

TRENTHAM GARDENS FLOURISH FOR 2008

2008 Highlights

- ***UK's biggest*** garden restoration project in full flourish
- ***New*** Hornbeam maze and edible flower garden
- ***UK's only*** barefoot walk
- ***Over 400 acres*** of woodland, mile long lake, myriad of wildlife
- ***Plus tours and special events***

AND a unique range of leisure activities across the Estate

- ***Unique*** monkey forest – where monkeys and man roam free together
- ***Treetop adventure course***
- ***Eclectic shopping*** village and garden centre
- ***Plus*** tours and special events

Trentham Estate's £100 million regeneration programme has breathed new life into the famous gardens and 2008 will see this monumental, award winning* restoration project in full flourish, with some bright new additions and special tours and events throughout the year.

No keep off the grass signs here, visitors are positively encouraged to immerse themselves! **Tom Stuart-Smith's** new designs of Charles Barry's famous Italian Parterre will be a flood with over 100,000 tulips and other bulbs in advance of one of the countries largest collections of Bearded Iris which with an evocative range of trendy perennials including Echinacea 'Rubinglow', Veronicastrum 'Fascination' and Amsonia tab.var.salicifolia, will blossom late into the season. In contrast, the free-flowing prairies of **Piet Oudolf's** Eastern Pleasure Ground have been completed with the addition of a further 17,000 new plants bringing the number of perennials to well over 60,000. Trentham has turned a major cornerstone and after four years of restoration and improvement, the once famous historic gardens, again provide one of the most iconic new plantings in the country. The gardens also boast a magnificent adventure playground with JCB little drivers track.

NEW HORNBEAM MAZE AND EDIBLE FLOWER BEDS

NEW for 2008 is an "interactive" spiral hornbeam maze open for Easter. Guests navigate their way through an elaborate swirling pathway to reach a tall grass viewing mound and along the way children (and adults!) can talk to each other through secret sound pipes. An edible flower garden with "yummy" selection of blooms including roses, dahlias and nasturtiums will be in full bloom in July. Open all year round except Christmas Day.

BAREFOOT IN THE PARK : UK'S ONLY BAREFOOT WALK IS BACK

The gardens are also home to the **UK's FIRST AND ONLY BAREFOOT WALK** where guests can “free” their feet from the winter shackles of shoes and socks for a sensory spring stroll across a variety of 24 terrains and textures, from mulch and mud to cool water and smooth stone. Guaranteed to re-connect walkers with nature, expand their sense of touch and generally get their toes tingling, barefoot walking is an ancient practice believed to offer the same benefits as reflexology – and it's loads of fun for all the family too! Re-opening after “winter break” for Easter 2008.

WOODLAND WALKS, WILDLIFE AND WATER

Trentham's aim to maintain and enhance the woodland community in its care is apparent by the myriad of wildlife, which includes badgers, voles, hares foxes, weasels and most notably a herd of black fallow deer plus one of the biggest heronries in the country with over forty breeding pairs. A picturesque mile-long lake designed by Capability Brown is home to kingfishers and otters. There are over 400 acres of woodland to discover with walks to challenge the biggest walking enthusiast or those who want an easier stroll, and visitors can enjoy the water on Miss Elizabeth - a 42-seat, electrically driven ecologically friendly catamaran – or by rowing boat. Open all year round except Christmas Day.

ALSO AROUND THE ESTATE UNIQUE MONKEY FOREST

Unique in the UK and one of only four in Europe, Monkey Forest is a totally different and exhilarating walk through wildlife experience that transports guests into the heart of the “freerange” home of 140 Barbary Macaques. The monkeys roam free in 60 acres of forest and visitors can literally step into their home - no bars, no barriers – just up close access.

EXTREME THRILLS AND HIGH WIRE ACTION

At Trentham Aerial Extreme visitors can safely swing, climb and slide their way through a tree-top adventure course up to 40ft above the forest floor with over 20 different obstacles including monster spider webs, islands in the sky and a 100m high zip wire. A height restriction of 1.4m applies. For opening dates/times and pricing see www.trentham.co.uk

ECLECTIC GIFT SHOPPING AND AWARD WINNING GARDEN CENTRE

Trentham Shopping Village is the ultimate answer for all gift buying, no matter how challenging. Over 60 shops, run with passion and specialist knowledge make up the ‘village’, with goods ranging from designer homewares, to the latest fashions for pampered pets, quirky woodcarvings and candles in every imaginable scent. The jewel in the crown is the award-winning Trentham Garden Centre, with an unbelievable range of indoor and outdoor living plants and everything any gardener could ever need – from seeds and bulbs to furniture, equipment, pots and containers.

ON-SITE HOTEL

From Easter 2008, visitors will be able to stay overnight as a 120 bed flagship Premiere Inn arrives at Trentham. Offering great priced, modern and comfortable rooms with a warm welcome, the hotel will be fully equipped with family friendly restaurant, bar and conference facilities.

PLUS A FULL PROGRAMME OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:

MARCH

SENSORY EASTER EGG HUNT – 21st – 24th March : Use your senses to see, smell and hear clues around the garden and claim a fudge-tastic Easter reward. Sponsored by Mad about Fudge. Free with entry to gardens.

LITTLE FERNS CLUB WISHING TREE WORKSHOP – Sunday 23rd March : Easter wishes might come true for “little Ferns” at Trentham as this fun workshop gets them writing their dearest desires to hang on the Trentham Fairy Tree, a spectacular 200 year old/6 metre tall yew. Free with entry to the gardens.

GREAT GARDEN WEEKEND – MAY 24TH-26TH

MAY - SEPTEMBER

GARDEN TOURS AND PLANTMAN'S WORKSHOPS – Guided tours of the stunningly restored Italian Gardens and workshops sharing insights into Trentham's restoration programme from its expert gardeners, with maintenance hints and tips. Tours @ £10 and workshops @ £20.

SUMMER ALFRESCO PERFORMANCES

SHAKESPEARE ON THE LAKE : 1st – 5th July. A picturesque setting for open air theatre, the lake-side auditorium will be hosting five nights of Shakespeare over the summer (programme tbc).

OPEN AIR CONCERTS : 20, 21, 22 June and 23, 24, 25 August. Leading producer Chris Moreno presents a diverse line up of A-list acts in two bursts of summer open air concerts in the unique setting of Trentham's lake-side auditorium; (programme tbc).

OCTOBER

THE GREAT SEED GIVE-AWAY – October 18th : Free seed and bulbs given with instructions on how to grow them at home.

HALLOWEEN OWL WALK – October 31st : This tantalisingly terrifying night-time trail through the gardens is a spookily great alternative to trick or treating. Guests dress up in their fancy dress finery for some chillingly good family fun including getting up close to some beautiful birds of prey; expect also plenty of surprises from some strange nocturnal characters telling tall tales and grisly ghost stories. Tickets (price tbc) must be booked in advance.

NOVEMBER

FIREWORK EXTRAVAGANZA – 1st November : Enjoy the spectacle of a sensational firework display and the toe tapping outdoor concert (programme tbc).

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS AT TRENTHAM – November – Mid January : The magical lakeside ice rink is at the heart of Christmas activities, with the winter beauty of the gardens, unbeatable Father Christmas plus sensational shopping guaranteed to help unearth a gift for even the most difficult friend or relative.

Prices and Opening Times

- Trentham Gardens and Shopping Village are open all year round with adult tickets to the Gardens at £6.50 until 1st March and £7.00 thereafter and great value family passes for two adults three children (5-15) at just £22. (£24 from 1st March).
- Monkey Forest is open from 9th February – 17th February, then at weekends until 15th March and every day until the end of October. Adult tickets are incredible value at £6.00 and children (3-14) just £4.50. Guests are also entitled to a 2-for-1 ticket to Trentham Gardens.
- Trentham Aerial Extreme is open selected days in January/February and every day from March through to October. Check website for times and prices.
- For full details of all events, opening times and special activities at The Trentham Estate visit www.trentham.co.uk.

* Trentham Gardens was highly commended in the Heritage and Conservation category of the Landscape Institute Awards.

For further information contact Seb Thompson/Karen Abrams at freerange on 020 7402 9966.