

SECRET GARDENS OF
HOLLYWOOD
AND PRIVATE OASES IN LOS ANGELES

ERICA LENNARD AND ADELE CYGELMAN

This book offers a peek into the most beautiful private gardens of Los Angeles, one of the most verdant places on earth. Life here is meant to be lived outdoors and extravagantly, and these gardens reflect the town's larger-than-life personalities, who take pride in their extraordinary garden sanctuaries.

The sunny, warm climate in L.A. allows garden designers to unleash their most creative gardening fantasies, using plants collected from all over the world. The twenty-five gardens in the book illustrate the remarkable range of styles in the area, from Joni Mitchell's whimsical Bel-Air garden retreat, to a garden of rare succulent plants at Jack LaLanne's former residence, to Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen's Southern-style country hideaway.

Featuring all-new photographs by Erica Lennard, coauthor of the bestselling book *The Art of Doing Nothing*, this escape book is sure to appeal to gardeners and star-gazers alike.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Mediterranean

BARBARA DRAKE

LAURA MORTON

NANCY MEYERS

KONSTANTIN KALININ

Romantic

MARY STEENBURG

LAURA COOPER AND

JONI MITCHELL

JAMIE WOLF 48

Exotic

ANA ROTH 58

ROLAND EMMERICH

LATANA 76

Country

JUDY HORTON 8

CONNIE BUTLER AND

BARBARA HOWARD

Formal

KEITH AND KERI AND

SUZANNE RHEINS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS IX

INTRODUCTION XI

Mediterranean

BARBARA DRAKE 2
LAURA MORTON AND JEFF DUNAS 8
NANCY MEYERS 16
KONSTANTIN KAKANIAS 22

Romantic

MARY STEENBURGEN AND TED DANSON 28
LAURA COOPER AND NICK TAGGART 34
JONI MITCHELL 40
JAMIE WOLF 48

Exotic

ANA ROTH 58
ROLAND EMMERICH 66
LATANA 76

Country

JUDY HORTON 84
CONNIE BUTLER AND DAVID SCHAFER 90
BARBARA HOWARD 96

Formal

KEITH AND KERI ADDIS 102
SUZANNE RHEINSTEIN 108

Tropical

MARILYN WILSON AND SCOOTER PIETSCH 120
LISA BITTAN 128
SUSAN COHEN 132

Native

JOHN GREENLEE 140
SCOTT AND LAUREN GOLDSTEIN 148
WESLEY AND MARLA STRICK 154

Hollywood

ART LUNA 162
ERIN LAREAU 170
DUANE PHAY 176
THEADORA VAN RUNKLE 184
TONY DUQUETTE 194

AFTERWORD 204

SOURCES 208





JONI MITCHELL

*We've got to get ourselves
Back to the garden*

When Joni Mitchell first sang those words, she was referring to global consciousness. Now those same words also apply to Mitchell's own Los Angeles garden.

Although Mitchell has lived in the same house since 1974, until recently she has largely ignored her backyard. "The first ten years that I lived in the house, I was on the road or working on deadlines," says the singer/songwriter/artist whose latest album, *Travelogue*, features jazzy, throaty takes on some of her own classic songs. "I had no time to stop and smell the roses."

There were occasional forays into the garden. A landslide in 1976 ("the hills are hard brown sugar," she says) took out a lower orange grove but gave her room for a gazebo. A concrete strip is a memento from when she planned to have roller-skating parties. For the most part, though, Mitchell was content to let her gardener keep things going.

Then two years ago, when she lost three crown palms to blight—at the same time that the rainforest around her property in British Columbia was drying up—she decided to take a year off work and put her garden in order. "We have been fighting all kinds of blight since El Niño," she says. A pine tree had fallen through the roof. An avocado tree near the swimming pool sat in a puddle of chlorine from a burst pipe. A bougainvillea had turned spindly. "There were a lot of sick trees," she says. "I wanted to step outside and feel happy, not depressed because all these plants were dying."

Part Canadian, part Californian, and part student of comparative religion, Joni Mitchell gives voice to all her passions in her Bel-Air garden. She recently took a year off work to bring it back from neglect and blight. Kangaroo paw grows on either side of a red-tiled niche; center stage is a red-headed Tibetan Buddha, whom Mitchell calls a role model. "It's her disposition," she says. "When I go in the water I do kicks looking to her, and I swim better."

Her lushly planted collage—old camellias and gardenias, palms and ferns, fig trees, jacarandas and lilies—little resembles the all-white Mediterranean house that first greeted her in the 1970s. Now the house is muted in color—“the patina is just starting to get good”—and the garden is all gangly and full of weeds. “My favorite gardens are wild, not formal,” says Mitchell. “I get more thrill out of the wild.”

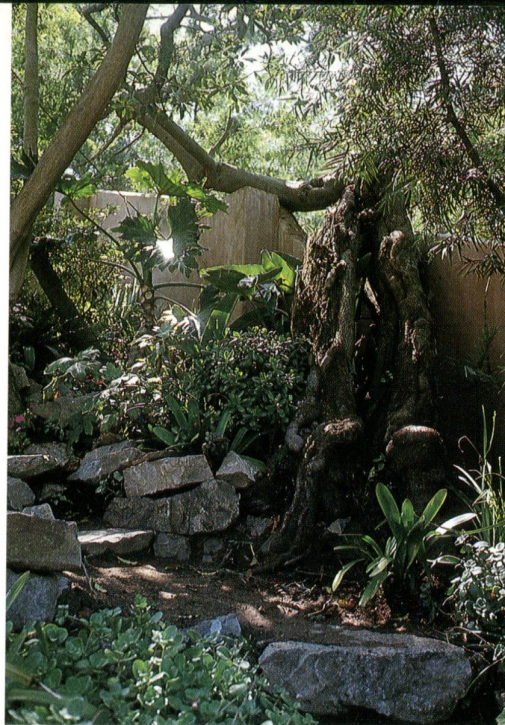
Mitchell is a flatlander, a child of the Canadian prairies and the first generation of her family to leave the farm. The blue grays/sage greens of Saskatchewan gardens are still the colors toward which she gravitates. Her own tiny childhood garden had *portulaca* (a succulent with waxy red flower and variegated leaves used as ground cover) and opium poppies; it’s where she first fell in love with succulents.

“I plant freestyle. Nature picks the right spots,” Mitchell says. “My gardener, Richard, left to his own devices, is a spacer—he would set plants up like picket fences. I’m a grouper.” Together they planted crepe myrtles (her 90-year-old mother is named Myrtle) and silk trees. They pried away the honeysuckle that had overtaken the swing and “unburied” the jasmine that had been eaten up by a wisteria. They put in plants that attract butterflies, dragonflies, and hummingbirds. “Any flying, floating thing is auspicious, a joy bearer, a magical messenger,” Mitchell says.

“It’s hard to classify my garden—it doesn’t have that American perfection,” she adds. Brick edging and paths give it a “cottagey formality.” She created vignettes in every corner with baker’s racks, baskets, statues, and wallhangings that help break up the symmetry of the architecture. “It looked too new and boxy,” she says. “It’s nice when things get tumbly.”

Mitchell is still adding to her garden—it is an eternal work in progress—but now she has turned her attention back to the recording studio. She dips into it when she needs reassurance or mental refreshment. “In every myth, we are the tenders of the gardens,” she says. “Ancient cultures knew when to take and not, how to take and not, and they understood the custodianship of plants. My mother has always had a sustenance garden. She would always tell us that you don’t need a psychiatrist if you have a garden. If I’m mad, I go pull weeds.”

TOP RIGHT: Branches fall and send pups out (“Nature thins itself out and adds things”), and become part of the “gangly, wild, weedy things” that Joni Mitchell loves. **BOTTOM RIGHT AND OPPOSITE:** Mitchell broke up the “boxy newness” of her house with vignettes, like the Grotto of Guadeloupe.







Mitchell inherited old gardenias and camellias and a white stucco house that she has gradually turned into a Spanish Colonial retreat. "Aromatics are the latest addition—jasmine and gardenias for pockets of scent," she says. "And we are putting aquatic plants around the well and fountain." There is a "wonderful crazy fig tree near the well—the fig is the tree of knowledge in folk art."



...treat.
...ound the



OPPOS
groun
palm
wan."



OPPOSITE: In the formal part, Mitchell and her gardener unearthed a swing that was overgrown with honeysuckle and anchored to the ground and put in brick paths and edging for what she calls "cottagey formality." **ABOVE LEFT:** Crepe myrtle, silk trees, jacaranda, and palms shade the residence. Mitchell says she is still drawn to "the weedy butterfly attractors and ditch-growing weeds of Saskatchewan." **ABOVE RIGHT:** "I learned as I planted," she says. "You can't put ferns under an oak—you can't put water lovers under dry lovers."