

## **Docent-Led Tour - Santa Fe Botanical Garden at Museum Hill**

### **Introduction - Gather in Welcome Ramada**

#### **Garden Etiquette –**

- Welcome to the Santa Fe Botanical Garden
- Bathroom location
- Cellphones – Please set your phone to vibrate and step away from the group to take a call.
- Please feel free to touch and smell but do not pick.
- Please be respectful of our freshly planted beds.

#### **About Santa Fe Botanical Garden (the organization) - Three Sites, One Enduring Mission**

Santa Fe Botanical Garden has a mission of education and community service.

Our two nature preserves—the Leonora Curtin Wetland Preserve and the Ortiz Mountains Educational Preserve—offer programs that teach stewardship for our fragile habitats through walking tours, hands-on activities and demonstrations.

#### **Welcome to the Santa Fe Botanical Garden at Museum Hill**

A Botanical Garden is a living collection of plants and outdoor experiences. Our Garden is the culmination of years of planning to create a living display and stunning array of botanical and horticultural plants. The plants chosen are the most suitable for Santa Fe and northern New Mexico, appealing to both amateur and professional gardeners and the general public. In this first phase, The Orchard Gardens features a rich variety of destinations that combine horticultural and architectural elements. The focus is on plants selected for their beauty and adaptation to the Santa Fe environment.

#### **Design**

Designed by landscape architect, W. Gary Smith, the Garden comprises three phases - Orchard Gardens, Ethnobotanical Garden, and Courtyard Gardens. Our Garden is unique in that it is being developed during historic climate change. Increased aridity, warmer temperatures and less predictable weather patterns may become the norm here in Santa Fe affecting the future of gardening. We aim to use this as an educational tool and demonstration opportunity.

The Orchard is planted with the best fruit trees for this region. Along the walkways you will find a rich tapestry of perennials, lavender, roses and many other plants suitable for a Santa Fe garden. In future phases, the Ethnobotanical Garden and Courtyard Gardens will add a diverse array of garden settings and plantings.

#### **Location**

The Santa Fe Botanical Garden at Museum Hill is uniquely positioned in Arroyo de Los Pinos, a major drainage arroyo that runs through much of Santa Fe. The Garden is also linked to Old Pecos Trail via the Museum Hill Bicycle Trail, with easy access to our neighboring museums.

### **From the Welcome Ramada, begin introducing the different areas of the Garden**

**Welcome Garden** – Note the beaked yuccas and agaves. They instantly tell you you're in a climate that is not only dry, but also dramatic.

1. **Garden Gateway** - A striking sculptural archway from the parking area, the Garden Gateway is adorned with fragrant Hall's Honeysuckle, a soft, fragrant and surprisingly tough accent on the steel structure.
2. **Welcome Ramada** - Bancos provide seating for visitors as they enter and leave the Santa Fe Botanical Garden at Museum Hill. This Ramada is planted with Madame Galen Trumpet Vine, which will wind itself among the steel "trees", creating an open-air ceiling. Note the intimate water fountain, a reminder of the huge impact even a small amount of water can have in our arid environment.

### **Depart Welcome Ramada towards Meadow Garden – Talk about the Meadow Garden and its components.**

**Meadow Garden** - Featuring a space-defining broad shallow bowl carved into the existing slope to collect rainwater, the Meadow Garden features native plants and wildflowers for dramatic seasonal interest. The bottom of the bowl is planted in a meadow mix of native grasses that are naturally found in water collection areas, while the informal walkway around the bowl is a walk through a mix of fragrant thymes and evergreen veronica.

1. [Central Walkway](#) - Bordered by ribbons of thyme and veronica and edged with locally quarried stone, the Central Walkway leads visitors from one destination to the next. Semicircular alcoves of sitting stones are nestled in plantings alongside the path.
2. [La Rambla](#) - Running behind and through the Meadow, a meandering hand-crafted rock channel slows the flow of rainwater, minimizing erosion while maximizing moisture storage in the soil to nourish plants and trees. Note that the Meadow Garden bowl is an important functional feature of the overall water collection infrastructure. In the event of heavy or prolonged rains, an overflow is incorporated which will lead water down to the arroyo by means of a series of boulder dams and “Zuni bowls.”
3. [Sculpture](#) - The granite sculpture “Emergence”, by Taos artist Candyce Garrett, provides a focal point and a textural contrast to the meadow grasses and plants.

## **Walk towards Orchard.**

### [Orchard and Ramadas](#)

From the naturalistic Meadow Garden, you step down into the different world of the Orchard. A collection of fruit trees suitable for Santa Fe gardens and a stylized meadow of grasses and wildflowers are the romantic heart of this phase of the Museum Hill Garden. The South Ramada with its winding grape vines offers a place to sit and view the Orchard. Graced by pillars (to be a canopy, some day) of climbing roses and framed by pine and oak, the North Ramada along the Central Walkway offers views north into the Arroyo de Los Pinos.

### [Perennial Borders](#)

Quarried stone walls frame the southwestern and water-wise interpretation of an English perennial border. The walls of large, hand-cut stones echo local escarpments, which are a central part of our northern New Mexico landscapes. Perennials were carefully chosen to suit the many microclimates created by the stone walls and more open, sunny areas. Some plants in particular represent those that grow in our two natural preserves.

## **Move on to Dry Garden.**

### [Dry Garden](#)

This xeric garden includes many plants native to New Mexico and the Southwest. Plants were chosen not only for their sophisticated palette of dramatic textures, forms, and colors, but also for their adaptability to our region’s spare soils and dry climate. The garden will eventually rely primarily on natural precipitation. Of special note is the collection of cold-hardy but heat-loving cactuses in the “Hot Box.” Please watch your step in this tiny courtyard.

## **Walk to Bridge.**

### [The Bridge, Arroyo de los Pinos and the Old Gabion](#)

The first work the Botanical Garden did on this site was to install rock features along a ½ mile section of the Arroyo de Los Pinos, including work just below the old gabion, created by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. Dry washes such as this arroyo are major thoroughfares for both people and wildlife, and are great demonstrations of the power of water as well as the lack of it. We want to ensure this portion of historic Santa Fe is preserved and incorporated into the master plan for this Garden.

The Kearny’s Gap Bridge, spanning the arroyo, will link all three gardens. An iconic Warren pony truss design, the bridge was obtained from the Bibb family ranch near Las Vegas, NM, when abandoned by road construction. The bridge was built in 1913.

The bridge will be used for events, yoga, concerts and more .

## **Walk back on the Central Walkway. Point out the Rose & Lavender Walk and the tour is over.**

### [Rose & Lavender Walk](#)

A wonderful combination of fragrant cultivars, all suitable for any Santa Fe garden.

### **Contact Information:**

[www.santafebotanicalgarden.org](http://www.santafebotanicalgarden.org)

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