# Contents

## Preface  1

### Landscape Gardens  5
- Hunting and Communion with the Spirits  8
- The Symbol of a Unified State  9
- Enjoying the Beauty of Nature  13
- Pleasure Gardens in Prosperous Times  18
- A World in a Gourd  22
- A Vision of Heaven and Earth  25

### Private Gardens of the Ming and Qing Dynasties  29
- Southern Gardens  30
- Northern Gardens  50
- Construction of Private Gardens  60

### Magnificent Imperial Gardens  79
- Imperial Gardens of the Ming and Qing Dynasties:
  - General Introduction  81
- The Garden Zone in the Northwest Outskirts of Beijing  87
- A Selection of Well-Known Gardens  91
- Imperial Gardens and Private Gardens Compared  126
Masters of Garden Design and Theories of Garden Creation  133

Beauty and Symbolism in Chinese Gardens  139
  The Creation of Gardens’ Artistic Conception  140
  Symbolism and Allegories  140
  Poetic Mood and Artistic Realm  143
  Incorporation of Famous Scenes and Historical Sites  148
  Temples, Streets and Taverns  151
  Garden Vistas  152

Decline and Revival of Famous Gardens  159

Appendix: Chronological Table of the Chinese Dynasties  167