

Six Secret Seattle Gardens to Visit in Spring

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by [Gemma Alexander \(G_Alexander\)](#) May 8, 2015

Here are six secret gardens to visit in or near Seattle that just might take your breath away.

With an almost year-round gardening season and plenty of rainfall, the Puget Sound is a gardener's paradise. Washington Park Arboretum, the Kubota Japanese Garden, and on Bainbridge Island, the Bloedel Reserve are rightfully famous destinations for the garden tourist. But they are not the only gardens worth a visit. Here are six secret gardens in or near Seattle that just might take your breath away.



[Kruckeberg Botanic Garden](#)

The Kruckeberg Botanic Garden is actually located just north of Seattle, in the City of Shoreline. It began 1958 as the home garden of Dr. Arthur Kruckeberg, who wrote the book *Gardening with Native Plants of*

the Pacific Northwest. Unsurprisingly, Kruckeberg and his wife Mareen incorporated an impressive collection of Pacific Northwest native plants that are blended naturalistically among non-natives in their wooded garden. Today the four acre garden contains over 2,000 species of plants and hosts 40 species of birds.



The Garden is now owned by the City of Shoreline and operated by the nonprofit Kruckeberg Botanic

Garden Foundation.



Visit:

20312 15th Ave NW, Shoreline, WA 98177

Open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

March to October: 10 am—5 pm

November to February: 10 am—3 pm

Admission is free.

[Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden](#)

The meticulously maintained private garden of famed plantswoman Betty Miller seeks a perfect balance between artistic design and horticultural excellence. Collections of rare and unique plants are housed in a series of naturalistic gardens that honor the microclimates on the site. Miller was a founder of the Northwest Horticultural Society in 1966 and worked tirelessly to make it a leading educational horticulture organization. She was also a driving force for the creation of the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, one of the best horticultural book collections available to the gardening public, at the University of Washington.

Visit:

The garden is only available for viewing as part of a limited number of scheduled tours – start thinking about booking for 2016 soon. For those who were not quick enough to get on the 2015 tour schedule, some classes offered by the [Northwest Horticultural Society](#) are taught on-site at the Miller Garden. As a last resort, you can take a virtual tour of the garden on its website.

[Seattle Chinese Garden](#)

The 4.6 acre Seattle Chinese Garden located on the South Seattle Community College Campus (next door to the College's arboretum) is still a work in progress, but it already serves as a unique combination garden and Chinese cultural center. When it is completed, it will be the only traditional Sichuan-style Chinese garden of its kind outside China. Currently hosting as many language classes and cultural events as plants, the garden is worth visiting for its peonies alone. The garden also provides educational materials about traditional garden design that will have you looking at gardens with different eyes in the future.

Visit:

6000 16th Ave. SW, Seattle, 98106

Tuesday to Sunday — 11:30 am to 5 pm.

Admission is free.

University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture



Tucked behind Husky Stadium, the Center for Urban Horticulture hosts a graduate program and provides a home for the horticultural community in Puget Sound. Greenhouse space is available for rental, and over 60 horticultural and environmental groups meet in its buildings, which are also available for rental to the general public.



Merrill Hall houses the University of Washington Botanical Garden headquarters, the [Elisabeth C. Miller Library](#) and the [Otis Douglas Hyde Herbarium](#). But the garden tourist will enjoy strolling through the Center's four gardens:

- [Soest Herbaceous Display Garden](#)
- [Goodfellow Grove](#)
- [McVay Courtyard](#)
- [Seattle Garden Club Fragrance Garden](#)

Visit:

Center for Urban Horticulture
4501 NE 41st St.
Seattle, WA 98105

The gardens and grounds are free and open to the public daily from dawn to dusk. Merrill Hall and public restrooms are open Monday through Saturday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM. The Elisabeth C. Miller Library is open to the public Monday 9:00-8:00 PM, Tuesday through Friday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM and Saturday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM. All buildings are closed on university holidays.

[Dunn](#)

Seattle is very proud of its legacy of gardens designed by the famous Olmsted Brothers Landscape Firm. The historic Dunn Gardens present a fine example of the naturalistic combination of pastoral and woodland elements that have characterized local gardens for over a century. The Dunn Gardens were designed by the Olmsteds in 1915. There are a number of centennial events planned for 2015, making this a great year to experience these fine examples of Seattle's garden design roots.

Visit:

The Dunn Gardens are open to the public by advance reservation for docent-led guided tours. Tours run from April 1 through July, and from September 1 through October. The gardens are closed in August and during special events. Admission is \$10.

The 1.5 hour tours are held:

- Thursdays: 1 p.m.
- Fridays: 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- Saturdays: 10 a.m.

Streissguth Gardens

If you like a romantic backstory, you will love Streissguth Gardens. Dan and Ann were next door neighbors who merged their lives and their gardens in 1968. Over the years, the garden expanded into two undeveloped lots on the opposite side of the public Blaine Street Stairway adjacent to their home. Their book, *In Love with a Hillside Garden*, was published in 2009. Scenic views and a planting plan that offers flowers throughout the year attracted so many visitors that the garden officially merged with the public St. Mark's Greenbelt, creating an urban green space over a quarter mile long, with over an acre of woodland in cultivation. The Streissguths still live in and lovingly maintain their their hillside gardens in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood today.

Visit:

The oldest gardens surround the family's two houses on Broadway East, just north of the East Blaine Street stairway. These gardens remain private, but visitors are welcome by appointment. Appointments can be requested by [email](#). The newer portions of the gardens lie south of the East Blaine stairs and are now publicly owned. These areas are open to visitors from dawn to dusk year-round. There is no street address for the garden. Visitors are requested to park at Blaine and 10th Ave. E. and enter using the stairway.

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About Gemma Alexander

Gemma is a contributing writer to Dave's Garden.

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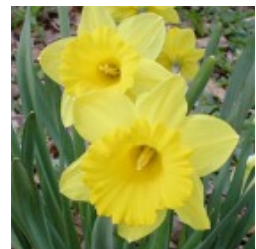
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