

A Dallas Blooms Autumn

By Britney Porter
Staff writer

For once, beauty does not lie beneath the surface. The Dallas Arboretum is flaunting quite a figure in fall flora, sporting 100,000 fall-blooming flowers including chrysanthemums, salvia, coleus, and ornamental grasses. Layers of lush locks cascade from tall trees; highlights of yellow lantana hide her roots. She's a beauty. "Let Nature Nurture You," she whispers.

Indeed, the arboretum's nature is nurturing. Crisp fall days call for soft, scented flowers and she advocates just that. Hundreds of visitors will grace her grounds during Dallas Blooms Autumn, the largest floral festival in the Southwest. Hours are daily, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. through Oct. 31. The theme this fall? "A Palette in Bloom."

The arboretum is no late bloomer. Her stunning good looks are credited to Jimmy Turner, the director of horticulture research. He is the arboretum's couturier, and for the main piece this fall he's designed a painter's palette-shaped bed of begonias. "I chose white bronze-leaf begonias because they are tough," Turner said.

"I needed something with a brown-colored foliage to simulate the brown of the palette. I knew that begonias would stand up to our summer heat and last late into the fall."

Four thousand flowers fill the palette, which is 55 feet wide by 25 feet high. The arboretum also models bright blooms shaped into dollops of paint and a 20-foot paintbrush made of a pine tree. You'll find the palette in the Margaret Elizabeth Jonsson Color Garden.

The arboretum's runway is called the Paseo de Flores, which leads you to

the main gardens. Chirping birds and fearless squirrels reflect her animated spirit. Benches are dispersed throughout, because all this beauty may be a bit overwhelming for some.

Karen Hinds Vassar, director of marketing and communications, said, "The arboretum is 66 acres comprised of two formerly private estates; 44 acres of which belonged to the DeGolyer family and 22 that belonged to the Camp family." The 22,000-square-foot DeGolyer house was built for petroleum geologist Everette DeGolyer and his wife, Nell. Although now owned by the City of Dallas, the arboretum is managed by the Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Society.

Another fashion plate is the Martha Brooks Camellia Garden, which encompasses 2,100 square feet of camellias - roughly 200 representing 30 different cultivars. The Martin Rutchik Concert Stage and Lawn offers a lake view, a cool backdrop for a hot concert. Musical performances are offered there daily. Blankets and coolers are must-have accessories for this seasonal treat.

According to Vassar, some of the arboretum's greatest fans are brides. The arboretum offers a hand, her trellises, for wedding portraits. The Lay Ornamental Garden is 2.2 acres of perennials, with bronze wildlife figures nestled throughout for a variety of scenic photographs. "The water walls are obviously very popular," said Vassar, pointing to a water curtain draped against limestone walls. "This is a really popular wedding site."

The ripples of White Rock Lake roll in the distance. Walk to A Woman's Garden near the lake and discover the Infinity Pool that offers a water-on-water view, like layers of silk. The garden was designed by Morgan Wheelock and encompasses 1.8 acres of tubs and sub-gardens, such as The Poetry Garden. Nancy's Garden is another popular spot for wedding portraits. "They just renovated this garden. It was originally Mrs. DeGolyer's garden," Vassar said.



WEEKDAY HIGHLIGHTS

Kimberly-Clark's Mommy & Me Mondays

Sept. 26, Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- Storytelling, crafts, petting zoo, face painting and hayrides (\$1)
- Mommy & Me Ballet
- Gymboree of Dallas and Plano

Tiny Tots Tuesdays

Sept. 27, Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- Storytelling, crafts, petting zoo, face painting and hayrides (\$1)
- Tiny Tots Yoga by YMCA at White Rock
- Kindermusik with Ms. Lisa by Soundsteps

Two-for-One Wednesdays

- Get one admission free with purchase of one regular-priced adult ticket (\$8)

Arboretum After Dark, Sept. 30, Oct. 28; 6-9 p.m.

- Outdoor social with signature cocktail
- Live musical performances
- Cost: \$15 or \$12 for members; Includes admission, parking, and two beverages

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sweet Light Night, Oct. 5, 5-7 p.m.

- Photograph your favorite flowers just before sunset or in "sweet light"
- Cost: \$10, \$8 for members

Sunday Night Movies, Oct. 2 - 30, 8 p.m.

- Favorite '80s movies playing at the Martin Rutchik Concert Stage and Lawn
- Oct. 2 - *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*
- Oct. 16 - *Top Gun*
- Oct. 30 - *Ghostbusters*
- Cost: \$6, \$10 for two, \$4 for members

Eddie Coker Columbus Day Concert,

Oct. 10, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- Eddie Coker concert at 11 a.m. on the Rutchik Concert Stage and Lawn; Free with admission
- Storytelling, crafts, petting zoo, face painting and hayrides (\$1)
- Valet parking \$9, \$7 for members at Lakeland Drive entrance
- Complimentary parking shuttle from the lot at Gaston Avenue and Garland Road
- Sponsored by Schepps Dairy

Otsukimi on the Martin Rutchik Concert Stage and Lawn, Oct. 17, 6:30 p.m.

- Traditional Japanese Moon Viewing
- Sponsored by the Dallas Arboretum, Japan-America Society of Dallas/Fort Worth, and The Trammell Crow Collection of Asian Art
- Call 214-342-2022

Goblins in the Gardens, Oct. 29, 12-4 p.m.

- Trick-or-treat scavenger hunt
- Carnival games for kids, petting zoo, and face painting

The DeGolyer home sits in between Nancy's Garden and the DeGolyer Garden. This garden, designed and built between 1939 - 1940, includes 4.5 acres of towering magnolia trees and The Sunken Garden. A gazebo (another intimate wedding spot) hides in the back. "Last year, we had a really terrible storm, and 80 mph wind shears came across the lake. We lost four or five different trees, which were really crucial," Vassar said. She further explained how the garden is being renovated because when the trees died, the shade plants died.

The arboretum's youngest guests, children, love the Texas Pioneer Adventure exhibit. A teepee and covered wagon teach children how Texas pioneers relied on plants for survival. "They built their homes out of plants and used them for food, medicine and dye," said Vassar. Last year, over 50,000 children visited the arboretum on field trips. Kids will also enjoy a hay bale maze, hayrides (\$1), and a pumpkin patch.

After all that fun, cool off in the Palmer Fern Dell. "This garden has a mist system that goes off every 15 to 20 minutes," Vassar said.

"All the plants here require a moist, shaded environment." The garden is woodland-like, with winding trails accommodating visitors and a brook chasing dragonflies.

There are many things to enjoy this year at the arboretum - including a bonus visit to the State Fair garden exhibit. Dave Forehand, gardens vice president, said the arboretum has partnered with the State Fair of Texas to give visitors the opportunity to visit two gardens at one price.

He said, "This joint ticket is a wonderful opportunity for visitors to enjoy the unexpected beauty of the gardens in the fall at the Dallas Arboretum, as well as pick up gardening tips at the State Fair fall garden exhibition."

The Dallas Fall Garden Getaway tickets are \$16 and valid at the arboretum through Dec. 31 and at the State Fair through

Oct. 23. They can be purchased at the Dallas Arboretum ticket booth, the State Fair's admissions gate, and BigTex.com.

Admission is \$8 for adults; \$7 for seniors 65 and over; \$5 for children, ages 3 - 12; and free for children 2 and under. Discount



tickets are available in advance at area Tom Thumb and Simon David stores. On-site parking is \$5.

For more information, call 214-515-6500 or visit www.dallasarboretum.org.

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