Lecture 21
Renaissance Horticulture

Rebirth of Western Civilization is known as the Renaissance
Started in Italy and spread throughout Europe
A result of new ways of thinking, philosophy, art, and commerce
Brought about a fundamental change between the state and the church

La Primavera, 1477–1478, Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510)
Ornithogalum umbellatum
star-of-Bethlehem
Leonardo de Vinci
(1452–1519)

Dyers greenwood (Genista tinctoria)
and oak (Quercus robur)
Leonardo de Vinci

Theoretical basis of ramification
Leonardo de Vinci
Horticultural Technology

The development of printing led to “how-to-do-it” books on gardens, horticulture, and agriculture.
Increase in interest in cultivars
Grafting and pruning
Cooking and cuisine
By the renaissance, technology had surpassed that of the Romans.
Rise of nobility and wealth led to interest in gardens for pleasure and prestige.
Eventually landscape and garden architecture became as important as architecture.

Gardens of Villandry


A 1490 painting made for Queen Isabella of Spain showing a summer-house with a complete view of a northern garden.
In front of a Netherlands mansion are formal rectangular beds and sanded walks, with trimmed ‘estrade’ shrubs, carnations supported on trellis, and a railed bed of lavender.
Peacocks have the freedom of wide lawns stretching down to the river with swans, backed by a landscaped park.
Maze
Source: Crisp CXLVII

Bathing tub, 1481
Source: Crisp CCXVI

15th century Italian fountain of youth
Source: The Garden, Berrall, 1966

Renaissance Gardens

Noble lady bathing in outdoor tub, 16th century tapestry.
A large plant of single red carnation, grown in a basket and pushed on a wheelbarrow, forms a humorous marginal aside in this Flemish Book of Hours of ca. 1500.
The heavy work is left to the gardener’s wife.

Medieval Gardens. Harvey, 1981

Renaissance Gardens
Arbors

Tree Planting 1470
First spading of the season 1495

Garden with lovers, spring 1499

Source: Crisp CCXV
Marbled pillared pergola 1499  Arba decameron end of 15th century
Source: The Garden. Berrall, 1966  Source: Crisp CL1

The gardener’s labyrinth 1577

Distillery garden 1521
15th century miniature with raised beds

The gardeners labyrinth 1577

1588 raised hedge around fountain, grafting

De Brig's Garden 1612
Raised beds and formal arrangement
Gardening 1615

Grafting

1625 Grafting

Approach

Grafting

Training

1574

Tying and harvesting hops
A modern French restoration of a knot bed with box outlines, which interestingly combines some patterned planting with outer sections filled with colored or white stones.