

Partner Garden Pairing

We've now come to the end of our whistle stop summer guide to the 60 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. 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?

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, 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.

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 Stepside 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 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 box 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....