

# The Wirtz Private Garden



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Few landscape designers are more admired than Belgium's Jacques Wirtz, as seen with the huge success of "The Wirtz Gardens," published in the fall of 2004. "The Wirtz Gardens" surveyed 57 private and public gardens designed by Wirtz, many in collaboration with his two sons, Martin and Peter, in locations spanning the globe. Like the veteran art dealer whose personal collection one imagines to be stupendous, the

volume raised the question of what Wirtz's own garden looked like. "The Wirtz Private Garden "now answers that question. At the family home in Schoten (near Antwerp)--a former gardener's cottage attached to an eighteenth-century estate--Wirtz and his family have created a laboratory for experimenting with plants, shrubbery, borders and pathways on an intimate scale. And the photographer Marco Valdivia, photographer for "The Wirtz Gardens," has produced a unique meditation on the subtle effects of light, space and form in the garden through the seasons. Valdivia shoots on film, not digital, and consequently his photographs show a depth and clarity of definition that is unsurpassable. His sensitivity to the Wirtz aesthetic and to the textures of nature make this book one of the finest photographic studies of an intimate garden ever published. Jacques Wirtz was born in 1924 in Antwerp. He studied landscape architecture at a horticultural college in Vilvoorde before starting his own business, growing and selling flowers and maintaining local gardens. In 1950, Wirtz designed his first complete garden, inspired by the gardens of his childhood and those seen on visits to other European countries and Japan. He gained recognition in the early 90s when he won a contest to redesign France's Carrousel Garden, which connects the Louvre with the Tuileries Gardens.

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