

The Green Burial Guidebook: Everything You Need to Plan an Affordable, Environmental Friendly Burial

ELIZABETH FOURNIER
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Over the past few decades, Westerners have been trying to find more eco-friendly ways of living, to include after we die. Once the norm, “green burial” simply means putting a person’s remains in the ground without embalming, cement tombs, or other additives.

If you’re interested in making this part of your end-of-life plans, then Elizabeth Fournier is an excellent guide. A licensed funeral director in Portland, OR, she operates a green funeral home. It’s obvious that she’s spent a lot of time not only thinking about green burials, but helping others to carry them out.

This slim volume is packed full of information. The author begins by explaining the current state of the funeral business and the need for more eco-friendly alternatives. Then she gets into the practical material, which includes everything from opening the sometimes difficult conversation with your loved ones about what you want done with your remains to finding cemeteries that will perform green burials. Most of us have never had to think about how to actually dig a grave, but there are instructions on that as well, in case your loved ones want to really do-it-yourself. The traditional practices of bathing the body and putting it on display for a home funeral are also covered in a pragmatic but sensitive manner.

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That’s the real value of this book is: it’s a great thing to offer to those you would like to care for your remains once you’re deceased. It’s

not too long, it’s easy to understand, and even someone who had never heard of a green burial would have little trouble figuring out what to do if they read the book. Fournier emphasizes the importance of making plans ahead of time in case your death comes much more suddenly than ex-

pected. That way, those left behind will have an easier time of navigating the practical details even as they also deal with their emotions.

One last thing: Fournier is very serious about the green details. She’s a fan of handmade coffins and secondhand fabric for shrouds, discusses not wasting food at the end of a big funerary feast, and the environmental toll of flowers that are going to be thrown away as soon as everyone goes home. She even has a delightful how-to on making an eco-friendly urn for cremains out of dryer lint. She really has thought of everything!

For Pagans, witches, and goddess-lovers who consider themselves to be caretakers of nature, this is a must-have book. Your care of this planet can extend well beyond your death, both in the care of your remains, and your setting an example for others to also choose greener burial practices. *Review by Lupa.*

