

Welcome to Untermyer Gardens

Once called America's most spectacular garden, Untermyer Gardens was created in 1917 by Samuel Untermyer (1858–1940) on the grounds of his Greystone estate overlooking the Hudson River. It was designed by William Welles Bosworth, the architect who had designed Kykuit, the nearby Rockefeller estate. Today's garden comprises 43 cultivated and woodland acres and combines exceptional horticulture, monumental architecture, and multicultural design in a majestic natural setting.

History

Born in Lynchburg, Virginia, to a German-Jewish family, Samuel Untermyer moved in 1868 with his siblings and widowed mother to New York City, where he was a brilliant student and graduated from City College and Columbia University's law school. A progressive who campaigned for women's suffrage and economic reform, fought antisemitism, and led the American resistance to Adolf Hitler as early as 1933, he became one of the most successful lawyers in America. He married Minnie Carl (d. 1924), a Christian and German-American, in 1883. Minnie became an influential patron of the arts who brought Gustav Mahler to serve as conductor of the New York Philharmonic and hosted numerous performances of music, dance, and poetry in the garden's amphitheater.

Untermyer purchased Greystone in 1899 from the estate of Samuel J. Tilden, a former New York State governor. Passionate about horticulture, he expanded the property to include 150 acres that were maintained by 60 gardeners and supplied by 60 greenhouses. He sought to build "the finest garden in the world" on its steep slopes with architectural elements from various civilizations and historical periods. Untermyer had always wanted it to become a public garden after his death. The City of Yonkers acquired 16 acres in 1946 and a further 27 acres in 1996, but it could not afford to care for the garden, and it suffered a long decline. The Untermyer Gardens Conservancy was founded in 2011 to reclaim its lost splendor.



History

Scan the QR code to learn more.



Gardens

The Untermyer Gardens Conservancy

The Untermyer Gardens Conservancy, a nonprofit organization, works in partnership with the City of Yonkers to restore, enhance, and interpret Untermyer Park and Gardens, which welcomes more than 150,000 visitors annually from all walks of life. The Conservancy raises funds to support its annual operations and capital improvements and delivers a range of educational and cultural programs, including classes and workshops, tours for adults and children, and concerts in the amphitheater. Our community outreach includes "Warblers on Warburton," a tree-planting initiative in historically redlined neighborhoods, the Youth Horticultural Initiative, which provides paid internships and career training to Yonkers public high school students, an enriched collaboration with the Yonkers public schools, and the annual Grand Holiday Illumination.

Although admission is free, the annual cost to care for this magical garden is \$14 per visitor. Your donation today will help the garden thrive. Donations may be made securely online at www.untermyergardens.org or mailed to the address below.



Connect with Us

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter to find out what's new in the garden, learn about programs and events, and enjoy photos and informative videos

Follow us on social media:

www.facebook.com/untermyergardens

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The richly illustrated book *Forgotten No More: The Restoration of Untermyer Gardens* chronicles the garden's progress. It may be purchased at www.untermyergardens.org.

Visitor Information

Full details are on our website, www.untermyergardens.org.



Admission:	Free
Hours:	Open daily at 9:00 am Last entry one-half hour before closing, which varies seasonally: May 1-Sept 15 7:00 pm Sept 16-Nov 4 6:00 pm Nov 5-Mar 9 4:00 pm Mar 10-Apr 30 6:00 pm
Closed:	New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas
Public Tours:	Sundays, April through October
Programs:	Visit our website for information on private and group tours, education programs, and concerts
Address:	945 North Broadway, Yonkers, NY 10701
Phone:	914-613-4502
Garden rules:	No bicycles • No pets • No ball playing • No drones No smoking • Picnicking and blankets in designated area only A permit from the Parks Department (914-377-6450) is required for professional photography and events.

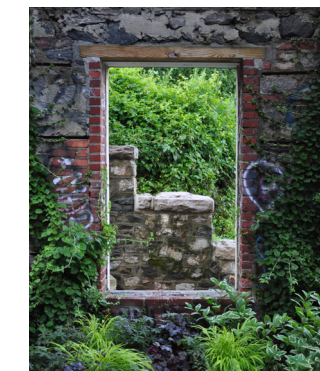


A Garden for the World

Multicultural in design, Untermyer Gardens alludes to gardens in Persia, India, Pakistan, Spain, and Italy and evokes the wonders of the ancient world. It operates on the highest level in terms of aesthetics, garden history, architectural history, American history, and even spiritual meaning. The theme of the Garden of Eden, a concept shared by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, resonates as a symbol of peace among different cultures. The life of Samuel Untermyer reinforces this reading, for he was a courageous reformer who not only created an extraordinary oasis of beauty but sought to share it with the public during his lifetime, opening it to the public once a week. Memorably, 30,000 people visited the garden on a single day in 1939. Today, Untermyer Gardens is one of the only great public gardens in America that is free to the public.



UNTERMYER PARK AND GARDENS *A Visitor's Map & Guide*



Cover: (top) *The Walled Garden* by John Jacono, (bottom) *The Temple of Love* by Annie Schlechter

This page: (top) *The Vista*, (left) *The Ruin Garden* by Jessica Norman

Self-Guided Tour

- 1. Walled Garden**—Based on the Garden of Eden as described in the Book of Genesis, the Walled Garden is the finest Persian garden in the Western Hemisphere. The crisscrossing canals symbolize the four rivers of Paradise, and the four land quadrants represent the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. The crenellated walls and corner towers, or “summer houses,” are traditional in Persian and Indian designs. The north-south axis terminates at an amphitheater flanked by two sphinxes sculpted by Paul Manship and set on cipollino marble columns, based on a similar feature in the Boboli Gardens in Florence, Italy. To the west, the Temple of the Sky stands above the Persian Pool and lower terrace. Mosaic work is showcased throughout the Walled Garden and refers to designs at Tiryns and ancient Roman villas. *Wheelchair accessible.*
Horticultural features: Aquatics (*June-Sep*); Canal borders: bulbs (*April-May*), mixed annuals (*June-Oct*); Hydrangea Borders (*June-Oct*); Lilacs (*May*); container plantings (*June-Sept*); Historic trees: Blue Atlas Cedar, Japanese Maples, Katsuras, Weeping Beeches
- 2. The Vista**— An inconspicuous doorway in the north loggia of the Walled Garden’s lower terrace opens to a breathtaking staircase leading down toward the Hudson River. At the bottom, two monolithic ancient Roman columns in cipollino marble frame the view.
Horticultural features: Japanese Forest Grass (*May-Oct*); Japanese Cedars; a historic Kentucky Coffee Tree (one of the largest in New York); container plantings (*June-Sept*)
- 3. Garden Remnants**—To the north, the Vista was originally bordered by six Color Gardens; a Rose and Dahlia Garden was situated at their western base. Only the bottom two Color Garden footprints are visible today—the rest of these extensive gardens have been built over or lie in total ruin.
- 4. Ornamental Vegetable Garden and Orchard**—With its restored pergola and parterre layout, vegetables and fruit trees are planted in a formal configuration with an eye to aesthetic beauty. The garden is tended by student interns from Yonkers public high schools.
- 5. Rhododendron Walk**—A densely planted Rhododendron Walk (*May-June*), with a colorful and textured understory of perennials, recalls the famous rhododendron collection that formed part of the

1. Temple of the Sky



5. Rhododendron Walk



4. Ornamental Vegetable Garden



10. Rock and Stream Garden



Photos: John Jacono



original gardens and leads visitors from the Ruin Garden to the historic gardens above.

- 6. Ruin Garden**— The roofless Gate House at the intersection of the Old Croton Aqueduct and the Carriage Trail is now a Ruin Garden with a grotto. Graffiti inside the walls of the Gate House was intentionally preserved as an artifact from a troubled time in its history. Below it are two distinctive sculptures of a lion and a unicorn. Nearby are architectural stone fragments that vandals tumbled down the hill from the Vista Overlook.
- 7. Woodland Trail**—A wood-chipped trail heading southeast from the bottom of the Vista leads gradually uphill, where one fork crosses the Carriage Trail toward a spectacular rock folly, the Temple of Love, and the other leads down to the Switchback Fountain. Another trail sweeps around the southern portion of the woodland.
- 8. Carriage Trail**—The mile-long Carriage Trail intersects the Old Croton Aqueduct and Warburton Avenue and provides a less formal but rewarding approach to the gardens. At its upper terminus near the Temple of Love, through the trees to the south, one can see the old retaining walls of the terrace that supported the original Greystone mansion.
- 9. Temple of Love**—This stunning cantilevered aerie provides a glorious view of the Hudson River and Palisades and is the centerpiece of an extensive series of rock gardens. Waterfalls cascade through the rocks to the pool below, and the whole structure is elaborately planted. A narrow staircase of rock leads to the top of the Temple.
Horticultural features: Aquatics (*June-Oct*); Butterfly-friendly Beds (*May-Oct*); Cherry Bowl (*April-May*); Daffodil Hill (*April-May*)
- 10. Rock and Stream Garden**—To the north, a delightful watercourse flows over rocks and under stone bridges, terminating in the basin below the Temple of Love, creating a lovely symbiosis between the two gardens.
Horticultural features: Various woody plants with an eclectic mix of perennials (*April-Oct*); Serbian Spruce, Dawn Redwood, Blue Fir, and columnar yellow Juniper are living sculptures (*all year*); rock and prairie plants spill down along the stream (*April-Oct*)
- 11. Crescent Garden**—This entrance garden welcomes visitors with a wide array of deer-resistant perennials.