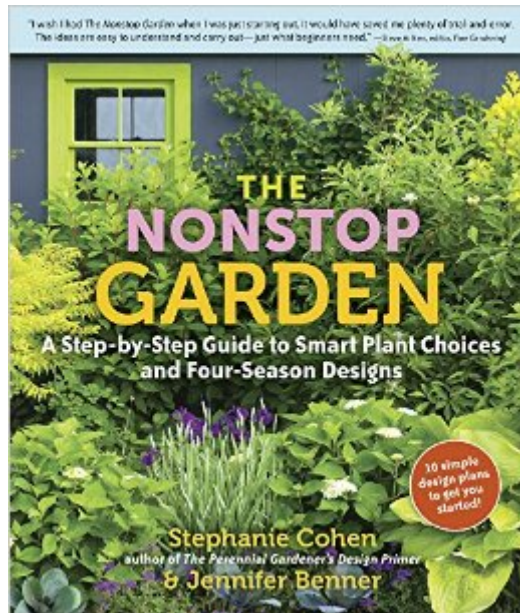


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# The Nonstop Garden: A Step-by-Step Guide To Smart Plant Choices And Four-Season Designs



## Synopsis

With hectic lifestyles and busy schedules, people are finding it more and more appealing to enjoy their leisure time at home rather than packing their bags in search of peaceful retreats. But how can they confidently create a garden retreat? By following Cohen and Benner's trusted advice and building a nonstop garden, they'll have more creative planting options, a garden that requires less maintenance than a traditional perennial border. The Nonstop Garden gives gardeners all the information they need to create a productive, beautiful garden. This easy-to-use guide is split into four main parts and includes ten fail-safe design plans that can be incorporated into any garden. Gardeners can choose from a native garden, a scented garden, a gold-colored garden, a garden for wet sites, a vibrant-colored garden, a cool-colored garden, a winter garden, a shade garden, and a design plan for the daunting area known as the hellstrip.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Is the word "garden" a noun or a verb? If much of the joy you take in your garden is that you get to play, experiment, fiddle, and tend to it, then this is the book for you. Stephanie Cohen has put together a thoughtful design primer for gardeners who love to garden, and want a garden that flows from season to season with nonstop color and interest. The book starts out with a straightforward chapter of advice that will get you fired up to create a gorgeous garden. She gives you an easy, but not simplistic, overview of what concepts to remember as you renovate your existing space or plan your new one. Then she walks you through the different types of plants that will star in your

year-round, nonstop garden. Chapters on trees, shrubs, perennials, tropicals, bulbs, annuals, edibles, and vines follow, and in each chapter she profiles some of the winning plants that you might select for your garden. Interspersed throughout the book are ten very pretty designs you can adapt to your own garden or use as a springboard for your own design. The highlight of this book for me was Stephanie's down-to-earth and just plain funny writing about design and choosing plants. Some of my favorite bits: "If a plant has 'yuck' foliage right after flowering, as so many perennials do, it might be best to plant it in your compost pile." (Sing it, sister Stephanie!!) "Impulsive plant purchases can lead to a garden that looks like it was designed by a blender." (Heh-heh - yep.) "Do not fully commit to hardy plants that return year after year. By designating space for annuals, biennials, and tropicals, you give yourself some shopping trips to look forward to each gardening season."

Over the past few years, several books have been published offering advice for creating beautiful and interesting gardens, in the shortest amount of time and with the least amount of fuss. These manuals allow the harried and the multi-taskers to circumvent the fascinating garden journey of trial, error, and discovery in order to experience almost instant success in gardening. Gardening manuals, that are clear and easy to read and that are neither encyclopedic nor all-encompassing in scope, are helping to create unique horticultural experiences for busy people. The Nonstop Gardener is such a book. The authors make it possible to work with recommended plants to quickly create attractive all season gardens that are almost the equal of those developed by experienced gardeners through years of experimentation. Some of my garden writer colleagues, who are traditional in their approach to gardening, are dismayed. They are disappointed that the new gardener will not experience the thrill of the hunt, the thrill of discovery and the fascination of watching a plant develop its personality. They insist that the essence of gardening will be lost and that a rich and rewarding hobby will become a hollow activity. I understand their concerns. However, I also understand the very real needs of the new gardener. Why should multi-tasking people, whose time is precious, not be able to create a beautiful garden without fuss and without burdensome background information? In a world that can give us frozen pizza that tastes like delivery, a successful instant garden should be accessible to those that need them. Some of us choose to experience a rich quantity of life.

If you want to know how to design a garden that looks good year round, I highly recommend The Nonstop Garden by Stephanie Cohen and Jennifer Benner. Those of you with yards will especially appreciate the book, as it includes 10 design plans to create different kinds of garden beds, be it a

native garden or the feeling of a wooded retreat. But even though I don't have a yard of my own, I found plenty of information about plants and design ideas that I can use to create interest and beauty year round on my balcony. The book is broken down into four major parts: nuts and bolts, the main attractions, the supporting cast, and finishing touches. The authors begin the nuts and bolts section by talking about what they think is so great about mixed borders. They were preaching to the converted as far as I was concerned, so I zipped through that part and dove right in to reading about their ideas for "design strategies that work." I found that chapter to be particularly useful and interesting, especially the graphic that depicts how to get the right balance of trees, perennials, annuals, bulbs, vines, and veggies. In Cohen and Benner's interpretation of the ideal nonstop garden, trees, shrubs, and perennials are the main attractions that gardeners should design around. They dedicate two chapters to great looking plants that would be worthy of being a headlining attraction. Interspersed throughout are photos-of course-but also several garden plans that show just how to use these gorgeous plants to their best advantage. The design plans are not just for people with perfect garden situations either. For example, on page 86 they share a garden plan for a bed with soil that is on the soggy side and features a beautiful Magnolia tree.

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