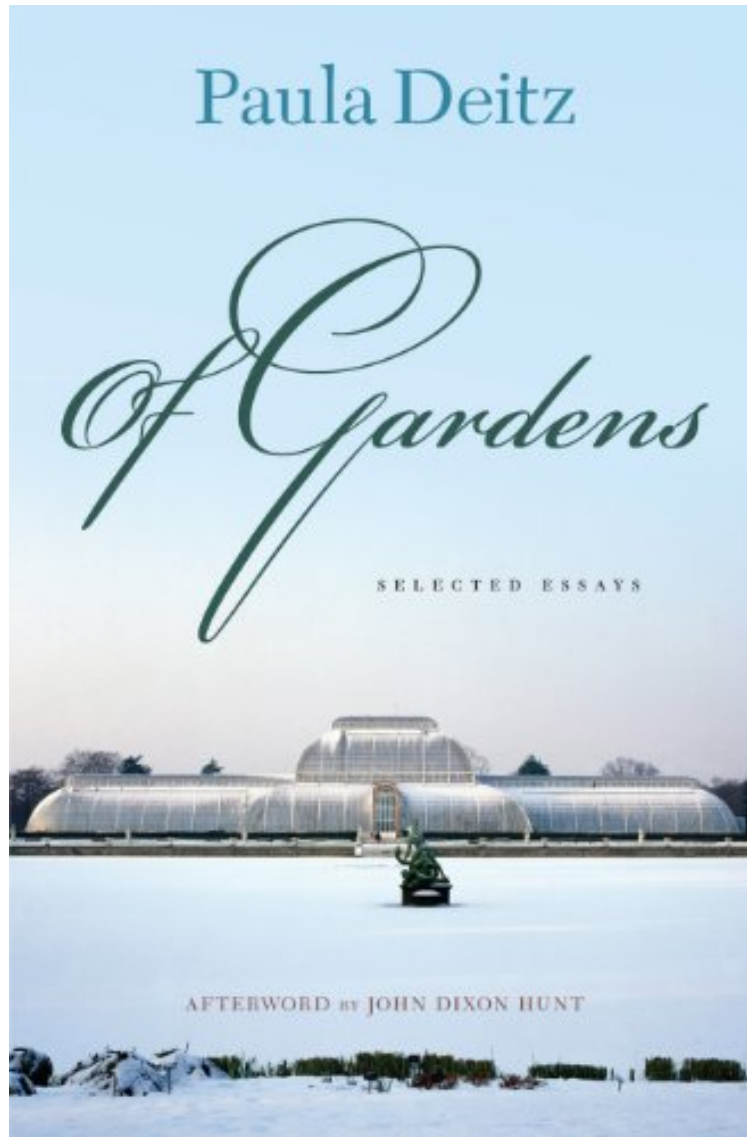


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Of Gardens: Selected Essays (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture)

Paula Deitz

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Paula Deitz : Of Gardens: Selected Essays (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Of Gardens: Selected Essays (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture):

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 Andr Le Ntre, 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."

"In over 70 essays, covering places and people all over the world, Deitz fuses her emotional response perfectly with what must have involved a massive amount of historical, horticultural and literary research. For anyone jaded with reading about gardens, or (heaven forbid) with visiting them, her intelligent appreciation of gardens, new and old, must surely revive and inspire." *Historic Gardens* "Deitz applies a cool intelligence, formidable powers of observation, and extensive research to convey the experience of walking through her chosen landscapes and unearthing the layers of their creation." *Times Literary Supplement* "Though not intended as a guidebook, *Of Gardens* will bring readers to the conclusion that the next best thing to having Paula Deitz as their traveling companion on a forthcoming garden tour is to read the relevant essay in her book. In the manner of similar collections, this book might have been titled *The Best of Deitz*. And, as we have seen, the best of Deitz is very good indeed." *New Criterion* "This is a book for the savvy reader who enjoys an intelligent discussion of gardens without all the glossy eye-candy photographs that pervade most books today. . . . No matter what the subject is that catches Deitz's fancy, she always manages to draw her reader in without pomposity or jargon." *Landscape Architecture Magazine* "There aren't many garden books that can change your perceptions so subtly but forcefully; this one belongs in the library of every serious student of design" *New York Times* "When it comes to gardens of lavish beauty, a picture may truly be worth a thousand words. Rare is the text that can match this feat, but in her sumptuous essay collection, Deitz more than meets the challenge, crafting worlds so precise in their detail and lush in their imagery the effect is as dazzling as any rendered by an artist or photographer. Here are the iconic gardens of the world the Taj Mahal's Moonlight Garden, Versailles, Kew Gardens laid out in verdant glory that is made richer for Deitz's insider revelations of arcane aspects of design or development. Here, too, are the acclaimed landscape architects who made it all happen, with special attention paid to trailblazing women such as Beatrix Farrand and Deborah Nevins. A prolific journalist with vast interests in divergent yet mutually illuminating fields, Deitz masterfully celebrates the myriad attractions of gardens both great and small, public and private, and their ability to enrich, ennoble, and entertain." *Booklist About the Author* Paula Deitz is Editor of the *Hudson*. As a writer and cultural critic in the fields of art, architecture, design, and landscape design, she is a frequent contributor to the *The New York Times*, *The Architectural*, and *Gardens Illustrated*.