

GARDEN DISCOVERIES 2015

Longwood Garden, Philadelphia

Garden Lovers' Tour of America

FROM CHARLESTON TO NEW YORK

with Kirsty Dougherty
06–20 April (15 days)

Foundation
& Friends of the
BOTANIC GARDENS



R
Renaissance
Tours

Garden Lovers' Tour of America

FROM CHARLESTON TO NEW YORK



KIRSTY DOUGHERTY

A traveller at heart, Kirsty Dougherty has been exploring the world's gardens for years. After writing for Australian garden magazines and running her own garden design company in Sydney, Kirsty headed to Argentina where she set up a bespoke tour company. Relocating to the United States, Kirsty initiated a garden and culinary tour program for a gourmet retail store in New Jersey, leading tours locally and internationally. Kirsty was co-leader on the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens' 2012 Historic North East Gardens Tour. She lives on the Jersey Shore.

Beginning in the unique, port city of Charleston and winding your way north to New York City, this tour will explore a dazzling selection of gardens, private and public, historic and contemporary, on the USA's East Coast.

Timed to coincide with the spring blooms of the Northern Hemisphere, you'll begin the tour with the Charleston Spring Festival, strolling leisurely between gardens while getting to know this charming city. Explore South Carolina's nearby plantations and enjoy culinary experiences scouted by gourmand and tour leader, Kirsty Dougherty.

Visit historic Monticello and Washington DC as well as the renowned Chanticleer and Longwood Gardens of Philadelphia. In New York, your final destination, be surprised by urban farming in Brooklyn Grange Farm and green space reclamation in the High Line and 55 Waters Street, Manhattan.

If you haven't travelled with Kirsty before, she is well-known in the States for her passion for gardens, combined with a love of food and wine, convivial company and good times. Bon voyage!

At a glance...

- Begin in Charleston during the annual Spring Festival of Houses and Gardens
- Visit South Carolina's magnificent plantations on the Ashley River
- Explore the grounds and home of Jefferson's Monticello and Washington's Mt Vernon
- Discover Chanticleer, Longwood and Mrs Hamilton's gardens in Philadelphia
- Enjoy a contemporary take on urban gardening in New York City, including the High Line and Brooklyn Grange – the world's largest rooftop farm
- Savour the varied local cuisines, wines and flavours of America, through South to North



Itinerary

Mon 06 Apr 2015 Depart Australia – Arrive Charleston

Depart Australia and arrive in historic Charleston, South Carolina late on the same day. Taxis are readily available to transfer you from the airport to the hotel. Check-in to the beautiful King Charles Inn and get some rest before the tour starts on Tuesday.

Tue 07 Apr Charleston

After a morning at leisure, gather for a welcome tour briefing and lunch with Kirsty and fellow travellers.

After lunch, walk with a 13th generation Charlestonian, Anne Middleton Herron, to get a local perspective on a city rich in early American history. As you stroll through the old walled city, you will be able to identify buildings dating back to before the Revolutionary War. End the tour in a private courtyard in the Middleton family's private garden with refreshments.

Kirsty will provide restaurant recommendations for dinner on your own tonight – Charleston is a food destination and the restaurant scene is fabulous. Charleston is low-country cuisine, representing the area between Savannah, Georgia and Pawley's Island, South Carolina. Recipes from this region were greatly influenced by immigrants from Europe, West Africa and the West Indies. **B L**

Wed 08 Apr Charleston

Spend the day visiting three plantations within ten minutes of each other on the Ashley River, which offer very different experiences.

Magnolia Plantation and Gardens is a former slave plantation established in 1679, containing America's oldest public gardens, constructed in 1840 by John Grimké Drayton. Today, the English-style gardens feature winding paths lined with native azaleas and antique camellias, as well as a pre-Revolution-era plantation house and a petting zoo.

Middleton Place is a National Historic Landmark and home to America's oldest landscaped gardens, dating back to 1741. The Garden Club of America has called the 65 acres 'the most important and most interesting garden in America'. The gardens have been planned so that there is something blooming at Middleton Place year-round.



Swamp Garden, Magnolia Plantation and Gardens

Drayton Hall is the only original Ashley River plantation home (i.e. main residence) that still stands. The home is unfurnished and unrestored, but the interior and exterior architecture are completely authentic. It is the oldest surviving example of Georgian Palladian architecture in the US, and one of the only pre-revolutionary houses that remain in close-to original condition today. **B L**

Thu 09 Apr Charleston

Continue your exploration of Charleston, the Holy City by the harbour, with a harbour cruise taking in significant historical sights while keeping your eye out for dolphins.

After lunch, stroll leisurely through eight to ten private gardens as part of the Festival of Houses and Gardens. Guides are stationed at each location to provide information about garden design, plant material and history. Enjoy wine and American Classic Tea reception in the garden of the Nathaniel Russell House Museum, widely recognized as one of America's most important neoclassical houses and declared a National Historic Landmark in 1973. Today, the interiors are restored to their original 1808 grandeur and surrounded by formal gardens. **B**

Fri 10 Apr Charleston – Richmond – Charlottesville

Depart Charleston by air (3 hours) for Richmond, Virginia. Transfer to the Omni Hotel in downtown Charlottesville – well located to the historic mall zone. Explore the area and enjoy dinner at your own leisure. **B**

Sat 11 Apr Charlottesville

This morning, enjoy a historical visit to Monticello, home to Thomas Jefferson, America's 3rd President and the Author of the Declaration of Independence. Tour the home and its grounds, which were a botanic showpiece, a source of food, and an experimental laboratory of ornamental and useful plants from around the world.

After a picnic lunch, continue to a local vineyard in an area highly regarded for its wine. Jefferson was the first landowner in the area to encourage grape planting on the land near Monticello. Relax and taste the wine from the area. Return to Charlottesville for an evening at leisure. **B Picnic L**



Magnolia Plantation House, Charleston

Sun 12 Apr

Charlottesville – Washington DC

Depart Charlottesville and travel to Mt Vernon, home of George Washington, first President of the United States. The 21-room mansion is an iconic example of 18th century architecture. The gardens and grounds of Mt Vernon are beautiful, with both ornamental and edible plants grown there for centuries.

In the afternoon, continue to Washington DC via the Arlington Cemetery. **B L**

Mon 13 Apr

Washington DC

Enjoy a morning orientation tour of the nation's capital. Begin with the best known Washington institutions such as the U.S. Capitol, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress and the White House. See also the Jefferson Memorial and the National Mall with the Korean Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.

The afternoon is at leisure to further explore Washington on your own. You may wish to visit the United States Botanic Gardens, established by the U.S. Congress in 1820 and one of the oldest botanic gardens in North America. Alternatively, the various branches of the Smithsonian Institution (the world's largest museum and research complex comprising 19 museums and galleries, as well as the National Zoological Park) are all open today. **B**

Tue 14 Apr

Washington DC – Philadelphia

This morning you will visit Dumbarton Oaks. Bought in 1920 and described as 'an old-fashioned house standing in rather neglected grounds', owners Mildred and Robert Woods Bliss had soon employed landscape gardener Beatrix Farrand to design the gardens. Dumbarton Oaks is ranked number 6 in the National Geographic's Top 10 Gardens of the World.

After lunch in Georgetown, drive to Philadelphia in the afternoon. **B L**



Wed 15 Apr

Philadelphia

Learn about the early history and foundation of the United States of America on a walking tour of the Independence National Historical Park where the events of the American Revolution transpired.

In the afternoon continue to the new home of the Barnes Foundation, established in 1922 by wealthy pharmaceutical mogul Dr Albert C. Barnes to 'promote the advancement of education and the appreciation of the fine arts'. Spend the afternoon viewing the remarkable collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings. **B**

Thu 16 Apr

Philadelphia

Enjoy a day outside the city in exclusive district, Wayne, which dates back to the early 20th century, when land along the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad was developed for summer homes to escape the heat of Philadelphia.

Begin with a visit to Chanticleer which, in 2013, celebrated two anniversaries: its centennial as the Rosengarten estate and 20th year as a public garden.

After lunch at nearby Valley Forge Flowers, visit the private garden of Mrs Dodo Hamilton, Campbell Soup heiress, legendary horticulturalist and supporter of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (America's oldest). **B L**

Fri 17 Apr

Philadelphia – New York

Depart Philadelphia and drive to New York.

On the way, stop at Longwood one of the premier botanical gardens in the United States covering more than 1,077 acres (436 ha). Your visit will coincide with the famous Spring Blooms festival, when thousands of bulbs blossom throughout the gardens.

Continue to New York City, arriving in the late afternoon. **B L**



Sat 18 Apr

New York

Enjoy a day of exploration of Manhattan's contemporary green spaces and relaxing gardens.

First, begin with a visit to the new 9/11 Memorial Museum, honouring the victims and examining 9/11 and its continued global significance. Continue to the incredible public space that is Ken Smith's Elevated acre at 55 Water St, and The Gardens of Remembrance, Piet Oudolf's waterfront plantings on Battery Point, which are a tribute to the victims of 9/11 and include 114 varieties of perennials and native plants.

After lunch on your own in Chelsea's thriving art district, head to the High Line, the famous elevated freight railway transformed into a public park on the lower west side of Manhattan. The 1.6 km park's attractions include naturalised plantings inspired by the self-seeded landscape that grew on the disused tracks, rugged meadow plants as well as many American natives.

Evening at leisure. Renaissance Tours will assist with theatre and restaurant bookings. **B**

Sun 19 Apr

New York

Spend the day out of Manhattan in the borough of Brooklyn.

Today begins with a visit to Brooklyn Grange, a one acre urban farm in Brooklyn. Enjoy the unique perspective of the Manhattan skyline from the top of a six-storey industrial building amidst a productive, thriving green space. Take the Founders tour and be inspired by their fascinating philosophy.

In the afternoon experience spring in the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens. Along with countless other spring blossoms, April is prime flowering time for over 200 Japanese flowering cherry trees showcasing more than 40 different species and cultivars.

This evening, celebrate the conclusion of the tour with a dinner cruise on New York harbour. **B D**

Mon 20 Apr

Depart New York

Tour arrangements conclude after breakfast. **B**



Bell's Run Creek, Chanticleer



Pond garden, Chanticleer



Longwood Gardens



'Rainbow Row' in Charleston, South Carolina



Middleton Place, Charleston



Magnolia Gardens, Charleston © Deb Snelson

Tour prices

Per person, twin share	AUD 8,850
Single supplement*	AUD 2,450
Deposit per person	AUD 500
Final payment due	06 February 2015

*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

Tour code GDI503

Fitness level Above Average
Please see booking conditions for fitness level definitions.

Suggested airline
Competitive airfares are available on Qantas, V Australia, United and Delta Airlines. Please contact Renaissance Tours for current fares and bookings.

Visas
Australian and New Zealand passport holders do not require a visa for the USA. You do however have to register on the website of the Department of Homeland security prior to departure from Australia: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>

Tour price includes

- 15 nights' accommodation with daily breakfast (B)
- Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner). Some picnic lunches. Wines with meals.
- Sightseeing and garden visits, including entrance fees as per itinerary, in comfortable air-conditioned coach
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (one piece per person)

Tour price does not include

- International airfares
- Travel insurance
- Airport portorage
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, room service etc.

Your hotels★★★★

Charleston – King Charles Inn

Charlottesville – Omni

Washington DC – to be confirmed

Philadelphia – Le Méridien

New York – to be confirmed

NB: Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted.

Terms & Conditions

HOW TO BOOK

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit and page one of your passport.

DEPOSIT / FINAL PAYMENTS

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payments are accepted in cash and by cheque, bank transfer, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. A 3% service charge applies for payment by American Express and Diners Club.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

a) Cancellation by You – Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
59 – 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 – 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 – 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us – We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by

Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

PASSPORTS, VISAS AND VACCINATIONS

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

TOUR PRICES

Prices quoted in our tour information are based on exchange rates, cost of services and applicable taxes at the time of publication. Prices may be subject to change in the event of significant currency fluctuations or the introduction of new taxes, up until final payment is received.

In the event of a price increase, whether because of a currency fluctuation, increase in taxes or a correction in advertised prices, we will advise you and you have the option of accepting the amended prices, inclusions and booking conditions or withdrawing from the tour and receiving a full refund of all monies paid.

Once final payment is received, all prices will be guaranteed and no surcharges will apply.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

FITNESS AND PARTICIPATION

Most of our tours require a MODERATE level of fitness.

However, in certain destinations (e.g. Silk Road, Central Asia, Outback Australia, tropical destinations) or in certain seasons (e.g. mid-winter,

mid-summer) or because of the nature of travel (e.g. remote rail), certain tours will require an ABOVE AVERAGE or CHALLENGING level of fitness.

If you (or we) have any doubts about your level of fitness, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require your doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour, including the fitness level, and provide you (and us) with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

MODERATE

For the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 1–2 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark / disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

ABOVE AVERAGE

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- undertake walking tours of 2–3 hours
- climb staircases of 100 or more steps

CHALLENGING

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- handle extremes of temperature (e.g. below 0 or above 35 degrees)
- handle extremes of altitudes (e.g. 4000 metres and above).

You can find the full terms & conditions on the Renaissance Tours booking form.

They can also be found at renaissancetours.com.au/booking-conditions or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.



New York Harbour



Monticello, Charlottesville

R
Renaissance
Tours

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Your travel agent is