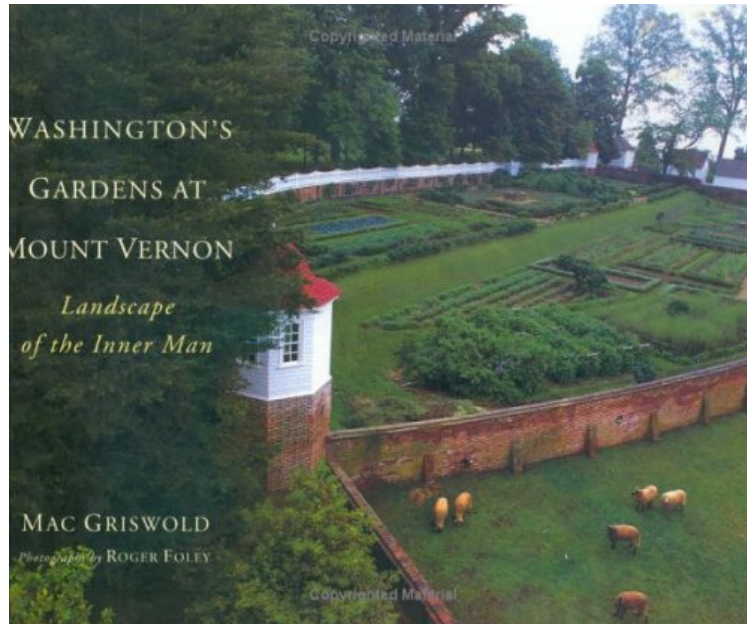


Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon

Mac Griswold

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Mac Griswold : Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon By saxmanA must read for anyone interested in either visiting Mount Vernon or just wanting to be an armchair traveler. Mac Griswold has done a stellar job in writing this book. She actually had access to Mount Vernon during off hours so she could grasp a "feel" for General Washington's home and the surrounding grounds. The reader gains many insights into what George Washington was trying to shape Mount Vernon into during the many years that he had control over it. He differed from many of his time in that he was not a planter but rather a farmer. He was also one of the pioneers in sustainable farming. This was information that I did not know of until reading this book. I never grew weary of reading it as it not only contains much information on what was planted during General Washington's oversight of the farm, his crops, trees, vines, and other plants, but also the history. There is much to be learned about how the farmstead operated even when General Washington was away fighting a revolution or when he was President for eight years. The issue of slavery is also discussed in various parts of the book. In addition to the text there are fantastic photos and illustrations throughout. After reading the book I told my wife that she had to read it as she is an avid gardener. This is certainly a reference book that I will keep at my side in looking for various plants that comprise Mount Vernon. At the end of the book are categories of the various trees, fruit trees, flowers, etc. along with their Latin names. As someone who gardens in the same climate zone as Mount Vernon I can shape some of my own garden in the fashion of that grand First President's estate. Thanks Mac Griswold for writing such a fantastic book!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book about more than just gardens By R. Marques This wonderful book gives you more than you might think you'll get because of the title. It certainly focuses on the gardens at Mount Vernon, but it also encompasses details and passages that add to your understanding of George Washington as a person and a gardener. You might say

that the garden sketch is also a bit of a personality profile. That kind of detail and research lie at the heart of this well-rounded book, a great addition to any gardener's library. Written in an accessible and interesting style, the content is well organized and educational. In fact, overall, the book is inspiring in that it excites the desire to visit Mount Vernon so as to better appreciate the grounds in person. I'm sure there was much more to be said and written about, as the grounds and history at Mount Vernon are so vast. I would have liked the book to be even longer and more comprehensive. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon By Kim Burdick. This is a truly beautiful, well-laid out and well-written book. It would be easy enough to never read the text and to simply feast your eyes on Roger Foley's beautiful photographs, but that would be a serious mistake. Mac Griswold's text is carefully-researched and lovingly written. Griswold sees the landscape of Mount Vernon as an expression of Washington's personality and her writing has convinced at least this reader, that she is right. Wonderful book for all who love gardens, landscape architecture, and history. Kim Burdick Stanton, Delaware

For gardeners and readers of early American history, here is the first book to document the unknown George Washington --- landscaper, farmer, and gardener of Mount Vernon. Remarkably, the George Washington who spent forty-five years designing and planting the gardens at Mount Vernon is virtually unknown today, hidden behind the icon of the first president's frozen dignity. In her new book, Mac Griswold reveals to us a man who gathered seed, transplanted and pruned trees, and designed a kitchen garden, a pleasure garden, and even a botanical garden, where he did all the experimental work himself. Washington left for historians and restorationists a wealth of memos, directives, diaries, plans, and plant lists that documented every step of his creation (and now the recreation) of his gardens. Out of this wealth of archival material, Griswold paints a remarkably vivid picture of eighteenth-century gardening.

From Library Journal In this engaging book, Griswold (*The Golden Age of American Gardens*, Abrams, 1991) draws a very appealing and human portrait of George Washington as farmer and gardener. She notes that the "secret George," a figure increasingly remote from our time, can be seen as more accessible through his "passionate domesticity." Her text conjures up a man who walked his fields, pattered in his gardens, and, when politics called him away, shopped at nurseries for desirable plants to ship home. It is also a fascinating introduction to gardening and farming practices in late 18th-century America. Washington tried many agricultural innovations, though ultimately the infertility of the land defeated many of them. Nor does Griswold ignore the reality of slave labor at the plantation, "the unwilling machinery of his farm." Washington's innovations made more work for them, but some ultimately benefited by becoming skilled farmers rather than unskilled field hands. The beauty of his garden design has endured, however, and Griswold includes many tips from the present gardeners at Mount Vernon on growing plants typical of Washington's day. Recommended for most gardening collections. [This book is being published to coincide with the restoration of Mount Vernon's gardens; this year is also the bicentennial of Washington's death. AEd.] ABeth Clewis Crim, Prince William P.L., V.-ABeth Clewis Crim, Prince William P.L., VACopyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Mac Griswold, the author of *Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon*, is a cultural landscape historian whose numerous awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship in architecture and design. She has been contributing editor for *House and Garden* and has written for the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Travel Leisure*.