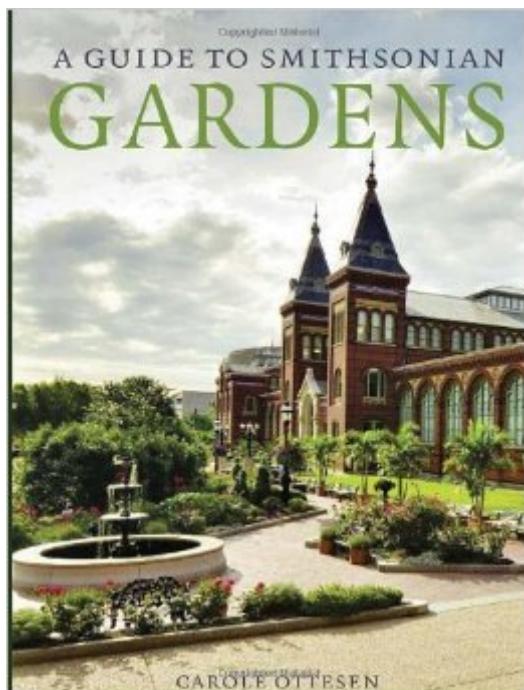


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A Guide To Smithsonian Gardens



Synopsis

A beautifully illustrated guide to the colorful gardens that surround the Smithsonian museums along the National Mall, each unique in its design, plant materials, and purpose. Many visitors are surprised to learn that the Smithsonian Institution includes extensive gardens and landscape areas. All have been designed to complement the museums they border and to enhance the overall museum experience. Imagine having the Smithsonian's resources and knowledge to solve the problems that confront every gardener: holding four-season interest, experimenting with exotic plants, designing a garden that reflects the architecture around it, creating a contemplative space, recreating historic or themed gardens, and much more. The Smithsonian Gardens are wide ranging: gardens that reflect distinct cultural influences; a rose garden; an intimate, four-season wonder filled with a vast selection of plants; an ever-changing backdrop and contemplative haven for viewing large-scale works of art; an eco-sensitive Native American habitat considered an extension of the building; an urban space dedicated to butterfly gardening; historical gardens that reflect the classic American flower garden and the Victory gardens of World War II; a classical oasis that invites reflection and contemplation; a historic courtyard turned all-season favorite with architectural pinache; the greenhouses that support these gardens and the museums with orchid displays, seasonal interest, and plant materials; and a garden collection that includes both furniture displayed in garden settings and extensive collections documenting historic and contemporary American gardens.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In the first publication highlighting the Smithsonian gardens, Carole Ottensen provides a poignant exploration of the horticultural collections along the National Mall in Washington, DC. Ottesen's insightful descriptions of the gardens constitute a well-rounded, readable analysis of the landscape surrounding some of our nation's most storied museums. In this book, the beautiful horticultural displays and collections prove to be as splendid as the materials indoors. A Guide to Smithsonian Gardens combines a reverence for history and horticulture. It traces the Gardens' evolution from the beginning in 1835, when British Scientist James Smithson left his state to the "people of the United States" to create an institution "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge" (p. 13). The historical narrative continues throughout the book and provides a sense of purpose and direction to the writings. Ottesen praises the key personalities and plant specimens characterizing the Gardens with equal enthusiasm. For example, one can learn about how the Hirshorn Museum came into existence while admiring striking color images of *Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'* at the Sculpture Garden. These vignettes carry throughout the book and combine nicely with the gorgeous images of the gardens throughout the year. The book is organized by site, with each chapter illuminating a different garden along the Mall. The structure and size of the publication makes it perfect to carry with you on your next trip to DC while venturing between gardens. It conveniently includes a map of the Mall in the front and back sleeve to help you along your way. Furthermore, at \$14.95, this book is a great deal for the level of detail included in the 160 pages.

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