

FREE



TRIANGLE GARDENER

YOUR LOCAL GUIDE TO ENJOYABLE GARDENING

TRIANGLEGARDENER.COM | SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2023

Fall Planting

natives, shade loving, edibles!

Camellias: Tall, Narrow Options

Spring Ephemerals: Time to Plant

Lemons: Hardy Yuzu Varieties

Warm Season Lawns: Winterize Now

ALSO! GARDEN EVENTS • BOOKS • BIRDS • EXPERTS • TRAVEL • GARDEN NEWS

Exploring Loudoun County, Virginia Gardens

While only 25 miles from Washington, D.C., Loudoun County, Virginia, is a step back in time. Country roads and highways lead to beautiful estates with gardens, historic towns offer charm and discovery, country inns dot the landscape, idyllic vistas abound, and over 50 wineries will give you plenty of time to pause and savor your time in Loudoun County.

A good place to center a Loudoun County visit is in the county seat of Leesburg. This historic downtown, founded in 1758, with its brick buildings and small town charm is known today for its restaurants, cocktail and coffee bars, and chic and fun shopping. It's also home to two of Loudoun County's most famous estate gardens.

Historic Gardens

Morven Park was the estate and home of Westmoreland Davis, a former Governor of Virginia (1918-1922) and his wife Marguerite. The Davis's purchased the property in 1903 and worked to transform the land to the legacy it is today. With the iconic Davis mansion as the center, you can walk through formal gardens, picnic under historic trees, and hike miles of nature trails. The 1,000 acre park is also home to the world-renowned Morven Park International Equestrian Center.

The historic gardens are mostly the work of Marguerite, and her pride and joy was the boxwood garden added in 1930. Over 1,100 English boxwoods were used to create the garden. Instead of planting young boxwood plants from local nurseries, the Davis's purchased mature English boxwood from estates across Virginia. As boxwood blight decimated these English varieties, the shrubs have been replaced with American boxwood.

Another of Marguerite's favorite gardens is the Sundial Garden with beds of bulbs in spring and annuals in summer and fall surrounded by a wall of boxwoods to create a garden room where she liked to sit and relax. Make sure to look at her sundial



An Oatlands garden terrace and Grand Staircase / Beverly Hurley

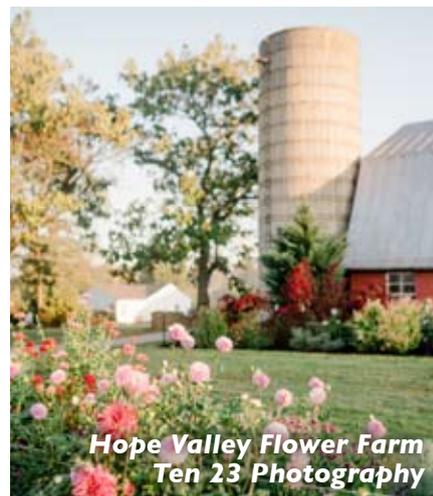
– it was Marguerite's favorite stop in the garden. Nearby, the Reflecting Pool Garden is flanked by white crepe myrtles and magnolias. As you walk to the mansion, take notice of the 100 foot long garden overflowing with shade loving plants.

The magic of Morven is in the trees and the landscape. Willow oaks tower above, the magnolias are magnificent, and the linden, Norway spruce, American hornbeam, and dawn redwoods are impressive specimens. Stand in front of the mansion for a panoramic view of the landscape. It's said on a clear day you can see the Washington Monument in the distance.

The story of Oatlands Historic House & Gardens spans several families and started before the Revolutionary War. But it wasn't until the early 1800s when the owner, George Carter, started to build his mansion and 4.2 acre walled gardens. Much of the stone work is original in the walled gardens and includes terraces that cascade down the hillside adjacent to the house. These terraces created by Carter are connected by a Grand Staircase made of stone and garden sections overflowing with colorful plants. Another original structure was installed in 1810; a multi-level greenhouse with two fireplaces that now is the second oldest greenhouse in the U.S. Two 140 year old Japanese maples flank the back entrance.



Morven Park Boxwood Garden Beverly Hurley

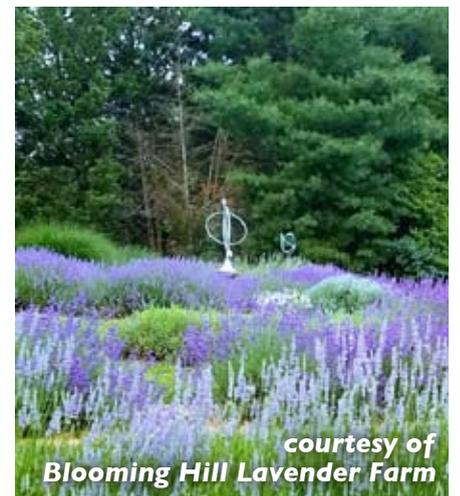


Hope Valley Flower Farm Ten 23 Photography

Another important element of the garden's design is the extensive use of boxwood hedges and parterres and walkways edged with flowers and trees. Some of these boxwood are over 200 years old.

One hundred years after George started the garden, Mr. and Mrs. Eustis of Washington, D. C. purchased the property in the early 1900s, and began work to restore and add to the gardens that fell into disrepair. Edith Eustis added more parterres and filled these with tulips, peonies, irises, lilies, and summer and fall blooming plants. The terraces were restored and expanded. A rose garden was installed. A bowling green was created with tall hedges of euonymus and arborvitae with an ornamental gate leading to the tea house beyond. More trees were planted, including three atlas blue cedars (*Cedrus atlantica*).

Today, the house and gardens



courtesy of Blooming Hill Lavender Farm

are managed as a National Trust Historic Site. The key to visiting Oatlands is to take your time to discover the beauty of this historic garden. Explore the various garden rooms, take note of its uniqueness from the white wisteria and grand magnolias, to the plantings of daffodils and daylilies along the main wall and the extensive use of color as you walk the Grand Staircase.

New Gardens

A new generation of garden visionaries is making an impact on Loudoun County's landscape. You probably have seen the work of Hope Flower Farm and Winery owner Holly Chapple in magazine photos or maybe you attended one of the events where she created the magnificent floral displays. As the daughter of parents who owned the local garden center in Leesburg, Holly grew up around plants. Fast forward to today and she is one



Hobbit Town at the National Botanic Garden / Visit Loudoun



courtesy of Stone Gables Bed & Breakfast

of this country's celebrated floral designers, best known for her work using old-fashioned flowers.

In 2015, Holly and her husband purchased a farm with historic buildings as a place to manage her wedding and event business and to teach floral design to her avid followers. When Covid hit and the wedding and event business went dark, she opened the farm and its flower fields for the public. Today, she has 2000 peonies planted, several thousand dahlias, zinnias, and cosmos, with more to come. During the growing season, you can purchase flowers or cut these on your own. There are garden display beds and even a gift shop of garden items. A winery was added and a series of events is offered from Dahlia Days (September 23-24) and a Fall Fest (October 21-22) to a tulip festival and peony festival in the spring.

When Cyndie and Peter Rinek built their home in the foothills, Peter, a landscape architect, made sure to incorporate his work into the home's exterior. And Cyndie loved lavender and started collecting

lavender plants. Today, Blooming Hill Lavender Farm & Gift Shop is a four acre farmlet with 1,000 lavender plants and some 100 varieties grown here. The spectacular blooms are on display from June through July when you can cut your own. And at other times, Cyndie makes and sells a range of lavender products in her gift store on the property, along with lavender plants that you can purchase. Cyndie knows her lavender and is happy to help you find the best type for your garden.

And when the lavender isn't in bloom, there are still gardens to see – a knot garden near the house, an herb garden, and a parterre on the side of the house filled with perennials and lavender. They also offer lavender-inspired and infused talks, teas, and tours to groups and individuals. The farmlet is open to the public Fridays and Saturdays from the beginning of April through the beginning of December.

The National Botanic Garden in nearby Chantilly, is a garden created by the vision of Peter and Beata Knop. Sited on the 1,000 acre farm of Peter's family on the edge of Dulles Airport, the two have sculpted the land, using recycled and donated materials to form the foundation, and created a 250 acre garden treasure out of flat farm land.

Part botanic garden and part sculpture garden showcasing Beata's monumental works of art, the National Botanic Garden is unlike most gardens you have seen. Upon entering the garden gates, various walking paths wind through the garden sections. The Kyoto area has intricate stone terraces leading up the hillside and a serene, curving stream flowing down. Shade loving plants

abound here, along with a large bamboo forest with shoots used to feed the pandas in the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. The sculpture "The Form" placed at the bottom of the hill is made of recycled concrete.

Hobbit Town is made from recycled materials to resemble the Hobbit houses in the "Lord of the Rings." These surrounding gardens are mostly xeric; the cactus garden has some 200 varieties on display. The large stone pavilion was a former barn and now where many of the garden's events are centered. A mix of shade and sun loving gardens abound here along the winding pathways with more of Beata's sculptures on display.

The lake is another gathering spot with a curved wall amphitheater offering a place to sit and gaze across the water. There is a castle structure under construction, a decorative "folly" to enhance the natural landscape. More sections are in development as Peter and Beata expand their amazing vision that combines nature and art. Local zoning restricts the number of days when the garden can open. Upcoming dates are September 6-10, October 7-11, and November 6-12.

Connecting with Nature

Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve is a 695 acre preserve in central Loudoun County, and is designated a Virginia State Treasure. And for good reason. It's a showcase of the Virginia Piedmont from the woodlands that surround to the five acre meadow of wildflowers. The visitors center is the former stone farmhouse of the original family who purchased the land from Oatlands owner George Carter. There are over 20 miles of mowed hiking trails on the property. You could spend a day exploring, or take a quick stroll. Either way, you'll be amazed at the plant and nature diversity here.

Where to Stay

Stone Gables Bed & Breakfast near Leesburg is one of the last remaining stone gabled barns in Loudoun County. Originally built in 1823, owners Leslie and Wayne have transformed this former hay and dairy barn into a stunning four bedroom luxury bed and breakfast, while still preserving the wood beams and stone walls that give the structure its unique character. From the hearty breakfast offered each

morning, to the swimming pool (in season), fireplaces in cool weather, and beautiful gardens and expansive grounds to stroll, you'll want to settle in and thoroughly enjoy this amazing inn and countryside.

Where to Dine & Wine

There are so many dining options in Loudoun County that you can't make a wrong choice. From downtown Leesburg and its multitude of options to the Village at Leesburg, there is a restaurant with every style of menu. One restaurant to be sure to add to your visit is Magnolias at the Mill in the charming town of Purcellville. Located in a renovated former grain mill, the restaurant uses locally grown produce and offers an extensive wine list. And as for wineries, with over 50 in the county, there is a selection for every taste. One of the newer ones is Endhart Vineyards, sited on 46 acres of rolling green hills.

For more information, visit www.visitloudoun.org.

Beverly Hurley is the editor of Triangle Gardener magazine and www.GardenDestinations.com. When she is not gardening, she loves to travel.

An American Orchid Society
Judged Show

FALL FOR ORCHIDS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
1 pm - 6 pm

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9
10 am - 6 pm

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
10 am - 3 pm

JC RAULSTON ARBORETUM
4415 Beryl Rd, Raleigh, NC 27606

- FREE ADMISSION -
Open to the Public

Orchids & Growing Supplies for Sale
Orchid Growing Classes for Beginners

Sponsored by the Triangle Orchid Society,
JC Raulston Arboretum & Neuse River Brewing Co.
Visit TriangleOrchidSociety.org for more info &
class schedule