



The Gardener of Versailles: My Life in the World's Grandest Garden

Alain Baraton

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INDIEFAB Book of the Year Awards -- 2014 Finalist

For gardening aficionados and Francophiles, a love letter to the Versailles Palace and grounds, from the man who knows them best. In Alain Baraton's Versailles, every grove tells a story. As the gardener-in-chief, Baraton lives on its grounds, and since 1982 he has devoted his life to the gardens, orchards, and fields that were loved by France's kings and queens as much as the palace itself. His memoir captures the essence of the connection between gardeners and the earth they tend, no matter how humble or grand.

With the charm of a natural storyteller, Baraton weaves his own path as a gardener with the life of the Versailles grounds, and his role overseeing its team of eighty gardeners tending to 350,000 trees and thirty miles of walkways on 2,100 acres. He richly evokes this legendary place and the history it has witnessed but also its quieter side that he feels privileged to know. The same gardens that hosted the lavish lawn parties of Louis XIV and the momentous meeting between Marie Antoinette and the Cardinal de Rohan remain enchanted, private places where visitors try to get themselves locked in at night, lovers go looking for secluded hideaways, and elegant grandmothers secretly make cuttings to take back to their own gardens. A tremendous best seller in France, *The Gardener of Versailles* gives an unprecedentedly intimate view of one of the grandest places on earth.

From the Hardcover edition.

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