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Desert Gardens Of Steve Martino



Synopsis

This survey of twenty-two gardens by Steve Martino, whose work blends colorful, man-made elements with native plants to reflect the sun-drenched beauty of the desert, is sure to inspire gardeners, landscapers, and admirers of California and the Southwest. For the past thirty years, Steve Martino has been committed to the development and advancement of landscape architecture in the Southwest. His pioneering work with native plant material and the development of a desert-derived design aesthetic is widely recognized. A recurring theme of his work is the dramatic juxtaposition of man-made elements with ecological processes of the region. His love for the desert--the interplay of light and shadow, the colors, plants, and wildlife--inspires his work. As Martino explains, "Gardens consist of two worlds, the man-made and the natural one. I've described my design style as 'Weeds and Walls'--nature and man. I use native plants to make the transition from a building to the adjacent natural desert." Though Martino's work is deeply connected to the natural world, he also has a flair for the dramatic, which is apparent from his lively color selections, sculptural use of plants, and keen attention to lighting, shadows, and reflections. Boldly colored stucco walls frame compelling views of the desert and sky, expanding the outdoor living area while solving common site problems such as lack of privacy or shade. Interspersed are custom structures molded in translucent fiberglass in vivid hues--colorful arbors, outdoor showers, and internally lit benches.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: The Monacelli Press (April 3, 2018)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580934919

ISBN-13: 978-1580934916

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #1,090,304 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #61 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > By Climate > Desert](#) #70 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > By Region > Southwest](#) #931 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Garden Design](#)

Customer Reviews

Caren Yglesias teaches landscape architecture and environmental planning at the University of

California, Berkeley. She is the author of *The Innovative Use of Materials in Architecture and Landscape Architecture: History, Theory and Performance* and *The Complete House and Grounds: Learning from Andrew Jackson Downing's Domestic Architecture*. Obie G. Bowman is an architect based in Healdsburg, California, whose practice focuses on the integral connection between the built and natural environment. Steve Gunther is a landscape photographer based in Los Angeles, California.

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