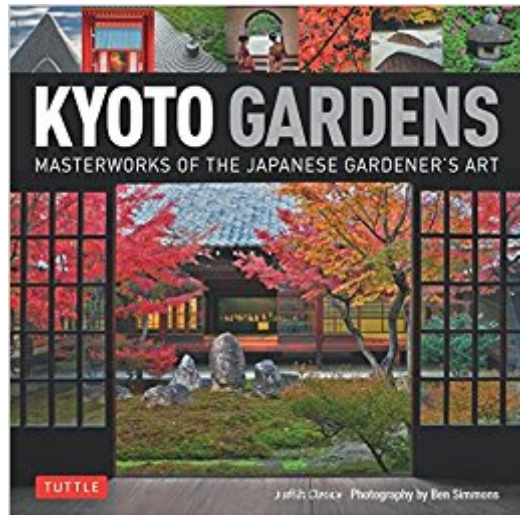


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Kyoto Gardens: Masterworks Of The Japanese Gardener's Art



Synopsis

"Bring the art and beauty of Japan to your garden with inspiration from Kyoto Gardens."

—HGTV GardensFeaturing beautiful Japanese garden photography and insightful writing, Kyoto Gardens is a labor of love from master photographer Ben Simmons and Kyoto-based writer Judith Clancy. In their rocks and plants, empty spaces and intimate details—Kyoto's gardens manifest a unique ability to provoke thought and delight in equal measure. These varied landscapes meld the sensuality of nature with the disciplines of cosmology, poetry and meditation. Japanese aristocrats created these gardens to display not just wealth and power, but cultural sensitivity and an appreciation for transcendent beauty. A class of professional gardeners eventually emerged, transforming Japanese landscape design into a formalized art. Today, Kyoto's gardens display an enormous range of forms—from rock gardens display of extreme minimalism and subtle hues, to stroll gardens of luscious proportions and vibrant colors. In Kyoto Gardens Simmons' photographs present a fresh and contemporary look at Kyoto's most important gardens. Their beauty is enhanced and humanized by gardeners tending the grounds using the tools of their art. Clancy's graceful text provides historic, aesthetic and cultural context to the Japanese gardens. Combining wonder and rigor, she describes how Kyoto's most beloved gardens remain faithful to their founders' creative spirit and conception. Journey to Kyoto's thirty gardens with just a turn of a page, or use the handy maps to plan your trip.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"[A most excellent book: a lively, interesting and informative text illustrated with Ben Simmons's brilliant photography. \[A\] book very much worth adding to one's library.](#)"

[Shakkei, Japanese Garden Society UK](#)"Here is an instance in which one can certainly judge a book by its cover. The cover of *Kyoto Gardens: Masterworks of the Japanese Gardener's Art* contains eight vignetted color photographs that sumptuously display the rich combination of organic and man-made features that populate the serenely elegant gardens of Kyoto, Japan. One is immediately drawn to the breathtaking scenes displayed within, accompanied by text that is both descriptive and evocative, yet unobtrusive." [Examiner.com](#)"Clancy, living in Kyoto, provides historic, aesthetic and cultural context to the gardens, and Simmons' photographs present a fresh look at Kyoto's most important gardens." [Publishers Weekly](#)"A beautiful book that will appeal to gardeners, armchair travelers, or readers interested in Japanese history and culture." [Library Journal](#)"Kyoto Gardens' is the sort of travel book that will make you miss Japan, whether you've been there or not." [About.com](#)"A great read on the subject, this book can be read in sections as time permits. Each garden is a story unto to itself." [Sensible Gardening & Living blog](#)"Kyoto Gardens: Masterworks of the Japanese Gardener's Art provides a lively survey of Kyoto's gardens and landscapes and comes from a master photographer and a Kyoto-based writer who capture the beauty of the city's major gardens." [Midwest Book Review](#)"Bring the art and beauty of Japan to your garden with inspiration from *Kyoto Gardens*, written by Judith Clancy and photographed by Ben Simmons." [HGTV Gardens](#)

Judith Clancy has lived in Kyoto for more than 40 years, writing and teaching about Japanese culture. Her first publication, *Naturescapes*, was a tribute to her Ikebana teacher, Tamura Suiko, who, through the art of flower arrangement, instilled a deep and subtle appreciation of Japanese aesthetics and character. *Exploring Kyoto: On Foot in the Ancient Capital* went beyond the usual guidebook. Its 30 detailed walks through Kyoto reveal temples, shrines and folklore to visitors while taking them on a journey through centuries of Japan's traditional architecture and culture. *Kyoto Machiya Restaurant Guide* relays the culinary delights within Kyoto's renovated townhouses, and in *Kyoto: City of Zen*, Clancy and Simmons introduce viewers to Japan's ancient capital. Clancy lives in a 120-year-old converted weaving studio in Nishijin, the weaving and dyeing district of Kyoto. Visit her website at kyotoworkshops.com. Ben Simmons is a longtime Japan resident whose photos have appeared in books, magazines, and exhibitions worldwide, including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the United Nations. He holds an MFA from the University of Florida. Some of his other book projects are *Tokyo Megacity* and *Traditional Japanese Architecture: An Exploration of*

Elements and Forms, both published by Tuttle.

From its first lines, where Clancy envisions a winged dinosaur soaring over ancient Japan, it is evident that this is an unusual book from a singular writer. This tour of some of Kyoto's most remarkable gardens is a banquet of color, texture, and ideas--as well as a wish list for those lucky enough to visit that jewel of a city. Part of the credit goes, of course, Ben Simmons' sumptuous photos. But the spirit is Clancy's. As an American living in Japan, she is in a unique position to interpret these amazing places for us. Somehow managing to be precise, intimate, and mysterious at the same time, these gardens are among the true jewels of human endeavor. (I imagine if advanced aliens came to earth, they'd be interested most in J.S. Bach and Japanese garden art.) Highly recommended.

Just a photo book with some maps. I was hoping for history and other details. Maybe some gardening methods. Nope - may as well google it.

What a wonderful retreat from the stressful everyday world to open this book and immediately feel the tranquility and beauty of Kyoto Gardens. The reader is rewarded with illuminating text by Judith Clancy and gorgeously rich photographs by Ben Simmons. The chapters are organized by regions of Kyoto, with some accompanying maps for those who may be planning a trip or want more localized information. But even if you never leave home, the book offers an armchair vacation to a world where every leaf and stone counts! My only complaint is that the format should have been larger to do justice to the wonderful pictures!

An amazing book that captures the history, design and beauty of many of the impressive gardens throughout Kyoto. Having been to nearly all of the gardens described in the book, it's easy to see how well Ms. Clancy and Mr Simmons captured their beauty. The accompanying descriptions provide an understanding of the design and importance of each garden. If a person is looking for reasons to visit Kyoto and its many gardens, this book is it. What a great publication.....

interesting book with fairly good photos, but didn't help me to know which gardens most interesting to me on recent trip

It was great! Everything is perfect. Thank you!

Great book

Beautiful photos--- Many good gardening ideas

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