

Book Notes

The Herb Society of America's *Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs*
Edited by Katherine K. Schiosser
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In the forward of the book is a brief history of the founding of The Herb Society. The logo is a circle surrounded by seven springs of thyme, representing the seven founders. It was designed by one of the founders, Florence Bratenahl. The preface describes the development of the National Herb Garden in Washington, D.C. The idea for the garden was conceived in 1965 and completed in 1980. It was first to be planted on the White House grounds, but that would prove impractical as access would not be available, so it was moved to the National Botanical Garden. Much planning and fundraising was needed to achieve this garden. Many others beside Herb Society members were involved, either for their knowledge or financial contributions and fund-raising activity.

Chapter one discusses the culinary garden. It covers every aspect of the growing, harvesting, and use of culinary herbs. The next chapter covers many recipes that are interesting and tempting. The third chapter discusses the National Herb Garden design. The garden is shaped like an old-fashioned skeleton key. You are welcomed by two large urns filled with rosemary. Bordering the garden are semi-circular beds filled with changing displays of annual herbs. In the spring, potted pomegranates are brought out to sit at the entrance of two great arbors sited by the Knot Garden. A donation of twenty two classical columns given by landscape designer, Russell Page, are placed in the distance from the garden. These columns were built in 1828 as a part of the East Portico of the Capitol but never used. A second grape arbor leads to a series of beds containing old roses, then into the Dioscordes Garden that contains many historical and now obscure herbs. Other gardens on the site are a Dye Garden, Colonial Garden, Native American Garden, Medicinal Garden, Industrial Garden, Fragrance Garden, Asian Garden, Beverage Garden and the Culinary Garden, all of which are described in their own chapters in the book. All the gardens have plant lists pertaining to the way the plants are used.

This book is a great guide to designing or teaching herbal culture. Every member should own a copy. *—Submitted by Darlene Beauvais*

Note: To order a copy of this book, follow this path (outside links open in a new browser window): http://www.herbsociety.org/amazon_order.php

You can view a copy of the book at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's Library at Elm Bank, Wellesley, MA. The book is shelved with the New England Unit's book holdings.

—webmaster