



NORTHWEST
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

GARDENS OF PHILADELPHIA'S BRANDYWINE VALLEY

Tuesday September 1 - Monday September 7, 2026

TOUR AT A GLANCE

7 DAYS / 6 NIGHTS

Double Occupancy per person \$3,595

Solo room \$4,335

Tour includes:

6 nights Staybridge Suites Brandywine

13 meals: 6 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 2 dinners

Transportation, including airport transfers

Experiencing a curated group of 9 public gardens and 7 private gardens

\$250 contribution to Northwest Horticultural Society

Optional: evening visit to Longwood Gardens and the Fireworks & Fountains show with VIP seating

An online map can be found by [clicking here](#)

Experience some of the most impressive gardens of the Brandywine Valley, nestled between the hills of Delaware and Pennsylvania. On this 6-night escorted tour we explore a diverse range of private and public gardens, learning about creative garden design, skilled plant cultivation, horticulture research, flowers and foliage galore plus we experience two of North America's premier public gardens: Chanticleer and Longwood Gardens.

There are numerous educational experiences throughout the tour - at many of the gardens, we will have a tour, lecture or hands-on experience during our visit, either with the head gardener or a local expert. In the months prior to the tour, we will provide reading materials for self-study.

There are hundreds of gardens and horticulture sights in this part of the world, both public and private. The tour will be escorted by board member Camille Paulsen. Camille is an avid gardener and seasoned traveler who finds endless inspiration in the gardens she visits around the world; she has served on many other boards including American Horticultural Society, Hardy Fern Foundation, Northwest Perennial Alliance, and Tacoma Garden Club. The itinerary was developed after a number of trips to the area by Lois Moss, owner of Tour 2 Explore More who will also be on the tour. We will also have expert local guides at most of the gardens plus some behind-the-scenes experiences.

We stay at one hotel throughout the tour, with daily excursions to the various gardens grouped geographically so we have more time in the gardens and less time on the coach. Our hotel is about 40 minutes from the Philadelphia airport - to make it a stress-free tour for you, transportation between Philadelphia airport (PHL) and the hotel is included.

Our hotel is Staybridge Suites Brandywine / Glen Mills, with restaurants and shopping centers nearby. Each room includes a kitchenette, so you might choose a restaurant for dinners or the nearby upscale grocery store which is a 3-minute walk from the hotel. There is an outdoor swimming pool, free self-serve laundry facilities and plenty of space for socializing, both indoor and outdoor.

We will have a charter coach and local driver throughout the tour. We will also have a passenger van for errands and for getting smaller groups of people where they want to go.

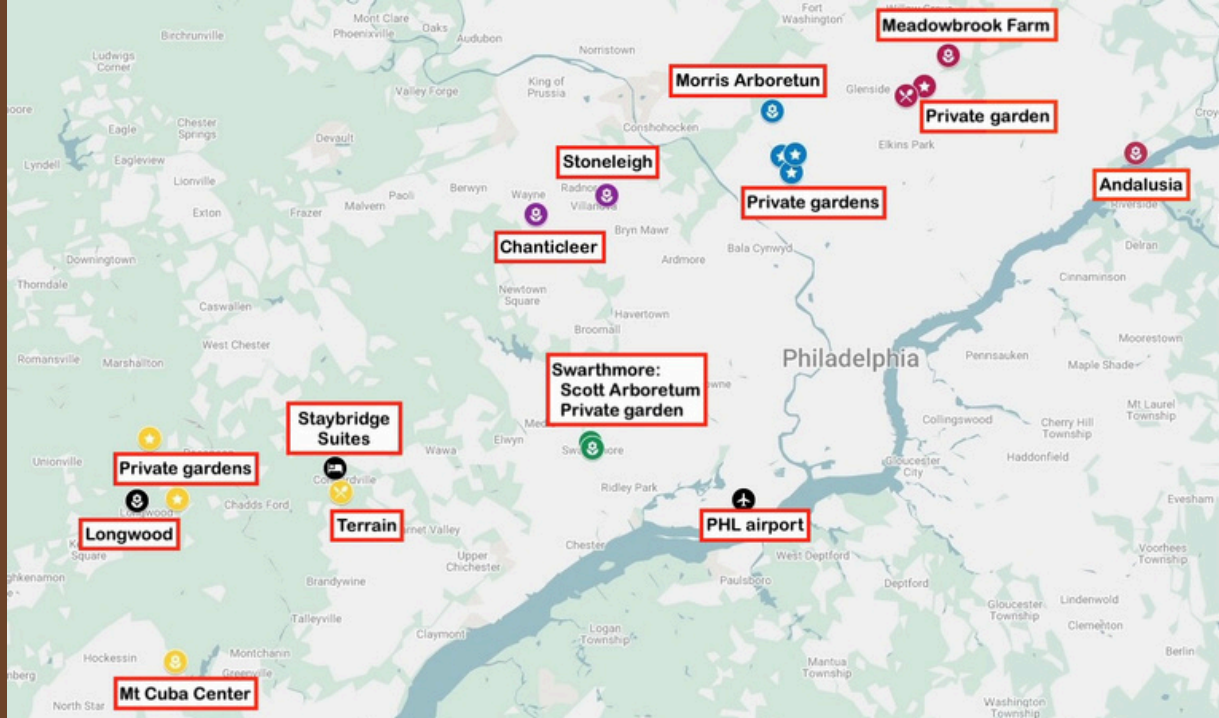
You will delight in the company of fellow garden enthusiasts. The minimum group size is 20 and the maximum group size will be 28.



Your host for the tour is horticulture expert and NHS Board Member Camille Paulsen.

You will also be accompanied by Lois Moss of Tour 2 Explore More who has orchestrated scores of horticulture themed tours and will be on the tour as manager and guide.





ITINERARY AT A GLANCE - DAY BY DAY

Tue, Sept 1

Arrival: non-stop flights from SEA to PHL are available and the timing is ideal. For anyone arriving at a different time, arrangements will be made for you, too

Wed, Sept 2

Mt Cuba Center, including lunch
Private Gardens
Included dinner at Terrain

Thr, Sept 3

Andalusia Historic House and Garden, including lunch
Private Garden
PHS Meadowbrook Farm
Included dinner

Fri, Sept 4

Stoneleigh, including lunch
Chanticleer, including the option of staying until early evening

Sat, Sept 5

Private gardens
Morris Arboretum, including lunch

Sun, Sept 6

Longwood Gardens, with options to stay as long as you like
Optional: evening at Longwood Gardens, including the Fireworks & Fountains show

Mon, Sept 7

Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College, including lunch
Private Garden
Departure: non-stop flights from PHL to SEA depart in the early evening

For those staying longer in the region, there is a train from the airport that goes to downtown Philadelphia and also to the Amtrak station. For anyone leaving on an earlier flight, a shuttle van will take you to the airport

Options:

- Additional night at Staybridge Suites Glen Mills, including breakfast and taxes:
 - \$160 per person in a double occupancy room
 - \$295 for a single occupancy room
- Longwood Gardens Fireworks and Fountains Show pricing TBD once the schedule is released by Longwood Gardens.



DAY 1



TUESDAY, SEPT 1

Travel day. Non-stop flights from SEA depart approximately 10am and arrive approximately 7pm. Transportation from PHL airport to the hotel will be provided throughout the day. For anyone who arrives before the 3pm check-in, there will be a hotel room available to freshen-up. Each room includes a kitchenette, so you might choose a restaurant for dinners or the nearby upscale grocery store, The Fresh Market, which is a 3-minute walk from the hotel. The hotel has complimentary food and drinks tonight from 5:30-7:00pm. There is an outdoor swimming pool, free self-serve laundry facilities and plenty of space for socializing, both indoor and outdoor.

We visit Mt Cuba Center, a botanic garden committed to conservation and research, especially focusing on native plants. This is also a former DuPont home and is one of the newest to be converted to a public garden. We will start with an overview tour of the gardens, followed by independent time and then have lunch in the mansion.

This afternoon, we visit private gardens. The area is home to many, many welcoming garden hosts. Some have been featured in the book *Private Gardens of Philadelphia*, published in 2024.

This evening we will enjoy dinner in the private dining area at Terrain, a nursery, garden center, lifestyle store and restaurant. It is walking distance from our hotel, so you may decide to visit again during our time in the region

DAY 2



WEDNESDAY, SEPT 2

DAY 3



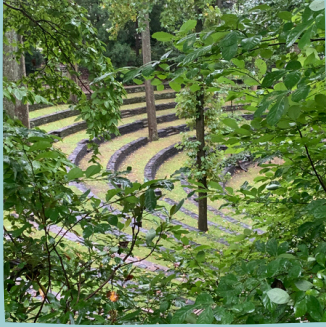
THURSDAY, SEPT 3

Our first garden today will be Andalusia House & Garden, an historic home with a rich history and birthplace of one of the oldest Garden Clubs of America. The extensive grounds include numerous areas to explore and experience. We will have a guided tour and a picnic lunch with time for independent exploration.

We then visit a private garden in the Chestnut Hill neighborhood, followed by Meadowbrook Farm, the headquarters of the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society. We will have a guided tour followed by independent time. The garden is open until 6pm on Thursdays, so we can linger a little longer.

We then have an included dinner at a restaurant near Meadowbrook Farm so that we can enjoy ourselves while rush hour traffic clears.

DAY 4



FRIDAY, SEPT 4

Stoneleigh is an historic property that has recently become a public garden. There is new enthusiasm here with some interesting design changes and updates featuring biodiversity. Their approach to gardening is progressive and they are wholeheartedly embracing and teaching sustainable and naturalistic practices. We will have box lunches in the pavilion.

Chanticleer is an iconic garden that is on many peoples' bucket lists. The garden is a study of textures and forms. The individual gardeners lead the design and even utilitarian items like drinking fountains and trash receptacles are sculptural. We will begin with a tour by their staff with plenty of independent time afterwards. Chanticleer is a garden meant for enjoyment, relaxation and contemplation so we will have time to experience the garden to its fullest. We will have some light food at Chanticleer, possibly a tea party. The garden is open until 8pm tonight and you will have the option of returning to the hotel in the afternoon or staying into the evening.

DAY 5

We have a variety of Private Gardens today plus a visit to Morris Arboretum, where we will have lunch.

Independent dinner tonight, with many options available within walking distance of our hotel.



SATURDAY, SEPT 5





Today we will visit North America's best-known public garden, Longwood Gardens. Purchased in 1906 by Pierre S. du Pont who bought the land to preserve an historic arboretum that had been planted by the Peirce family in the 1700s, Mr du Pont initially developed it as a personal estate with grand gardens, conservatories and fountains. It was opened to the public in 1956 and has continued as a world-class botanical destination focused on horticulture, research and education. We will arrive in the morning and there will be transportation throughout the day so that you can spend as much or as little time at Longwood as you like. We will have a guided tour of the new West Conservatory (opened in 2024) plus some behind-the-scenes learning experiences.

Longwood is famous for its synchronized water fountains which were renovated and reimagined, now including LED lighting as well as music. Tonight is expected to be a special Fireworks & Fountains show. For those who choose this option, we will have VIP seating for the show. The price of the show hasn't been announced yet but we have been in touch with their Groups department and they know we are coming.

DAY 6



SUNDAY, SEPT 6

DAY 7

This morning, we check-out of the hotel in the late morning and load our luggage onto the coach. Since non-stop flights from PHL to SEA depart at approximately 7pm, we will visit two more gardens on our way to the airport.

We visit the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College which includes historic gardens and more than 4,000 plants over 300+ acres. The entire campus is a botanical garden with various themed areas such as a rose garden, herb garden, specimen trees, plant collections, perennial beds and more. Scott Arboretum was funded by the family who invented paper towels. We will have a guided tour plus box lunches here.

We expect to visit a private garden after lunch with plenty of time to arrive at the airport by 4pm.

For those staying longer in the region, there is a train from the airport that goes to downtown Philadelphia and to the downtown Amtrak station. For anyone leaving on an earlier flight, the van can take them to the airport earlier.



MONDAY, SEPT 7

PRICING, DEPOSITS, AND OPTIONAL ADD-ONS

Tour prices below are if 24 to 28 people register

If 23 or fewer people register by May 1, 2026 the price may be increased, based on the number of people who have registered. The minimum for the tour to move forward is 20. The maximum will be 28.

- **Price, per person, in a shared room: \$3595**

- You will have the choice of a room with 2 beds or a room with 1 bed. If you are seeking a roommate, we will let you know if a second person is looking for a roommate.

- **Price, in a solo room \$4335**

- No roommate and you have your own room.

Deposit and balance due

A deposit of \$700 per person is due at registration. An installment will be due by May 1 and the remaining balance will be due by July 1, 2026.

Optional add-on: Longwood Gardens evening show Fountains and Fireworks

Longwood has not released the ticket prices yet. Once we know the actual cost, the number will be adjusted. Price includes a ticket to Fireworks & Fountains with VIP seating and transportation. In the past, Longwood has allowed Tour 2 Explore More groups special re-entry privileges throughout the day, so you could go back to the hotel for a rest and then return to Longwood in the evening.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Donation to NHS

Pricing includes a \$250 donation to Northwest Horticultural Society. Thank you for your support. All participants are required to be a member of NHS at the time the tour begins.

6 Nights Accommodation

Transportation

You will be met at the airport and taken to the hotel. Our hotel is about 30 minutes from the airport so the tour includes transportation from and to the airport. We will have a charter coach and local driver plus a passenger van will be available for errands.

13 Meals (6 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 2 Dinners)

Dinners: Our hotels are all within walking distance of numerous restaurants or grocery stores, so choosing your dinner will be easy. You can choose something fancy or simple.

Taxes, Fees, and Tips

Gratuities for the driver and guides are included in the tour price.

Convenient, Secure Payments

You can pay using your credit card or ACH electronic transfer on secure, encrypted booking software. Paying online is more secure than traditional paper checks sent through the mail.

2% Cash Back

For any payments made using ACH electronic transfer, you will receive 2% cash back. Your 2% cash back will be sent to you on August 1, 2026 and will be calculated on the payments you made using ACH electronic transfer.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Airfare

Non-stop flights from SEA to PHL are available; the timing is ideal. You could depart SEA late morning and arrive PHL early evening. Returning, you would depart PHL early evening, arrive SEA 10pm

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is highly recommended. Some policies require purchase soon after your first deposit. Unexpected events can disrupt your travel plans, either before you leave or during your trip. Consider purchasing travel insurance soon after making your first tour deposit. You can select the coverage best suited to your circumstances by comparing the options on websites such as Squaremouth.com or InsureMyTrip.com. If you travel more than twice a year, you may want to consider an annual policy instead of a per trip policy.

Meals Not Listed

Any meals not listed in the itinerary are your choice and not included in the tour

Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages are not included in any meals or events

Personal Expenses

Further Travel

You might decide to travel elsewhere while you're on the East Coast. Amtrak has trains north to NYC and south to DC.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

A cancellation, regardless of the reason, is subject to the following fees:

- From now until March 30, 2026, the withdrawal fee is \$500 per person
- From April 1, 2026 until June 30, 2026, the withdrawal fee is \$700 per person
- After July 1, 2026 all payments are forfeited

Replacement Guests: If a replacement is found for your place, the withdrawal fee becomes \$300 per person and you will be refunded the difference, if any.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Participants must be able to stand for extended periods of time during garden tours. Walking surfaces can sometimes include cobblestones or unpaved paths, uneven terrain or stairs without handrails.

A signed liability waiver will be required from each tour participant within 90 days of departure.



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Email: info@northwesthort.org
Website: www.northwesthort.org
Instagram: [@nwhortsociety](https://www.instagram.com/nwhortsociety)
www.facebook.com/northwesthort

Join fellow NHS members as we travel and learn from each other and from horticultural experts around the world. The NHS Travel Program supports our mission to provide inspiration and education to our members. Our tours expand knowledge and appreciation of horticulture while fostering camaraderie among participants.

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