



Stephen & Kristin Pategas

in the garden *by Stephen and Kristin Pategas*

Visiting Gardens

It doesn't take much to inspire us to visit a garden. Many years ago we took this quote from the famous garden designer Russell Page to heart, "I never saw a garden from which I did not learn something." There is rarely a trip we make that does not include a garden visit.

Research - Having visited hundreds of public gardens, we have honed our garden visitation skills. Start with research about what the garden contains. Azaleas, camellias, and spring bulbs each have their relatively narrow blooming seasons. Locally, Harry P. Leu Gardens has an outstanding camellia collection at peak in late winter. The web sites of many gardens will note what is in bloom when and garden guide maps will allow you to check out the features. There may be an upcoming temporary exhibition of Chihuly glass or even animatronics dinosaurs.

Finding gardens to visit - The American Horticultural Society has a long list of gardens with reciprocal admission privileges. To see our life list of favorites open to the public gardens, visit our web site at www.hortusoasis.com and find Tips under the About Us tab.

In the book *1001 Gardens You Must See Before You Die*, gardens are organized by geographical region. Each garden is summarized and the accompanying fact box provides information including the designer, owner, garden style, size, location, and climate. Alas we've only visited 93 of these gardens and we have 908 to go. May we live to be 200.

To find private gardens, check out Garden Conservancy Open Days www.gardenconservancy.org as well

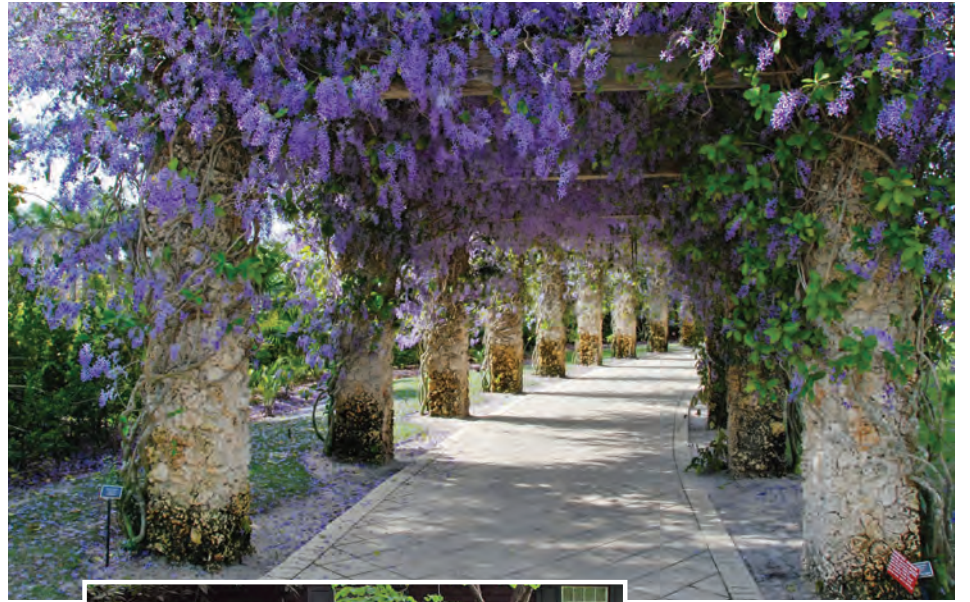
as garden tours in Charleston and many other cities. Locally the Lake Eola Heights and Lake Lawsona Fern Creek neighborhoods have garden tours every other year.

Prior to departure - Load addresses in navigational systems before you head out the door. Confirm the address is the physical location of the garden. Have a map and phone number for backup. Always confirm with a live person that the garden is indeed open and that major features are not under construction or in an uproar with an exhibit installation. We pack camera, notepad, comfortable shoes, clothing layers, hat, insect repellent, sun block, refillable water bottles, compact umbrellas, and membership cards. At the garden, needed items are carried in shoulder bags and fanny or backpacks.

Day of the visit - We check the day's weather and arrive at the garden early to beat the crowds and find soft light for photography. Grab a garden tour guide and ask what is looking its best. In the garden, do not remove tags that identify plants, step on plants, or take cuttings or blossoms unless expressly allowed. Assume some plants will have sharp or spiny parts and may cause an allergic reaction. Never place any plant parts in your mouth since the plant or sprays on the plants may be harmful. Keep the kids close at hand but let them wander in a designated children's garden.

And, remember to look down. We learned gardens do inspire and often the inspiration is not only the plants and the design, but even the surfaces we walk upon.

"I never saw a garden from which I did not learn something."
- Russell Page



Above, A spring 2015 trip included the Naples Botanic Garden and its bluebird vine in full glory. At left, Hollister House garden in Washington, CT. Below left, animatronic dinosaurs at the Naples Botanic Garden. Below right, creative water feature at the National Orchid Garden in Singapore. All photos by Stephen G. Pategas/Hortus Oasis.



Hortus Oasis (FL26000315) in Winter Park is a boutique garden design company specializing in residential, commercial and specialty gardens. Stephen is a registered landscape architect and Kristin is a certified landscape designer. Contact them at 407-622-4886/garden@hortusoasis.com

THIS ESTATE PLAN LOOKS JUST LIKE A LUXURY RESORT

[CALL IT THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS]

The Mayflower. Smart. Secure. And Spectacular.

Close your eyes and think "continuing care retirement community" for a second. What do you see? Park-like grounds and walking trails? A pool and fitness center? A formal dining room? Perhaps.

But what about your own faux fireplace? Hardwood floors? Designer kitchen with granite countertops? Custom cabinetry and trim? Closet systems? At a *retirement* community . . . seriously? Seriously.

At The Mayflower, you have the freedom and flexibility to customize your home *and* your retirement lifestyle to make them uniquely *yours*. And while you're having fun doing that, you'll also have the guarantee of pre-funded long-term care in our 5-Star, Gold Seal Health Center. That's what prompted residents like Shelby and Sylvia Reaves to plan ahead and proactively make the move . . . because they *wanted* to, not because they *needed* to. How about you?

**What's your plan for the future?
Call today, and let's talk about it: 407.672.1620.**

THE MAYFLOWER
www.themayflower.com
 1620 Mayflower Court
 Winter Park, FL 32792

Quality First

88141 PRAD/TPP 6/2015