



## In the Garden with Jane Austen

*Kim Wilson*

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Bringing Jane Austen's gardens--real and fictional--to life with excerpts from her novels and letters, period songs, poetry, and illustrations, this charming recollection offers tips for creating English gardens alongside Austen. This lavishly illustrated exploration with color photographs of gardens associated with the writer offers a rich experience to admirers of both Austen and gorgeous gardens. Complete with a reference section that includes important dates in Austen's life, locations and dates of her houses, and a map of 1809 England, this delightful book is perfect for the history and garden enthusiast alike.

## In the Garden with Jane Austen Details

Date : Published October 1st 2008 by Jones Books

ISBN : 9780979047510

Author : Kim Wilson

Format : Paperback 114 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Gardening, European Literature, British Literature, History

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## From Reader Review In the Garden with Jane Austen for online ebook

### QNPoohBear says

This book explains the history of landscape gardening in Jane Austen's time. It draws from secondary sources and supplements with quotes from Austen's novels, letters and other gardening texts from the time. I knew about Humphrey Repton and Capability Brown, the Picturesque and the switch to the more natural style. I'm not into gardening so the final section on recreating an Austen garden was useless to me but it is interesting to read about the different types of flowers and the modern equivalents. What I liked best was the quotations from ladies' magazines and other sources. There are recipes for skin lotion to prevent tans, potpourri and advice from 18th and 19th century periodicals.

The photos make every location look amazing! I especially liked the inclusion of the list of filming locations used in Austen adaptations. There are a lot more historic sites added to my must-see list now! I need to win the lottery!

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### Rebecca says

An interesting look into the gardens and landscapes that may have inspired Jane Austen's works, with excerpts from her books and other texts from the time period.

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### Laurel says

"To sit in the shade on a fine day, and look upon verdure, is the most perfect refreshment." Fanny Price, Mansfield Park, Chapter 9

It seems quite fitting that a quote from Jane Austen's character Fanny Price, who is an astute observer of natural beauty, should open this book with such a succinct statement expressing her delight in being planted on the bench in Sotherton's parkland to enjoy the serene beauty of the green landscape around her. Verdure is not a word that one runs across very often in contemporary writing but we should, because it vividly describes a scene and sensations in one word. It is no leap of the imagination that Fanny's creator Jane Austen gave her such sentiments, for Jane dearly loved nature herself and included references to it and gardening in her novels and letters.

Author Kim Wilson must be a Fanny Price too, sensitive and observant to nature's beauty as her new book *In the Garden With Jane Austen* is a verdurous delight, introducing us to Austen's affinity to nature through the gardens she would have experienced in her own homes, family members and public gardens of Georgian and Regency England. This beautiful little volume is packed full of quotes from her novels and letters referencing her characters' experiences in the garden and her own love of garden cultivation. It has always appeared to me that some of the best plot development in her novels happened while her characters were walking and I am reminded that her heroine's Elizabeth Bennet, Catherine Morland, and Emma Woodhouse were all proposed to in a garden or on a woodland path. Hmm? Should we take a clue from this ladies and get your men outside?

Ms. Wilson has certainly done her research collecting many quotes and antecedents from Austen's novels, letters and family lore effectively placing them in historical context and illustrated with beautiful photographs of the actual locations mentioned. I felt like I was on a personal garden tour of Austen's life as I traveled from the cottage gardens of her home in Steventon and Chawton, to the manor house gardens of her family such as brother Edward at Godersham Park, Goodnestone Park, and Chawton House, and the estate of Stoneleigh Abbey owned by her cousins the Leigh's. We are also treated to views of other famous estates that might have inspired settings in her novels such as Chatsworth House reputed to be the inspiration for Pemberley in *Pride and Prejudice* and Cottesbrook Hall for *Mansfield Park*.

Even though this is a lovely pictorial edition, the text is what really shines with so many facts and observations on how nature and gardens influenced Jane Austen's life and writings. I will admit to a more than slight disappointment in the book's small size and paperback format though in comparison to other comparably priced larger sized hardcover editions on the market.

I must confess a large prejudice in favor of this book even before it was published since it combined two of my passions, Jane Austen and gardening. When I finally had the book in hand, I was happy to discover that the last chapter is devoted to re-creating a Jane Austen inspired garden yourself reminiscent of a Regency or Georgian era. What a fanciful thought that plants that Austen admired can be obtained and grown either in a classic presentation, a few simple pots of garden herbs or her favorite flowering shrub the syringa placed by your front door to remind you everyday that looking upon verdure in the perfect refreshment.

Laurel Ann, Austenprose

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### **Anne Marsh says**

IN THE GARDEN WITH JANE AUSTEN is a fabulous mix of lush garden photographs, Jane Austen quotes, English gardening history, and planting tips. The plant names themselves are a delicious treat and an invitation to garden: pot marigolds and peonies, lupins and mignonettes. Conveniently, I discovered this book right as the spring garden catalogs started showing up in my mailbox.

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### **Linda says**

I bought this at the National Gallery of Art because I am going to visit England this fall and now I have a number of places I would love to go visit. Also, since it is now spring I am called to read gardening books and books about gardens and come up with plans for my own garden whether they actually come to fruition or not! This was a nice blend of information of what kind of gardens Jane Austen would have been familiar with and which of these gardens still exist or have been re-created. This wasn't a long book but it was a fun read and also has beautiful photographs.

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### **Carmen says**

Kim Wilson ties together Jane Austen's books with houses and gardens. In doing so, she explains some of the references in Jane Austen's books. I am one of those crazy persons who likes combining vacations with books I have read, so this is a perfect match for me. I am also in deep winter here in Colorado, snow for two

weeks already, so I am day dreaming and planning next summer's garden. The pictures really lifted my spirits.

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### **Karyn says**

A fun find at the library. The author takes the reader through gardens referenced in Austen's books and Austen's personal gardens. There were also brief references to plants of Austen's time. I enjoyed the book and noted a few of the gardens to perhaps visit should I ever have time and money to wander England.

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### **Meredith (Austenesque Reviews) says**

(Note: This review is of the 2011 edition published by Frances Lincoln Limited, which is hard cover and includes seventy color photographs, twenty-five period drawings, and five garden plans.)

Kitchen gardens, extensive shrubberies, enchanting vistas, labyrinths, gothic seats, hermitages – wouldn't you just love to live in Jane Austen's time and have all these natural and picturesque settings surround you? While I love the modern conveniences and freedoms of the twenty-first century, part of me longs to live in a time where a large portion of a family's food came from their backyard and walking in the garden was an almost daily activity. Spending most of her life in the country, Jane Austen was a great admirer of the outdoors and saw her fair share of beautiful and extensive gardens. Don't you wish you could do the same? Wouldn't you just love to go on a walking tour of English period gardens?

To keep reading, go to: <http://janeaustenreviews.blogspot.com...>

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### **Jeanette says**

In the Garden with Jane Austen takes the reader on a tour of all things to do with Georgian and Regency gardens. You come across gardens that Jane herself would have worked in or visited or at the very least knew of. Cottage gardens, manor house gardens, town gardens, and public gardens are all brought to life in wonderful detail and through beautiful photography. We also learn what Jane's favorite plants were as well as other interesting bits of information like how people tried to disguise or hide their outhouses. The book features information on several gardens that are still in existence and open to the public today as well as sections on the gardens featured in Jane Austen movie adaptations and a chapter on how to re-create Jane Austen's garden yourself.

A lovely little book filled with beautiful pictures and drawings, as well as fitting quotes from Jane Austen's novels and other contemporary sources.

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### **Caroline Miley says**

I really wanted to know more details about gardens and the plants in them in Jane Austen's time. It's hard to find the planting details, but this book came up with just what I wanted. It has delightful pictures of some Austen gardens, including Chawton, where I've been. A must for Austen/garden fans.

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### **Chris Webber says**

I actually exhaled while reading this book, could feel my blood pressure lowering as I scrolled through the words and photos. I am in love with gardens/gardening, and the landscape of English gardens are my most favorite, moreso than Japanese garden landscaping.

If you need to escape in the balm of natural goodness, this book's for you.

"To sit in the shade on a fine day, and look upon verdure is the most perfect refreshment." ~Jane Austen

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### **Linda Kenny says**

This is a book for readers with an interest in Jane Austen's life and literature as highlighted around gardens. It would also be of interest to folks who manage or plant flower gardens. The book features specific places (estates and gardens) in Austen 's life and literature with contact information so you can plan a visit.

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### **Scott says**

Very nice combination of excerpts from Austen novels, letters, and contemporary gardening publications. Discusses the role gardens and landscapes played as settings of the time. Helps to understand the novels better, and gives a good sense of the purpose of various landscape elements and how they were used by the gentry in England ca. 1800.

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### **Megan says**

This is a wonderful book. It covers cottage gardens, mansion/manor gardens, city gardens and public gardens in places where Jane Austen lived, traveled to or used in her books. There is also a chapter on how to recreate Jane Austen's various gardens at Chawton Cottage as well as a mansion garden, a great estate garden, and a city garden. The book also contains a list of the gardens used while filming the various movies based on the novels of Jane Austen.

The book uses excerpts from Austen's letters and novels to highlight the specific subject being discussed. The author looks at the different types of gardens, who would plant them and what the specific use of the garden would be. These range from the practical kitchen (vegetables, fruit, herbs) garden to the pleasure garden designed for beauty and leisure pursuits with its temples, grottoes, shrubberies, "ruins", ha-ha's, conservatories, etc. The author also highlights city gardens in London and Bath.

The photographs are beautiful and it is evident that the author loves her subject and has done extensive research. A lovely way to spend a few hours and escape to beautiful and quiet places!

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**Brianne says**

I love this book! Not only are there gorgeous pictures on every page (and the paper itself is wonderful too), but Wilson gives so much information in a way that is not overwhelming or boring. I just found it very interesting.

And to make it even better, Wilson includes a listing of the gardens and estates that were used to film the various Austen films. So now I've got an Austen trip to plan! :D

Highly Recommend!

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