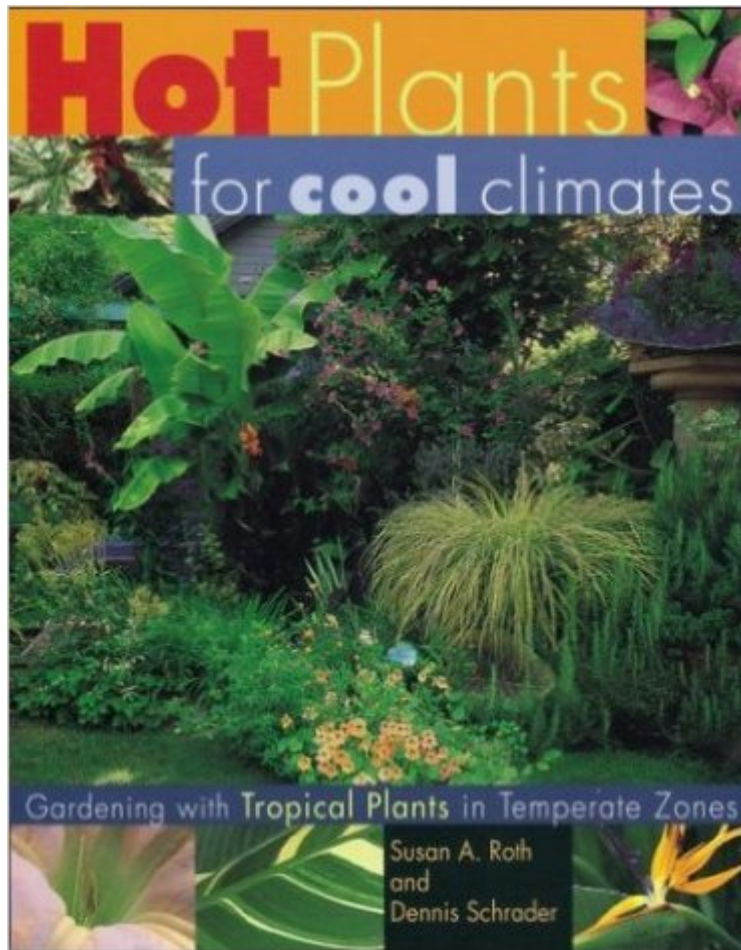


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# Hot Plants For Cool Climates: Gardening With Tropical Plants In Temperate Zones



## 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, tropicals 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

Simply put, this book is the most exciting, helpful and practical book I have seen in quite a while when it comes to ideas about innovative approaches to gardening in cool climates. It is a treasure

chest of ideas on the cutting edge of what's happening. If you are into geraniums and other pedestrian plant material, look elsewhere. If you are curious about what's new, hot and exciting, this book is for you. The photos are dazzling and the narrative is so well written, even an amateur like myself felt totally comfortable. This book has already become my gift of choice for friends and family who care about their gardens.

As a professional horticulturist gardening in zones 5 through 7, I have searched high and low for a good reference book on tropical and subtropical plants. At last I have found it! *Hot Plants for Cool Climates* is informative, interesting and well-organized. The design suggestions are new and exciting, and the encyclopedia is stuffed with detailed information regarding cultivation. Particularly helpful were the cultivar names listed under each species (god help me, how did they ever whittle down the list under *Coleus*?) and the overwintering tips. Serious amateurs and professionals alike will benefit from owning this book.

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.

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.

Although I am a mere "weekend, small-patch" kind of gardener, I have found that "Hot Plants for Cool Climates" is as wonderful to own as some of my favorite cookbooks. The stories accompanying each plant description feed the imagination of a gardener as do ingredients in a recipe. Informative in its scope yet poetic in its breadth, this book is a delight to the heart as well as to the eye. This book makes it delicious to dream of someday tending a much larger garden, and it provides the reader with not only the creative inspiration, but also the tools of knowledge with which to plant a tropical paradise that can thrive in a temperate reality.

If you're looking for ways to incorporate a tropical "flair" to your garden, this is the book to purchase. Very informative, not only on what plants to buy, but also important info. on how to care for your new beauties during the winter months for pretty much all planting "zones". Visually appealing, excellent!

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