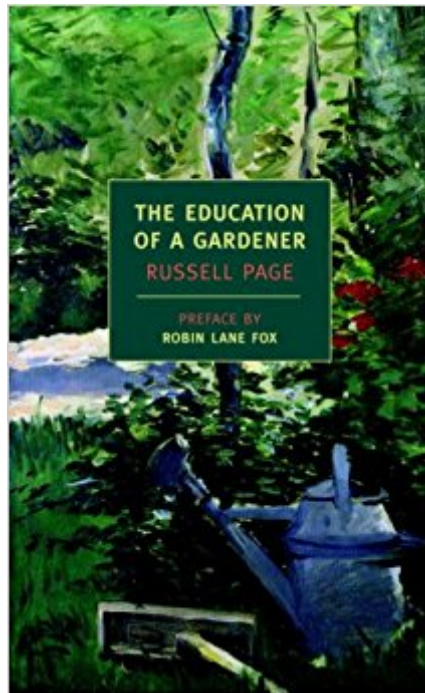




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# The Education Of A Gardener (New York Review Books Classics)



## Synopsis

Russell Page, one of the legendary gardeners and landscapers of the twentieth century, designed gardens great and small for clients throughout the world. His memoirs, born of a lifetime of sketching, designing, and working on site, are a mixture of engaging personal reminiscence, keen critical intelligence, and practical know-how. They are not only essential reading for today's gardeners, but a master's compelling reflection on the deep sources and informing principles of his art. The Education of a Gardener offers charming, sometimes pointed anecdotes about patrons, colleagues, and, of course, gardens, together with lucid advice for the gardener. Page discusses how to plan a garden that draws on the energies of the surrounding landscape, determine which plants will do best in which setting, plant for the seasons, handle color, and combine trees, shrubs, and water features to rich and enduring effect. To read The Education of a Gardener is to wander happily through a variety of gardens in the company of a wise, witty, and knowledgeable friend. It will provide pleasure and insight not only to the dedicated gardener, but to anyone with an interest in abiding questions of design and aesthetics, or who simply enjoys an unusually well-written and thoughtful book.

## Book Information

Series: New York Review Books Classics

Paperback: 448 pages

Publisher: NYRB Classics; Reprint edition (July 3, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590172310

ISBN-13: 978-1590172315

Product Dimensions: 5 x 1 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #331,011 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > English Gardens #194 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Landscape #205 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Landscape

## Customer Reviews

Page, one of the great landscape gardeners, covers a lot of ground-literally and figuratively-as he shares his knowledge and experience in this heavily illustrated volume. First published in 1962, this

edition contains more photos than the original, many from Page's private files. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

"Page was one of the 20th century's legendary landscape gardeners. This classic memoir, first published in 1962, is filled with charming anecdotes and timeless gardening advice." -Library Journal

• "A classic of garden literature." -The Los Angeles Times

• "Page is one of the most respected gardening experts in the world." -The Washington Post

• "It is beyond dispute that Russell Page, an Englishman now in his 77th year, has designed more gardens for more people in more parts of the world than anyone in history. He has moreover had for many years an underground celebrity as a master of English prose, on the strength of his book *The Education of a Gardener*." -The New York Times (John Russell)

• "Russell Page was one of the most gifted landscape architects in history. Page's erudition also extended to writing, as this book demonstrates. Three hundred and sixty three pages of design advice can be reduced to this: Beauty is not in the eye of the beholder; it is a quality based on sound artistic and aesthetic principles. Applying those principles is now that the hard part, even in Page, in his genius, makes it look easy." -The Washington Post Book World

• "One of the most eloquent of all horticultural testaments." -The Sunday Telegraph (London)

• "Literary types will enjoy *The Education of a Gardener* by Russell Page, a landmark exposition, first published in 1962, of garden design principles by one of the 20th century's leading landscape designers." -The Toronto Star

• "Something of a classic, a manual on the art of the garden by a man who designed them for over 50 years, but also much more." -The Times (London) (Sean French)

• "I never travel far without Russell Page's *Education of a Gardener*, one of the most thoughtful and civilized gardening books ever written, by a master designer." -The Daily Telegraph (London)

• "Russell Page was one of the great English landscape architects of this century. His book *The Education of a Gardener* remains, in my view, the best combined guide to planting and designing a garden ever written, with inspiration for every sort of gardener, wherever they are placed. The last chapter on his own dream garden is brilliant." -The Independent (London)

• "Whatever has happened to garden writing? By that I mean literature, books that one picks up in the same way that one would a novel or biography for a good read, confident of the quality of its prose. Going to my bookshelves, I pull down Russell Page's *The Education of a Gardener* or Vita Sackville-West's *In Your Garden*. Virtually no pictures in any of them. We recognize all of these as somehow belonging to a golden age of garden writing." -The Times (London) (Roy Strong)

• "Page had a great talent and a sensitivity not only to different types of

flora and to different climates, but also to the architectural requirements of gardens, both large and small. Combining a painter's eye (his only formal training was in art) with a pragmatic and encyclopedic knowledge of horticulture, he produced gardens that were "extraordinarily lovely." New York Times (Witold Rybczynski) "From garden design to individual plants, he invests everything with beauty and wonder." The Sunday Times (London) Russell Page, admittedly a bit of a mystic, is pretty much out there by himself with his verdant heart and green digits. Michael Pollan, *Second Nature: A Gardener's Education* Page has written an astonishingly beautiful book about his craft. Doris Lessing "I reread this book every three years. It explores both the mechanic and aesthetic side of gardening, while also including solid information for an academic balance." Southern Accents

I've learned a lot from this book about why I like some gardens and not others, about what I've done right and wrong in my own gardens. His experiences are fascinating and on a large (and expensive) scale, but still there are little gems that apply across the board. He gardened for many years, mostly in England and Europe--the plants he could use do not always work in my climate, but still there are the principles. He's also an interesting person. I visited the Pepsico gardens, which he designed, now I would like to go back with a greater appreciation.

Very well written, a bit longwinded for the average garden lover, but there are very useful tips too. The last chapter, about his imaginary dream garden is quite delicious, makes wading through the book absolutely worthwhile

This man who achieved so much comes across as so humble in this book. He talks about the inspirations behind his work and as a result is truly an inspiration to every aspiring gardner.

Like plant pornography - lots of long words and nouns

This reflection of Russell Page on his lifelong work as a gardener for himself and others is full of great information, principles on designing gardens, and tips for developing a garden that is right for the owner.

My introduction to Russell Page was in Michael Pollan's "Second Nature: A Gardener's Education," a book about gardening and grandparents applied to the philosophy of living. Pollan's praise of

Russell Page stirred my curiosity, and since I couldn't get Page's book through my local library's state network, I ordered a copy from . And I haven't been disappointed. Page was a 20th century English genius who studied, designed and planted gardens around the world. His book describes his life as a garden creator, both in terms of sites and plants but also in terms of the mental process involved. As with Temple Grandin describing her mental processes involved in building stockyard facilities, the insight into mental genius provides inspiration for broadening my mind's problem-solving aptitude.

There's been no better book written about the art of designing a beautiful landscape, IMO. While few of us can relate to mansions on the Riviera or expansive town gardens in Paris, the principles Mr. Page talks about are an accessible distillation of a lifetime of intense planting, looking and thinking. If nothing else, experiencing this rigorous and disciplined artist is an incredible inspiration.

This book, first published in 1962, is one of the great classics of garden writing and should not be missed by any serious gardener, regardless of the level of experience. Page was one of the leading garden designers of the 20th Century, and his very extensive client list includes an impressive list of royals and a broad miscellany of the rich and famous around the world. But the gardens are the real stars here, and so is the delightfully readable prose. This garden design memoir is written in a light and friendly tone and will give every gardener much to think about. Page's approach to garden design was unique and strangely sympathetic and intuitive. Listen to the way he articulates his special gift for seeing the constituent parts of the garden design: "My understanding is that every object emanates - sends out vibrations beyond its physical body which are specific to itself. These vibrations vary with the nature of the object, the materials it is made of, its colour, its texture and its form." Compose the elements correctly and the emanations and vibrations are right and it feels right, the artist can see that it is so; change them slightly and the design is simply all wrong. He is wise without being pedantic and experienced without being doctrinaire or the least arrogant. A great artist, a superb plantsman and a long life crammed with incident are all combined in a well written memoir of a great life.

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