

Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria

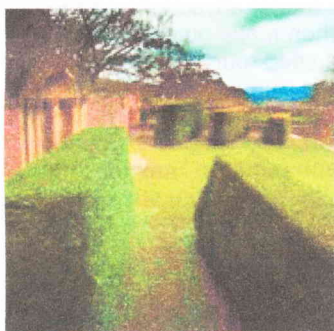
NSW GARDEN TOUR 2012



Fully Escorted by Paul & Maureen Lucas

7 Days / 6 Nights

Tour Departs Sunday, 14th October - Saturday, 20th October, 2012



The Itinerary

Day 1 Sun 14 Oct: Home Port / Sydney / Blue Mountains

A/Tea & Dinner

After arriving at Sydney Airport we board our luxury coach and begin our drive up into the **Blue Mountains of New South Wales**. We arrive in Leura at the beautiful gardens of **Everglades which is one of Australia's foremost heritage gardens**. This treasure from the 1930s sits in twelve and a half acres of European-style gardens and native Australian bush with breathtaking views over the Jamison Valley in the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains. After a **delicious Devonshire afternoon tea** we tour the garden with an Everglades guide. Later in the day we check into our motel before dinner.

Overnight Leura: Waldorf Leura Gardens Resort 02 4784 4000

Day 2 Mon 15 Oct: Mt Wilson

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

This morning we travel up through Blackheath and Bell to the unique heritage listed **Garden Estate of Breenhold** at Mount Wilson which is one of the most extensive privately owned garden properties in Australia. Breenhold Gardens comprises 45 hectares of luxuriant gardens, parkland and native bushland. Over the past 40 years several thousand exotic and indigenous trees and flowering shrubs have been planted. Six individual stone walled gardens, several with pools, are focus points of Breenhold. We then move on to the **garden of Nooroo**, which is a beautifully built garden also located in Mount Wilson. The garden is constantly changing but one part of it always remains the same and that is its famous wisterias which typically bloom in mid-October. This is one of Australia's most famous gardens featuring world famous wisteria, plus rhododendrons, azaleas and maples. Our next stop is at the famous **Mount Tomah Garden** which covers 28 hectares in the World Heritage listed northern Blue Mountains. After lunch we tour this cool climate garden which contains over 40,000 plants from around the world, arranged according to geographical origin. It was opened to the public in 1987 and is already home to over 5000 species of plants from the cooler parts of the world. Many of these have been collected by staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens in the wild and have not previously been grown in Australia. Areas visited include South America, Southeast Asia, China, Africa, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and the alpine regions of Australia, special emphasis being placed on plants of the southern hemisphere. Later in the day we return to our motel for dinner.

Overnight Leura: Waldorf Leura Gardens Resort 02 4784 4000



Member of



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Day 3 Tues 16 Oct: Katoomba**Breakfast & Dinner**

This morning we enjoy a leisurely drive along **Cliff Drive** around to **Echo Point** and the **Three Sisters Lookout** overlooking the beautiful Jamison Valley. We then continue onto **Scenic World** where our **Scenic Pass** enables us to ride the **Scenic Skyway**, which travels horizontally 300 metres above the Jamison Valley floor above Cooks Crossing and offers magnificent views of Katoomba Falls and Orphan Rock. We can also enjoy the **Scenic Rail**, which was built in 1878 and takes us on a drop of 207metres into the valley and has the reputation of being the world steepest inclined railway. Once on the Valley Floor we can enjoy some short walks along the board walk to the Ruined Castle and Federal Pass before enjoying the **Cableway** back out of the Valley to the Visitors Centre. After lunch we visit the **Campbell Rhododendron Gardens** at Blackheath which covers an area of 18.3 hectares (45 acres) and comprise both exotic plantings of rhododendrons, azaleas, maples and other deciduous trees and pristine native bushland. Stroll the easy walking tracks of these lovely gardens and then enjoy the teas and light refreshments available at The Lodge (at own cost). Later in the day we return to our motel for dinner.

Overnight Leura: Waldorf Leura Gardens Resort 02 4784 4000**Day 4 Wed 17 Oct: Gosford / Hunter Valley****Breakfast, A/Tea & Dinner**

This morning we depart the Blue Mountains and begin our drive down into the delightful Hunter Valley Region as we travel down through Gosford where we stop and tour the **Edogawa Commemorative Japanese Gardens and Gosford Regional Gallery**. We enjoy a guided tour of the garden which was a gift to the people of Gosford as a symbol of cultural exchange and friendship, by our Sister City, Edogawa, (near Tokyo in Japan). It is designed in accordance to the original principles of Japanese design of the Heian (700AD) period and is now one of the most popular tourist attractions on the NSW Central Coast. We will also have time to visit the galleries and buy lunch in the café. We then make our way across to Raymond Terrace and stop at the **delightful Hunter Region Botanical Gardens**. We enjoy a guided tour of the gardens which covers the history and introduces us to the **Theme Gardens** along the **Botanical Walk**. The Hunter Region Botanic Gardens cover an area of 140 hectares, much of which has been preserved as natural bushland. Within we have the **Botanical Collections**, which are predominantly Australian flora. The **Rare and Endangered Plants** section and of course the **Natural Bushlands** as well as features such as the **Rotunda, Bush Chapel, Sundial Pool** and the **Lord Howe Island Water Feature**. After our tour we enjoy a delightful **devonshire tea** in the beautiful surrounds. We then make our way to our accommodation before check in and dinner.

Overnight Maitland: Mercure Maitland 02 4937 7999**Day 5 Thurs 18 Oct: Hunter Valley Gardens****Breakfast & Dinner**

This morning we begin our Hunter Valley Tour with a visit the **magnificent Hunter Valley Gardens** with over 25 hectares of spectacular international display gardens that will amaze us with sensational sights, colours, fragrances and adventures. Exploring over 8 kilometres of paths, we are able to experience each of the superb feature gardens - all of a standard we won't see elsewhere in Australia. Designed with sight, colour and fragrance very much in mind, **Hunter Valley Gardens was created by Bill Roche** who along with his **wife Imelda** and family, form the **Australian-owned company Roche Group**. The entire Hunter Valley Gardens property spans over 300 hectares with the central heart and soul being the Gardens themselves - Bill Roche's vision. Our tour begins with a **Tractor Train Tour** through the **different themed gardens** as our driver gives us an overview of the gardens as well as some interesting history and plant facts along the way. After our tour we are able to take time out to stroll at leisure through the gardens. We also have the opportunity to purchase morning tea from the **Garden Terrace Restaurant** and also take a look in the **Garden Gate Gift Shop** where we will find unique home wares and souvenirs to remind us of our visit to the Gardens. We then visit the **Village Shopping precinct** for the chance to purchase lunch and the maybe some of the local gourmet produce on offer at the boutique shops. Our last stop for the day is at the **impressive Bimbadgen Estate Cellar Door** which is beautifully sited at the northern end of Pokolbin, the winery and cellar door are impressive constructions with a Mediterranean feel to them. Later in the day we make our way back to our motel before dinner.

Overnight Maitland: Mercure Maitland 02 4937 7999**Day 6 Fri 19 Oct: Upper Hunter Valley****Breakfast, M/Tea Lunch & Dinner**

This morning we travel to the Upper Hunter to Singleton for a tour of the **Sisters of Mercy Sacred Spaces**. Our guided tour takes us through the first Sisters' Chapel, the old Cottage Museum, the beautiful Motherhouse Convent, the new Sisters' Chapel, and the superb gardens that surround them. We then enjoy **morning tea** before continuing up through Muswellbrook and Scone to the **magnificent Belltrees Country House, Farm & Garden** for a delicious lunch and tour. Many guests come to Belltrees to relax and enjoy leisurely strolls around the charming garden which is an ideal pastime. After lunch we enjoy our own tour of the property and homestead conducted by one of the members of the family. This afternoon we travel back down through Muswellbrook and into the lower Hunter to our motel to relax before our farewell dinner.

Overnight Maitland: Mercure Maitland 02 4937 7999**Day 7 Sat 20 Oct: Maitland / Sydney / Home Port****Breakfast**

After an early breakfast we bid the Hunter Valley farewell as we make our way back down into Sydney stopping at **Kissing Point** where we board the River Cat Ferry for our **45 minute cruise into Circular Quay** along the beautiful waterways of the Parramatta River. After disembarking our cruise we transfer across to the **Royal Botanical Gardens** to board the **Choochoo Express** which tours the gardens with commentary which features the interesting aspects of the Gardens and the surrounding harbour. Our tour starts and finishes at the Queen Elizabeth II Gate by the Opera House and includes four on and off stops running every half hour on the hour: **1. Tropical Centre / Rose Gardens; 2. The Woolloomooloo Gate / Art Gallery; 3. Restaurant / Café / Gardens Shop / Info Centre; & 4. Mrs Macquarie's Point**. This also gives time for those wishing to visit the Opera House or sites in and around Circular Quay or the historic Rocks precinct. Later in the day we transfer to the Sydney Airport for check in and afternoon flights home after a wonderful and colourful tour of the Hunter Valley and scenic Blue Mountains of New South Wales with Trade Travel.

The Tour Price Includes: Return Flights to Sydney Ex Melb, Bris, Adel & Perth (Alternate Aust or NZ Departures price on request); Luxury Coach Travel Seatbelts & Restroom; 6 Nights Quality Motel Accommodation; 6 Dinners & Hot Buffet Breakfasts; Lunch Day 2 & 6; Morning & Afternoon Tea as per Itinerary; All Entry Fees and Guides as per Itinerary.

- **Please Note:** Passengers wishing to join this tour ex Perth require flights day before the commencement date of tour and overnight accommodation. This has been factored into the Ex Perth tour cost

Not Included: Insurance, Meals not mentioned in Itinerary, Optional Touring and Extended Stays in Sydney.

Tour Highlights: Leura Everglades Gardens; Garden Estate of Breenhold Mount Wilson; Nooroo Garden Mount Wilson; Mount Tomah Botanical Garden; Katoomba Cliff Drive / Echo Point / Three Sisters Lookout; Scenic World / Scenic Skyway / Scenic Rail / Cableway; Campbell Rhododendron Gardens Blackheath; Commemorative Japanese Gardens & Gosford Regional Gallery; Hunter Region Botanical Gardens; Magnificent Hunter Valley Gardens & Shopping Village; The Impressive Bimbagen Estate Cellar Door; Sisters of Mercy Sacred Spaces Convent & Garden Tour & Morning Tea; Belltrees Homestead & Garden Lunch & Tour; River Cat Ferry / Sydney Harbour Bridge / Circular Quay / Opera House / The Rocks Precinct; River-cat Ferry; Royal Botanical Gardens Choochoo Express plus more.

Tour Cost from:

Ex Melb/Bris/ Adel: \$2099.00 per person Twin Share

(\$390.00 single supplement)

Ex Perth: \$2595.00 per person Twin Share

(\$438.00 single supplement)

Ex Perth Price includes extra night accommodation in Sydney

Getting to know your Tour Escorts Maureen and Paul Lucas

Maureen Lucas is Garden writer for "The Senior Newspaper" and is on the Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria and Editor of their magazine. She is qualified horticultural judge and Editor of the Australian Horticultural Judges Association Newsletter - judging at many shows including the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show, etc;

Paul Lucas is an award winning photographer who also does photographic screen presentations to groups such as Garden Clubs, Probus Clubs, Retirement Villages, Over 50s Association, Nursing Homes, etc, even in the USA for the "America in Bloom Society" and also several in New Zealand. Paul's subjects are "Flowers and Gardens of the World", "Wildlife Safari" and "Armchair Travel". He has a collection of over 50,000 top quality photos. He is also The Photography writer for the Rowville/Lysterfield News, Past President of the Knox Home Garden Club, Committee Member of & Official Photographer for the Royal Hort Society of Victoria.



Paul and Maureen as a team have escorted Garden Tours in both Australia and New Zealand. They have also developed, from scratch, a prize-winning 1/3 acre garden that they regularly open to the public, including for Australia's Open Gardens. This garden has been accredited as a "Garden for Wildlife" by the Knox Council. It has been awarded a First Place in the Knox Council Garden Competition (which covers 50,000 homes).

For information and bookings contact:

Victorian Office: Freecall 1800 034 439 - Email: groupsvic@tradetravel.com