



Season to Taste

By Eda Benjakul

Based on Characters from Sweet, Sour, Spicy by Eda Benjakul & Isabel Dréan

Logline: After her fiancé abandons her in Singapore, a tightly wound Thai-American banker trades Wall Street for a kitchen in Thailand, only to fall for the conflicted heir to the hotel empire threatening her family’s ancestral land. To save it, she must unite the banker she became with the chef she was meant to be.

Format: Feature / TV Movie

Genre: Destination Romantic Comedy

Tone: Crazy Rich Asians meets The Hundred-Foot Journey, with the romantic reinvention of Eat, Pray, Love

THE STORY

STELLA MILLER (28) is a tightly wound, second-generation Thai-American investment banker who has optimized her future down to the wedding date, honeymoon, and first child. She gave up cooking—the one thing she truly loved—to follow the practical path her immigrant parents worked to give her. But when Stella arrives in Singapore to begin married life with her fiancé, she finds no key and no groom, only a note: “I can’t do this. Sorry.” Dumped in Helvetica, Stella impulsively flies to Thailand.

At a luxury Phuket resort, Stella is taken in by **AUNTIE DAO**, the formidable hotel owner who has been estranged from Stella’s mother, **MAE**, for thirty years. Dao pairs her with **LEELA** (12), Stella’s lonely, precocious cousin, who is more comfortable studying occupancy reports than admitting she misses her mother. Teaching Leela to make pancakes revives Stella’s buried dream of being a chef—and introduces her to **CONNOR WHITMORE** (30), a charming Australian she mistakes for a carefree beach bum.

Connor is actually the conflicted heir to the Whitmore hotel empire. His father needs Dao’s ancestral land to complete Northstar, a massive resort development that would endanger the village watershed and the elephant sanctuary built upon it. Connor wants to stop the project from inside the company, but hides his identity from Stella even as their romance deepens. In Bangkok, Dao arranges for Stella to train at Rót, a two-Michelin-star, all-women kitchen ruled by the exacting **CHEF THIP**. As Stella learns to cook by instinct instead of measurement, Connor quietly uses her financial model to propose a more ethical version of Northstar. When paparazzi expose who he is—and what he has done with her work—Stella feels used by the first person who made her brave enough to trust the unknown.

Heartbroken, Stella retreats north to Baan Boonmee, where **NOK** (60s), her grandmother’s old friend, runs the struggling elephant sanctuary. When Stella discovers it is nearly insolvent, she combines the two halves of herself: the banker who understands how to save it and the chef who understands why it matters. She creates a protected land trust, a restaurant and cooking school in her grandmother’s house, and a sustainable future for the sanctuary.

Connor uncovers the environmental report his father buried and sacrifices his position to stop Northstar. Mae and Dao finally confront the wound that divided their family.