



New English Gardens & RHS Chelsea

Exuberant design and planting schemes at the cutting edge

17–22 September 2021 (MH 907)

6 days • £2,590

Lecturer: Amanda Patton

The Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show featuring inspirational Show Gardens from top designers and unsurpassed floral quality.

Privileged access to the finest private gardens in Sussex, including Follers Manor, and Sarah Raven's colourful garden at Perch Hill.

The great classic gardens of Sussex including Sissinghurst and Great Dixter.

In the last century, the English garden has undergone a transformation. While the herbaceous border remains its most defining feature, greater awareness of the environmental benefits of a garden and a desire for year-round interest, together with better plant management, has seen its season extend from six weeks to six months and more. The shift in recent decades has been towards a more pseudo-naturalistic style, with seedheads and grasses playing an ever more important role over the fleeting nature of flowers. In turn, greater demands are made on the plants chosen, which need to create a green tapestry before flowering, a pictorial highlight in bloom, and a strong structure in the aftermath. More than any other aspect of gardening, these criteria have transformed the plant palette used by designers – as we see throughout this tour on visits to some of the most influential and exciting gardens created in Sussex and Surrey within the last century.

The much revered gardens of Sissinghurst and Great Dixter are seen alongside modern private gardens including Follers Manor. This exciting garden is one of the new 'greats' of the 21st century. Built in 2010 and set against a picturesque backdrop of the South Downs, Ian Kitson's masterpiece was winner of the Society of Garden Designers' Judges Award in 2012 and has featured in numerous television broadcasts and publications. Its naturalistic planting and bold sunken gardens create an intimate connection with the landscape and a completely immersive experience.

The tour moves from private projects, to Wisley, the jewel in the crown of RHS gardens. Continuously developed since its acquisition in 1903, it remains forward-thinking with much work done in trialling new plants and ideas, and as a centre of education. There are



After a drawing by Alfred Parsons 1887.

new areas created by Europe's top designers, including Tom Stuart Smith and Piet Oudolf, as well as an updated masterplan under development by Christopher Bradley Hole.

The tour culminates at The Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show, the most prestigious horticultural event in the world, attracting top UK and international designers and growers. The level of a Chelsea medal, from gold to bronze, can make or break careers; pressure is extreme and the results, complex gardens created from scratch in less than three weeks, show a level of skill, craftsmanship and splendour unseen at any other show.

Itinerary

Day 1: Perch Hill, Little Horsted. The coach leaves from Tunbridge Wells station at 12.15pm for Perch Hill, Sarah Raven's private home and garden, well-known for extravagant plant and colour combinations. First of four nights in Rye.

Day 2: Pashley Manor, King John's Nursery. At Pashley Manor, under landscape architect Anthony du Gard Pasley, the gardens have

been opened to the landscape and a delightful series of pools created from the old moat. King John's Nursery's romantic eight acres includes the wild garden, with ancient apple trees underplanted with meadow.

Day 3: Sissinghurst, Great Dixter. Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson's groundbreaking garden at Sissinghurst Castle, begun in the 1930s, transformed a squalid farmstead into a garden of spatial design and long vistas with crammed, colourful borders. The exuberant gardens at Great Dixter, home of the late gardener and writer Christopher Lloyd, perfectly demonstrate his more naturalistic planting style.

Day 4: Alfriston, Follers Manor, Clinton Lodge. Alfriston Clergy House's small Arts and Crafts garden is filled with medicinal plants, as mentioned in Nicholas Culpepper's Herbal of 1653. At nearby Follers Manor, the garden design by Ian Kitson is perfectly balanced by Julie Toll's vibrant planting to create a garden that is quirky, individual and sculptural. Clinton Lodge's six acres reflect English garden design from the 16th to the 21st centuries, with a Cloister Walk inspired by a Pre-Raphaelite painting.

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continued

Day 5: Ockley, Wisley, Richmond. Travel to Surrey to visit Anthony Paul's garden, 'more akin to a green English rain forest'. With pseudo-naturalistic planting and strong plant groups, this magical setting acts as an open air gallery for Hannah Peschar's collection. After a visit to RHS Wisley continue to Richmond, West London, for an overnight stay.

Day 6: RHS Chelsea (Members' Day). The morning is dedicated to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The tour ends after lunch, with a return transfer to the hotel in Richmond if required.

Lecturer

Amanda Patton. Award-winning garden designer, writer, broadcaster and artist. A member of the Society of Garden Designers and the Garden Media Guild, she has created Show Gardens at Chelsea and Hampton Court, and has designed over 200 private and public gardens. She lectures widely including at the London College of Garden Design, the RAC and the Lurie Garden in Chicago. Her particular interest is in 20th-century and contemporary garden design.

Practicalities

Price, per person. Two sharing: £2,590.
Single occupancy: £2,950.

Included: travel by private coach; hotel accommodation as described below; breakfasts; 3 lunches and 4 dinners with wine, water, coffee; all admissions; all tips; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager.

Accommodation. The George in Rye, Rye (thegeorgeinrye.com): 4-star, traditional hotel in the town centre. **Richmond Harbour Hotel, Richmond** (harbourhotels.co.uk): an elegant hotel in an 18th-century building atop Richmond Hill. *Single rooms are doubles for sole use throughout.*

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.