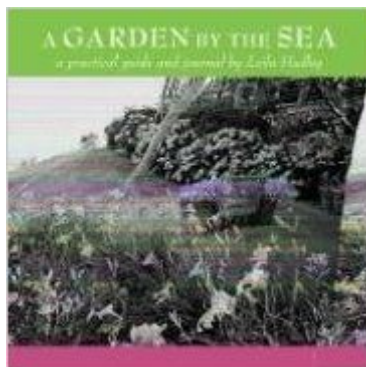


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# A Garden By The Sea



## Synopsis

Since the early 1990s Leila Hadley has tended to her paradise-like garden at her house on Fishers Island, on Long Island Sound. Here she shares her wealth of experience in seaside gardening and offers a very informative and entertaining how-to book. Written with a conversational tone and accompanied by gorgeous, lavish color photographs, this book serves as a comprehensive and practical guide for beginner and advanced gardeners alike. Starting from the ground up, Leila Hadley built an all-organic garden and bird sanctuary that defies the most difficult gardening conditions. She sprinkles her trials and triumphs throughout the text, which includes maps and charts on annuals, perennials, indoor and outdoor planting, tips on how to keep a coastal garden thriving even in long winter months, as well as substantial information on gardening in other regions and climactic conditions. The ultimate book for creating and cultivating a garden and deriving joy and satisfaction in the process, *A Garden by the Sea* is destined to become a gardening classic.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. "All my life, I've known gardens, grown gardens," writes Hadley at the start of this captivating chronicle and guide. The author of the travel memoirs *Give Me the World* and *A Journey with Elsa Cloud* grew up believing that cultivating plants and flowers was an indispensable part of any good life (her grandmother was a friend of the great British garden designer Gertrude Jekyll). Hadley was steeped in the notion that truly beautiful gardens were composed with restraint and

harmony. Size and extravagance was never the point. She has cultivated gardens all over the world, from South Africa to California, but one of her favorites remains a "jungle of blue morning glories in terracotta pots" on a Manhattan balcony "no larger than a bath mat." In 1990, her husband, the philanthropist Henry Luce III, presented her with a cliff-top house and five acres of beach-front property on Fisher's Island, off the shore of Connecticut, and Hadley learned to expand her sense of what it means to be harmonious and restrained in the dramatic conditions of the sea. Combining a wealth of practical information with the eye and the verve of a born explorer, observer and artist, following the seasons and the passing years, Hadley details how to create a garden that is organic on every level—matching and enhancing the environment and all its inhabitants. "The way Hank works a room at cocktail parties, chatting with everyone he knows, exchanging remembrances, catching up on what's going on at the moment, is the way I walk about the garden in the early morning in June." In this gorgeously written and photographed book, Hadley reveals what it is about gardening that is exquisitely temporal and timeless, down to earth and divine. This book will make everyone want to pick up a trowel. 200 color photos. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Leila Hadley was born in New York in 1925. An inveterate traveler, she has written numerous books on the subject, including the acclaimed *Journey with Elsa Cloud* and the award-winning *Give Me the World*.

Very old book.

It is always so satisfying to discover a book that treats its subject in a way to make it interesting to any and all readers: Simon Winchester's book *The Professor and the Madman* about the birth of the Oxford English Dictionary; Dava Sobel's book on *Longitude*; Andrew Solomon's *The Noonday Demon* on depression - the list is long and always growing. Happily, Leila Hadley's book, *A Garden by the Sea*, easily secures a place on my short list of nonfiction books that stretch well beyond their topics, captivating the general reader and gardener alike. I have two black thumbs, yet continue to use them to turn the pages of *A Garden by the Sea*, marveling at Ms. Hadley's descriptions of her beloved garden, her unusual life and travels, and the changing seasons as viewed from the shores of the Northeastern seacoast. There is plenty of practical knowledge about how to cultivate an organic seaside garden: climate maps, Latin names of plants, planting depths, garden pests, seasonal considerations, etc., but it is her ruminations away from the hardcore information that

make me want to take trowel and hoe in hand. My favorite chapter is about her Dream Garden, which encompasses a white garden and a moonlit garden: "The attraction of a white garden is that it gleams in the evening. . . lovely by day, pale-petaled scented flowers become magical by starlight, especially with a birdbath to reflect moonbeams, and the light of pierced brass Moroccan lanterns. "I have become inspired to green my thumbs and find a patch of soil, even if it's just off my Manhattan apartment's fire escape, and grow my "jungle of blue morning glories in terracotta pots on a New York trellised balcony . . . no larger than a bath mat." And eventually, as Hadley cheerfully prophesizes, create my own "thing of beauty that's a job forever."

Like all the best gardening books, Hadley's blooms with the personality of its author. A visual writer with an uncommon ability to recreate personal vistas of beauty in the mind's eye of her reader, Hadley has lived and gardened all over the world. Her current garden, on five acres of secluded beachfront property at her home on Fisher's Island, off the Connecticut coast, includes nature walks and is strictly organic. "I thought a seaside garden should look and be simple, easy, harmonious with sea and sky, serene, tranquil....It hadn't occurred to me that this might not always be as simple nor as easy a project as I imagined." Luckily for Hadley, who grew up with gardeners and governesses, help is affordable. But even if you don't have someone to pick up the slack on weeding, planting, pruning and deadheading, there's much to enjoy in this lovely, well-organized and practical book. Hadley offers advice on salt and drought tolerant plants, on coping with pests like rabbits and deer, learning from mistakes, and attracting birds and butterflies. Roughly organized by season, she discusses her favorite plants in detail, including sources for plants, bulbs and seeds. There are entire chapters devoted to daffodils and tulips, irises, hydrangeas, geraniums and pelargonium, pinks, marsh mallows, passionflower and other vines, annuals and fruits. Other chapters discuss "The Cutting Garden," "The Autumn Garden," "The Winter Scene," houseplants and volunteers. Hadley opens her flower chapters with exuberant descriptions of what she likes about these favorites. "the daffodils, like a waving river of flowers along the western edge of the driveway, look as though they had just been painted. Their clean, shining brightness, the scent of young leaves and damp spring earth, everything glowing and blowing, hint at the bliss of May and the hope and magic of summer ahead." She goes on to describe the work in loving detail, from how many bulbs to buy ("Think wheelbarrowsful.") when and how to plant them (clumps of odd numbers in a diamond shape work best for her) to choosing colors, height, extending flowering and interplanting with astilbe or day lilies to hide bedraggled post-bloom foliage. Although her chapter on pests neglects the bane of my existence, woodchucks, she does offer numerous non-toxic ideas for

ridding the garden of rabbits ("Best of all solutions to the rabbit problem, I've found, is to focus on plants rabbits dislike."), raccoons, rats and mice, ants, slugs, aphids, mosquitoes, crab grass and poison ivy (full strength vinegar poured over the whole plant) and more. While many solutions will be familiar, others may not. I'd never heard of cornmeal for combating fungus, for instance, or Mosquito Magnets, which trap mosquitoes by mimicking human breath. You won't always agree with her, of course. She has banished daisies from her garden as "killers and dangerously invasive," but I've found that these problems are (mostly) solved by yanking them out before they are quite done flowering. And masses of daisies definitely offer the "incandescent radiance" she so values in her dream garden. "My dream garden is both a white garden and a moon garden, a garden of annuals and perennials the color of snow, cream, ivory, and milk, with flower textures delicate as tissue paper, soft as velvet, smooth as silk, sleek as satin. Consider beds of creamy white roses, clusters of lilies, carpets of white violets, clematis blossoms." The crisp, brilliant photographs are nearly as elegant as the prose, offering atmospheric views of rambling hillsides at dawn, bordered walkways, glimpses of house between masses of blooms, architectural line and ornamental accents, and close ups of her favorite varieties. Hadley, author of the memorable travel memoirs, "Give Me the World," and "A Journey with Elsa Cloud," in addition to the series, "Fieldings Guide to Traveling with Children in Europe," has produced a joyful, intense and elegant garden book, which will be enjoyed again and again and all through the winter.

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