

*Spring Gardens & Chateaux in France*  
*A Botanical Tour*  
*presented by Jensen Horticulture*

*Departing: 12<sup>th</sup> May 2004*

Experience the beauty and elegance of spring flowers, parterres and fine gardens of English and Italian style in the enchanting country of France. Visit One of Europe's most renowned flower exhibitions at Courson. See the magnificent gardens of the Sun King and his court, Monet's garden in Giverny, grand chateau gardens, and various private and public gardens in and around the Loire Valley.

**Your Tour Escort: Elizabeth Tree-Smith** is a well-known Brisbane based teacher in vocational horticulture. She specialises in landscape design ornamental and amenity horticulture. Her qualifications are in horticulture, landscape design, education and technology. Her knowledge and experience inspires her students to strive for perfection in their careers and to further their botanical knowledge.

Elizabeth has lived and worked in London, Sydney and Queensland, and has drawn on these experiences to further enhance her knowledge of gardens and plants of the world. During her travels, she has visited and studied ornamental gardens in Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland, Holland, New Caledonia, France, Japan and Canada. Elizabeth has a passion for rare, beautiful and unusual plants. Her favourite gardens include the plantings, and water features around Chinese follies in the English and French period pieces.

## YOUR ITINERARY

### *Paris*

#### **Wednesday 12 May, 2004. 1st day**

*Check into hotel from 16.00 hours (4pm) onwards. About 19.00 hours (7pm) arrive in the lobby for Champagne with your Tour Leader and to meet with fellow tour members, before the Welcome dinner. Overnight stay at the Duminy Vendôme Hotel.*

### **Paris Bagatelle Park - Luxembourg Gardens.**

#### **Thursday 13 May, 2004. 2nd day**

*Breakfast. Meet your guide ready for the day. Depart by bus for the Bagatelle. Lunch at the Victor Hugo Bistro at the end of the visit. Leave for the Luxembourg Gardens. Return to the hotel. A free evening for dinner and time at your leisure. Overnight at the Duminy Verdôme Hotel.*



**Bagatelle Park** - The result of a bet between Marie-Antoinette and the Count of Artois, who had acquired the field in 1775, this park was almost miraculously completed, in sixty-four days! Here you will discover: quaint bridges, rocks, caves, mirrors of water, artificial cascades, gigantic trees, an araucaria of Chile, species of conifer from 150 million years ago, and a whining beech 140 years old. Towards the basin of the Nymphaea, are enamelled lotus, water lilies and a Chinese style pagoda dating back to the 19th century.

**Gardens of Luxembourg** - This was the first French garden to be influenced by the Italian Baroque. The Luxembourg has long been seen as a quintessential Parisian park and remains very popular. It was designed for another Medici princess, Marie, who became Queen of France.

### *Versailles*

#### **Friday 14 May 2004. 3rd day: (45 km).**

*Breakfast. Depart for Versailles. Visit the Palace and the gardens. Lunch at leisure. Return to the hotel after the visit. Transfer to Montmartre for dinner at the Crémaillère Restaurant, and afterwards attend the late show at the Moulin Rouge. Return to the Hotel Duminy Vendôme for the night.*



**The Palace of Versailles** is one of the most visited sites in France and famous for its immense size. The palace began as a 'modest' hunting lodge, built by Louis XIII in 1623, and was transformed by the architect Jules Hardouin Mansart, under the guidance of Louis XIII's son, Louis XIV, into a grand palace complex surrounded by lavish French and English style gardens designed by André Le Nôtre.

## ***Courson Flower Exhibition - Giverny***

***Saturday 15 May, 2004. 4th day: (160 km).***

*Breakfast. Have your luggage ready for departure to the Courson to enjoy the displays. Wander through the grounds and lunch at your leisure. Depart for Giverny. Dinner and overnight at the Hotel Mt. Vernon.*



**Courson 'Les Journees des Plantes'** are held in the grounds of the lovely Domaine Courson, near Paris, each May and October. This is a very special garden event with extravagant nursery displays, especially of roses and exhibits from the manufacturers of garden furniture, arbours, garden tools, clothing etc. Domaine Courson is a classical chateau and quite beautiful.

## ***Giverny - Colombiers du Plessis - Mont Saint Michel***

***Sunday 16 May, 2004. 5th day: (400 km).***

*Breakfast. Have your luggage ready for departure to the American Museum of Giverny and the Gardens of Monet. Lunch at the Moulin de Fourges at Giverny. After lunch depart for Colombiers du Plessis for a visit to the Renaudies Gardens. Leave for Mont Saint Michel. Dinner and overnight stay at the Travellers Hotel Fougères or Best Western Montgomery.*



**Monet's garden**, like his impressionist paintings, is a bold mix of colour and texture. Roses are planted extensively -- but do not dominate the garden. The pallet of plants is diverse and seasonally, vast underplantings of tulips, daisies and nasturtiums put on their show. The water garden with its famous Japanese bridge, wisteria and pond of water lilies is not to be missed.

## ***Mont Saint Michel - Le Châtellier - Fougères***

***Monday 17 May, 2004. 6th day: (60 km).***

*Breakfast. Have your luggage ready for departure to Mont Saint Michel. Wander through the town with your Guide and lunch there at your leisure. Leave for Châtellier for a visit to the Haute Bretagne Floral Park. Afternoon tea at the Park and then depart for Fougères. Dinner and overnight stay at the Traveller's Hotel.*



**Mont St Michel** - Perched on a rocky islet in the midst of vast sandbanks exposed to powerful tides between Normandy and Brittany stands the 'Wonder of the West', a Gothic-style Benedictine abbey dedicated to the archangel St Michael, and the village that grew up in the shadow of its great walls. Built between the 11th and 16th centuries, the abbey is a technical and artistic *tour de force*, having had to adapt to the problems posed by this unique natural site.

## *Fougères - Saumur - Chinon - Tours*

*Tuesday 18 May, 2004.7th day: (320 km).*

*Breakfast. Have your luggage ready for departure for a visit to Saumur. Lunch at your leisure, then continue your visit through the rose gardens.*

*Leave for Rivau Chateau to visit the buildings and gardens. Arrive at Tours for dinner and overnight stay at Hotel Turone.*



**Chateau de Saumur** Built at the junction of the Loire and the Thouet rivers, the former Carolingian city is known for its fortifications built by Thibault, the Count of Blois, in the 10th century. In 1026, the town passed into the hands of the Count of Anjou.

**Rivau Chateau** is 15<sup>th</sup> Century and has been recently restored. Its 'Gargantua vegetable garden' and its forest decorated with giant sculptures rival each other for their poetic appeal.

## *Tours - Villandry - Azay le Rideau - Chenonceau*

*Wednesday 19 May, 2004.8th day: (120 kms).*

*Breakfast. Depart for a visit to the Gardens of Villandry and then to the Chateau of Azay le Rideau.*

*Lunch at Fournil near Azay le Rideau, then visit the Chateau of Chenonceau. Dine and stay overnight at the Hotel Turone.*



**Villandry** is an elegant castle from the Renaissance period. This wonderful castles is also famous for the magical beauty of its gardens laid out by the famous landscape gardener Doctor Carvallo, it was also develop with the Italian Renaissance style. At that time, Italian gardens were characterized by a geometric layout and a typically architectonic taste.

**Chenonceau** is arguably the most beautiful Chateau of the Loire Valley, straddling the Cher river and built for Henri II's favourite mistress, Diane de Poitiers.

## *Tours - Chaumont sur Loire - Cheverny - Blois*

*Thursday 20 May, 2004.9th day: (100 km).*

*Breakfast. Have your luggage ready for departure to the Chaumont Chateau on the banks of the Loire River. The theme for the Chaumont Chateau gardens for 2004 is the 'Order and Chaos of the Gardens'. Lunch will be on site. After lunch continue on to the Cheverny Chateau to visit the buildings and park. Afterwards we travel to Blois for dinner and an overnight stay at the Relais of the Octroi Hotel.*



**Loire Valley, known as "the Garden of France"**, was the favourite residence of Kings of France during the Renaissance period. They made this peaceful countryside the setting for their dreams. Thus was born the Renaissance in France...

**Cheverny** is one of few fully furnished Chateaux in the Loire Valley, and still inhabited by the same family since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

## *Blois - Chambord - Orchaise - Blois*

*Friday 21 May, 2004. 10th day: (70 km).*

*Breakfast. Leave for a visit to the Chambord Chateau and Blois. Lunch on the way then depart for the Botanic Gardens to Priory d'Orchaise. Return to dine and stay at the Relay of the Octroi Hotel.*



**Chambord** is the largest chateau on the Loire, an architectural monument of vast proportions and varying styles. The most striking feature is the double spiral staircase, designed by Leonardo da Vinci. The grounds themselves are full of deer and wild boar and are virtually the size of Paris.

**The park botanic of Priory d'Orchaise** has over 2000 species of trees from around the world. Visitors will appreciate the compositions of peonies, magnolias, roses, cherry trees and ponds full of lotus and water lilies.

## *Blois - Paris*

*Saturday 22 May, 2004. 11th day: (185 km).*

*Breakfast. Have your luggage packed for departure to Paris.*

*Bon Voyage!*

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