

# HOME

## Fanciful fun on the garden scene: tiny planters brimming with green!

If you've had it with trying to grow an avocado tree, or training your prize philodendron to trail around the living room, Carla Wallach's "less is more" style of plant tending could be for you.

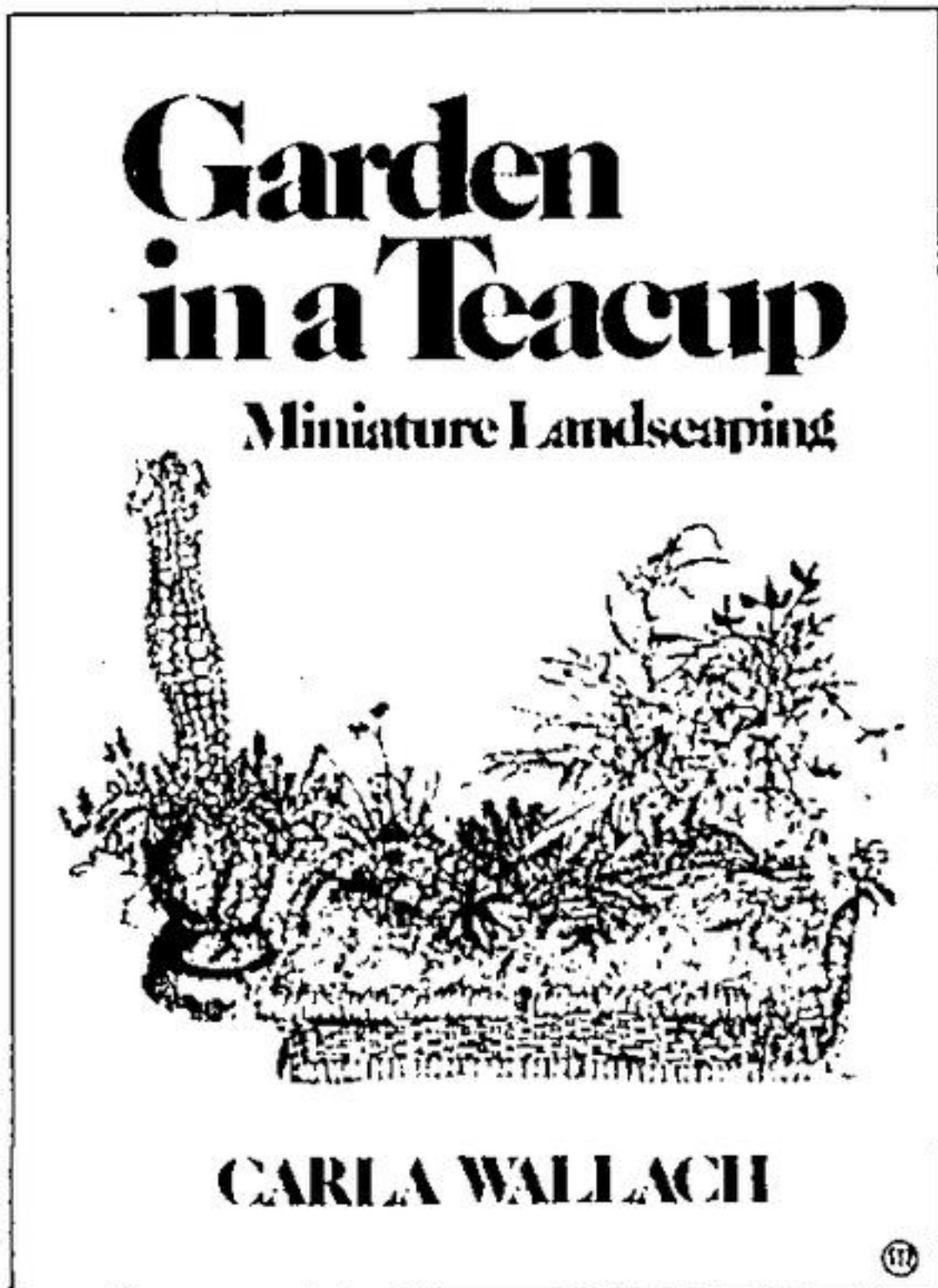
If you're a city dweller whose one sunny window provides room for only one large plant, you could "think small" and grow a dozen tiny plants instead.

Or, if you're one of the ever-growing number of big kids turned on by dollhouses, why not decorate your mini-mansion with scaled-to-size potted plants and landscape the grounds with shrunken shrubbery?

You needn't be restricted to raising regular size houseplants in familiar clay or plastic pots. Teacups are not just for tea, and ashtrays need not contain ashes. To Carla Wallach, author of *Garden in a Teacup*, (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$3.95), these, and many other objects found around the house, make great miniature planters.

Wallach recommends miniature gardening for a variety of reasons. It's a hobby that tickles the imagination of adults who are already plant enthusiasts, as well as being a delightful introduction to horticulture for children.

Tiny potted plants require little space and, Wallach says, the amount of care they need is minimal. The cost of starting a miniature garden can also remain scaled-down. Containers don't have to be bought, but can be made from household items or found objects like seashells, driftwood or rocks. You can buy inexpensive dime store plants or ask green-thumbed friends for



plant cuttings. Wallach advises that these free-for-the-asking plants be used for initial experiments. When grown in restrictive smaller containers, she adds, plants will remain tiny for some time. When you've acquired a knack for mini-horticulture, you might want to invest in dwarf plants, tiny varieties of larger full-size plants such as roses or African violets.

With a little imagination, almost anything can be a planter. Wallach warns that once you become an avid mini-gardener, you'll begin to envision every vacant container as a potential home for tiny plants!

If it's not waterproof, Wallach suggests lining a container with a double layer of aluminum foil, plastic wrap, or an even smaller glass pan. Remember to choose a plant whose root ball will not be too crowded in a small pot. Wallach recommends trying cacti and their relatives, succulents, because they have shallow roots, grow slowly, and can endure longer periods between waterings than leafy plants. (About the only hazard of miniature pots is that the soil dries out quickly, sometimes

every day.)

Keep proportions in mind when choosing a plant to match a container. For example, a top-heavy plant will look out of place in a delicate glass, and Wallach says each look best when given plenty of space to shine in.

When grouping plants, be sure to combine specimens with similar requirements for light and water. It's a safe bet to choose plants from the same or related families, such as cacti and succulents, different color African violets, or begonias.

The variety of planters is limitless: cream pitchers, bird's nests, thimbles, wicker baskets, dollhouse dishes, wine glasses and inkwells are a few of the examples illustrated in *Garden in a Teacup*.

Once you've become adept at planting tiny pots, you might want to try your hand at creating miniature landscaped gardens. These differ from simple multiple groupings of plants in a single container, Wallach explains, because you'll be attempting to recreate in miniature an actual scene, complete, if you wish, with tiny animals, houses, mountains, ponds, or whatever is appropriate to the particular setting.

Wallach offers step-by-step advice for creating these storybook landscapes, complete with suggestions for which plants will create the illusion of a particular setting. *Garden in a Teacup* contains tips and illustrations for planting a barnyard garden, Hawaiian village, woodland garden, desert scene, and a simple Japanese garden.

But the real fun is in letting your imagination go, to create a tiny, lush paradise of your own!

## The exotic world of summer bulbs

Summer flowering bulbs from Holland provide such an unlimited range of shapes, sizes and colors that no gardener need want for a vivid, brilliant, interesting and unusual flower garden during the long, hot days of summer.

There are so many different varieties that will bloom from mid-June through September that space will not allow a description of all of them.

Here are five, all exotic and colorful whether in the garden or in vases decorating the home.

One of the less familiar is the *acidanthera*, a delicately-scented pure white blossom with maroon spots at the center.

The flower is four inches wide and grows on an eighteen-to-twenty-four inch stem. Its foliage resembles the gladiolus and it blooms from late July into October.

*Acidantheras* are excellent in a bed of mixed summer bulbs or along borders, and are superb for cutting.

The summer flowering *anemone*, the St. Bridgid and the de Caen classifications, are excellent as cut flowers alone, in a mixed arrangement, or as accents in rock gardens and mixed borders. Their colors range from purple to white with shades

of blue, red and rose in between. The two-to-three inch blossoms on stems as high as eighteen inches are conversation pieces and will do well in full sun or part shade, blooming from late June through August.

Anemone tubers should be soaked in cold water four to six hours before planting and the soil should be watered regularly for a week to ten days after they have been planted.

*Lilies* (Lilium) offer the gardener a selection of many different varieties and a blooming period which begins in July and continues through the fall.

Their colors cover the spectrum: orange, crimson, yellow, lavender, pink, brown and pure white. They will grow as tall as eight feet with flowers that measure from four to twelve inches in diameter.

They can be used anywhere in the garden. Their striking beauty will create a focal point in beds, along a hedge or fence or against a dark background of evergreens.

*Lilies* should be planted in soil that is made up of at least one-third organic matter—peat moss or leaf mold. A 5-10-5 fertilizer should be spread evenly around the

plants and watered early in the spring and again two months later.

The *ranunculus* will provide additional splashes of color to those sheltered, sunny spots in the garden. They are bright, vibrant, multi-colored flowers with double or semi-double blossoms in lovely shades of yellow, orange, scarlet, crimson, pink and white.

They should be planted in well-drained soil and covered with sand and soil. A mulch of peat should be applied in April or May.

The *Dutch sparaxis* is a perfect summer flowering bulb for rock gardens and along borders. Its two-inch wide flowers on twelve-to-eighteen inch stems bloom in red, yellow, blue, purple, mauve and white, all with a bright yellow throat and a three-cornered black spot at the base of each petal.

The *sparaxis* should be planted in the fall, two-to-three inches deep and two-to-three inches apart in almost any soil. They can be left undisturbed for years.

### Dahlia is summer favorite

The dahlia is one of summer's most accommodating flowers, offering gardeners endless possibilities for an exotic, colorful, vivid flower bed from July through early September.

Few flowers can boast the variety of shapes the dahlia provides.

For example, there are pompom dahlias with blossoms no more than two-inches wide, while the decorative dahlia, one of the largest, boasts blooms of six-to-eight inches.

Dahlias are excellent landscaping flowers and can be used in beds, against wooded backgrounds, along borders and in rock gardens.



THERE ARE MORE THAN 50 varieties of Dutch dahlias, some no larger than an inch wide, others as large as a foot. Colors range from pure white to deepest red. They will enhance any area of your garden. Dahlias bloom from July through September.

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SUMMER-FLOWERING BULBS / Their Planting					
Bulb	Height (inches)	Planting Depth (inches)	Spacing (inches)	Planting Time	Care/Location
Begonia, tuberous (various colors)	Varies	Varies	24	Shade	Start indoors in March. Outdoors rich soil, moisture.
Acidanthera (white)	18-24	3-6	4-6	Sun or part shade	Moist soil
Anemone (various colors)	12	1	8	Sun, well-drained soil	
Calla lily (yellow, white)	18-36	4	12-15	Shade	Moisture, good soil
Dahlia (various colors, except blue)	15-60	6	24-36	Sun	Heavy feeders, add manure and fertilizer
Galtonia (white)	12-24	4-6	8-12	Sun	Rich, moist soil best
Gladiolus (various colors)	24-48	4-6	4-6	Full sun	Plant every 2 weeks for succession of bloom
Lilies (white, red, yellow, orange and pink)	24-48	3 times as deep as height of bulb	24-48	Sun or shade, according to variety. Good drainage. Choose for succession of bloom	
Montbretia (flame colors)	20-36	3-4	3-4	Sun	Leafmold in soil
Oxalis (pink, lavender, yellow)	6-9	1	2	Sun or part shade	Any soil
Ranunculus (various colors)	18-24	1	4-6	Sun, well-drained soil	
Tigridia (bright shades)	15-24	2-3	6-8	Sun	Light soil, water before and during flowering

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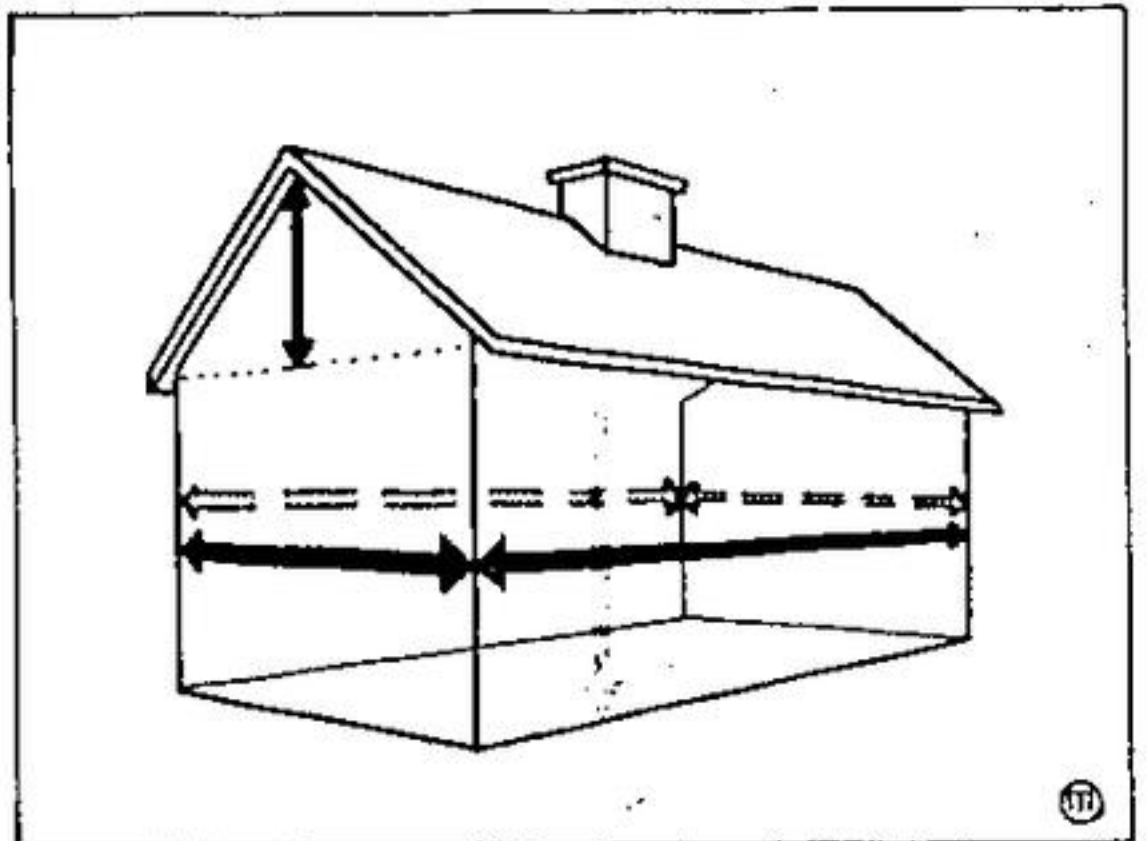
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**DON'T GET CAUGHT SHORT!** Estimating the amount of paint needed to coat the exterior of your house is easy, says the National Paint and Coatings Association. You need only keep in mind the square footage of the house, the number of coats you plan to apply and the type of surface you'll be painting.

### How to estimate how much paint you need

Estimating how much paint you need to cover the exterior of your home is easy, says the National Paint and Coatings Association.

Three things determine your paint needs: 1) the square footage of the house, 2) the number of coats you plan to apply, and 3) the type of surface.

To find the square footage, multiply the length of each wall by its height, measured from the foundation to the eaves. Add the figures for each of the walls together. Their total is the number of square feet to be painted. Subtract window areas if they account for over 100 square feet.

Find the square footage of a gable by multiplying its length by one-half of its height. Measure the height of a gable from the eave line to its point. If the house has several gables, multiply the square footage of one by the total number of gables. Now, add this figure to the square footage of the wall area. This sum is the square footage of the house.

Multiply the square footage by the number of coats you plan to apply. For example, if you are applying two coats, double your figures.

Next divide the total figure by the number of square feet a gallon of your paint covers. The label on the can will tell you the coverage per gallon of paint.

If the surface is porous or textured your paint needs will increase by approximately 20-25%. When painting previously unpainted concrete block, double your total figure.



THIS DESTINY LILY is representative of the beauty and exotic shapes of Dutch summer flowering bulbs. *Acidanthera*, *anemone*, *dahlia*, *gladiolus*, *lilies*, *ranunculus* and *sparaxis* will make any garden come alive during the hot days of July and August.



ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR of the summer flowering bulbs, the gladiolus will bloom from early July until September in a variety of colors—pastels and bright shades. They are one of the loveliest and longest-lasting cut flowers, equally attractive alone or in mixed arrangements.

**Choose from 200 varieties**

When you plan your garden, choose from over 200 Dutch hybridized varieties of gladiolus to have a succession of lovely blooms until the autumn frost arrives.

Select both the large flowering gladiolus with their impressive, massive spikes and those with smaller flowers, which will grow from two to five feet high.

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