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In & Out of Paris  
*Gardens of Secret Delights*

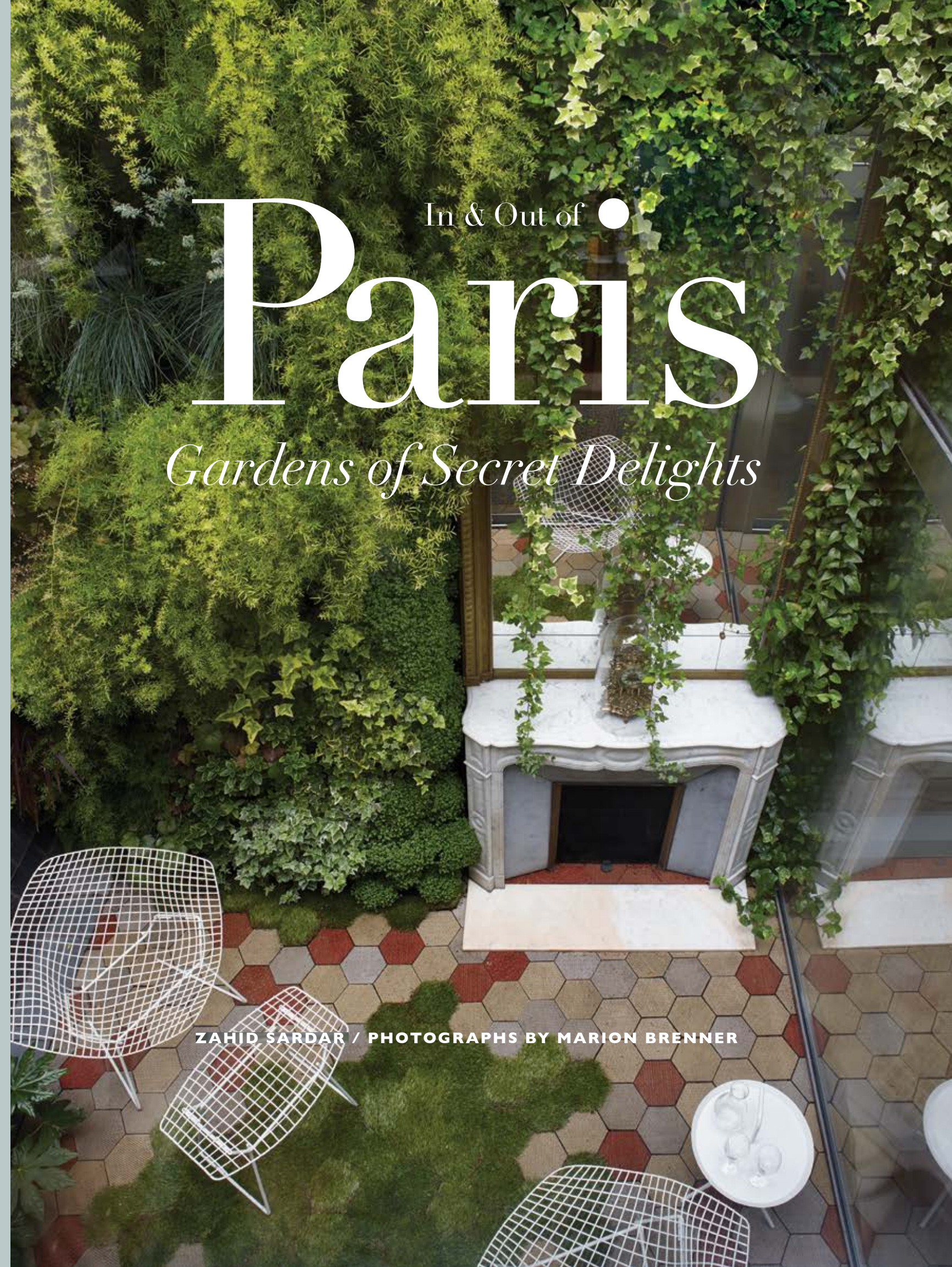
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In & Out of ●  
**Paris**  
*Gardens of Secret Delights*

ZAHID SARDAR / PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARION BRENNER

**In & Out of Paris**  
*Gardens of Secret Delights*

By Zahid Sardar  
Photographs by Marion Brenner

When French queen Catherine de Medici created the Tuileries Palace and Garden outside Paris's medieval walls, she began the unprecedented expansion and greening of one of the world's great cities. Now Paris's extraordinary public parks are rivaled only by secret courtyard gardens behind inscrutable seventeenth-century façades and miniature orchards of delight on hidden roof terraces. Among the more than 30 great and small projects within *In & Out of Paris* are fresh garden concepts in the city's environs such as Vaux-le-Vicomte, Versailles, Courances, and Méry-sur-Oise, which are otherwise all bastions of classic André Le Nôtre-style French gardens. Also discover the Paris gardens of celebrated artist Jean-Michel Othoniel and art aficionado Pierre Bergé, fashion designer Kenzō Takada's authentic Japanese retreat in the Bastille, Australian couturier Martin Grant's very tiny terrace in the Marais, visionary Mexican painter MariCarmen Hernandez's Montmartre rooftop, American architect Michael Herrman's perfect homage to Le Corbusier's surreal Champs-Élysée garden for bon vivant Charles de Beistegui, and the exotic *mur végétals* inside botanist Patrick Blanc's lofty living room. *In & Out of Paris* showcases top modern masters Louis Benech, Gilles Clement, Pascal Cribier, Christian Fournet, Camille Muller, Hugues Peuvergne, and Pierre-Alexandre Risser, who represent a new era of experiments, color, and asymmetry in the Paris garden.



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## Garden Estates

“A garden to walk in and immensity to dream  
in—what more could he ask? A few flowers at  
his feet and above him the stars.”

—Victor Hugo





## Inspired Vaux-le-Vicomte

André Le Nôtre's first masterpiece

The magnificent seventeenth-century formal garden at Chateau de Vaux-le-Vicomte, a short distance from Paris, might never have happened had its owner, Nicolas Fouquet, the viscount of Vaux, known that its beauty would bring down the wrath of Louis XIV upon him. In concert with architect Louis Le Vau and designer Charles le Brun, the young landscape designer André Le Nôtre applied the tricks of Renaissance painting to create illusory perspectives that imply a scale far grander than the few hundred acres surrounding the small chateau. The unified vision they brought to a building and its garden was unprecedented and it launched other such estates, not the least of which was one of the world's largest garden estates, Versailles.

"Our family has worked for three generations to preserve this garden in its entirety," Alexandre de Vogüé, a scion of the current owners, said.



Arabesque parterres laid out symmetrically are designed to be viewed from the chateau. Reflective pools, sculpture, and other surprises await anyone who walks the length of the garden.



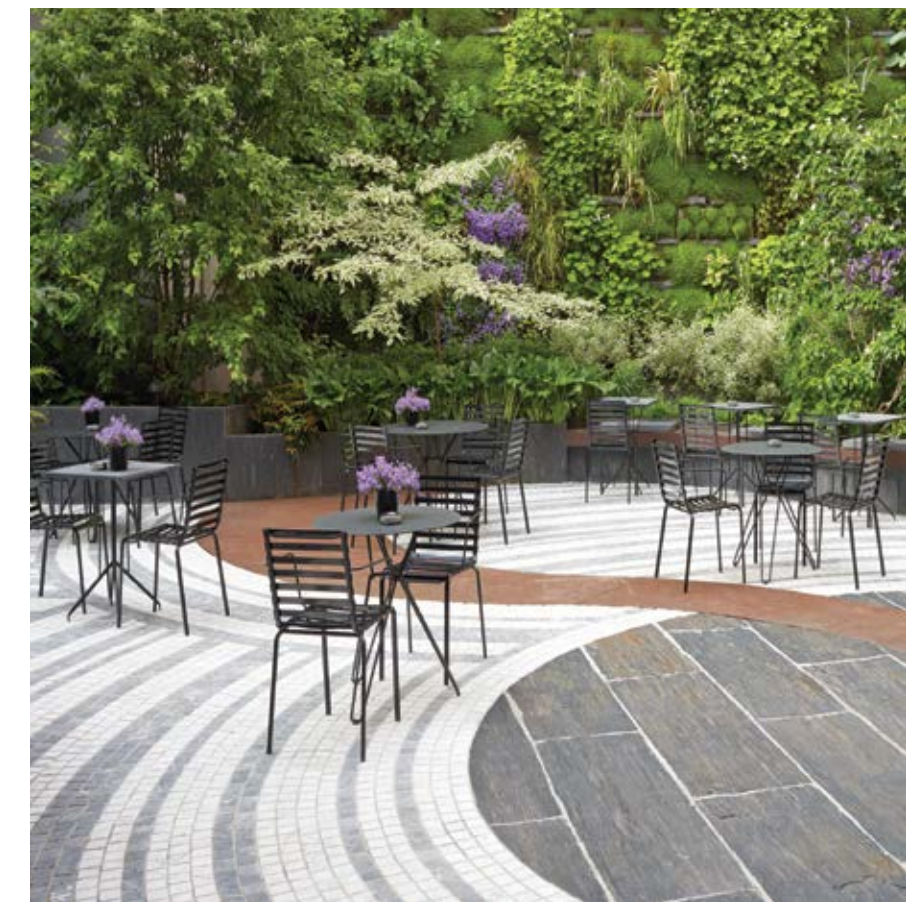


## Novotel's Secret Courtyard

Christian Fournet's modern parterre

Although this modern courtyard at Paris's relatively new Novotel in the Les Halles district is not exactly public, it is open to anyone. It borrows ideas from seventeenth-century landscapers who created patterned hedges to be viewed from above. In this case, the multistory hotel tower is the perfect gallery from which to view a garden designed to withstand a great deal of foot traffic as well as to look its best year-round. Evergreen shrubs in cascading terraces are accented with blue and purple flowering plants as well as silver gray foliage that adds highlights even when the garden is not blooming.

Swirling bands of inlaid stone both delight and direct anyone who chances upon the space to come in and sit. The bands are also carefully arranged to conceal slopes toward drainage channels.





## Rooftop Eden in the 16th

Hugues Peuvergne's outdoor rooms

While most Parisians are content with a few hardy plants and vine-laden pergolas for summer shade in their roof gardens, the owners of this L-shaped terrace in the 16th arrondissement wanted something different. Enter landscape designer Hugues Peuvergne, who began his career with Camille Muller, who in turn worked with Gilles Clement, the famed French designer who encouraged a shift away from classic, orderly gardens.

However, Peuvergne's design has an order—or rather, rooms—of its own. Under wood trellises, unexpected seating arrangements prevail.

Paved with red terra-cotta tiles, garden paths weave in and out of hidden enclosures in this garden. Carefully clipped around chimneys, trees and shrubs are lit by pendant lanterns at night.







## Louis Benech at Rue de Grenelle

A dark garden sees new light.

While sheltering old trees especially in rainy Paris are desirable, they do cast a lot of shade. So, in this venerable garden that once belonged to a single eighteenth-century *hôtel particulier* but is now shared by several tenants, the garden-level owners wanted both light as well as privacy from neighbors upstairs.

"I planted a lot of trees with willow leaves to create an impression of light," landscape designer Louis Benech said. At the far end of the garden next to a stone wall that divides the garden from its neighbor to the north, Benech, who has won the privilege of being

the first *propriétaire* in more than two hundred years to alter one of the *hôtels* at Versailles since the Sun King, Louis XIV, first commissioned them, planted a few fast-growing trees to create a higher "wall" that will allow for privacy yet cast only dappled shadows in the neighbor's garden.

"Here, I wanted to create the impression of formality," Benech said, "because a garden needs to fit the style of a home."

Clipped hedges and balls of boxwood—the hallmarks of most formal French gardens—are employed whimsically in this setting.

