

THE GARDEN SOCIETY  
OF GOTHENBURG  
*in the heart of the city*



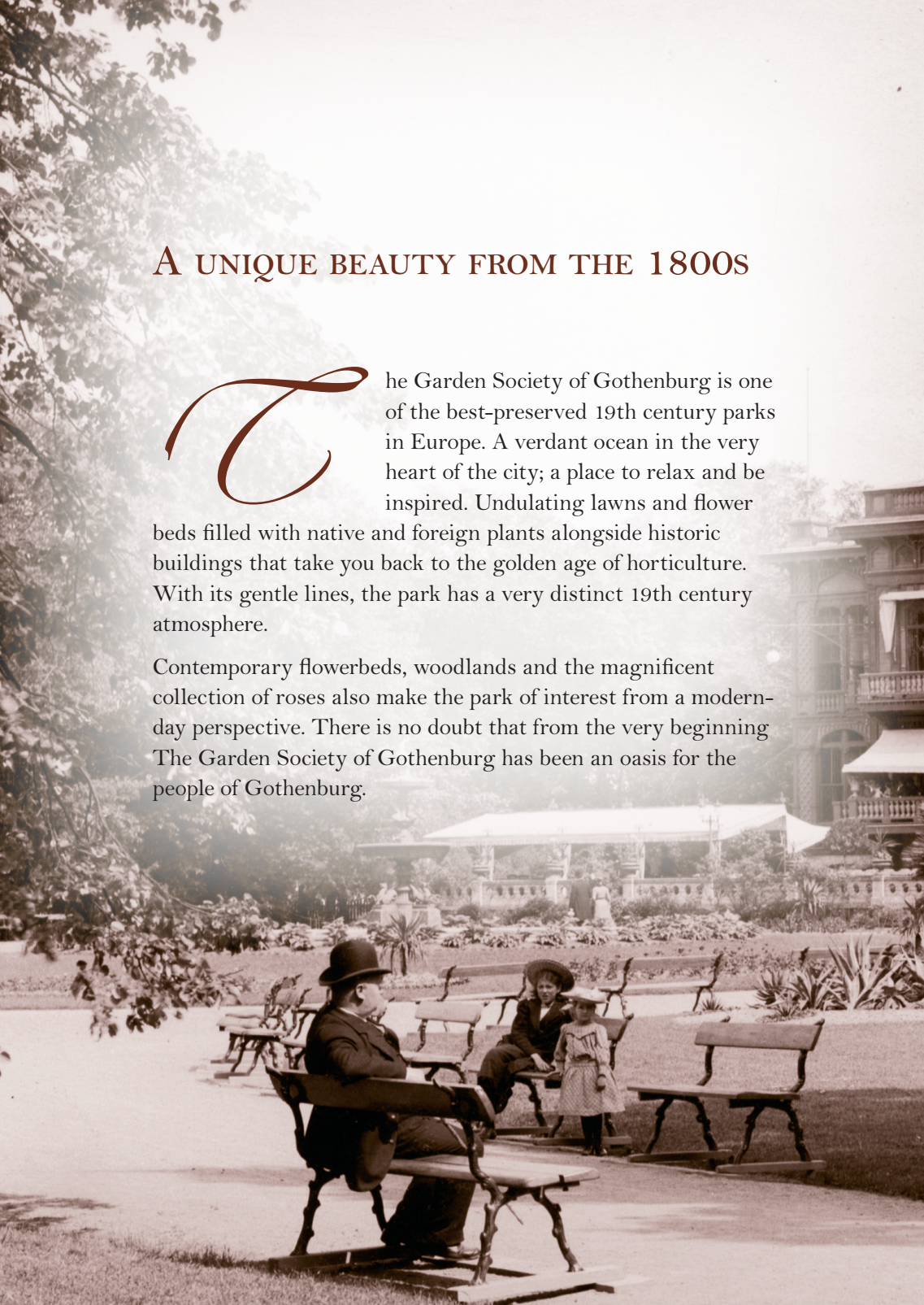
FÖRENINGEN



## A UNIQUE BEAUTY FROM THE 1800S

The Garden Society of Gothenburg is one of the best-preserved 19th century parks in Europe. A verdant ocean in the very heart of the city; a place to relax and be inspired. Undulating lawns and flower beds filled with native and foreign plants alongside historic buildings that take you back to the golden age of horticulture. With its gentle lines, the park has a very distinct 19th century atmosphere.

Contemporary flowerbeds, woodlands and the magnificent collection of roses also make the park of interest from a modern-day perspective. There is no doubt that from the very beginning The Garden Society of Gothenburg has been an oasis for the people of Gothenburg.







In front of the fountain and the restaurant, c. 1900.

# HISTORY

Filled with inspiration from the famous botanical gardens in Greifswald and Berlin, Captain Henric von Normann returned to Gothenburg with a dream of founding a horticultural society. He wanted to create a place in the city where he could establish a botanical garden and where people interested in gardens could meet.

The year was 1840 and there was a burgeoning interest in flower cultivation and horticultural art. Throughout Europe, garden societies were being founded and in von Normann's case the Royal Horticultural Society in England served as a model. The people of Gothenburg had for more than a century and a half lived in a city surrounded by solid granite walls. Now they were longing for a haven to which they could retreat. Captain von Normann soon managed to persuade people to listen to his ideas. Pehr Christopher Westring, a senior physician at Sahlgrenska Hospital, acted as spokesman for this band of enthusiasts.

## A PARADISE TAKES SHAPE

In order to finance the founding of the park, a 'Share Subscription' was set up, resulting in the middle classes becoming financially involved in the beautification of their city. Architects and landscape gardeners set about transforming what was in effect an area of marshland.

The rolling lines of English horticultural art were intertwined with the botanical beauty of the German school. The city authority allocated land and The Garden Society of Gothenburg was founded in 1842.

The park had extensive sales of seeds and plants and it became one of the country's foremost garden centres. The floral splendour of the park was accompanied by beautiful sounds from the music pavilions and cafes served Swiss-inspired confectionery, the likes of which were seldom seen. Even today the park is a sensory delight. The Garden Society of Gothenburg has been declared a listed historical site under the Cultural Heritage Act and is run entirely in accordance with ecological principles.

Top: Music Pavilion, 1860s

Left: Sowing grass, 1920s

Right: Kaptan Henric von Normann, 1850s







# THE PALM HOUSE

Built in glass and wrought iron, the Palm House is a glittering work of art in the centre of the park. Modelled on the famous Crystal Palace in London, it has been a popular place to visit since 1878. Almost 1,000 square metres in size, you can take in the tropical heat and at the same time behold a rich array of exotic plants – including palms of course.

The Palm House is divided into five sections: the Nave, the Mediterranean House, the Camellia House, the Tropical House and the Water House. It brings together a wide variety of plants from foreign parts with a distinct feeling of a bygone era, contrasting starkly with the stylised ideals of contemporary garden design.

## History

Georg Löwegren, a landscape gardener and director of The Garden Society of Gothenburg from 1860 to 1916, was determined that a large and magnificent greenhouse should be built in the park in keeping with the fashion of the times. He succeeded in bringing his ideas to fruition despite the huge cost it would entail. In London, Crystal Palace in Hyde Park was inaugurated by Queen Victoria as part of the World Exhibition in 1852. It was to become the model for many greenhouses, including the Palm House at The Garden Society of Gothenburg.

## Delivered in sections by sea

Löwegren managed to convince the financiers and he travelled to Scotland where the Palm House was built. From the very outset he knew that his beloved palms would have place of honour. The building was delivered in sections by sea and in autumn 1878 the completed construction proved to be quite a sensation. The admission fee was 50 öre on Wednesdays and Saturdays and 25 öre on other days. Despite the high cost of admission, the people of Gothenburg came in their thousands.

Top: Victorian water lilies in the Water House  
Left: Entrance to the Palm House with its summer flowerbeds  
Right: Blooming camellias in the Camellia House







# FIND YOUR WAY IN THE PARK

## WOODLANDS

- A Ulf Nordfjell, Stockholm
- B The Garden Society of Gothenburg
- C The Garden Society of Gothenburg
- D Heiner Luz, Germany
- E Rune Bengtsson, SLU Alnarp
- F Piet Oudolf, Holland



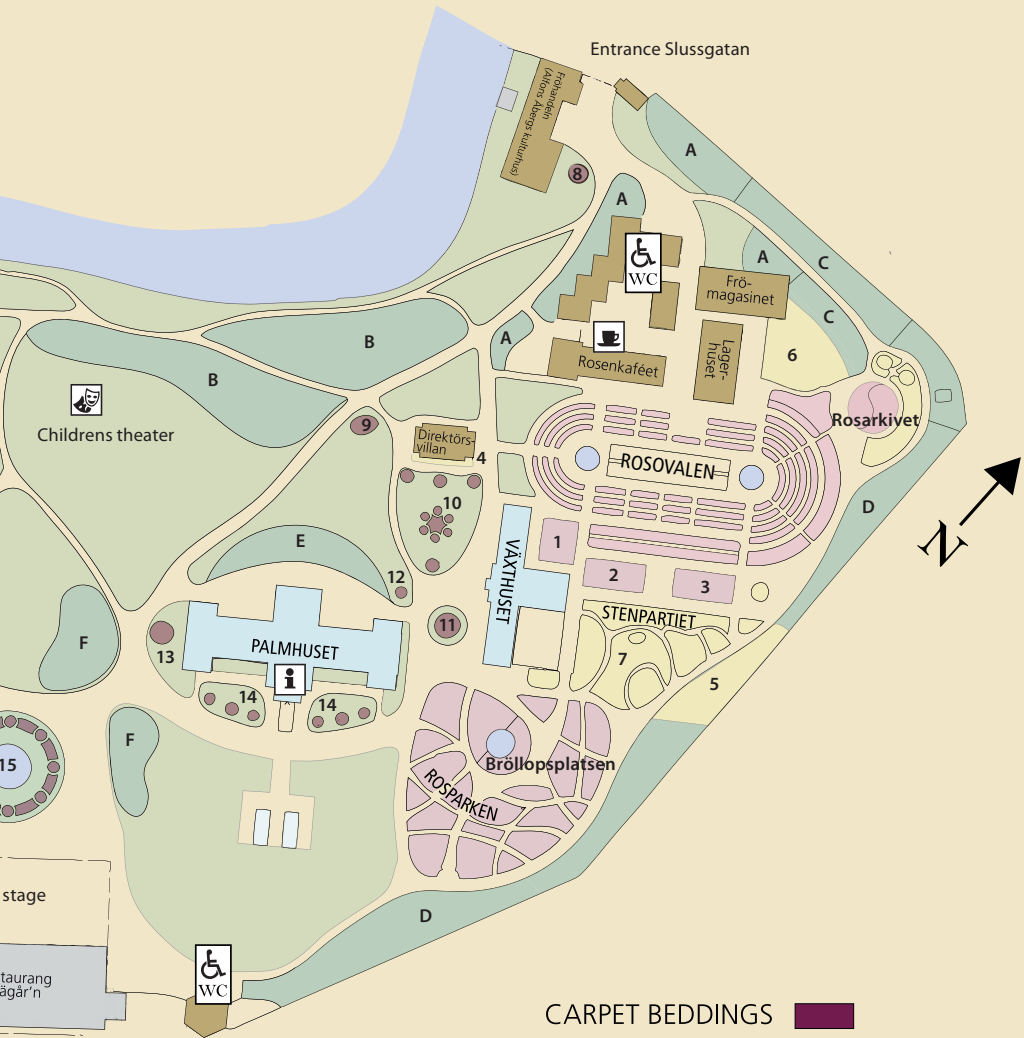
## HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

- Fröhandeln (Seed boutique)
- Alfons Åbergs kulturhus (Alfie Atkins' cultural centre)
- Frömagasinet (Seed warehouse)
- Lagerhuset (Storehouse)
- Direktörsvillan (Director's house)
- Växthuset (Glass House)
- Palmhuset (Palm House)

## THE ROSE GARDENS

- Rosovalen (Rose Oval)
- Moderna rosor (Modern roses)
- Rosparken (Rose Park)
- Gammaldags rosor (Old fashioned roses)
- Rosarkivet (Rose Archive)
- Västsvenska rosor (West swedish roses)
- 1 Greetings from the kings garden
- Jane Schul, Danmark (Denmark)
- 2 The sunken garden
- Nina Thallinsson & Gert Wingårdh, Göteborg
- 3 Dutch rose garden
- Piet Oudolf, Holland





Entrance Nya Allén

## OTHER GARDENS

- 4 **Espalier border**  
The Garden Society of Gothenburg
- 5 **Rhododendron garden**
- 6 **Butterfly garden**  
The Garden Society of Gothenburg
- 7 **Rock garden**  
Amateur gardening society

## CARPET BEDDINGS

- 8 **Woodland border**  
Ulf Nordfjell, Stockholm
- 9 **Guest border**
- 10 **The shield**  
The Garden Society of Gothenburg
- 11 **Agave border**  
Ulf Nordfjell, Stockholm
- 12 **Cactus border**  
West swedish cactus society
- 13 **Exotic border**  
The Garden Society of Gothenburg
- 14 **Palmhouse borders**  
Park- and Landscape Administration, City of Gothenburg
- 15 **The fountain borders**  
Park- and Landscape Administration, City of Gothenburg
- 16 **Serpentine borders**  
Park- and Landscape Administration, City of Gothenburg

# GOTHENBURG ROSARIUM

The rose, the queen of flowers, has for a long time held a prominent position at The Garden Society of Gothenburg. In 1987, the Rosarium was created with the aid of plant donations from Göte Haglund, a clergyman with a magnificent rose collection. Today the park can boast one of the foremost rose gardens in Northern Europe. Each summer, 1,200 different roses bloom in the Gothenburg Rosarium.

The Swedish Rose Society looks after and renews the wild rose collection at the Rosarium.

## **Modern, old-fashioned and west of Sweden rarities**

The Rosarium consists of three sections. The modern roses are arranged into groups at Rosovalen. The old-fashioned roses are collected in Rosparken, where they exist in perfect harmony with perennials such as salvia nemorosa and nepeta. Rosarkivet contains a collection of roses from the west of Sweden, which are part of a conservation project – Programme for Cultivated Diversity. The Rosarium is run ecologically and insecticides are not permitted to harm humans or animals. Birds are excellent for keeping pests at bay and they are rewarded with attractive bird boxes placed throughout the park.

## **Celebration of the rose**

Each summer, at the beginning of July when the roses are at their most beautiful, The Garden Society of Gothenburg arranges a rose party. It is then that the queen of the flowers is celebrated with exhibitions, seminars, sales and entertainment.

Top: The Rose Oval with The Store House in the background  
Left: The sculpture Dimman in The Rose Park  
Right: Nostalgia in The Rose Oval







## CARPET BEDDINGS

The English garden ideal of the 19th century advocated soft, natural lines and flowerbeds. What are termed 'carpet-beddings' provided a sharp contrast in the form of strictly geometrical and controlled creations. The Garden Society of Gothenburg became one of the parks where carpet-beddings were to become a major attraction. They have now begun to reappear in contemporary form.

## WOODLANDS

In a woodland setting, the choice of plants is not limited to domestic species or those that only grow naturally in situ. Horticultural art is given a free rein.

Sometimes known as shadow gardens, the woodland consists of several layers. The upper layer is made up of the crowns of the trees, the bushes form the middle level and the perennials, bulbous plants and ground cover make up the lowest level.

## ROCKERY

Rare and unusual plants form this truly exciting horticultural gem with a large collection of trillium, primulas, blue wood anenomes and paeonia mlokosewitschii. The rockery is cared for by the association Trädgårdsamatörerna (TAG).





## BUILDINGS

Many of the 19th century buildings in the park still remain. They give the park charm and splendour even if certain buildings are used for purposes quite different to 150 years ago. Certain buildings are available for hire for parties and conferences.

## PLAYGROUND

The playground in the park is a place where the magic of childhood meets the restful verdancy of the park. Everyone can find their own special place among the elves, slides, illuminated eggs, bamboo trees and winding gravel paths.

The playground opening hours are the same as the park.

## SCULPTURES

The Garden Society of Gothenburg contains both classic and modern sculptures. The majority have been placed in the park in conjunction with sculpture exhibitions. The aim of the sculptures is to create a varied and exciting experience for visitors.

**Left-hand side:** Red rudbeckia in Piet Oudolf's woodland  
The rockery in the eastern section of the park

**Right-hand side:** The Director's House with carpet-beddings in the foreground. The playground with an elf sculpture in the sandpit.



# EVENTS

The Garden Society of Gothenburg is not just a park but also a venue for different events. Exhibitions, concerts and talks take place all year round.

You can read more about what is happening in the park on the website.

## Regular activities

### Camellia weeks

In the west wing of the Palm House, the camellias bloom in vivid shades of pink, red and white. They are at their most beautiful during the first weeks of February.

### Midsummer celebrations

Dancing around the Maypole, making flower garlands and singing. Welcome to a traditional Midsummer celebration in a true 19th century setting.

### Celebration of the rose

Each summer, at the beginning of July when the roses are at their finest, a rose party is arranged when the queen of the flowers is celebrated with exhibitions, seminars, sales and entertainment.

### Plant exhibitions

Each spring and autumn the park arranges an exhibition. Sometimes well-known horticultural personalities are invited to attend.

Left: Traditional Midsummer celebrations

Right: Jubilee Exhibition in the Greenhouse by Gunnar Kaj





## RENTING

Renting a building in The Garden Society of Gothenburg is something very special. The location of the park in the very heart of Gothenburg is enhanced by the beautiful setting. If you are in search of a glittering glass palace then the Palm House could be the answer. For large groups, Lagerhuset is an excellent alternative. The sunken outdoor garden is ideal for small workshops or talks. If you are a couple looking for a wedding venue that is definitely out of the ordinary, we have a very special place in the garden for you – Bröllopsplatsen.

**Left:** Tables laid in preparation for festivities in Lagerhuset  
**Right:** The round pond at Bröllopsplatsen



## ENTRIES

Slussgatan (opposite Drottningtorget),  
Södra Vägen (opposite Kungssportsavenyn) and Nya Allén.  
Free entrance to the park and Palm House.

## OPENING HOURS (PARK)

May-september.....daily 7 am to 8 pm

October-april.....daily 7 am to 6 pm

## OPENING HOURS (PALM HOUSE)

June-august.....daily 10 am to 8 pm

September-may.....daily 10 am to 4 pm

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The Garden Society of Gothenburg belongs to  
the City of Gothenburg.