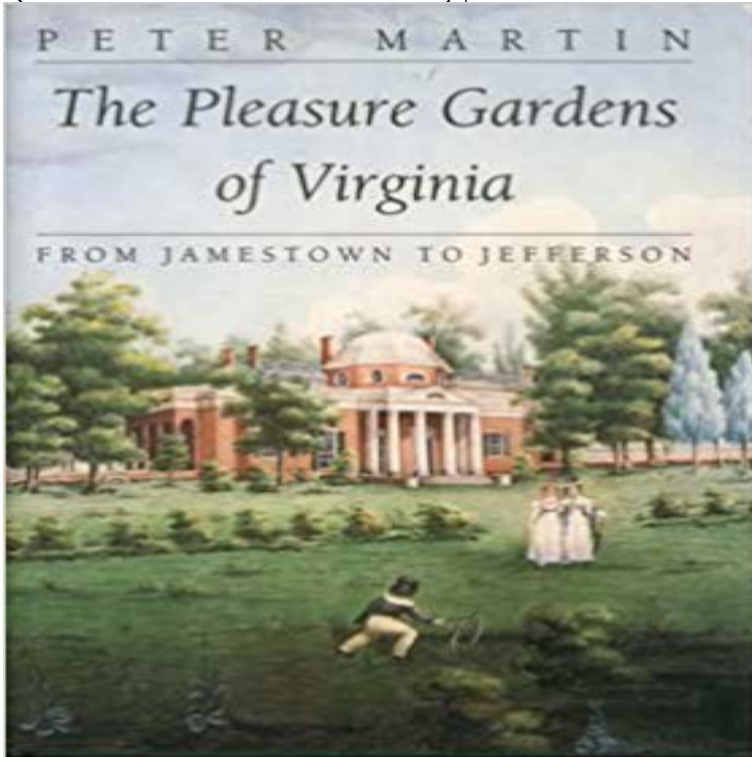


The Pleasure Gardens of Virginia: From Jamestown to Jefferson (Colonial Williamsburg Studies in Chesapeake History and Culture)



Using a rich assortment of illustrations and biographical sketches, Peter Martin relates the experiences of colonial gardeners who shaped the natural beauty of Virginia's wilderness into varied displays of elegance. He shows that ornamental gardening was a scientific, aesthetic, and cultural enterprise that thoroughly engaged some of the leading figures of the period, including the British governors at Williamsburg and the great plantation owners George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, William Byrd, and John Custis. In presenting accounts of their gardening efforts, Martin reveals the intricacies of colonial garden design, plant searches, experimentation, and the problems in adapting European landscaping ideas to local climate. These writings also bring to life the social and commercial interaction between Williamsburg and the plantations, together with early American ideas about cultured living. While placing Virginia's gardening in the larger context of the colonial South, Martin tells a very human story of how this art both influenced and reflected the quality of colonial life. As Virginia grew economically and culturally, the garden became a projection of the gardeners' personal identity, as exemplified by the endeavors of Washington and Jefferson at Mount Vernon and Monticello. In order to recapture the gardens as they existed in colonial times, Martin brings together paintings, drawings, and the findings of modern archaeological excavations.

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