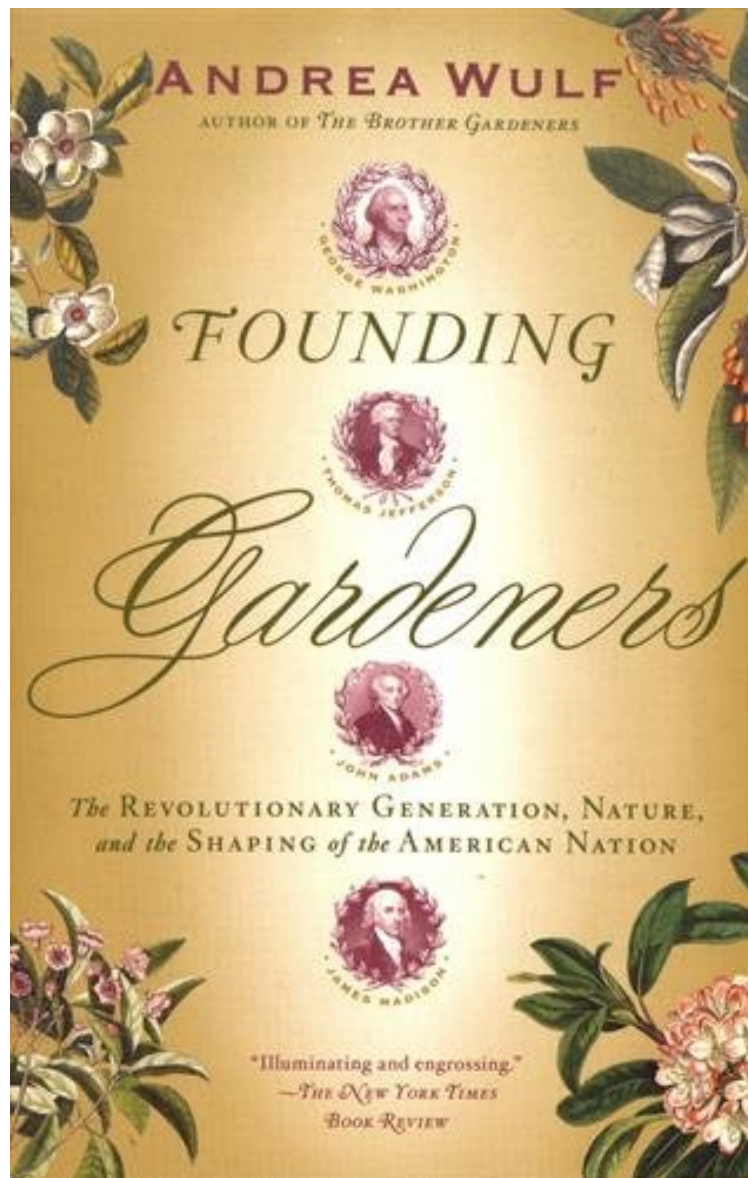


[Download] Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation

Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation

Andrea Wulf

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Andrea Wulf : Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Revolutionary Gardeners* By P. Carle This interesting book tells the stories of four patriots with emphasis on their gardening efforts in Virginia. The founding gardeners are George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and James Madison. There is also a fascinating section about the early development of a "City of Magnificent Intentions, Washington, D.C. The writing is direct although there are many very long sentences to trip up a naive reader. Once used to this style, it becomes easier. The author includes details about the lives of the founding fathers which suggest deep and thorough research. Details of place, conversation, and of many plants make the book fascinating. Colored pictures show the people and certain trees at their best.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Nature's Bonding for a Young America* By Carey Roberts In the prologue of this fascinating study of the inner lives of Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison, historian Wulf says that by carefully studying records, letters and diaries, she came to see "how vegetable plots, ornamental plants, landscapes and forests had played a crucial role in America's struggle for national identity and in the lives of our Founding Fathers. Wulf tells of Benjamin Franklin's early certainty that America's future rested on its "endless horizons, fertile soil and floral abundance" - a belief, she states, "became the perfect articulation of a distant national identity - of a country that was young and strong." The author claims Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison felt the same and offers their stories and letters to prove it. Even as Washington struggled through the eight year ordeal of the Revolutionary War, his thoughts were constantly of his gardens, his fields and the wooded lands of Virginia. At the war's end, he wished to return to his life as a "farmer and plantsman". And, he did, throwing himself with passion into daily life as a "hands-on" gardener - an intellectual gardener, sending out seeds, acorns and thoughts on soil conservation, etc. He accepted the presidency with great reluctance. Jefferson would also serve as president but saw himself as "farmer, gardener and philosopher". Adams regarded himself as a farmer first, stating, "zeal at my Heart for my country" was the reluctant drive that kept him in politics. Jefferson in Paris and Adams in London were profoundly affected by English gardens. When the Adamses returned home in 1788, Wolfe claims they packed "books, seeds and plant lists of American trees, shrubs and flowers discovered in English gardens" for use at home in Massachusetts. The Constitutional Congress of 1788 brought fifty-five delegates to Philadelphia, bound only by the Articles of Confederation. Vicious disputes marked the convention. The tenuous bond between the delegates was that most were farmers or from a planter's background. Their uniting agreement was that the rich expanse of soil and the variety of possible plantings in this new land of theirs would allow personal livelihoods, individual state independence and a common commitment as a people. Wolfe moves from the national story to a detailed account of the first presidents' dedication to and involvement in their own lands, homes and gardens - Washington at Mount Vernon, Adams at Peacefield, Jefferson at Monticello and Madison at Montpelier. Well-described. Intimate details. Meticulously researched. A new favorite on my bookshelf.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Layers of Meaning for both Gardens and History* By V. Vesper This is a very enjoyable and well-written book. It serves as a reminder that we too often view things without full consideration for the time and the people involved in their creation. I was initially surprised how many of the founding fathers were intensely interested in plants and gardening. I shouldn't have been. After all, they lived in an age when most people either farmed themselves (though the scale varied) or were, at the very least, still reliant on the farmers immediately around them. Disease-resistant crops which produced good yields were important to everyone. Shipping food long distances was not nearly as easy as it is today. And as a vast land with tremendous settlement opportunities (apologies to Native Americans, but this is how our founding fathers saw the continent), it seems painfully obvious that agriculture could be a way of not only existing but prospering and being economically independent. Beyond the economic value of crops, the native flora were a way of demonstrating the beauty of their new country. Anyone passionately interested in crops for food, building, etc. would find it hard, I think, not to see the beauty in plants as well. The book gives a step by step account of many of the events surrounding the revolution and the first years of the United States' existence. Tied in to these events are the ongoing daily lives of the founding fathers, as they planned their farms and gardens. I think the book demonstrates well that if we ignore this side of their personal history, we miss a fundamental portion of why the country developed as it did.

From the bestselling author of *The Invention of Nature*, a fascinating look at the Founding Fathers like none you've seen before. For the Founding Fathers, gardening, agriculture, and botany were elemental passions: a conjoined interest as deeply ingrained in their characters as the battle for liberty and a belief in the greatness of their new nation. *Founding Gardeners* is an exploration of that obsession, telling the story of the revolutionary generation from the unique perspective of their lives as gardeners, plant hobbyists, and farmers. Acclaimed historian Andrea Wulf describes how George Washington wrote letters to his estate manager even as British warships gathered off Staten Island; how a tour of English gardens renewed Thomas Jefferson's and John Adams's faith in their fledgling nation; and why James Madison is the forgotten father of environmentalism. Through these and other stories, Wulf reveals a fresh, nuanced portrait of the men who created our nation.

From *Publishers Weekly* Not only did Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison operate farms, all believed agriculture was the noblest occupation and the foundation of democracy. All loved to talk about it, write about it, and

spend leisure time (between building a nation) inspecting local farms. Scholars have not ignored this, but British design historian Wulf (*The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession*) focuses on the agricultural passion that also reflected the political convictions of America's founders. Even while fighting the Revolution and governing the nation, Washington bombarded the manager of his beloved Mount Vernon with detailed instructions and insisted on prompt replies. During years of diplomatic service overseas, Adams and Jefferson toured private gardens and studied the latest agricultural techniques. This obsession went beyond the personal, influencing the design of Washington, D.C., and the White House, where Jefferson wanted only native shrubs and trees. Detailed botanical descriptions, garden layouts, and crop yields of their estates may appeal more to fans of horticulture than of history, but Wulf offers a delightful new perspective on the men we usually associate more with politics than with plants. 16 pages of color illus.; 19 bw illus. (Apr.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. Illuminating and engrossing. . . . The reader relives the first decades of the Republic not only through [Wulfs] eloquent and revelatory prose but through the words of the statesmen themselves. *The New York Times Book [A]* lively and deeply researched history. *The Washington Post Book World* Anecdotes . . . shimmer through Andrea Wulfs fine story. . . . Luxurious and sharp-witted. *San Francisco Chronicle* A work of historical and horticultural importance, one that examines Americas origins through a new prism, and in so doing enriches Americans understanding of their heritage. *Richmond Times-Dispatch* Eloquently written and very beguiling. . . . [Wulf] is a writer of considerable grace and breadth of vision, and *Founding Gardeners* is an excellent portrait of the early years of the federal republic. *The Plain Dealer* A new interpretation of early American history, one that connects the founders zeal for agriculture and gardening to their thoughts on politics, independence, self-sufficiency, and patriotism. Its terrific. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* One of those rare books that, by focusing on a single angle of vision, brings to life a whole era and cast of characters. *The Dallas Morning News* [Wulf] infuses her text with such liveliness, grace and original scholarship that the reader happily follows the author at a brisk trot wherever she may lead. And what a journey. For the first time, we are vividly shown how the founding fathers reinvented a system of agriculture geared to the needs of the young country. *The Washington Times* Wulf has wonderfully illuminated an often overlooked and very important aspect of the founders lives, providing new reasons to be inspired by them. . . . Delightful, enlightened reading. *Nashville Scene* A timely and passionate book, with resonances beyond todays legion of new gardeners . . . Wulf traces the birth of the modern environmental movement back beyond Thoreau and Muir to the founding fathers passion for nature and plants. *The Guardian (London)* Full of wonderful details. *Literary* The book fizzes with energy. *The Lady* Highly enjoyable and thought-provoking. . . . Wulf combines a sure knowledge of garden history and eighteenth-century politics with a keen eye for domestic detail and evocative description. . . . The best kind of popular history. *The Irish Times* Wonderfully engaging. . . . Wulf may be at her best when she invites us to enter the founding fathers gardens themselves. Her knack for description is marvelous. . . . Breaks new ground. *The Times Literary Supplement (London)* *Founding Gardeners* is genuinely illuminating, illustrated with a wealth of compelling detail and well-chosen quotations from personal correspondence, and provides succinct accounts of both the founding of America and some of the countrys earliest and most spectacular gardens. *The Spectator* The founding fathers really do come alive. . . . They express their deep belief in freedom through the way they garden much the same way they do in their writings. *New York Journal of Books* Superb. . . . This book will fascinate anyone interested in gardening, agriculture or American history, offering new insights into four familiar lives and conjuring up the gardens of the new republic. *Mail on Sunday (London)* Andrea Wulf found a timely topic, has done excellent research, and has written a wonderful book to demonstrate the thesis. . . . *Brother Gardeners*, Ms. Wulf's previous book, was such fascinating reading that I slowed down as I anticipated its ending. In *Founding Gardeners*, she neatly continues the historical thread of the previous work: its blend of history and gardening is as interestingly written as before. . . . Extraordinary. *The Marthas Vineyard Times* Carefully researched and well-told. . . . Their passion for plants will inspire pride in your garden plot that is indeed America under your very own gardening feet. . . . You will never garden the same way again. *Michigan Gardener* Lovely book. . . . Fascinating story. *The Sunday Telegraph* The reader's reward is a fresh appreciation for the talents, vision and energy of the men who shaped their farms and gardens along with the nation. *The Post Courier (Charleston)* *Founding Gardeners* is a great achievement and deserves its place on the shelves of political as well as garden historians. *Country Life* An original, insightful look at the characters and passions of the men who shaped our country. Wulfs colorful prose, superb research, and driving narrative make for an engrossing read that will give you new appreciation for horticultures influence on history. *The American Gardener* Artfully composed. . . . Wulfs scholarship, passion and pleasing prose make for a happy combination: a history book for gardeners, a gardening book for historians. A fresh look at the Founders that charms even as it irresistibly convinces. Kirkus s, A Best Book of 2011 About the Author Andrea Wulf was born in India and moved to Germany as a child. She trained as a design historian at the Royal College of Art and is the author of *The Invention of Nature: Alexander Von Humboldt's New World* and *Founding Gardeners*, *The Brother Gardeners*, and *Chasing Venus*, as well as the coauthor (with Emma Gieben-Gamal) of *This Other Eden: Seven Great Gardens and 300 Years of English History*. She has written for *The Sunday Times*, *Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and the *Los Angeles Times*, and she regularly reviews for several newspapers,

including The New York Times, The Guardian, and The Times Literary Supplement.