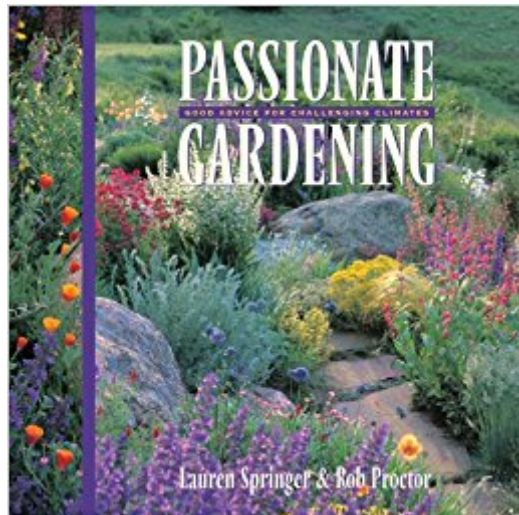


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# Passionate Gardening: Good Advice For Challenging Climates



## Synopsis

The ultimate reference and inspirational guide for gardeners in challenging climates. Takes the reader through the seasons in a most comprehensive, yet pleasurable way, as the authors celebrate a diversity of plants for every site and every season. *Passionate Gardening* tackles every subject, from early snows to slugs, from bulbs to botanical Latin.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This series of short, easy-to-digest essays by noted garden writers Springer (*The Undaunted Garden*) and Proctor (*Herbs in Pots*) addresses the horticultural needs of gardeners in difficult climates, discussing design, "challenges" (dry shade, deer, underused plants), the seasons, and "perspectives" (favorite tools, gardening while pregnant). Most of the essays are personal in approach and specific to either Proctor's urban garden in Denver or Springer's new sprawling rural landscape. Gardeners in Colorado and similar high and dry states will value the wealth of practical advice and commiseration in dealing with this challenging but rewarding environment. But the book's appeal is not limited to the West; the text is bursting with good ideas and the joy of growing and designing with plants. Highly recommended for most public libraries. DBeth Clewis Crim, Prince William P.L., VA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Full-color book explores every facet of gardening. A book for everyone, it would look almost as lovely on a pristine glass coffee table as it would sprinkled with dirt next to you in your garden."

"Bursting with good ideas and the joy of growing and designing with plants. Highly recommended." "Whether sharing process, making us think, or simply making us laugh out loud, Lauren and Rob encourage us to share their passionate approach to gardening." "Ann Lovejoy, author" "Readers throughout North America will gain from the wit and wisdom of these two passionate gardeners." "Pacific Horticulture magazine" "Rob and Lauren are the Sonny and Cher of horticulture. Witty, entertaining, and knowledgeable, they are divas in their own right. These two passionate gardeners live and work their passion and this book describes it." "Chris Woods, director Chanticleer, a pleasure garden" "Foreword Magazine Book of the Year" "American Horticultural Society Annual Book Award" "Benjamin Franklin Award Finalist" "Quill and Trowel Award"

You can look by seasons to see what you need to be doing. Great info.

If you live in the mountain southwest, you need this book for gardening advice and inspiration. Clearly written and entertaining. Excellent!

Although this book has beautiful photos and snappy dialogue, realize that it is a collection of essays. This book does not have chapters, per se, and not exhaustive discussions, but the essays are by two very experienced gardeners. Gardening advice is charmingly presented, but in a piecemeal fashion. It makes for entertaining and enjoyable winter reading but for more practical advice in dry climates with hot summers and cold winters, I find Lauren Springer's book *The Undaunted Garden*, to be much more helpful. It has plant lists that *Passionate Gardening* doesn't have. I read *Passionate Gardening* for inspiration and for vicarious gardening experience, but when it comes down to doing things, I use other books. Realize also, that *Passionate Gardening* isn't necessarily Xeriscape oriented, featuring at least a few essays where plants require regular moisture (e.g. the essay on lilies, and one on roses).

Not exactly what I expected but nice.

Superior book for Colorado gardening. Highly recommended.

Not quite the technical book I hoped to have.

Excellent advice for the western gardiner, especially those of us used to conditions in the midwest and learning to work with the challenging (and rewarding) climate of the high plains!

Passionate Gardening: Good Advice for Challenging Climates Authors: Lauren Springer and Rob Procter Publisher: Fulcrum Publishing ISBN 1-55591-348-2 The concept of the Westerner in American culture, conjures up the image of a friendly and unpretentious person. That explains the feeling one gets when reading this book. Not only is the style of writing informal but also, the gardens illustrated are bereft of the formality we often see and read about in British garden books. More than just a book about gardening, this publication is a window into the unabashed joy of getting down and dirty in the garden and the sheer pleasure of the physical energy expended in doing related chores. The authors' respective gardens are located in a challenging locale. Gardening in Colorado forced them to adjust their expectations and needs to the extremes of the Western climate. They share with us their experiences and the advice that grew out of dealing with a harsh climate. To understand the authors' take on gardening, one needs to understand the obstacles they tried to overcome. These challenges included heat, drought, hail, blizzards, clay, sand, weeds, slugs, grasshoppers and raccoons. . This book is a collection of no less than one hundred and sixteen short essays, or mini topics. It is not a "how to" book. Each essay covers a different aspect of gardening in a challenging climate and is dedicated to discussing the topic from the point of view of two friendly Western gardeners. It is the charm of the authors that makes this book such an enjoyable read; they have a lot of fun doing what they love. . I was pleasantly astonished to discover that the authors chose to address the eternal problem of the rude visitor. Gardeners who visit the homes of their peers are prone to making inappropriate comments related to the host's garden. The authors' treatment of this topic is serious stuff and forced me to reconsider every comment I have ever made to owners of gardens I have visited Studying the many photographs of the authors' terrains, it is clear that Ms. Springer gardens on a large tract of land. Because her home is situated on one hundred and fifteen acres, she has the luxury of allowing her gardens to grow exponentially with a total disregard for boundaries. Mr. Proctor's home is located on one acre of land, and the floral compositions on his property are more disciplined. While Ms. Springer's garden is devoid of any straight lines, Mr. Proctor's gardens are defined by them. Photos of their respective lands indicate that despite the differences in their size, both gardens are in harmony with the rugged nature of Colorado In reading the essays, I discovered several bits of information that I found to be helpful. Here are a few; some in the authors' own words.\* Local variations in temperature and rainfall will sometimes allow us to grow plants not recommended for

our growing zone.\* Garden one up man ship is a pervasive problem everywhere. There ought to be a book of etiquette on how to behave when visiting other people's garden.\* Clay can be useful, if properly used. Several perennials thrive in clay. These include sedum, coreopsis, perovskia, veronica, and the list goes on.\* There is no such thing as an instant garden. A perennial garden takes time to develop and knit together.\* Geography matters. Most perennials come from climates different than our own; zone hardiness alone will not determine the success of growing a plant. The more we know about a plant's native habitat, the better we can adapt it to our garden\* Flower borders can thrive in hot dry summers. All borders need to be stuffed with plants and all of the plants in one border need to share the same cultural requirements. Furthermore, borders need depth to create drama.\* Some herbs make excellent growing companions for roses because of their insect repellent properties\* In a vast meadow garden, plants chosen for their untamed appeal make the transition from flower bed to the surrounding countryside a more graceful one. And finally, my favorite essay is titled "The Summertime Blues" and discusses the invaluable contribution that blue foliage and flowers make to any garden. Once again, in the authors own words, because they say it better than I have ever seen it said before: - "Blue is an amazing color, seemingly effective with every other hue. It's elegant with white, pale pink and cream. It shimmers with silver and chartreuse leaves. It glows with fiery orange or scarlet and smolders with maroon and blood red." Other essays that fill this book deal with diverse garden related topics as hand care, essential garden tools, what to wear when getting dirty, gardening when pregnant, pets in the garden, and plants that make the land look awesome in winter. Reading this publication has been more than an informational exercise. I am happy to have met two new friends who have invited me into their gardens and made me feel welcome with their proverbial warm Western hospitality.

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