

Blu-ray Review: Even Nicholas Sparks Fans Will Be Annoyed by ‘Safe Haven’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 20, 2013 - 6:34pm

- [Blu-ray Review](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Cobie Smulders](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Josh Duhamel](#) [6]
- [Julianne Hough](#) [7]
- [Lasse Hallstrom](#) [8]
- [Nicholas Sparks](#) [9]
- [Safe Haven](#) [10]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [11]

CHICAGO – At its best, Lasse Hallstrom’s “Safe Haven,” based on the book by the insanely popular Nicholas Sparks, is merely safe, Lifetime Channel TV Movie junk. At its worst, it’s pretty offensive and exploitative of women actually stuck in abusive situations and men forced into single parenthood after losing a spouse. As he has done before, Sparks takes real-world issues and turns them into manipulative devices. Hallstrom (“Chocolat”) has enough filmmaking skill to keep it from getting too boring despite the attempts on the part of the two remarkably dull leads to put you to sleep.



Rating: **1.0/5.0**

Julianne Hough has yet to find that breakout role that convinces me she’s more than a reality TV star and this certainly doesn’t make the case as she’s incredibly flat and unbelievable as a woman on the run from an abusive husband. Hough’s Katie jumps a bus and decides not to get back on at a stop in a small oceanside town. There she meets Alex (Josh Duhamel), a recently widowed father of two trying to get his own life back together. Nothing that a canoe trip in the rain can’t fix. “Safe Haven” seems particularly, well, safe even for Sparks and the addition of an action-packed finale and last-act twist (that’s actually REAL easy to see coming if you’re looking) just feel like frosting on a really bland cake.

Note: Fans of the film who may be enticed to pick this up to see what the alternate ending entails — it’s barely different. Just one character speaks directly to the camera and it ends with a slightly different tone. Nothing major.



Safe Haven was released on Blu-ray and DVD on May 7, 2013

Photo credit: Fox

Synopsis:

Josh Duhamel and Julianne Hough star in this spellbinding romantic drama based on the novel by best-selling author Nicholas Sparks (The Notebook). When a mysterious, beautiful woman named Katie (Hough), moves to Southport, North Carolina, she sparks the interest of the locals, especially Alex (Duhamel), a handsome widower. Although she is attracted to Alex, Katie is reluctant to trust him - that is, until a new friend (Cobie Smulders) convinces her to give Alex a chance. But before long, a dark secret from Katie's past threatens her happiness in this thrilling romance directed by Lasse Hallström (Dear John).

Special Features:

- o Alternate Ending
- o Deleted & Extended Scenes
- o Igniting The Romance In Safe Haven
- o Josh Duhamel's Lessons In Crabbing
- o Set Tour
- o Digital Copy Included

"Safe Haven" stars Julianne Hough, Josh Duhamel, David Lyons, and Cobie Smulders. It was directed by Lasse Hallstrom. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on May 7, 2013.



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