate propaganda. Also, many claims in this book are not backed up by factual evidence, which makes it hard to believe at times. Over all, an entertaining read I could do without. There are so many better books out there.

"Who knew that such a tiny bottle housed so many secrets?" — Michael Tonello, author of *Bringing Home the Birkin*  
Tilar J. Mazzeo, author of the New York Times bestseller *The Widow Clicquot* (an Amazon Best of the Month book in October 2008) returns with a captivating history of the world's most famous, seductive, and popular perfume: Chanel No. 5. Mazzeo's sweeping story of the iconic scent (known as "le monstrer" in the fragrance industry) stretches from Coco Chanel's early success to the rise of the seminal fragrance during the 1950s to the confirmation of its bestseller status in today's crowded perfume market. "Here is the life of one of the 20th century's most interesting and deeply complicated women, a fascinating cultural history, and the story of an extraordinary perfume." — Chandler Burr, New York Times scent critic and author of *The Perfect Scent*