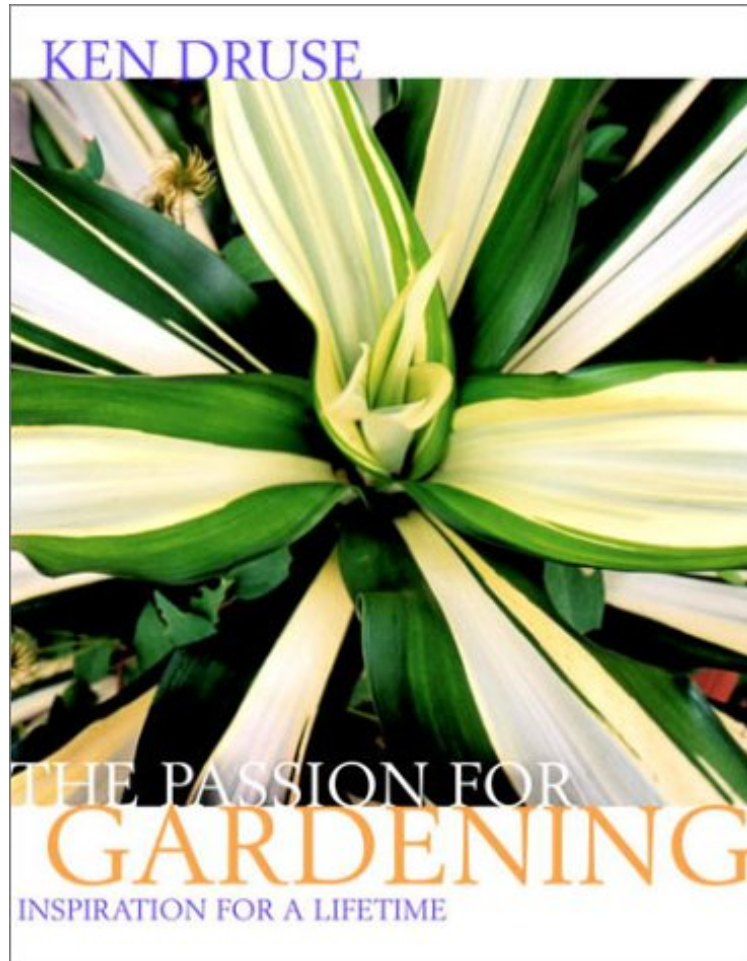


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Ken Druse: The Passion for Gardening

Ken Druse, Adam Levine
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Ken Druse, Adam Levine : Ken Druse: The Passion for Gardening before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ken Druse: The Passion for Gardening:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This one gets personalBy NatureboyMuch has been written about Ken Druse's photography. Throughout his books his photos stand out as among the most beautifully done in garden publishing. In this book the generous sized pictures seem to reflect that here, he pulls back to look at the "big picture" of the gardener's heart and sensibilities.And here the words are achingly true and personal. It is a real gift to us readers of the author to share how the experience of being a gardener is indeed filled with rewards, but also moments of self-doubt, vulnerability and even conflict. It is the kind of humble writing (coming from an amazing gardener) that does a great service by reminding us that it is natural to feel moments like these as we experience the kind of life and values we, as gardeners and lovers of living things have chosen to live.By awakening the reader to the courage it demands is a balm for anyone who feels they are just doing a lousy job at gardening. Ken reframes the question away from the

judgements of the cognoscenti and taste makers to valuing the experience itself the way we wanted to. 26 of 26 people found the following review helpful. As You Like It By Jedediah B. Do you have a NEED to garden, an instinct that simply can't be denied? Do you gain a joy, a tranquility from gardening? And do you long to know of others who share this need and love? Finally, do you love Ken Druse's other wonderful, wildly beautiful books on same? "The Passion For Gardening" combines all in a typically (for Druse) gorgeous volume, plus it introduces others for whom gardening is not simply a matter of "plant material" being "installed" by some local garden center. You meet people for whom gardening, in all its aspects (from the Giverney-like selection and placement of the plants to the mundane and often satisfying acts of weeding and soil improvement) is almost a genetic imperative. You meet others for whom gardening is the thing that makes all right with the world. Even in the dead of Winter, this book is better than three therapy groups or five bottles of pills. It is one you will hold onto till the pages are tattered. It is what that urge to garden is all about. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I loved this book so much By Joanna Lee I loved this book so much, I bought it for my boss for his birthday! It's a great book for anyone with a passion for gardening or plant geeks.

Ken Druse's passion for gardening has always been the unmistakable force behind each of his books. Now, with *The Passion for Gardening*, Druse writes about this inspiration, the underlying spirit that is shared by all gardeners. This is not a simple how-to book, but a why-to. Why do we garden? And how are our lives immeasurably enriched by the process? As the world around us grows more chaotic each day, Druse, in rich and thoughtful prose, reminds us to slow down, put a trowel to the earth, and consider the wonders and healing powers of tending a garden. Gardening, he tells us, is an antidote for today's hectic pace. In *The Passion for Gardening*, Druse meditates on the issues close to heart of all gardeners: the notions of giving back and of conservation, of taking risks and the creative process of collaborating with nature and one's community. Along the way, he introduces us to a variety of extraordinary gardeners and their gardens, revealing how they have cultivated their natural spaces and, in turn, have themselves been transformed in the process. Druse visits ten remarkable gardens, including a Michigan landscaper's 60-acre natural habitat, a West Coast garden inspired by the Japanese aesthetic, and Chanticleer, a delightful public estate on Philadelphia's Main Line that Druse dubs a paradise in progress. Of particular note is a special section on Druse's own garden, including an unprecedented view of nature's contribution through the seasons that provides us with a deeper understanding of how gardens truly live. With more than 250 dazzling color photographs, as well as practical advice on replanting shrubs and trees, creating garden paths and sculptures, and controlling pests naturally, *The Passion for Gardening* is an inspirational and intimate look at gardening for a lifetime.

From the Inside Flap Ken Druse's passion for gardening has always been the unmistakable force behind each of his books. Now, with *The Passion for Gardening*, Druse writes about this inspiration, the underlying spirit that is shared by all gardeners. This is not a simple how-to book, but a why-to. Why do we garden? And how are our lives immeasurably enriched by the process? As the world around us grows more chaotic each day, Druse, in rich and thoughtful prose, reminds us to slow down, put a trowel to the earth, and consider the wonders and healing powers of tending a garden. Gardening, he tells us, is an antidote for today's hectic pace. In *The Passion for Gardening*, Druse meditates on the issues close to heart of all gardeners: the notions of giving back and of conservation, of taking risks and the creative process of collaborating with nature and one's community. Along the way, he introduces us to a variety of extraordinary gardeners and their gardens, revealing how they have cultivated their natural spaces and, in turn, have themselves been transformed in the process. Druse visits ten remarkable gardens, including a Michigan landscaper's 60-acre natural habitat, a West Coast garden inspired by the Japanese aesthetic, and Chanticleer, a delightful public estate on Philadelphia's Main Line that Druse dubs a paradise in progress. Of particular note is a special section on Druse's own garden, including an unprecedented view of nature's contribution through the seasons that provides us with a deeper understanding of how gardens truly live. With more than 250 dazzling color photographs, as well as practical advice on replanting shrubs and trees, creating garden paths and sculptures, and controlling pests naturally, *The Passion for Gardening* is an inspirational and intimate look at gardening for a lifetime. About the Author KEN DRUSE is recognized as one of America's foremost gardening authorities, and has contributed both articles and photographs to numerous gardening publications. His most recent book, *Making More Plants*, received the 2001 Award of the Year from the Garden Writers Association and was named best book of the year by the American Horticulture Society. He lives and gardens in New Jersey. Visit him at www.kendruse.com. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Recreation for a Lifetime I met a young horticulturist at a botanical garden recently, and we spent several minutes chatting about the plants she helped to tend. We were meeting on common ground—as two garden lovers—and we both chattered on excitedly, sharing ideas about culture and information about little-known species that we'd both learned to love. But when she mentioned that she grew one of these species on the windowsill of her parents' house, where she lives, and that she hoped someday to have a garden of her own, I suddenly felt every one of my fifty-plus years. I wondered how she viewed me, dreading the idea that she saw me as a contemporary of her father (which I was). I wanted to seem cool, but then I had an awful thought: Good God, I've got houseplants older than this girl! I mentioned this encounter to my friend Jill Hagler, who is

halfway in age between me and the young gardener. "It's just a state of mind," she assured me. "All gardeners are young at heart." And it's true: all the gardeners I know always seem to have one foot in the future, wondering what gifts they'll get from the garden tomorrow, next week, and next year. Gardening truly is a lifetime recreation, one that can keep us fresh and on our toes (or on our knees) until the end of our days. Among my older-than-the-young-gardener houseplants are twin specimens of the cycad *Zamia furfuracea*, which were probably five or ten years old when I bought them in 1975. They traveled with me from my first college apartment in Providence, Rhode Island, to Manhattan and then to Brooklyn. Now the twins live in New Jersey, and their longevity helps put our history of gardening together into perspective. Ancestors of these conifers populated the earth for millions of years before flowering plants evolved. The fact that this genus has been around for so long points out how very short thirty, forty, or fifty years is, and how my time on earth spent in the garden is really only an instant in the scheme of things. I may call thirty years an instant, but in this age—which might be called the "Age of Impatience"—that span of time may as well be forever to most people. We get impatient if the car in front of us pauses imperceptibly at a red light. We watch the interminable seconds tick away on the microwave, and get irritated if the computer takes a few extra nanoseconds to accomplish a task that, even five years ago, would have seemed incomprehensible. Technology has compressed time so greatly that we have come to expect miracles to be over and done with almost before we even notice they have begun. Gardening is an antidote to this manic pace. Gardens aren't created overnight; a good garden takes time to develop, and then can be made and remade, over the course of a lifetime and even into succeeding generations. Plants don't mature in nanoseconds. They follow the pace of the natural world, which for most of time has been the only measure of time: the passage of days and seasons, the annual cycle of death and rebirth. The late May Sarton, whose intimate journals are full of wisdom about life in the garden, wrote: "Everything that slows us down and forces patience, everything that sets us back into the slow cycles of nature, is a help. Gardening is an instrument of grace." Tending a garden can be a continual lesson in letting go, of accepting what is offered and appreciating the moment—because a moment later, what you see could disappear. How many times has some wonderful thing become a casualty of a thunderstorm or been decapitated in an unfortunate dog-walking incident? The list of possible accidents is endless, and even the plants themselves have a built-in brevity: *Hemerocallis* aren't called daylilies for nothing. Unfortunately, many promoters of garden products hope to cash in on our cultural impatience, offering "new" ideas for instant color, instant effect, instant solutions. For many people, quick-kill herbicides in disposable spray bottles have replaced hand-weeding tools; the annoying whine of the electric- or gas-powered blower has largely obliterated the gentle "scerrick" of the rake. Gardening magazines try to be about "The Garden" without getting into the dirty business of "gardening," featuring articles with seductively impossible titles such as "101 Easy Ideas for a No-Maintenance Landscape." One Internet purveyor (now out of business) perhaps epitomized this attitude, offering pre-chilled daffodil and tulip bulbs to plant in the spring for "instant" bloom. The company claimed that this would allay the "sense of failure" gardeners feel when they plant bulbs in the autumn and have to wait months to see the rewards of their efforts. This attitude devalues the appeal that gardening holds for many of us. It assumes that making a garden is as simple as putting up Christmas decorations: buy a few gewgaws, plug them in, turn them on, and then move on to the next activity. It promotes decorator gardens full of "colorful plant material," which are "installed" (as if they were appliances) to one-up the Joneses and then ignored until they need to be freshened up and dusted off for the next party. Yes, there will always be fashions, fads, and trends in gardening. We only need to look at a Victorian-era seed catalog to see all the plants that have come and gone and come back into favor again. But gardening itself will never be a fad, as the long-term involvement of so many of us makes amply clear. While a beginning gardener might fall for these advertising gambits, anyone who has gardened for even a little while knows that good things don't come easily, and rarely in an instant. What so many jaded marketers fail to imagine is the rich relationship between the gardener and the garden, how dedicated we can be to our favorite pastime. They don't see that many of us actually like getting our hands in the dirt. They don't understand that looking ahead, anticipating future rewards that will sprout from our efforts of the moment, is part of the wonderment of gardening for us. We don't want to get out of the garden in less time. Most of us want more time to spend puttering in our beds. I'd like to ask those garden-product executives: Would you have bothered to learn how to play tennis, or golf, so you could play just one game and then retire your rackets and clubs to the attic? Have you ever seen a garden trowel used only once? Garden of the Mind It is ironic that when the garden we dreamed of creating finally seems finished, the picture keeps changing. Other artists don't have this problem. A painting, a sculpture—these are worked until the creator decides the piece is finished, at which point it doesn't continue to mutate into something else. Displayed in a climate-controlled museum, such a work of art will remain basically unchanged for hundreds of years. But gardeners can't control the climate. On the contrary, it controls us, determining what we can do and how long we can stand to be out there doing it. A garden can't be protected from the elements, since those elements are what it needs to survive. A garden is alive, with plants in different stages of life. Some are growing old and senescent, some reaching a distinguished maturity, and some merely babes in the woods, just starting to spread their branches and roots. Because of this endless mutability, gardening—more than any other art—is as much about the process as the end result. It can be disconcerting to visit a garden deemed "historically significant" and fixed in that arbitrary time, as if gardeners of historic importance would not have continued to evolve—ripping up their beds

and replanting them based on new knowledge, new plants, even new fashions. How a famous architect chose to arrange a living room might be insightful, but outdoors, the garden is a "living" room that never has a set moment in time. "In a garden, you learn that nothing is static," says Juana Flagg, who has gardened on the same Connecticut property for nearly half a century. "There's no such thing as instant landscaping. It's always changing, never ending." When I began the Brooklyn garden described in my book *The Natural Shade Garden*, I thought I would design it, plant it, and enjoy it. I moved in too late in the fall to do anything outside, so I had all winter to plan and sketch and dream-and I dreamed big. I wanted a folly-a combination classical ruin and summer house. I needed a barbecue area, a dog run, a pond with a bridge. I wanted thousands of different plants-trees and shrubs, vines and groundcovers, annuals, perennials. I wanted it all-all in a backyard measuring 21 by 50 feet. Eventually it didn't matter what I got or didn't get, because after ten years, I was still doing it-trying different plants, digging a larger pond, pruning, moving things around. The only thing that slowed down my delighted tinkering was starting another garden somewhere else, after which the one in Brooklyn became a somewhat neglected adolescent. But it was also the babysitter and parent of a number of plants for the new garden in New Jersey, some of which had earlier been part of my rooftop garden in Manhattan. Think of those *Zamias*, tagging along with me through four gardens. Some people grow attached to a piece of land and could never dream of moving elsewhere. It is unlikely that landscape designer Tom Rooks will move from his acres in Michigan, or that Juana Flagg, nearing eighty, will be looking to start a new garden elsewhere. But other gardeners would happily move to a site that appealed to them more than the one they now tend. The longing is often for a garden that has whatever the present one lacks: more sun or more shade; more space, or, as we grow older, perhaps less space; a patch of woods, a meadow, a pond, a stream. Many of us have our "dream gardens," but if that dream ever materializes, the reality of it may not equal our fantasies, and we might begin to long for something el...