

Blooming Paradise: Gardens of Northern Portugal and the Azores

March 14 - 23, 2024

With American Horticultural Society
Hosts Christine and Tim Conlon

Post - Tour Extension: Madeira

March 23 - 27, 2024



AMERICAN
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY



Dear Friends,

I personally invite you to join an extraordinary American Horticultural Society Travel Study program to Portugal and the Azores from March 14 - 23, 2024.

We'll begin in northern Portugal, exploring the vibrant city of Porto and its environs. This pristine and remote region, renowned for its Port wine, is home to several UNESCO World Heritage sites and some fabulous private gardens with camellia collections. To immerse ourselves in the rich history and fascinating intricacies of Port winemaking, we'll enjoy a private tour, tasting, and dinner in the cellars at a Port wine house during our stay.

We'll then fly to São Miguel Island in the Azores to visit arguably the best camellias in Portugal. These remote and protected islands are home to a remarkable variety of plant species, making them a veritable paradise for horticultural enthusiasts and nature lovers.

We'll conclude the tour by exploring Lisbon, a coastal gem with its colorful tiled facades, cobbled streets, and expansive squares. We'll visit the iconic Torre de Belém, the majestic 16th century Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, and the exquisite 17th century Palácio de Fronteira, including its beautiful formal gardens.

I'm thrilled to share that hosting this program for the American Horticultural Society is AHS Board member Tim Conlon and his wife, Christine. Tim heads a successful construction firm in the Midwest, and he and Christine have hosted many AHS programs worldwide.

We will stay in charming hotels throughout the journey: the Infante de Sagres in the heart of Porto; the Terra Nostra Hotel, situated in the Furnas Valley surrounded by calderas and thermal springs; and the grand Avenida Liberdade Hotel in Lisbon.

For those who would like to extend their stay, we're delighted to offer a post-tour extension to the island of Madeira to discover its spectacular landscapes and beautiful gardens.

Don't miss out on the profound experiences and lush gardens that await us on this AHS journey. Space is limited, and our Travel Study programs often sell out, so we recommend making your reservation early.

Most sincerely,



Suzanne Laporte
President & CEO



BLOOMING PARADISE: GARDENS OF NORTHERN PORTUGAL AND THE AZORES

WITH AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY HOSTS

CHRISTINE AND TIM CONLON



Itinerary

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

Depart the United States on independent flights.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14 — PORTO (D)

On arrival at Porto Airport, transfer to our first accommodation, the Hotel Infante de Sagres. Situated in the vibrant heart of the city, the hotel embodies the timeless elegance of a 19th century Portuguese manor house. In the afternoon, depart for a walking tour of Porto, including São Bento Station, with its remarkable *azulejos*, charming Rua das Flores, the ornate Palácio da Bolsa and the São Francisco church, with its splendid, gilded interior. Immerse yourself in the captivating sights of the World Heritage riverfront of Cais da Ribeira. Return to the hotel for an introductory lecture by tour manager Amy Kupec Larue, followed by welcome drinks and dinner in the hotel.



FRIDAY, MARCH 15 — PORTO (B, L)

Explore Serralves Park, designed by the architect Jacques Gréber in the 1930s, to complement the Art Deco villa, with magnificent formal gardens, a great canal, woodlands, and a traditional farm. After a guided tour with the Head Gardener, behold the exterior of the Casa da Música, designed by Rem Koolhaas and Ellen van Loon. Then, enjoy lunch at a

private garden designed in the Romantic tradition, featuring an exquisite collection of camellias and tree ferns. After lunch, explore the historic Botanical Garden of Porto. The rest of the afternoon will be at leisure, with dinner independently.

SATURDAY, MAY 16 — GUIMARÃES & AVELEDA (B, L)

Visit the UNESCO World Heritage city of Guimarães. Once the capital of Portugal, it is often referred to as the “birthplace of the Portuguese nation.” After a guided walk and some free time to explore the charming old town, continue to a unique private garden. Famous for its splendid camellia topiary, Caso do Campo is a unique Baroque style garden built in the 18th century. The alleyways of box-trees and hedges lead towards an array of fountains, arches, and camellia cupules. The house was built in the 17th century and has remained in the same family ever since. Lunch privately with the owner before continuing to Quinta da Aveleda, set in a shaded ravine. Enjoy a guided tour of the romantic 19th century woodland garden and a tasting of their world famous *vinho verde* before returning to the hotel for an independent evening.

SUNDAY, MARCH 17 — DÃO & VISEU (B, L, D)

Discover the heart of the Dão wine region today. Explore the small village of Santar with its beautiful manor houses and centuries-old palaces. Visit the Santar Village Garden, a constellation of magnificently restored historical gardens designed by the celebrated Spanish landscape architect Fernando Caruncho, followed by a private wine tasting and tour of a manor house garden. After lunch in Santar, depart for Viseu and visit the granitic historic center and the Cathedral before returning to Porto for an afternoon at leisure. This evening cross the Douro River for a private tour of the cellars at Churchill's, a Port wine lodge, followed by a tasting and dinner.

MONDAY, MARCH 18 — PORTO / SÃO MIGUEL, THE AZORES (B, D)

Head to Porto Airport and check in for an early afternoon flight to Ponta Delgada, the largest municipality in the archipelago of the Azores, located on the verdant island of São Miguel. Upon arrival, visit the remarkable José do Canto Garden, considered one of the island's most significant gardens, and learn about the fascinating life of the renowned 19th century landowner, agronomist, and Azorean gardener, who imagined creating expansive parks and gardens across São Miguel. Proceed to the 4-star Terra Nostra Hotel, set in the botanical gardens of Parque Terra Nostra in the Furnas Valley. Dine at the hotel restaurant this evening.



TUESDAY, MARCH 19 — FURNAS (B, L, D)

Begin the morning with a guided walk with the Head Gardener through the breathtaking Terra Nostra Botanical Garden. Widely regarded as the most beautiful of all the Azores' heritage gardens, it features a remarkable collection of 2,500 trees and plants from all over the world, including Malaysian rhododendrons, ferns and cycads, and an area dedicated to endemic Azorean plants. Following lunch at a local restaurant, explore gorgeous private gardens in Furnas. Return to the hotel for dinner at the hotel restaurant.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20 — PONTA DELGADA (B, L, D)

Travel west to Ponta Delgada, the Azores' capital. On a morning walking tour, explore the city's whitewashed, granite, and basalt architecture and 16th-century fortress. Discover the gardens of Palácio de Santana, notable for its collection of camellias, and visit a private 3-acre garden reflecting the picturesque style of 19th century Romanticism. After lunch in a local restaurant set on an old fishing harbor, continue to the great volcanic crater of Sete Cidades to view a lush private garden on the lake with a wonderful collection of old camellias before returning to the hotel for dinner.

THURSDAY, MARCH 21 — SÃO MIGUEL, THE AZORES / LISBON (B)

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and fly to Lisbon. Upon arrival, transfer to the 5-star Hotel Tivoli Avenida Liberdade. Housed in a 1930s building on the stately main avenue, this luxury hotel boasts a rooftop bar with panoramic views of the city. Following independent lunch, embark on a guided orientation tour featuring highlights such as São Pedro de Alcântara church; São Roque Church with its splendid Baroque interior; and the vibrant Chiado district with Carmo Square and the Santa Justa Elevador. The rest of the day will be at leisure with dinner independently.

FRIDAY, MARCH 22 — LISBON (B, L, D)

This morning, visit the Belem quarter and discover the landmark Belem Tower, the Memorial to the Discoveries, and the exquisite Manueline-style Jerónimos Monastery. Enjoy lunch at the Estufa Real restaurant in the Ajuda Botanic Garden's royal greenhouse. In the afternoon, visit the 17th century Palacio Fronteira on a special guided tour. Accompanied by a garden historian, discover the stunning formal garden, its renowned terrace, and beautiful decorated tiles. This evening, visit a private house in Alfama followed by drinks and a farewell dinner kindly hosted by the owners.

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 — LISBON / USA (B)

This morning, check out of the hotel prior to midday for an organized transfer to Lisbon Airport for independent flights home. Alternatively, you may choose to continue on for the Madeira extension.

Program Revisions: *While revisions of this itinerary are not anticipated, the AHS and its travel partners reserve the right to make changes, with or without notice, that may become necessary.*

AHS Travel Study Activity Level Description:

AHS Travel Study programs are designed to offer immersive experiences and often involve long days filled with exploration and extensive walking on uneven terrain. To participate in a program, it is recommended to be in good physical condition and prepared to walk for a minimum of two miles each day.



BLOOMING PARADISE: GARDENS OF NORTHERN PORTUGAL AND THE AZORES

Tour: March 14 - 23, 2024

With AHS Hosts Christine and Tim Conlon

JOIN US FOR EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING:

- By special arrangement, visit stunning private camellia collections at homes and estates near to Porto
- See the magnificent historical gardens at Santar Village Garden, restored by Spanish landscape architect Fernando Caruncho
- Enjoy a private tour and dinner at a Port wine house in Porto
- Visit the captivating garden of José do Canto, while staying on the island of São Miguel in the Azores
- Visit the breathtaking formal garden of 17th century Palácio Fronteira in Lisbon

OUR ACCOMMODATIONS:

The 5-star hotel **Infante de Sagres** was built in the 1950s and is in the style of a 19th century manor house. Recently refurbished in 2018, the building has been restored to its prime, incorporating a mixture of classic and contemporary details.

Terra Nostra Garden Hotel: This 4-star hotel sits on the edge of a botanical garden of the same name. With modern decor and beautiful scenery, it is a great base to explore this breathtaking island.

Tivoli Avenida Liberdade is a landmark hotel located in the center of Lisbon. This 5-star hotel is modern in design with superb views of the castle and old town from its rooftop terrace.

PRICING AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

Price: \$9,795 per person

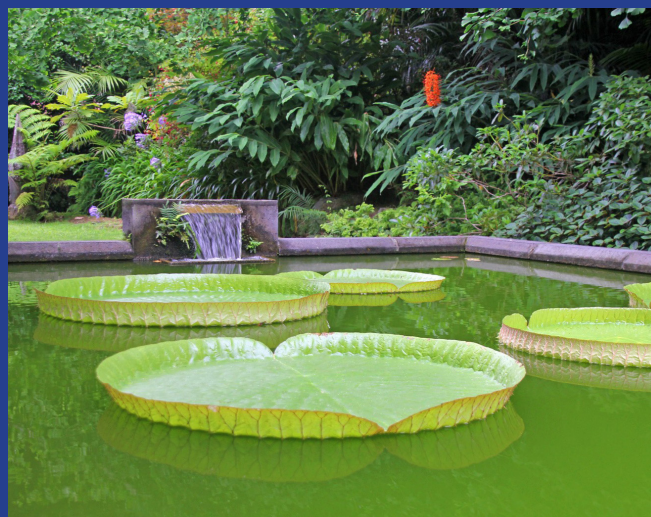
Single Supplement: \$1,295 per person

The tour price includes a \$500 per person non-refundable tax-deductible donation to the AHS. The AHS team will be in touch to process your trip donation at the time of final payment.

We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance. One travel insurance provider to consider is USI Affinity Travel Insurance Services. For more information on the plan for AHS travelers, visit www.ahsgardening.org/travel.

Information is also available at this link regarding optional flight and travel arrangement services.

This AHS Travel Study program is offered in collaboration with Specialtours.



PRICE INCLUDES:

- Accommodation as per the itinerary
- Transportation as per the itinerary
- Group airport transfers
- Domestic flight tickets in Economy Class:
 - Porto to São Miguel
 - São Miguel to Lisbon
- All buffet breakfasts
- 6 lunches and 6 dinners including wine, water, and coffee
- 2 drinks receptions
- Entrances into museums, churches, and gardens
- Porterage at the hotels
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and in restaurants
- Whisper system headsets
- The services of local guides
- The services of your Specialtours Tour Manager
- \$500 of your payment per person is a non-refundable tax-deductible contribution to the American Horticultural Society

PRICE EXCLUDES:

- Flights from USA to Portugal and return
- Any meals indicated as independent
- Personal extras
- Housekeeping tips
- Insurance

Please refer to the enclosed reservation form for instructions for reserving your place on this AHS Travel Study program. For further information contact AHS@specialtours.co.uk or 011 44 (0) 20 7386 4690.

When you travel with the AHS, you make a difference.

Designed for garden enthusiasts who love to explore horticultural wonders around the world, AHS Travel Study offers exceptional programs that include many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Your participation in an AHS Travel Study program supports the AHS's nonprofit work to increase knowledge among gardeners, inspire passion for plants and the natural world, and encourage responsible stewardship of the earth.

For more information about AHS Travel Study programs, please contact travel@ahsgardening.org or (703) 768-5700, ext. 117. Information is also available at www.ahsgardening.org/travel.

MADEIRA EXTENSION

Tour: March 23 –27, 2024

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 — LISBON / FUNCHAL (B, D)

After breakfast and hotel check-out, transfer by coach to Lisbon Airport for a flight to Madeira. Upon arrival in Funchal, travel to the 5-star Reid's Palace Hotel, owned by the renowned Belmond Group. The hotel has a majestic setting on cliffs overlooking Funchal Bay and features 10 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens. After check-in, explore the hotel's stunning gardens, maintained by a dedicated team of gardeners. This evening, dine in the hotel restaurant.

SUNDAY, MARCH 24 — FUNCHAL (B, L)

Begin this morning with a visit to Quinta Vigia, the residence since 1984 and historic garden of the President of the Regional Government. This enchanting garden is known for its glorious views over the harbor. Explore the flower market in the famous Mercado dos Lavradores on our way to lunch at the elegant Casa Velha do Palheiro, set in gardens laid out for the Conde de Carvalhal in 1801-1804 with formal pools and avenues and planted with trees and camellias. Part of the Quinta do Palheiro estate, the garden was purchased by the Blandy family in 1885. After lunch, return to Funchal for an afternoon at leisure and independent dinner.



MONDAY, MARCH 25 — FUNCHAL (B, L)

Today, explore the north-west of the island, with a short levada walk to Balcões for panoramic views. Stop for lunch at Quinta do Furão, which boasts magnificent views of the coastline and Madeira's highest mountain, Pico Ruivo. This afternoon view a private 'wild garden' (by kind arrangement with author and botanical expert Raimundo Quintal) before returning to the hotel. Dinner independently.



TUESDAY, MARCH 26 — FUNCHAL (B, L, D)

This morning, discover the gardens of the Monte Palace. Dating from 1897, the palace was a resort hotel for many years. It was acquired by entrepreneur José Manuel Rodrigues Berardo in 1987 and the gardens were restored, with a huge collection of exotic plants around several lakes. Continue to the lovely Quinta Jardins do Lago for lunch. Built in the 18th century, it was the residence of General Beresford, commander of the British forces, during the Napoleonic wars. It has an immaculate 6-acre garden with some 500 species. Then, visit the famous Jardim Botânico, originally the private garden of Quinta do Bom Sucesso, which belonged to the Reid family until 1936. Laid out in terraces, with magnificent views over Funchal, the Jardim Botânico is devoted to the flora of the island. Return to the hotel for a farewell reception followed by dinner.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27 — FUNCHAL (B)

This morning, check out of the hotel prior to midday for an organized transfer to Madeira Airport for independently booked flights home.



MADEIRA EXTENSION

JOIN US FOR EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING:

- View the magnificent gardens of the Quinta do Palheiro, created by generations of the Blandy family
- Explore the flower market in the famous Mercado dos Lavradores
- Lunch at the 18th century 'Casa Velha'
- Visit to the famous Jardim Botânico with magnificent views over Funchal

OUR ACCOMMODATION:

Reid's Palace Hotel: Set in 10 acres of landscaped gardens and overlooking Funchal Bay, this beautiful hotel is decorated in traditional décor with all rooms overlooking the gardens or the sea.

Price: \$4,995 per person

Single Supplement: \$875 per person

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Accommodation as per the itinerary
- Transportation as per the itinerary
- Group airport transfers
- Domestic flight tickets in Economy Class:
- Lisbon – Funchal – Lisbon
- All buffet breakfasts
- 3 lunches and 2 dinners including wine, water, and coffee
- 1 drinks reception
- Entrances into museums, churches, and gardens
- Porterage at the hotels
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and in restaurants
- Whisper system headsets
- The services of local guides
- The services of your Specialtours Tour Manager

PRICE EXCLUDES:

- Flights from USA to Portugal and return
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