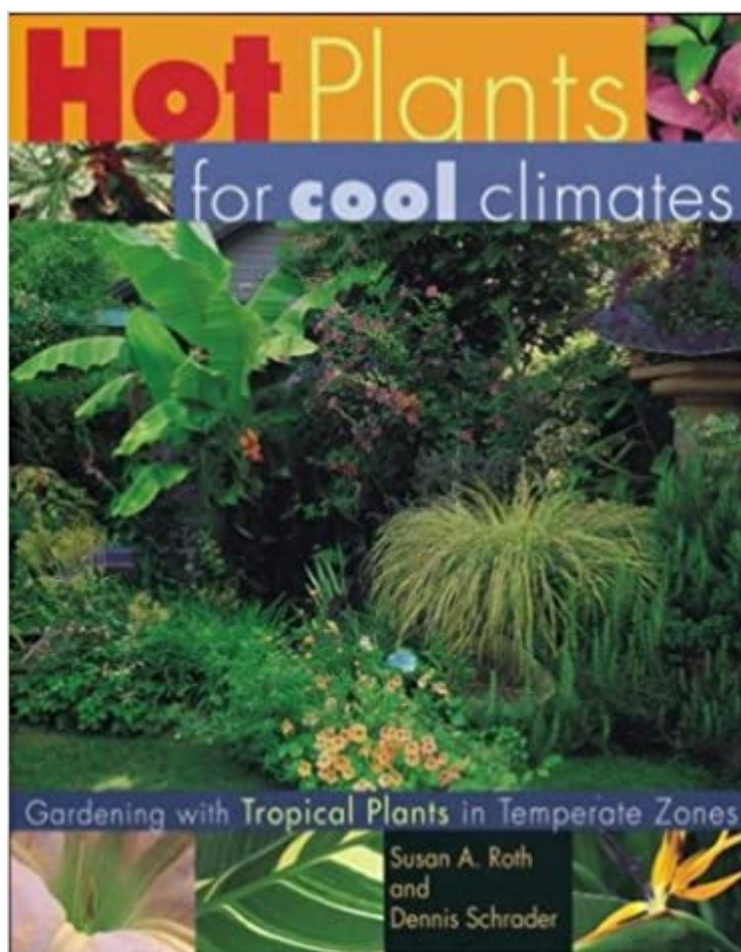


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# Hot Plants For Cool Climates: Gardening With Tropical Plants In Temperate Zones



## Synopsis

The most exciting new trend in garden design is the lush look of the tropics -- no matter where you live! If, like so many gardeners, you're a little bored with pastel flowers and rigid borders, welcome to the jungly garden, where the plants have huge shiny leaves, boldly colored foliage, ferny textures, and flame-colored flowers. Now that garden centers and nurseries are stocking banana plants, elephant ears, giant ferns, and lilies, you can have your own tropical garden no matter where you live. Whether you want to go the whole way and turn your suburban yard into a jungle paradise or simply want to grow a few tropical plants in containers, you'll add pizzazz to your garden and your gardening experience by indulging in these exciting new plants. How do you grow tropical plants in a cold climate? The way you grow annuals or other tender perennials -- you plant new ones each season or winter them over indoors. And you can even include hardy plants with a tropical look to augment the true denizens of the jungle. If you've ever bemoaned the sorry appearance of an August garden, tropics are the perfect answer -- their leaves stay fresh and they bloom undaunted by summer's worst heat. In *HOT PLANTS FOR COOL CLIMATES*, you will find both inspirational photographs and solid information on how to design a flamboyant tropical landscape and grow the plants that make it happen no matter where you live.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Using flamboyant plants to evoke tropical gardens is the hottest trend in the gardening world, perhaps best described as the "banana and canna" style of garden design. *Hot Plants for Cool*

Climates makes clear, for those of us without greenhouses or the time and muscles to dig and wrap plants for winter, that this look can be achieved by using tropical-looking hardy plants or by planting container gardeners that can be moved indoors before first frost. Most tropical plants are perennial in their native habitats, and if we lived in Hawaii, we too could grow agaves, Elephant's Ear, and Angel's Trumpet outdoor year-round. For those of us who garden in less benign climates, the authors give instructions on mulching and wrapping such plants to protect them from freezes. It involves straw and burlap and leaves the plants looking like mummified little soldiers, but able to withstand temperatures 20 degrees lower than without protection. The gardens pictured in the plentiful color photographs are certainly tempting, as they overflow with huge leaves, flashy foliage, exotic flowers, ponds and vines, all combined into the rich tapestry of a jungle. You can almost smell the jasmine and hear the chattering of the parrots. Thankfully, the chapter on hardy plants for the tropical look (bamboos, grasses, hardy bananas, ferns, Petasites) puts this style of garden within the reach of most gardeners, no matter if they live in Minnesota or California. Especially useful are the appendices, which list plants for a variety of design situations and a source list for the plants recommended throughout the book. --Val Easton

Garden fashion turns outrageous in this spirited call for cool-climate gardens to shed their English-borne respectability and don the dress of tropical wilds. With their typically hot and humid summers, gardens from Virginia to Minnesota and Oregon can mimic a Hawaiian paradise or a Costa Rican rain forest with layers of hanging greenery, contrasting leafy textures, gargantuan flowers and riotous color. Emboldened by Roth's (Four-Season Landscape) prose and Schrader's knowledge (he is the foremost grower of tropical plants in the New York metro area), readers can start with one of several simple container plantings or design an entire garden room around a temple of faux ruins. Gardeners will come to think of tropicals as big annuals that come into their own when the typical perennial garden is headed for ruin, learn how to begin with tropical-like cold-hardy plants and get the feel for garden design based on contrasting textures and a dominant vertical presence. Half of the book is devoted to an encyclopedia of 100 tropical plants and useful plant lists, categorized by color and pattern. This is certainly one of the liveliest and best-organized presentations on the tropical trend in gardening. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A great book for those who like me: 1) push the Zone envelope; 2) like to grow tropicals that provide many lovely specimens that we in the temperate zones lack. :-))In many places this book does lack some of the detail that I would rather see. In addition, it is not quite as thorough as I might have

wished. Never the less, well worth it for Zone Pushers. My Musa basjoo in the ground in Zone 5b testifies to my insanity.

A very good read. I use the book as a reference .Descriptions are given for a variety of plants. I initially checked the book out from our local library. It was such a fact based book that I decided to purchase it.

I wanted to find out more about what I need to do prior to moving my plants into the greenhouse for the winter.

The photographs are enticing and the advice for garden design and plant combining is useful, but apart from some tips about winterizing subtropicals, I found the book's horticultural advice and information a bit skimpy and sometimes doubtful or vague. We learn that Heliconias need to be kept warm during the winter, but no specific temperature range is provided. Hibiscus are described as ideal houseplants--a claim that should raise a few more experienced eyebrows (and some eager head nodding and salivating from hordes of overwintering scales and white flies). All phormiums are pronounced as suffering in heat and humidity, but Tony Avent in sticky hot Carolina manages well enough with several cultivars. Bougainvillia Raspberry Ice is described as one of the best cultivars, when it is actually a notoriously shy bloomer. Often I felt like what we had here was, in place of hard core research and experience some enthusiastic skimming of various plant catalogues (in fact, some, like the Stokes catalogue might actually be more informative). But at the same time, I do think the design aspects of the book are good and it inspires me with a thousand plans for next year and beyond.

Tropical gardening here in the the Midwest has been a passion of mine for over 20 years. I never thought of it as different just big annuals. Thats what I liked about Susan's and Dennis's approach to this book. It was really laid back there just plants was the feeling I was getting from reading this book. They didn't make it complicated. I liked the real expectations they had in the book no hype about growing you own table ready bananas in Maine or something crazy like that just pure and simple you are growing them for the foliage effect don't get carried away. Bananas are just big cannas and brumansias are really big coleus they put it simple and gave great advice and the garden shots are great a real inspiration. The over wintering section was worth the price of the book.

THIS BOOK WILL SERVE AS AN EXCELLENT REFERENCE BOOK NOT ONLY FOR THE EXPERIENCED GARDENER BUT ALSO FOR THE AMATURE. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IS COMPREHENSIVE, INFORMATIVE AND BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN. THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE EXCEPTION AND RELATE VERY CLEARLY TO THE WRITTEN MATERIAL. THE OVERALL ORGANIZATION IS EASY TO FOLLOW, LOGICAL AND ENJOYABLE TO READ. THIS BOOK IS A MUST FOR ALL GARDENERS.

The book is composed of 2 sections. The first section is 98 pages about the tropical environment, garden design, and garden structures. 18 pages about plants in the tropics. 32 pages on garden design and style. 16 pages on containers. 19 pages on random observations about tropical, and tropical looking, plants. 13 pages about overwintering tropicals. This section also includes about 90 photographs. Photos appear rather dull and faded, not high quality printing. Most images are also rather small. The second section contains a 95 page tropical plant encyclopedia, 11 page plant list for different environments, 3 page plant nursery list, and an 11 page index. The encyclopedia describes 101 plants giving common name, scientific name, native growing zone, gardening tips, and typical cultivars. Each description includes a small photograph of the plant. Information in the first section is mostly fluff. Long wandering sentences that lead nowhere. This is supplemented by the same old garden design stuff that you can find in many other books. My first impression when I put the book down was that this was a book written in the 1950s. Nothing special. The second section is the encyclopedia, and while nearly one full page is written about each plant - little is said. Garden advice is weak, no specifics are given. Most plant tags contain more real information. The only bright spot is a brief chapter on overwintering tropicals. This chapter becomes modestly interesting, but ends way too soon. Overall, the book is a disappointment. Small snippets of important information are scattered amongst the text, but mostly it just rambles along. It a nice book to buy as a holiday present for that relative you've never been real fond of :-)

When I first saw the title of this book, I thought it was exactly what I was looking for. But that turned out to be because conceptual accuracy was sacrificed for verbal cleverness on the cover. The book has little to do with gardening in temperate zones (horticulturally understood to be climates free from extremes of heat or cold), or cool climates (horticulturally understood to mean climates with heat-deprived summers). To the contrary, the book presumes that the gardener lives where there is a significant season of sustained heat, during which time plants will quickly establish themselves from plant-and-pull frost protection measures or regenerate as root-hardy returning perennials. The

book is aimed at gardeners in the East; West Coast gardeners will probably be happier with books that advocate attaining the "tropical look" with plants that feature year-round outdoor hardiness and don't require summer heat to perform well.

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