



chanticleer
A PLEASURE GARDEN

Chanticleer Press Kit

Updated February 2026

786 Church Road, Wayne, PA, 19087, USA · 610-687-4163 · www.chanticleergarden.org



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Chanticleer Backgrounder

Name: Chanticleer, a Pleasure Garden (also referred to as Chanticleer and Chanticleer Garden)

Location: 786 Church Road, Wayne, Pennsylvania, USA

Website: www.chanticleergarden.org

Chanticleer has been called the most romantic, imaginative and exciting public garden in America. The garden is a study of textures and forms, where foliage trumps flowers, the gardeners lead the design, and even the drinking fountains are sculptural. It is a garden of pleasure and learning, relaxing yet filled with ideas to take home.

The garden has evolved greatly since the death of the owner in 1990. As the home of the Rosengartens, Chanticleer was beautiful and green with impressive trees and lawns. Most of the floral and garden development you see today has occurred since 1990, designed by Chanticleer staff and consultants.

There are seven horticulturists, each responsible for the design, planting, and maintenance of an area. The areas are continually evolving, each with its own feel, yet joined together as one complete unit. The Teacup Garden and Chanticleer Terraces feature seasonal plants and bold-textured tropical and subtropical plants. These areas change greatly from year to year. Non-hardy plants overwinter in a greenhouse, basements and in the restrooms.

The Tennis Court, Ruin, Gravel Garden and Pond Garden focus on hardy perennials, both woody and herbaceous. The Tennis Court builds on the idea of foliar display introduced in the Teacup. The Ruin is a folly, built on the foundation of Adolf Rosengarten Jr.'s home. It is meant to look as if the house fell into disrepair. The Gravel Garden is hot and dry, a touch of the Mediterranean in Pennsylvania. The pond area is exuberantly floriferous.

Asian Woods and Bell's Woodland are shady areas. The former features natives of China, Korea and Japan; the latter, plants of eastern North America. The Serpentine celebrates the beauty of agricultural crops. The Cutting and Vegetable Gardens produce flowers for arrangements and food for our tables. Surplus goes to a shelter. The parking lot is our low maintenance area with hardy plants that are neither irrigated nor fertilized. Staff build furniture, fences, gates, bridges and drinking fountains during the winter in converted garages.

We take our educational responsibilities seriously but interpret them a bit differently than other public gardens. Instead of labeling every plant, which would distract from the visual effect, we encourage guests to speak with the gardeners about our 5,000 + plants. Plant lists and photographs are in handmade boxes and available online. Study our designs and borrow ideas if you'd like. Take courses we offer in collaboration with



other horticultural and art organizations. Internships, scholarships and staff exchanges help the careers of garden professionals.

We strive to improve our environmental impact. We reuse, recycle, and compost. Solar panels produce 20% of our electricity. Cisterns capture 50,000 gallons of rainwater for irrigation and recharge. Integrated pest management keeps pesticide usage low. Healthy soil makes for healthy plants; we have fertilized our lawns organically for over a decade. Meadows and sedges replace some lawn areas, and we are eliminating invasive exotics. Since 1990 we've planted hundreds of trees here and along local streets. Furniture is now made from wood cut on the property or with reused wood. We recently exposed a creek long entombed in a pipe. The path in Bell's Woodland is made of shredded tires.

The Chanticleer Foundation owns 50 acres, 35 of which are open to the public. The remaining acreage is agriculture, woodland, service areas and staff housing. The main path is just under a mile in length.

We hope you feel like a special guest of the Rosengartens. Sit and enjoy the views. Relax, read, converse, meditate. Feel the sun on your back and the grass beneath your feet as you listen to the birds and enjoy the scents of the garden.

Mission & Vision

Chanticleer's mission is to **educate, inspire, and share the joy of horticulture through exceptional garden design, vibrant biodiversity, and transformative learning experiences for all.**

The garden pursues these goals through innovative horticulture, a culture of experimentation, and programs that support both emerging and established professionals. It is both a place of joy and refuge for the public and a living classroom for the future of horticulture.

History & Heritage

Originally the summer home of Adolph Sr. and Christine Rosengarten, Chanticleer was constructed in 1912–1913 and later opened to the public in 1993 following a bequest from their son, Adolph Rosengarten Jr., who founded the Chanticleer Foundation to ensure the property's long-term stewardship. The house and grounds were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.

The name Chanticleer has literary roots tracing back to Chaucer and Thackeray, symbolized by the rooster motif found at the garden's entrance, a nod to tradition and whimsy.



Garden Character & Design

Unlike traditional public gardens that rely heavily on labeled displays, Chanticleer emphasizes artful, dynamic plant compositions and sensory engagement. Each garden space, from intimate garden rooms to larger woodland and meadow landscapes, is curated and maintained by dedicated horticulturists responsible for design, planting, and ongoing evolution.

Distinctive features include:

- The Teacup Garden with seasonal and bold tropical plantings.
- Terraces and Lawn Gardens that showcase texture and form.
- Woodlands, Pond Garden, and Orchard spaces that encourage exploration.

Chanticleer's philosophy blends artistry with horticultural experimentation, making it both a place of beauty and discovery.

Education, Sustainability & Community Engagement

Chanticleer offers a range of educational programs, including workshops, courses, and internships, often in collaboration with horticultural and art organizations. These initiatives support professional development and public learning.

The garden also integrates sustainable practices such as rainwater harvesting, organic lawn care, integrated pest management, and solar energy usage, reflective of its environmental stewardship goals.

Visitor Experience & Seasonal Info

Open to the public seasonally (late March through early November), Chanticleer invites visitors to wander, relax, learn, and find inspiration among its thoughtfully crafted spaces. Guided tours of the house and garden are available during the season.

Quotes & Recognition

"Planted to Perfection." — London's Financial Times

"America's most inspiring garden." — Garden Design magazine

These accolades reflect the garden's reputation for innovation, design excellence, and visitor delight.



Chanticleer FAQs

Chanticleer is a 35-acre pleasure garden located in Wayne, a suburb along Philadelphia's Main Line 30-miles west of Philadelphia. It is open to the public from April through early November, from Wednesday through Sunday each week. Many questions about the garden are answered on our website, chanticleergarden.org, or in the books *The Art of Gardening; Chanticleer, A Pleasure Garden*; and *Now and Then*. Some of the most frequently asked questions are answered below.

Q: How did Chanticleer come to be?

A: The garden evolved from the seven acres of land acquired in 1912 by Adolph Rosengarten Sr., head of the Philadelphia pharmaceutical company Rosengarten and Sons (which eventually merged with Merck & Co.). He built a large house for his family, which included children Adolph Jr. and Emily. Over the years, the acreage was expanded by Adolph Rosengarten Jr. and his wife Janet, who loved the rolling hills and pleasant open spaces around their home. Rosengarten Jr., lamenting the development that was changing this landscape in the late 20th Century, saved the land he loved by giving it away to be enjoyed as a public garden.

Q: How did it get its name?

A: The Rosengarten family named their home after "Chanticleere" in Thackeray's 1855 novel *The Newcomes*. The fictional Chanticleere was "mortgaged to the very castle windows" but "still the show of the county." The Rosengarten family played on the word, synonymous with "rooster," using rooster motifs throughout the property.

Q: How is the garden managed?

A: The garden is governed by a nine-member board that includes several members of the extended Rosengarten family. The Executive Director is responsible for operations. Financial support is provided through an endowment established by Adolph Rosengarten Jr. through visitor-generated revenue.

Q: Why is Chanticleer so often described as "a pleasure garden"? Aren't all gardens meant to be pleasurable?



A: The garden aims to be a total delight, or pleasure, says Executive Director R. William Thomas, an escape from the hassles of everyday life. “Chanticleer allows one to be immersed by beauty... I hope everyone finds that to be a pleasure,” he says. “If every garden is a pleasure garden, what a wonderful world this is.”

Q: Is the ruin garden the remains of an estate house?

A: No. The ruin was built to capture the feeling of a building that has been abandoned and is reminiscent of landscaping popular during the Picturesque Movement in the 18th Century. Chanticleer’s ruin is built on the site of “Minder,” the former home of Adolph Rosengarten Jr., and incorporates some of the materials from that house.

Q: Are picnics and pets allowed in the gardens?

A: We welcome guests to picnic in the garden’s four designated picnic areas. On Friday evenings from May through September, Chanticleer offers extended evening hours, during which visitors may enjoy picnics throughout the garden. All picnics follow a carry-in, carry-out policy, as trash receptacles are not provided. Pets are not permitted, and the garden is a smoke-free environment.

Q: How about young children who come with their parents? Is there anything to entertain children at Chanticleer?

A: There is plenty for children to discover throughout the garden. Favorites include spotting the “spitting toad” at one of the ponds, finding the many roosters hidden across the grounds, and—with parents’ permission—rolling down the garden’s grassy hills. Families can also enjoy a scavenger hunt, observing fish and native wildlife, exploring vegetable and imaginative display gardens, and finding quiet places to sit, read, draw, and reflect.

Q: How many gardeners does it take to keep the gardens looking like this?

A: Chanticleer’s staff includes a team of horticulturists responsible for the design and care of individual garden areas, supported by assistant horticulturists and grounds staff. During the busiest months, the garden is supported by a larger seasonal team, including visitor services staff and interns.

Q: What do the gardeners do in winter?

A: Look around the garden and you will see. Most of the horticulturists are artists in other areas as well, and many spend the off season working on sculptural benches and chairs for the garden, designing beautiful bridges such as those that span Bell's Run creek, creating artistic wrought-iron fences for special areas of the garden, or building trellises and supports for the vegetable and cut-flower gardens. And, of course, they must keep up to date with what is happening in horticulture, in addition to preparing and planting the garden for the spring opening.

Q: How many plants are in the gardens at Chanticleer?

A: There are over 10,000 plant accessions, representing over 5,700 taxa (different types of plants). But the total number of plants is much greater, since an accession may include multiple plants.

Q: There are no identification tags on most plants. How do visitors know what they are?

A: Plant lists for the major garden areas are available in handmade Plant List Boxes scattered throughout the garden and are also available on our website.

Q: Do the gardeners propagate plants for use in the gardens? If not, where does Chanticleer get its plants, some of which are very unusual?

A: Most plants are acquired from nurseries, many of which specialize in unusual plants, and from other gardens. Some plants are grown from seeds and cuttings in a small greenhouse on site.

Q: How do the horticulturists cope with insect pests in the gardens?

A: Chanticleer practices Integrated Pest Management, which advocates a natural balance as much as possible. Gardeners plant pest-resistant plants, practice cultural techniques aimed at producing healthy plants, and, when pesticides are used, try to use the least toxic possible.

Q: Does Chanticleer host weddings or private events?



A: No, Chanticleer does not host weddings or private events. We suggest that you explore other public gardens within 30 miles of Philadelphia, many of which have event rental spaces. Other gardens can be found through [America's Garden Capital](#).

Q: How about wedding photographs?

A: No, wedding, family, engagement, and portrait photography is not permitted in the garden. Visitors are welcome to take snapshots of the garden for their personal pleasure, however, and avid amateur photographers are welcome to photograph the garden for non-commercial purposes when they sign the "Photography Guidelines and Tripod Use" form available online or at the entrance desk.

Q: Are painters allowed to set up their easels?

A: Yes, painters are welcomed on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. We hope artists of all kinds to be inspired by the garden. Chanticleer has sponsored workshops for young writers from a variety of backgrounds, and hosts classes taught by regional art centers, classes and tours offered through the Wayne Art Center, and numerous classes in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

Q: Is there a gift shop at Chanticleer?

A: We have several items available for purchase at the entrance desk, including the books *The Art of Gardening*, *Chanticleer: A Pleasure Garden*, and *Now and Then*, as well as puzzles, journals, notecards, magnets, water bottles, and postcards.



About Chanticleer Executive Director, Bill Thomas

Bill Thomas arrived at the 50-acre pleasure garden Chanticleer on April Fools' Day, 2003. Previously, he was at Longwood Gardens for 26 years, the last five in Research and Production and the prior 21 in Education. Bill leads the talented and creative Chanticleer staff in its continued development of the young garden, now in its 32nd year. He emphasizes an educational, environmentally sensitive, and multi-century approach to the property and is unifying the former estate into one cohesive garden. The staff and he co-authored *The Art of Gardening* (Timber Press), recipient of the American Horticultural Society (AHS) Book Award. He received the Scott Medal and Award in 2017 and the AHS Professional Award in 2016. He holds a B.S. and an M.S. in Ornamental Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studied under Professor Edward Hasselkus.



Chanticleer Logos

The Chanticleer logo is trademarked and copyrighted and is available by permission only. The logo is not for personal or commercial use in any way.



(standard logo)



(logo with tagline)

Chanticleer Brand Guide

Chanticleer's typefaces and colors for the application of the logo and supporting visual style.

Header Text - Cormorant Garamond - Font Weight: 700

Body Text - Inter - Font Weight: 400



Deep Purple

Primary

Hex: #110C2D

RGB: 17, 12, 45

CMYK: 62, 73, 0, 82



Blue-violet

Primary

Hex: #3A5DAE

RGB: 58, 93, 174

CMYK: 85, 58, 0, 0

PMS Coated: 7455 C



Light Purple

Secondary

Hex: #E3E5EC

RGB: 227, 229, 236

CMYK: 4, 3, 0, 7



Green

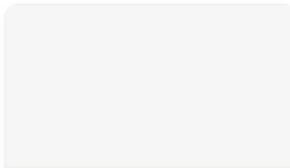
Secondary

Hex: #4E801F

RGB: 78, 128, 31

CMYK: 61, 0, 86, 42

PMS Coated: 2278 C



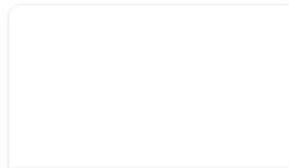
White Smoke

Secondary

Hex: #F6F6F6

RGB: 246, 246, 246

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 4



White

Secondary

Hex: #FFFFFF

RGB: 255, 255, 255

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 0



 **PMS Uncoated Green**

Secondary

CMYK: 48, 0, 100, 26

PMS Uncoated: 377 U



 **PMS Uncoated Blue-violet**

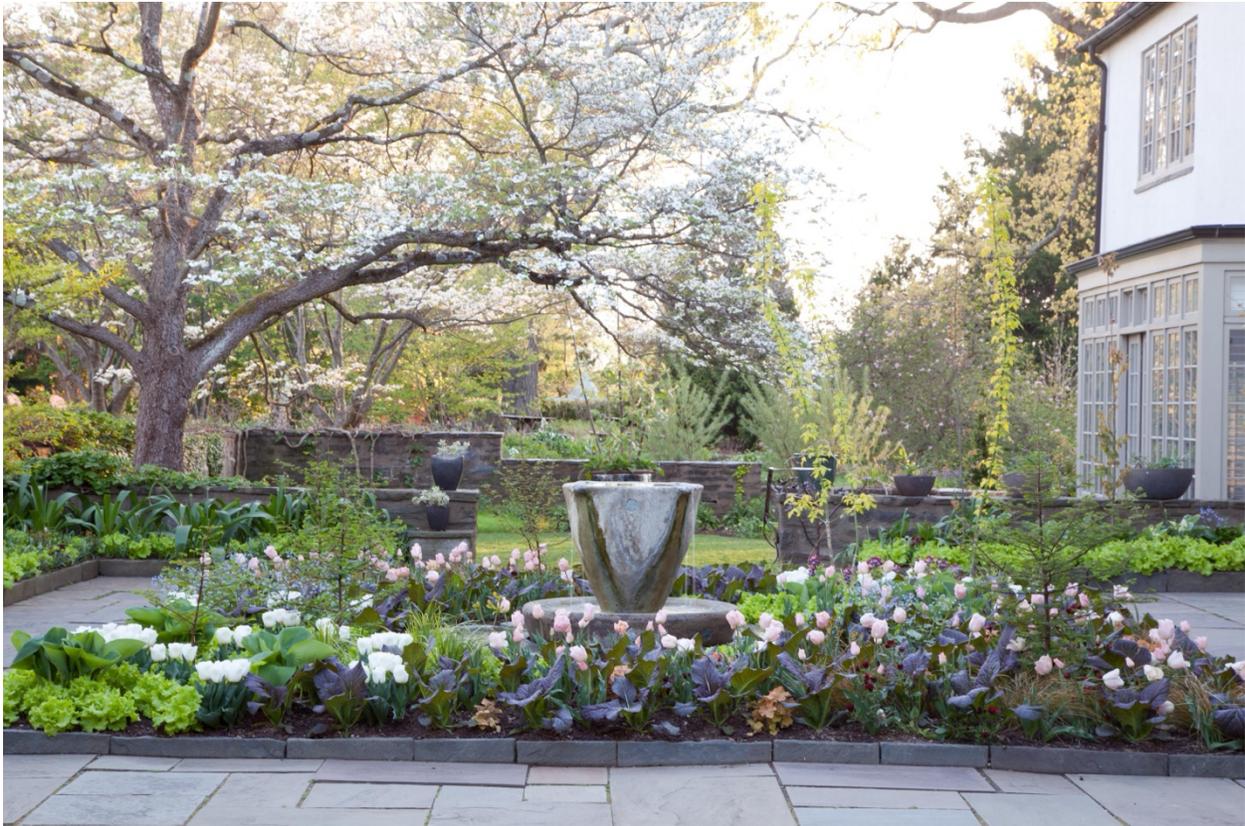
Secondary

CMYK: 87, 59, 0, 0

PMS Uncoated: 2133 U

Chanticleer Images

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Caption: *Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty' and purple mustard are underplanted beneath the Teacup Fountain. Photo by Lisa Roper.



Caption: Pink petals from *Prunus* 'Accolade' carpet the gravel circle where a container of *Agave americana* is displayed. Photo by Lisa Roper.



Caption: Nibbling on a poppy, an early morning visitor to the Cutting Garden is caught in the act. Photo by Lisa Roper.



Caption: Orange flowering *Glaucium* hybrid blooms in the Gravel Carpet where visitors can sit on carved stone furniture with a view to the Ruin Garden. Photo by Lisa Roper.



Press Releases (as of February 2026)

[Chanticleer Welcomes E. Yvette Weaver as Planning & Engagement Manager.](#)

[A Blooming Step Forward: Lenny Wilson's Botanical Shoes at Chanticleer.](#)

[Chanticleer Welcomes Leirion Sorensen as the New Horticulture Manager.](#)

[Chanticleer Announces the Latest Chanticleer Scholars](#)

[Chanticleer Opens for the Season on March 27th](#)

[Horticulturist Lisa Roper Receives Garden Writers Association Gold Medal Award](#)

[Daniel J. Hinkley named latest Chanticleer Scholar](#)

[Chanticleer Announces Two Chanticleer Scholars](#)

[Indianapolis Museum of Art Horticulturist Gwyn Rager Is Latest Chanticleer Scholar](#)

[The Chanticleer Scholarship Receives the APGA Program Excellence Award](#)

[Chanticleer's Executive Director R. William Thomas Receives the Scott Medal Award](#)

[Chanticleer Announces Latest Chanticleer Scholars](#)