
RHSI Partner Gardens

Partner Garden Pairings



RHSI Partner Garden Pairing

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Co Wicklow Partner Gardens

What about a summer day trip from Dublin to some marvellous Wicklow Partner Gardens west or south of the city?

Making an early start west from the city through Tallaght, you could visit Jimi Blake's **Hunting Brook Garden**, then on to **June Blake's Garden** nearby and finishing 15 minutes further on with a tour of the **RHSI Russborough Garden** and some well-earned refreshment. Jimi Blake's internationally known, flamboyant, ever changing 20-acre garden holds one of Ireland's largest plant collections. Whilst his sister June Blake's very individual 3-acre country garden with its exciting bold herbaceous borders, beautiful stone buildings and more offers something delightfully different. The volunteers working in the lovely **RHSI Walled Garden at Russborough** are always really appreciative of those who come to view the fruit of their labours in this beautifully evolving garden. The excellent Russborough Cafe is the final reward!



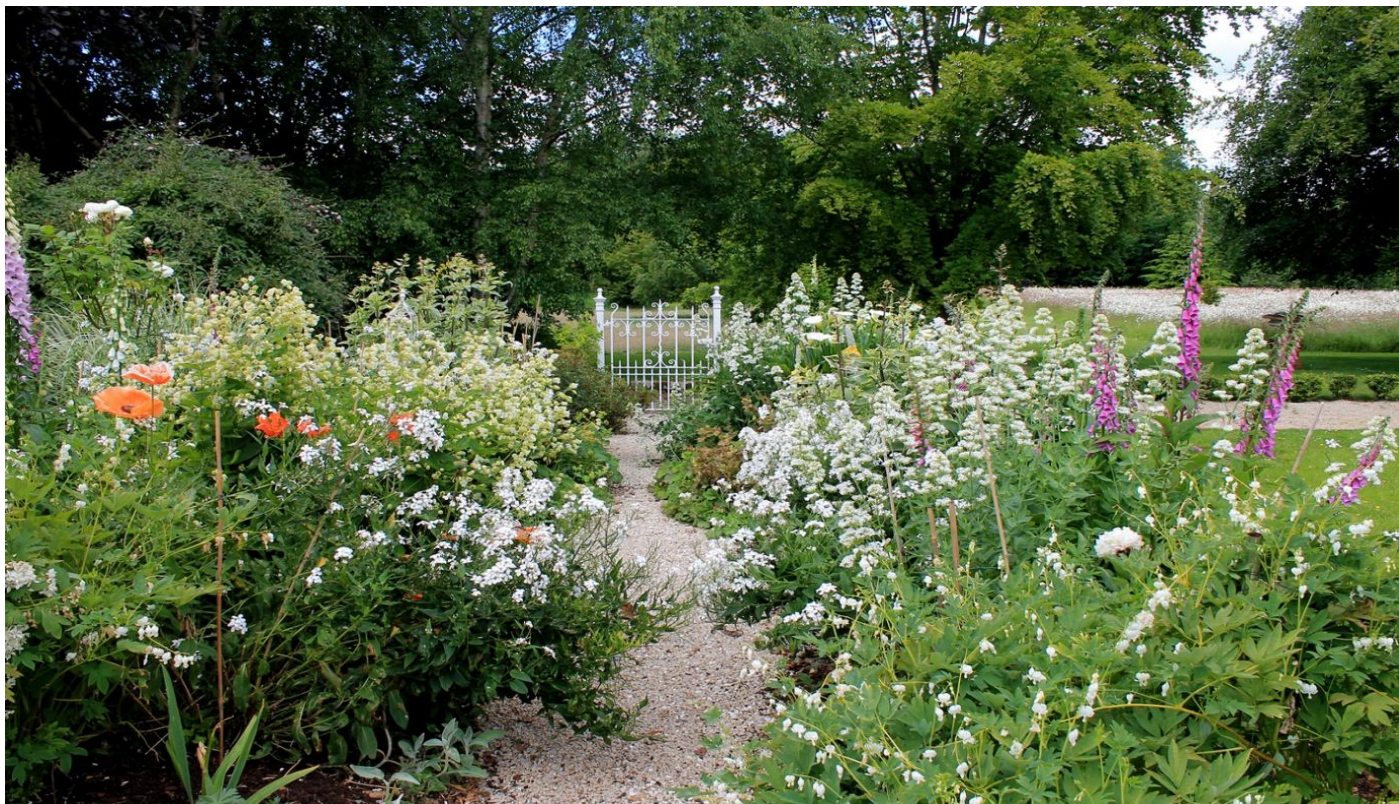
June Blakes Garden

Further south from Russborough, deep in the heart of Wicklow, is the almost secret **Patthana Garden** in Kiltegan village. A true panorama of colour and artistry, from the packed courtyard around the old granite house, to the upper terrace and then out to the newly created Torc garden....

Heading south from Dublin on the northern outskirts of Bray is the 1780 walled garden of the charity **Festina Lente**. The restored ornamental gardens have huge community involvement with beautifully kept allotments, formal gardens and ponds which are a designated sanctuary for terrapins. Just south of Bray are the magnificent 17th century classically French-designed gardens of **Kilruddery**. Set in the 200-acre estate are extensive woodlands, the famous long ponds, formal, sunken, and walled gardens and beautiful yard buildings including a large, converted granary cafe.

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Further south along the M11, in the village of Ashford are the 20-acre **Mount Usher Gardens**. These beautiful Robinsonian style gardens set along the banks of the river Vartry are home to a superb and important collection of shrubs and trees- many of them champions. There is also extensive informal woodland and riverside planting. Just half a mile away at Rossanagh is the romantic **Dower House** and garden. With a charming formal white garden, a wildflower meadow, and a great variety of unusual trees it has deservedly been described as one of Wicklow's finest gardens.



Dower House, Wicklow

Run by the OPW (and not an RHSI Partner Garden!) are you aware that **Kilmacurragh**, Ireland's second Botanic Garden after Glasnevin, is just about 6 miles further south? Do look it up and make a point of visiting these superb (free) gardens sometime.

Co Wexford

We have a great selection of Partner Gardens for you to visit this summer in Co Wexford- our sunny Southeast!

In the north of the county, our newest member, **Douentza Garden** is in a totally rural setting some 19km off Exit 24 (Camolin) on the M11. This 1-acre garden is full of variety, set out as very individual rooms and also has a beautiful greenhouse packed with colourful rare and exotic plants. Just 2 miles from Courtown Harbour is **Glenavon Japanese Garden**. Centred around a wonderfully recreated Japanese

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pavilion, the garden features oriental styled planting, water gardens, little bridges, stone lanterns, and sculptures. Further south at Clonroche is the lovely 2.5-acre cottage style **Coolaught Garden** surrounding a beautiful old farmhouse. The garden is divided into several areas with a great variety of planting combinations and a woodland area with many rare and unusual trees. A bonus- Coolaught has its own well stocked plant nursery!



Coolaught Garden

Just south of Wexford town is **Johnstown Castle Estate, Museum and Gardens**. Something for everyone here with ongoing restoration and development of the extensive 4-acre ornamental gardens and glasshouses, walks around the picturesque lake and a visit to the Irish agricultural Museum.

In south Co Wexford, heading towards Waterford is **Colclough Walled Garden**. Next to Tintern Abbey, this beautiful 2.5-acre Georgian garden with its curved corners has been restored over the past 12 years and boasts a river with 5 bridges running through it. At Great Island, some 10km further on towards New Ross, is **Kilmokea Country Manor** and Gardens. This handsome former Georgian Rectory is surrounded by romantic old fashioned flower gardens with topiary and clipped hedges and productive kitchen gardens and woodland areas. These gardens hold an Irish Heritage Garden certificate.

It is essential that you check with each garden directly before you visit. Either by phone/email or their own website. Several are strictly by appointment only. This contact information plus postcode directions are on the Partner Garden section of the RHSI website.

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Free or reduced entry on presentation of current RHSI membership card

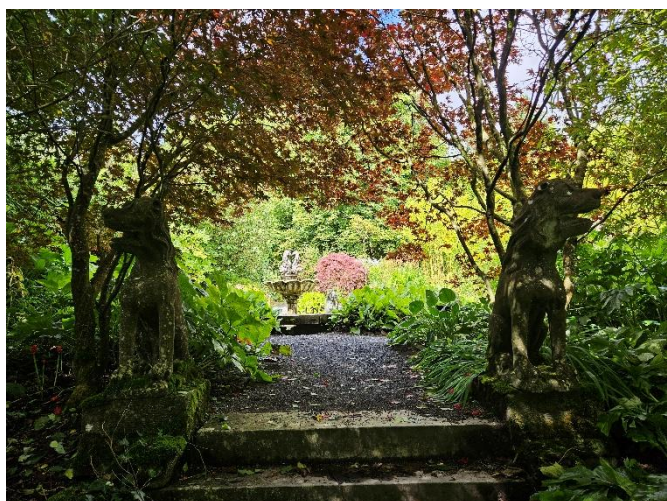
Midlands Gardens

Are you having a little sojourn in the Midlands by chance?

We have several Partner Gardens which you may like to visit. Belvedere is close to the N4, with Tullynally and Loughcrew north of this route. The Irish National Stud Gardens, Burtown and Ballintubbert are quite close together between the M7 and the M9, while Gash Gardens and Birr are close to the M7 a little further west.

It is easy to see their relative locations on the full-size map in the Partner Garden section of the RHSI website www.rhsi.ie/partnergardens

Belvedere House Gardens & Park lie along the shores of Lough Ennell. This fully restored Georgian house



has a beautifully designed walled garden and adjoining arboretum extending out to woodland and landscaped lakeside walks. A special folly among others, is the 1760s Jealous Wall! **Tullynally Castle Gardens** are a 25-minute drive further north. The imposing castle sits in 12 acres of beautiful gardens made up of extensive woodland, a walled garden and 2 ornamental lakes. A Chinese garden with waterfalls and streams and other eastern features has also been added. Just 15 minutes further north are **Loughcrew Gardens**, the 200-acre estate being in the same family since the 1600s. The very fine 6-acre gardens boast a lime avenue, yew

walk, lawns, terraces, a parterre, a canal and a greatly restored walled garden with herbaceous borders.

The Irish National Stud & Gardens- The Japanese Gardens and St Fiachra's Garden, are close to Kildare town. There is huge variety in this visit, from a fascinating tour of the stud to the two widely differing gardens in the grounds. The very peaceful Japanese Gardens regarded as the finest of their kind in Europe, were created in the early 1900s. St Fiachra's Garden design was inspired by ancient monastic settlements and is in a very naturalistic setting with great use of water, rock, and recreated ruins. Just off the M9, **Burtown House and Garden** have been a source of great artistic inspiration for several generations of its owners. The gardens are divided into several areas complete with large herbaceous borders, walled vegetable garden, shrubberies, a yew walk, and a large woodland garden surrounded by streams. Just 20 minutes further on to the west, **Ballintubbert Gardens and House** are extremely proud of having recently become Ireland's first Organically Certified Ornamental Garden. The gardens are laid out in a series of over 40 different "rooms", from cottage style to a splendid Lutyens inspired sunken garden, a nuttery, orchard rose garden and much more.

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A little further west and just off the M7 are **Gash Gardens**. Set in former rich dairy land, this lovely 4-acre garden has been gradually developed over the past few decades. From the cottage style garden in front, the gardens flow informally and with great variety, with flowering shrubs, large drifts of perennials, many specimen trees and some wonderful water



features. Some 35 minutes on, and across the other side of the M7 is the famous **Birr Castle Demesne**. The gardens are home to many rare plants, with 50 champion trees, rivers, lakes and streams within the wider 120-acre estate. The formal gardens boast the world's tallest box hedges along with a romantic hornbeam walk. A must-see is the Leviathan, the 19th century telescope in the Science Centre.

Not to be missed, and just 10 minutes from Birr, formerly a Partner Garden owned by Angela Jupe, is our very own **RHSI Bellefield** in the village of Shinrone. www.rhsi.ie/Shinrone

Counties Kilkenny and Waterford

On to the rich lands of Kilkenny and Waterford! **Rothe House & Garden** is in Kilkenny City. This is the only known medieval garden left on the island, a long slim "burrage plot" now faithfully reconstructed as a 17th century garden with the same trees and plants as would have grown there originally. Some 17kms south of Kilkenny, a romantic landscape- **Kilfane Glen and Waterfall** -was developed in the 1790s within the demesne of Kilfane House. The very picturesque glen is made up of multiple paths through the ancient woods leading down to an artificial waterfall which plunges into a winding stream with little rustic bridges. The romantic idyl is completed by a restored cottage orne.

Some 45 mins on down, southwest of Waterford city is the famous **Mount Congreve Gardens** in an exciting new phase of renewal. 16 km of meandering paths through stunning woodland planted with magnolias, camellias, azaleas and rhododendrons, a walled garden under enthusiastic renovation and a visitor centre with cafe and shop. Just southeast of Waterford City is **Springhill** Garden. Above the River Suir, this lovely 6-acre garden within a 29-acre site is largely Robinsonian in style with a host of mature trees, wonderfully varied wildlife and vistas over the countryside. There is a maze and more formal planting complete with a pond closer to the house.

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Mount Congreve

Still in Co Waterford but heading west towards Cork is **Tourin House & Gardens** on the banks of the River Blackwater near Cappoquin. The superb gardens first laid out in the 1840s cover over 15 acres including the main garden. A fine Broad Walk leads to the colourful more informal Pleasure Garden and thence to the walled garden with its ornamental and productive planting, and finally down to the banks of the Blackwater River. Standing dramatically above the river, some 3 miles south of Cappoquin **Dromana House & Garden**, is in the same family ownership for 800 years with its fascinating history, superb woodland walks, extensive acid loving planting and stunning views.

Northern Partner Gardens

Stretching from Co Down right around to Donegal we have eleven great Partner Gardens waiting for you to explore!

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Ballyedmond Castle Gardens, Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, Seaforde Gardens, Rowallane Garden and Mount Stewart are south of Belfast in Co Down, with Ballyrobert Gardens, Glenarm Castle Walled Garden and Benvarden Garden to the north in Co Antrim. Then across to Oakfield Park and Salthill in Co Donegal and last but not least to Killyreagh Garden in Co Fermanagh. A suggested tour for a few days but the choice is yours!

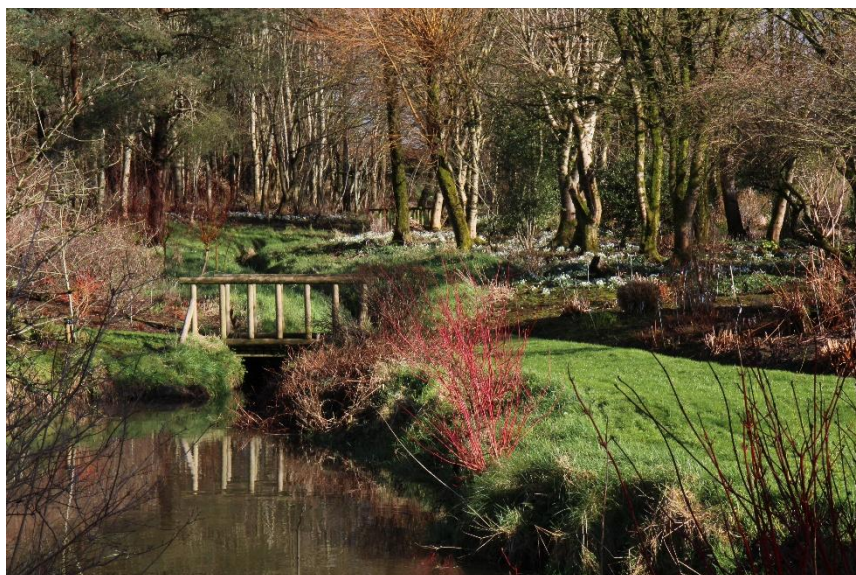
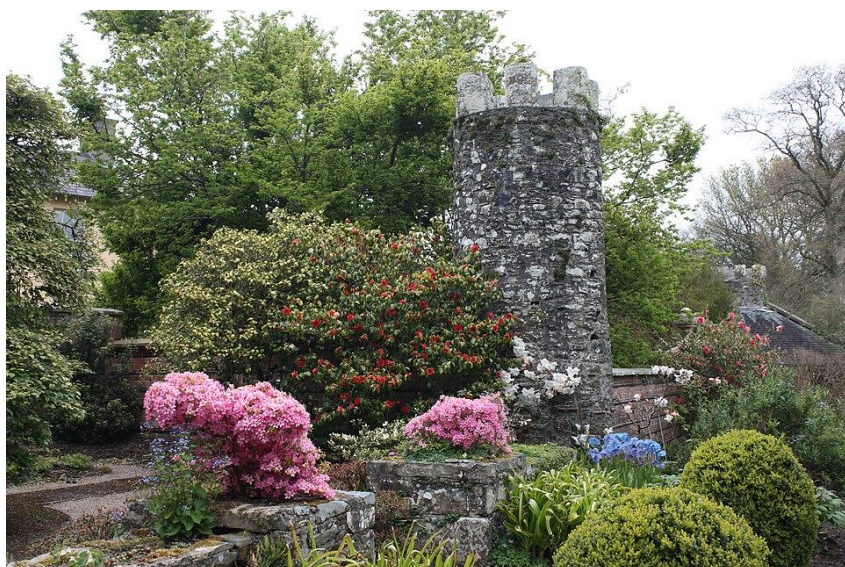
On the shores of Carlingford Lough, **Ballyedmond Castle Gardens** near Rostrevor is a private garden largely developed over the past 30 years but still with some original 1800s plantings. there is a great variety of interest with statuary, glasshouses, terraces, various garden rooms and woodland. Further north, **Seaforde Gardens** are part of a historic demesne with lots to enjoy including its Tropical Butterfly House, Ireland's oldest living maze, rare and venerable trees and a Herb Garden with a Mughal Tower. The National Trust's **Rowallane Garden** and **Mount Stewart House and Gardens**, within a half hour of each other, are among

the most beautiful and prestigious gardens on the island. Along with the many horticultural treasures at Rowallane, are the summer roses and perennials including The National Penstemon Collection. Meanwhile Mount Stewart's Arts and Crafts-style designed gardens and huge plant collection are the jewels within their larger demesne.

Just 20 minutes south of Belfast is famous **Hillsborough Castle and Gardens**- home of the Secretary of State

for Northern Ireland. 100 acres of magnificent gardens made up of formal areas, a newly restored 4 acre walled garden, lake, extensive woodland walks with widespread bulb and rhododendron planting.

A half hour north of Belfast into Co Down, **Ballyrobert Gardens** comprises six acres of charming gardens nestled into the countryside. Informal herbaceous planting around the old farm cottage gives way to an orchard, woodland, meadows, streams, and a lake. There is a cottage-garden plant nursery attached. A change to history and formality awaits half hour further north at beautiful **Glenarm Castle and Gardens**. After travelling through



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glorious Antrim countryside, there is much to see and enjoy here including a walled garden being one of the finest in the north and has been recently restored with several innovative and very attractive areas. Further along the northern coast is **Benvardeen Garden**, near Ballymoney. Enclosed since the 17th century, the restored walled garden has a formal area with a central fountain, box parterre, rose arches, herbaceous borders, and a well-stocked adjoining kitchen garden. There is also a woodland area leading down to the banks of the River Bush.

Thence over to Co Donegal and **Oakfield Park** in Raphoe. This 18th century Georgian Deanery has won several national awards for the restoration of its gardens and buildings. On the 100-acre estate you'll find beautiful parkland, formal gardens man-made lakes, walled ere gardens, follies, parterres, and much more! Heading south to Mountcharles, on the edge of Donegal Bay is the romantic **Salthill Garden**. The circa 1 acre walled garden behind a Georgian house and old farm buildings has its own microclimate with a profusion of perennials, roses, shrubs, and vegetables woven between winding grass and gravel paths.

A 50-minute drive south along the scenic shores of Lower Lough Erne brings you to Enniskillen and nearby **Killyreagh House Garden**. From the front of the listed Georgian house this peaceful and tranquil garden leads down a sloped lawn to a pond and beautiful views beyond over the surrounding fields and hills.

Partner Gardens in The West

Perhaps you are heading west to Galway and Connemara. If so, **Woodville Walled Garden** is close to Loughrea just off the M6. This is a restored romantic garden complete with herbaceous borders, roses, a dovecote and a reconstructed archway with its original 1750 keystone. Then right in the depths of Connemara near Letterfrack is **Kylemore Abbey Victorian Walled Garden**. This 6-acre garden is set on a sheltered south facing slope - an oasis of fertility and cultivation within a wilder landscape. Half is laid out as a typical Victorian pleasure garden and half is planted with an enormous variety of vegetables, herbs and fruits which supply the excellent abbey cafe.

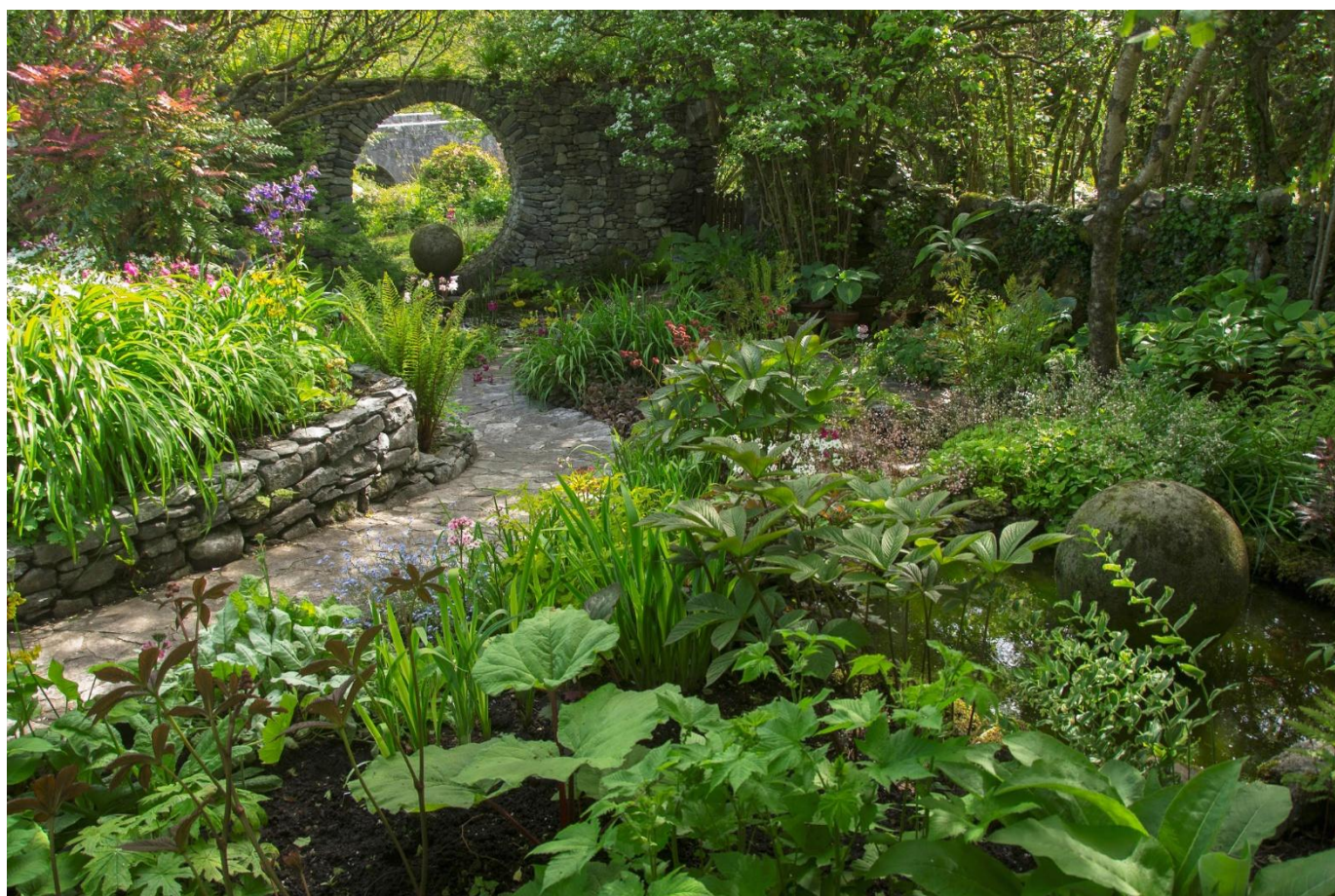
An hour's drive on up along the west shore of Lough Mask will bring you to Tormakeady and the beautiful **Drimbawn House Garden**. The garden, gently sloping down to the lough, is divided into several different areas. The most developed is the restored walled garden with beautiful planting complimented by gravel paths and sweeping lawns against a background of 19th century and later trees. A paved terrace overlooks this whole area with views through the trees of the lake.



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Alternatively, if you are heading to north Mayo along the N5 you can stop at the beautifully restored 6-acre **Strokestown Walled Gardens** and woodlands in Co Roscommon. Within the grounds your visit can also include the National Famine Museum or the restored Strokestown House.

From Galway city it is just an hour's drive deep into the Burren where you'll find the breathtakingly original **Caher Bridge Garden**. A perfect example of how to inch a garden seamlessly into the surrounding countryside and how to incorporate the huge volume of local rock cleverly into terraces, walls, raised beds and even a moon window.



Caher Bridge

If you are in the southwest and heading to north Kerry, you could divert 15 mins off the N21 south of Limerick City at Patrickswell to **Coolwater Garden** at Fedamore. This small half acre garden is distinctly different without lawns or borders! A stunning Water Garden with superb aquatic wildlife, multiple alpine troughs, rare and exotic trees and shrubs making it a very well-structured space. Or if you are in south Kerry in the Kenmare area, seeking a wonderful contemporary garden experience, a trip to **Dawros Gallery & Garden** is the answer. The 4-acre garden by the Dromoughty River waterfall blends extensive use of grasses and drifts of perennial planting into the beautiful surrounding native woodland.

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Co Cork

Are you planning a trip around County Cork during the summer?

You'll be spoilt for choice with a range of 9 Partner Gardens to visit in the county with free or reduced entry for RHSI members.

Just 9km northwest of Cork city is Blarney, home of one of Ireland's finest horticultural gems-the extensive **Blarney Castle Gardens** surrounding the famous 600-year-old castle. So much to be seen in these magnificent constantly changing and evolving gardens.

East Cork

Just east from the city in the village of Glounthaune is **Hester Forde's Coosheen Garden** - with great design ideas for small gardens, containing an amazing collection of plants for its size. Quite close by is the **Victorian Working Garden at Fota House**. This is a wonderful European award-winning restoration project-a beautiful garden with glasshouses, bothy buildings etc.

Further east from Fota there is a selection of gardens to visit within a small region. The beautiful old world gardens of the **Old Deanery** are near Cloyne with its walled garden, stream garden and large magnolia collection. The lovely seaside garden of **Seanabea** is at nearby Ballyshane with its winding paths, roses and herbaceous planting. And at **Ballymaloe Cookery School** in Shanagarry you'll find not only a wonderful kitchen garden, but also a fascinating series of different gardens. Something for everyone!

West Cork

Well west of Skibereen, on the sea near the village of Durrus is **Kilravock Garden** - a beautifully situated lush 1.7acre garden of both native and exotic specialist plants and trees. On the Bantry side of Durrus is **Ballycommane House and Garden** with a wonderful variety of garden rooms, old ruins, exotic plants and mature trees. And finally, on to majestic Italianate **Bantry House and Gardens** with its formal gardens and



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stunning views out over Bantry Bay.

Greater Dublin Area

While some Partner Gardens can be visited in clusters, others may be a bit off on their own. So why not tie in your visit to one of Ireland's many excellent public gardens which may be nearby? For example, Georgian **Tyrrelstown House Garden** set in 50 acres of parkland with its beautiful old world walled gardens, climbing roses, herbaceous borders and arboretum is just 20 minutes north of the **National Botanic Gardens** (OPW) in Glasnevin.

Travelling north along the coast road out of the city towards Howth you'll pass the 250-acre **St Anne's Park**, Clontarf (Dublin City Council) with its famous extensive rose garden. Arriving in Howth you can visit the dynamic contemporary garden **Ardan** on Howth Summit. The varied and eclectic planting on Ardan's



half acre is complemented by a great design layout with terraces and divided areas. Herbaceous borders literally bursting with colour, vegetables and a pond are cleverly woven in. Just minutes away is **Medina**- a tropical miracle, a small garden with an enormous variety of rich foliage plants of different shapes and textures. A variety of palms, tree ferns and bamboos abound with connecting gravel paths, stepping stones and water features.

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South of the city in Dundrum are the **Airfield Estate Gardens**. Packed into this lovely open 6-acre site are walled and sunken gardens, glasshouses, fruit trees, mixed herbaceous and shrub borders and the very busy 2-acre organic vegetable garden supplying the garden's excellent eatery. Less than 10 minutes south towards Stepaside are the newly restored **Fernhill Park & Gardens** (Dun Laoire Rathdown Co Co).

Ardgillan Castle and Demesne (Fingal Co Co) lies just off the M50, north of Skerries. And just 30 mins further on via the M1, the Partner Garden at **Collon House**, with its small but beautiful 18th century styled



garden lies right in the heart of Collon village. Statuary, topiary, a box parterre, a classically styled summer house and herbaceous planting are very atmospheric beside this beautifully restored historic house. (Extra charge for tea & house tour)

And now, a pair of Partner Gardens which ARE near each other- off the M4 and just 15 mins apart! **Lodge Park** in Straffan has a walled garden dating back to the 1700s but restored in the 1940s and again in the 1980s. The old brick walls are covered in climbers, fruit trees and roses while beech hedges divide the garden into sections, featuring herbaceous and mixed borders. There is also an outstanding rosarium.

and lastly the most recently developed sensory garden, just on the other side of the M4 is **Kilgar Gardens** near Kilcock. It is almost impossible to believe that these gardens have been developed from a greenfield site over the past 25 years. Gardens within gardens- formality with parterres overflowing with roses, a Mediterranean room with pots of colourful annuals, a shaded area with evergreen plants, and a semi wild garden leading to a cut- flowers area. And lastly the most recently developed sensory garden....

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We've now come to the end of our whistle stop summer guide to the 61 RHSI Partner Gardens! We hope you can fit in some visits, or at least are now more aware of these gardens for future visits. The RHSI is very grateful to the owners who work so hard and generously to share them with us.

It is essential that you check garden opening times etc first before your visit. This information plus postcode directions are on the Partner Gardens section of the RHSI website. Free or reduced garden entry on presentation of current RHSI membership card

This final piece points out that while some Partner Gardens can be visited in clusters, others may be a bit more off on their own. So, why not tie in your visit with a trip to one of Ireland's many excellent public gardens which may be nearby? www.rhsi.ie/partnergarden

