



A Man's Garden

Warren Schultz

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"I'm tired of being told that gardening is women's work," writes author Warren Schultz. "I don't like the way my buddies roll their eyes when I tell them I'd rather weed a border than watch a hockey game between Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, but there's no shame in being a gardening man. Farmers? Men. Landscape architects? Men. Golf-course greenskeepers? Men. Plant breeders? Men." Do men have a different style of gardening from women? You bet your last six-pack they do. In fact, there are several archetypal styles. Some men's gardens are playful, others competitive; some are places to fool with tools, others to play with toys. Men like large plants and bright colors. The big straight-row vegetable garden is classically a man's territory, where he can fulfill the need to provide for his family. As Schultz says, "A guy likes to make a splash with his garden." His pumpkins will be the biggest (Howard Dill); his perennial border the longest (John Craighead) And who but a man (Ralph Velez) would plant 483 palm trees on a 60-by-150-foot corner lot? For the man who wonders whether he too might enjoy gardening, this book offers portraits of fifteen men who garden in different ways and for different reasons. By no means all macho men, they approach their gardens from various points of view, including those of the scientist, the colorist, the folk artist, and the New Age meditator. For all of them, gardening has filled an important niche in their lives. Schultz points out that even today, the interior of a house is likely to be a woman's domain, but outdoors a man can decide what to plant around the deck and how short to prune the flowering shrubs. He can plant trees and carve beds; in short, he can make the garden his own outdoor room.

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