



An Unlikely Vineyard: The Education of a Farmer and Her Quest for Terroir

Deirdre Heekin

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Named one of the Best Wine Books of 2014 by *The New York Times*, *An Unlikely Vineyard* tells the evolutionary story of Deirdre Heekin's farm from overgrown fields to a fertile, productive, and beautiful landscape that melds with its natural environment.

Is it possible to capture landscape in a bottle? To express its terroir, its essence of place—geology, geography, climate, and soil—as well as the skill of the winegrower?


That's what Heekin and her chef/husband, Caleb Barber, set out to accomplish on their tiny, eight-acre hillside farm and vineyard in Vermont.

But *An Unlikely Vineyard* involves much more. It also presents, through the example of their farming journey and winegrowing endeavors, an impressive amount of information on how to think about almost every aspect of gardening: from composting to trellising; from cider and perry making to growing old garden roses, keeping bees, and raising livestock; from pruning (or not) to dealing naturally with pests and diseases. As Eric Asimov, chief wine critic for *The New York Times*, writes, "I love this book, which conveys beautifully why the best wine is, at heart, an agricultural expression."

Challenged by cold winters, wet summers, and other factors, Deirdre and Caleb set about to grow not only a vineyard, but an orchard of heirloom apples, pears, and plums, as well as gardens filled with vegetables, herbs, roses, and wildflowers destined for their own table and for the kitchen of their small restaurant. They wanted to create, or rediscover, a sense of place, and to grow food naturally using the philosophy and techniques gleaned from organic gardening, permaculture, and biodynamic farming.

Accompanied throughout by lush photos, this gentle narrative will appeal to anyone who loves food, farms, and living well.

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