



Historic Garden Week Strengthens Community Fabric and Supports Statewide Growth

Garden tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the industry, according to the Garden Tourism Alliance, based in England. Here in Virginia, we see this trend firsthand during Historic Garden Week, which has evolved from a regional spring ritual into a flagship touring experience in the United States. This spring, the Garden Club of Virginia's signature event, Historic Garden Week, welcomed more than 22,000 visitors from 49 states and 15 countries.

Since 1929, tour proceeds have supported the ongoing restoration and preservation of Virginia's historic public gardens and landscapes, as well as a research fellowship program for students in landscape architecture, now celebrating its 30th anniversary. The Garden Club of Virginia has completed 130 restoration projects statewide, including several tied to the nation's 250th anniversary.

While other organizations were called upon to preserve the homes of Virginia's Founding Fathers, the Garden Club of Virginia played a crucial role in restoring and interpreting the landscapes and key garden features at these properties, including Mount Vernon and Monticello, as well as at other sites linked to Virginia's early history. For garden enthusiasts and history buffs, the Garden Club of Virginia's Historic Garden Week is hard to beat.

Chmura Economics & Analytics has analyzed Historic Garden Week and produced three economic impact studies of the fundraiser over the past decade. According to Chmura, the popular springtime event has an estimated annual economic impact of \$13.3 million. "These extraordinary results would not be possible without the tremendous contributions of our dedicated members, sponsors, advertisers, and homeowners, whose combined efforts make the nation's only statewide house and garden tour possible," says Jennifer Kelley, GCV's President.

"Historic Garden Week is both a celebration of beautiful homes and gardens and a strategic part of the state's broader visitor economy," Kelley explains. Each local tour is independently designed, yet all share a focus on landscape design and interiors featuring blue-ribbon-worthy floral arrangements. Historic Garden Week showcases a distinctly American garden culture at a time when global interest in horticulture, sustainability, and outdoor living continues to grow. It is an opportunity to connect past and present. Mark your calendars. Next year's dates are April 17-24, 2027.

GCVirginia.org/historic-garden-week

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