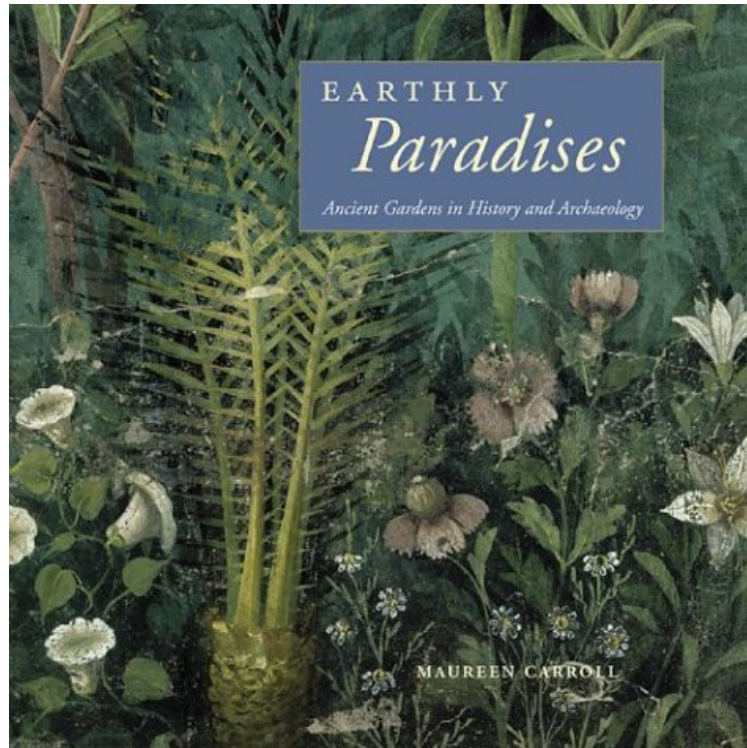


[Download] Earthly Paradises: Ancient Gardens in History and Archaeology

Earthly Paradises: Ancient Gardens in History and Archaeology

Maureen Carroll

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#1731082 in Books J. Paul Getty Museum 2003-10-30Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.70 x .70 x 8.70l, 1.61 #File Name: 0892367210144 pages | File size: 56.Mb

Maureen Carroll : Earthly Paradises: Ancient Gardens in History and Archaeology before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Earthly Paradises: Ancient Gardens in History and Archaeology:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. a lover Keeper, for sureBy Writer Fiber ArtistI was nervous to purchase this kind of book without being able to look through it first. Normally I order such books through inter-library loan so I can make a more informed decision about purchasing decisions. My library system didn't have a copy of this one so I just took the gamble. I'm really glad I did, too! The reproductions are exceptional and I am now planning a budget for my disposable income so that I can soon purchase other relevant volumes published by the Getty. From an overview perspective I really like that this book isn't based solely on Roman gardens. There's more variety and, thus, more potential ideas of where to look for more information about anything included which sparks individualized interest. I'm also finding the book a very nice browsing companion for the breathtaking book Gardens in Time. Those photographs (of very old and incredibly gorgeous gardens which still exist) from our current age, coupled with Carroll's take on more ancient design goals and parameters, make for some enriching armchair gardening and site-seeing.21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Ancient Gardens, Unchanging GardenersBy Rob HardyWe are all familiar with ancient buildings like the Luxor temples, Acropolis, or houses in Pompeii, and from them we can get an idea of how people of their times lived. But what about their gardens? The question is not trivial. Gardens have always represented an ideal sensual and peaceful environment, and what ancient gardens were like could tell us something about the ancients and about humans in general. This sort of research has been done by Maureen

Carroll, an archeologist who has dug in garden sites all around the regions of the ancient world. She has written *Earthly Paradises: Ancient Gardens in History and Archaeology* (Getty Publications), a small and scholarly book that unlike most academic works, is beautifully produced with almost a hundred pictures, mostly in color. It is a concise overview of what we can now know about ancient gardens of the Near East and Mediterranean region, and will delight those interested in ancient history or in gardening. "Gardens are ephemeral, as fragile and short-lived as the people who once cultivated them," Carroll writes. This was one of the reasons that archaeologists neglected them; marble, mortar, and mosaics lasted longer and were easier to find and understand. It was not until the 1970s that the "empty spaces" of courtyards and outside of houses became the target of evaluation. Most of the gardens described here are not agricultural or economic efforts, but luxuries. When Pericles encouraged Athenians not to mourn their possessions in a loss to Sparta, one of the luxuries he specifically mentioned as unfit for bereavement was the garden. Gardens were, however, no less work than they are today. A papyrus document shows that the garden owner Talames required that the gardener Pefumont maintain the irrigation channels, water the garden, protect against sparrows and crows, and do a full day's work. One of the pleasures of *Earthly Paradises* is that it gives the ever-valuable lesson of how little people really change. For thousands of years they have found refreshment and sensual delight in gardens that were just for pleasure, not for profit, although baser motives of showiness to impress others also seem eternal. There is one example after another here of ancient gardeners doing the same thing gardeners do now; it isn't surprising that watering and weeding had to be done, of course, but it is interesting that we can recognize so many tools for the gardener. Most iron objects have corroded away, but Egyptian paintings, for instance, show the use of rakes and hoes. We have to assume that they were used in Egyptian gardens as well as for regular agriculture, because such paintings of gardens are idealized and don't show tools or work. There is a detail of a Roman painting shown here of a songbird sitting on a vertical reed stick which serves as a support for a rose plant that has been tied to it. Terracotta pots for plants were so essential to the Romans that they started making them in Britain immediately after invading in 43 CE. A ladder whose impression was left in the ash of Pompeii looks completely modern, with a tapering top such as is used in fruit picking. The central square of Greek cities, the agora, was planted with trees for the shade of citizens, and in Roman cities similar spaces had pits cut into the rock to be filled with soil and used as planters for trees. Gardeners borrowed styles from each other, with, for instance, a Roman garden decorated with statuary of Greek or Persian themes and having a central water channel as was favored in Egypt. The borrowing has gone on especially during the baroque period, when ornate classical landscape design renewed in the Renaissance became the fashion. To be sure, Carroll's delightful book is not a how-to for setting up an ancient garden two millennia later, but gardeners will find much that is familiar here, and some will find plants and arrangements that can agreeably be incorporated into their own personal paradises.

In this beautifully illustrated book, Maureen Carroll examines the most recent evidence of the existence of ancient gardens, the horticultural practices used to plant and maintain them, and the many forms and functions they assumed. Surveying the ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece, Italy, and the provinces of the Roman Empire from the second millennium B.C. to the middle of the first millennium A.D., Carroll finds that whether grown as sources of food, symbols of wealth and prestige, or dwellings for the gods, the cultivation of gardens played an integral role in both the public and private spheres of the ancient world. She concludes with a chapter on the survival of ancient gardening traditions in the Islamic and Byzantine worlds and the ways in which gardens have figured in these cultures' perceptions and depictions of paradise. Culling evidence from a wide variety of archaeological, textual, and pictorial sources, and illustrated with delightful images from tomb and wall paintings, sculptural reliefs, manuscripts, and reconstructions, Carroll provides fascinating insights into the earthly paradises of antiquity.