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The Civilized Jungle: Tropical Plants Facts & Fun From Ola Brisa Gardens (Volume 1)



Synopsis

BOOK OVERVIEW A need has long existed for a book such as "The Civilized Jungle" Tropical Plants, Facts & Fun (Vol.1). It is written simply, explaining tropical plants in an uncomplicated and sometimes humorous manner. Tommy treats his plants with respect for what they are – living entities with a purpose for existence. Accordingly his descriptions are such that we all can fast and easily understand their physical wants, needs and individual "personalities". These tropical plants, palms, trees, bushes, flowers, vines, succulents and more are presented – via descriptive "word pictures", accompanied by photographs – in a way that allows us all to come to appreciate their individual, unique characteristics or – as Tommy says – their plant foibles! This is an easy and fun way to expand one's awareness of some of Nature's most spectacular creations – the vegetation of the tropics. Like his stories written in war-torn Iraq, he has striven to reach the soul of the subject and bare it to his readership. In approximately 750 words for each plant, Tommy has been able to capture the unique essence of each plant he describes, make it meaningful, appreciated and easy to apply by readers for their own use.

Book Information

Series: The Civilized Jungle

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Customer Reviews

There's something to be said for the enthusiastic amateur...the guy who doesn't have an ounce of

professional training in a subject, but loves it so much that he learns all about it, mostly hands-on, and can't wait to share his passion (obsession?) with anyone who will listen. Tom Clarkson is such an enthusiastic amateur, and his passion is tropical plants. Tom and his lovely wife Patty took a steep, unusable plot of land above Manzanillo, Mexico, and turned it into a world-class showplace of tropical plants named Ola Brisa Gardens, the "Gardens of the Waves and Breezes." Now, I'll tell you up-front that when it comes to plants, my interest pretty much begins & ends with eat, mow, or rake. But as I flipped through "The Civilized Jungle", Tom's articles were so engaging that I found myself stopping to read much more than I skimmed. Whether you're a casual reader interested only in plant trivia & good writing, or a botanical expert looking for technical information about growing and feeding tropical plants, "The Civilized Jungle" will give you plenty to enjoy. Not to mention the photography -- so razor-sharp & color-saturated that you can almost feel the breezes and hear the waves. Tom Clarkson is an enthusiastic amateur, and it's easy to catch his enthusiasm as you read "The Civilized Jungle". I've had the privilege of visiting Ola Brisa Gardens...they are breathtaking in person, and Tom & Patty are convivial hosts. I highly recommend both the book and the visit.

We have been privileged to watch this garden take shape since 2008. This volume provides a wonderful portrayal of the beautiful environment that Tommy has created out of an almost vertical hillside. His commentary about the plants is very informative and interesting and includes both relatively common plants as well as very exotic rare palms. Even if you've never seen the Clarkson's garden, if you are a plant person...especially if you are a palm person...you will thoroughly enjoy this book.

Just picked up my copy last night and couldn't put it down. This book is well written for novice to expert gardeners and everyone in between. There are little known facts that help decision making when planning and planting your tropical garden. Tommy & Patty Clarkson have done a marvellous job of compiling all this information into a truly fun and comprehensive read. Their tropical gardens Ola Brisas should not be missed when visiting the pacific coast of Mexico in the state of Colima.

I was excited to get my hands on this amazing book. Having actually toured Tommy and Patty's gardens in Manzanillo was an added bonus and reminded me how much knowledge Tommy has on plants and palms. The work that has gone into bringing a little of their garden into this book is truly a labour of love! This is my new favorite coffee table book. I am looking forward to working on my garden this year! This book inspired me!! Highly recommend it!

Of the hundreds of books in print on tropical plants, this one is super-accessible to the beginner and has plenty of insights for veterans. The Clarksons' passion for these plants and to share the fun about what they've learned is evident on every page. Beautifully illustrated.

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