

VanDusen Botanical Garden
5251 Oak Street
Vancouver, BC V6M 4H1

Seasonal Self-Guided Tour
June 2010

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Please follow the black number and arrow signs for this tour.

We salute rose lovers among our visitors in this June 2010 edition of self-guided tours.

*You may break, you may shatter the vase, if
you will,
But the scent of roses will hang around it
still.*

Thomas Moore (1779-1852) *Farewell! But Whenever* .

Leaving the deck area, you descend the central stairs through an avenue of **1 - pink dogwoods (*Cornus kousa* 'Satomi')** which provide a splendid entrance to the Garden. Kousa dogwoods occur wild in Japan, China and Korea with flowers varying from white to green to dark pink bracts. They are one of the 45 species of dogwoods distributed throughout the northern hemisphere and are grown mainly for their showy bracts, elegant habits, fruits, and colourful autumn leaves. At the end of the dogwood row turn left and walk along the path past the boxwood framed beds toward the large golden catalpa tree (*Catalpa bignonioides* 'Aurea'). This beautiful tree was planted when the Garden opened on August 30, 1975.

When you meet the other path, under the Catalpa tree, turn left and then turn right going up the Laburnum Walk. As you go stop and admire the formal rose garden. Continue up the path, turning right as you go. Step onto the grass, to your right through a break in the trees, where you will see four beds containing **2 - heritage roses**. Each bed has two or three classes of old roses: the first bed, Moss and Centifolia roses; the second bed, Gallica and Damask roses; and, the third bed, Bourbon and Alba roses, and most easterly bed, Portland, Rugosa and Pimpinellifolia roses

The early European roses were probably forms of *Rosa gallica* which grew wild from France to the Caucasus. **Gallicas** come in all forms - single to full doubles varying in color from white to pink to red, and are once-flowering. **Damask roses**, derived from *Rosa gallica*, were the first European hybrids. They were extremely important because of their fragrance, tendency to produce double flowers and their flowering season extended into autumn. The blooms are loosely double, in pinks and whites and are strongly scented. Further developments produced **Alba, Centifolia and Moss roses**, which were variations on earlier themes. The real change came with the introduction of the China Rose (*Rosa chinensis*). Although introduced in 1752, the influence was not seen until the early 1800s with the new, compact, repeat-flowering plants -- the **Bourbon roses**. The **Portland roses** soon followed

Roses have been in existence for at least 35 million years but have been cultivated only for about 2,700 years. The use of wild roses for rose water, scented oils and other fragrances goes back to Sumerian times in Iraq around 2000 BC. Rose cultivation in China goes back to Confucius (551-479 BC) who mentions extensive plantings of roses in the Chinese Imperial gardens. In Europe, the period from 1200 to 1800 saw several new roses introduced into cultivation - these are our "old" roses. Roses are valued for their beauty and perfume, sometimes their bright hips, and have been at the forefront of garden design and plant hybridization. In centuries past they also had medicinal uses. In the Middle Ages plants had to have practical uses in order to justify their cultivation; few were grown for beauty alone.

Gardeners at VanDusen practice sustainable gardening practices with roses by not using chemical-laden pesticides and fertilizers. Instead they are experimenting with various products as anti-fungal measures. Mulching beds with mature compost and applying nitrogen-rich alfalfa meal and blood meal provide the nutrients.

Now get back on to the path, proceed to the four corners path junction at the north end of the Perennial Garden, continue westerly to **3 - coastal Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *menziesii*)**, the grove of large trees to your right. *Pseudo* means false and *tsuga* means hemlock. This species' name is unfortunate since it is neither a true fir nor a hemlock. Instead it is part of a separate small group, only one of which is found in Canada. The botanical name is after Doctor Archibald Menzies, who was the first to observe the species while aboard Captain Vancouver's voyage of discovery in the late 1700s. Some time later, David Douglas, who confirmed its separate grouping, studied the species. Douglas fir is the largest tree in Canada, reaching 85 m (280') in height on the coast (var. *menziesii*) and 42 m

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(135') (var. *glauca*) in the BC interior. Coastal specimens up to 4 to 5 m in diameter can be found. The specimens you see here and there in VanDusen are relatively young, but nevertheless are some of the older and larger trees in the Garden, thanks to their planting within fairway groves, when the property was in its earlier, golf course life.

Walking on the grass under the cherry trees you will see a white marble sculpture entitled **4 - Meta Morphosis** sculpted by Olga Jancic of Yugoslavia as part of the International Sculpture Symposium held in the summer of 1975 just before the Garden opened. Thirteen sculptors participated and their works are in various locations throughout the Garden. Walking straight up to more Douglas firs, is another sculpture, **5 - Between**, by Adolf Ryska of Poland. This one consists of two pieces and is in travertine. Note the lines in the stone. More information about the sculptures can be found in the brochure, *Sculpture Collection*, available on the deck on your way out.

Continue through the grassy break in rhododendrons to the paved pathway. Turn right until you come to a pathway going to your left and leading up to the waterfall, note the **6 - Himalayan blue poppy (*Meconopsis betonicifolia*)**. In late spring and early summer this deciduous perennial produces horizontal to pendant bright blue flowers with yellow stamens singly on bristly stalks. Sometimes the blooms are clustered at the tops of the stems and colour variations of purple and white may be seen.

Before coming to the waterfall, observe the weeping tree on your right **7 - Maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba* 'Pendula')**. While usually erect, this Ginkgo is a weeping variety. Ginkgos are either male or female but fruits do not appear until the females are about 20 years old. These trees are very ancient, perhaps 300 million years old plants, older than the dinosaurs. Other than the *Ginkgo biloba*, closely related species have all become extinct. "Maidenhair" refers to the distinct leaf shape and vein pattern which you can view close-up on this tree. Ginkgos are trees of temperate climes and are resistant to pollution and most pests.

Continue up the path. At the **8 -Waterfall** you can sit on a bench and enjoy the view. The waterfall was designed by Bill Livingston, first superintendent of the Garden. The stones used to build the waterfall and outline the streams and paths were obtained from local building excavations and the False Creek development being constructed in the early 1970s. While you are sitting, note **9 - the weeping Katsura Tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Pendulum')** in front of you toward the left. Inside the branches is a wonderful place for a picnic! As you can see, this tree is valued chiefly for its foliage. *Katsura* is its Japanese name.

Continue left along the path until you see a major paved pathway coming up ahead. Before reaching the pavement, look to your right to find **10 - the Fern Dell**, a collection of many native and non-native ferns. Ferns reproduce, not by seed, but by spores -- microscopic single-celled organisms. Since reproduction by spore requires abundant woodland moisture, ferns are characteristically absent from drier sites. Turn over a fern leaf to see the rusty-coloured bumps or spots on the underside. The bumps are called sori and this is where the spores are produced. The sori bumps do not have a common appearance on all fern species. Look at the underside of various ferns to see examples of sori differences. Ferns can also increase their numbers within a moist woodland by reproduction from their rhizomes, creeping underground stems that grow horizontally and root at nodes.

Exit the Fern Dell onto the major paved pathway and you will see two **12 - Empress/princess trees (*Paulownia tomentosa*)**. A fast-growing specimen tree from East Asia, is grown for its fragrant, showy flowers in a pinkish lilac color that are borne in large stalks or panicles in late spring. After the flowers begin to fade its bright, light green leaves emerge and grow to 30 cm (12 inches) in length.

Within view can be seen **13 - the Korean Pavilion**, a gift to the garden from the Expo 86 Republic of Korea pavilion. More recently, to celebrate the garden's 30 anniversary, the pavilion stain was restored to its original brilliance. Step onto the pavilion base and enjoy the view.

To bring you close to where you began this VanDusen Garden tour, proceed to the bottom (easterly) end of the Rhododendron Walk. Watch for **14 - Dove/handkerchief tree (*Davidia involucrata*)** located in sight of the west parking lot gate. This specimen tree is normally found in China woodlands. Its small flower heads are surrounded by showy white bracts, which give rise to its common names. Even when its flowering period is over, the dove tree's broad form can be enjoyed. Now that you have been orientated to the parking lot you can follow the path paralleling the garden fence to return to the garden entrance.