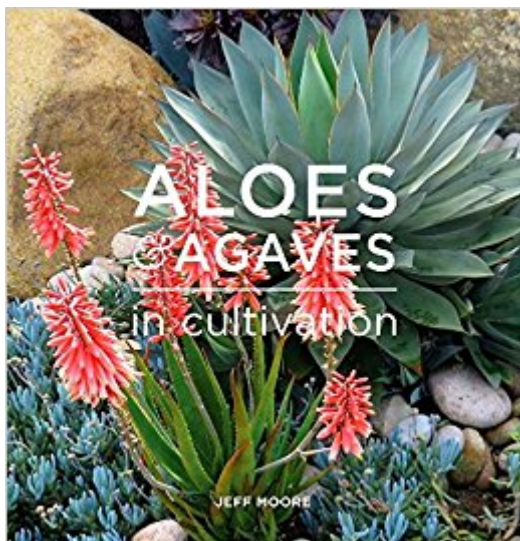


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Aloes And Agaves In Cultivation



Synopsis

Aloes and Agaves in Cultivation is a comprehensive look at aloes and agaves as ornamental plants for Mediterranean landscapes. Over 1000 beautiful images of these sculptural plants are provided, primarily in California landscape settings. This book is about how we work with these plants outside of their native habitat, with insightful commentary and suggestions from Jeff Moore, a nursery owner with over 30 years of experience.

Book Information

Paperback: 335 pages

Publisher: Sunbelt Publications (October 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0991584619

ISBN-13: 978-0991584611

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 1.1 x 9.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #379,651 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #27 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > By Climate > Desert](#) #153 in [Books > Science & Math > Agricultural Sciences > Horticulture](#) #224 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Landscape](#)

Customer Reviews

Jeff Moore has owned and operated a retail succulent nursery, Solana Succulents in Solana Beach, since 1992. Succulents became his hobby 7 or 8 years prior to opening the nursery. He sold rare plants and dish gardens at street fairs to test the market. Prior to opening Solana Succulents, Jeff worked in the mortgage business. He lives in Solana Beach with his wife Lori, who is clinical dietician at Rady Children's Hospital, and has two sons currently attending Cal Poly SLO.

My husband loves it ! As he is a cultivator of many of these plants.

I will say upfront, before I even get to my criticism, that this book has probably the largest and highest quality collection of agave photographs of any text out there today. Large, high resolution photographs, taken in appropriate lighting conditions and which, more often than not, showcase the stunning the beauty of these spectacular plants. This book is a literal tome, chocked full of page

after page of these glorious photos, with stunning shots of mature specimens. The section on variegates alone is probably worth the price of the book, as it offers many fantastic shots of plants you will probably never see in common retail garden centers and a privileged few will ever own in their collection. That said, and as hinted above, I have some misgivings about this book. First and foremost is the writing style itself which, while witty and spontaneous, comes across many times as cavalier, perhaps even condescending, especially when discussing the more esoteric aspects of these plants. As a case in point, there are several places where the author literally has written things like, "Some experts consider it X, but I say Z. Take that agave experts!". This is childish and arrogant and, as with several other places in the book, gives the impression that the author believes himself above reproach and his opinions beyond the pale of discussion. I could forgive such writing if it were warranted, but with the number of misidentified agave I've seen gracing the pages of this book, he clearly lacks the knowledge to back that kind of arrogance. Furthermore, he has committed the unforgivable sin of showcasing plants that he cannot properly ID at all. There are literally points in this book where a plant is shown with a caption that reads along the lines of, "Some folks thinks this is A, others say B or C," and with no real definitive answer from the author if any are right, just some terse, "All we know is that it's awesome" type of comment. I'm sorry but if you're writing a book on the subject, maybe know what you're talking about? It is unfortunate that the author, in the nursery business himself, is content with not even knowing what plant was shown. Rather than showcasing a beautiful plant, he instead showcases his ignorance and highlights the problem of rampant and egregious misidentification that often happens with agave in cultivation. So, all this said, I can't possibly give more than 3 stars for this book. The photos are great, the best I have ever seen in any publication on the subject, but the writing and indeed the author's attitudes put forth therein, leave much to be desired. When I crack open a book about agave in cultivation, I expect accurate identification and some respect for the academics whose work in the field is the sole reason that many of these amazing plants are even available in cultivation to begin with. To incorrectly label, plead ignorance and not label at all in some cases, and worse yet to thumb your nose at "agave experts" just reeks of pretentiousness.

Must disagree with previous review. Absolutely an awesome book. Fantastic photos, excellent writing, and authoritative knowledge which is almost peerless on these two genera. Humor is very dry but then that is what Aloes and Agaves like best. You will love this book. Must buy..!!!

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