



# Of Gardens: Selected Essays (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture)

*Paula Deitz*

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Paula Deitz has delighted readers for more than thirty years with her vivid descriptions of both famous and hidden landscapes. Her writings allow readers to share in the experience of her extensive travels, from the waterways of Britain's Castle Howard to the Japanese gardens of Kyoto, and home again to New York City's Central Park. Collected for the first time, the essays in *Of Gardens* record her great adventure of continual discovery, not only of the artful beauty of individual gardens but also of the intellectual and historical threads that weave them into patterns of civilization, from the modest garden for family subsistence to major urban developments. Deitz's essays describe how people, over many centuries and in many lands, have expressed their originality by devoting themselves to cultivation and conservation.

During a visit to the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden in Seal Harbor, Maine, Deitz first came to appreciate the notion that landscape architecture can be as intricately conceived as any major structure and is, indeed, the means by which we redeem the natural environment through design. Years later, as she wandered through the gardens of Versailles, she realized that because gardens give structure without confinement, they encourage a liberation of movement and thought. In *Of Gardens*, we follow Deitz down paths of revelation, viewing "A Bouquet of British Parks: Liverpool, Edinburgh, and London"; the parks and promenades of Jerusalem; the Moonlight Garden of the Taj Mahal; a Tuscan-style villa in southern California; and the rooftop garden at Tokyo's Mori Center, among many other sites.

Deitz covers individual landscape architects and designers, including André Le Nôtre, Frederick Law Olmsted, Beatrix Farrand, Russell Page, and Michael Van Valkenburgh. She then features an array of parks, public places, and gardens before turning her attention to the burgeoning business of flower shows. The volume concludes with a memorable poetic epilogue entitled "A Winter Garden of Yellow."

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