



# Thérèse

Autumn  
Season  
2013

**Release:** 2012

**Cert (UK):** 12A

**Runtime:** 110 mins

**Director:** Claude Miller

**Screenwriter:** Claude Miller from the novel by François Mauriac

**Cast:** Audrey Tatou, Gilles Lellouche, Anais Demoustier



François Mauriac's legendary 1927 novel of French provincial life has been gloriously brought to the screen by the inestimable Claude Miller in his final film. Sumptuously photographed to capture the full beauty of the pine-forested Landes area in southwest France, *Thérèse* is a beautifully conceived drama of exquisite taste. Marvelously played by the luminous Audrey Tautou, *Thérèse* is a heroine hewn from the same stock as *Madame Bovary* or *Anna Karenina*, suffocated by her provincial marriage. *Thérèse* has married less for love than for convenience, but it is not long before the casual disinterestedness shown

her by her arrogant husband, Bernard (Gilles Lellouche), starts her thinking again. Life is easy at first, as Bernard's pinewood estates keep them both in the lap of luxury. But when *Thérèse*'s best friend Anne (Anaïs Demoustier), who also happens to be Bernard's younger sister, falls madly in love with a handsome young Portuguese man, *Thérèse* begins to see what she has been missing in her life. Soon, *Thérèse* begins her own fight against the oppressive Desqueyroux family.

Claude Miller died soon after completing this film, but had been directing films since the 1970s. He is often mentioned alongside Truffaut, with whom he worked a lot, but deserves to be remembered in his own right, having won 15 awards and 26 nominations including 2 for Palme d'Or at Cannes (*'Little Lili'* and *'Class trip'*). *Thérèse* is typical of his films, with a central figure under a lot of pressure.

Audrey Tautou is most famous for her portrayal of *Amelie* in the film of the same name, where her pixie-like energy carried the film. She plays a very different role here, where much of the turmoil she is going through is only seen on her face; she gives a performance which Trevor Johnston in the *Radio Times* says is *'utterly mesmerising as her implacable inner demons push her into conflict with everything around her'*.

