



Zen Gardening

A. K. Davidson

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The Zen gardens of Japan are places in which to meditate. They can be anything from a landscaped garden, complete with waterfalls, to a bed of raked pebbles. This ancient way of gardening goes back to the Zen Buddhist priest-gardeners of the thirteenth century. Based on abstract compositions, relying on simplicity and suggestion, their gardens were designed to liberate the imagination, while providing a starting point in the appreciation of everyday things.

Zen Gardening is the first handbook to examine the concepts and techniques that make up this garden art and to apply them to the West. It explains the historical relationship between Zen and the development of gardens, and gives practical suggestions for the creation of a Zen garden at home. The chapters on the garden components and their adaptation for the West, principles of design, and construction work, are illustrated with over 150 line drawings. Step by step they show us how to make the most of corners of large gardens, of plots not large enough for lawns and flower beds, or of awkward passageways, alleys and terraces.

The principles of Zen gardening are particularly relevant in our crowded conurbations. Keir Davidson's thoughtful and practical approach enables us to maximize our garden space and to create areas of calm in our own immediate environment. Without precedent in the West, his book will be a source of delight to gardeners of every persuasion.

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