

RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show

4 - 9 July 2017

David Domoney's Insider Guide



Show Gardens

See some of the brightest stars in the horticultural world exercise their design talents at Hampton with a selection of incredible show gardens.



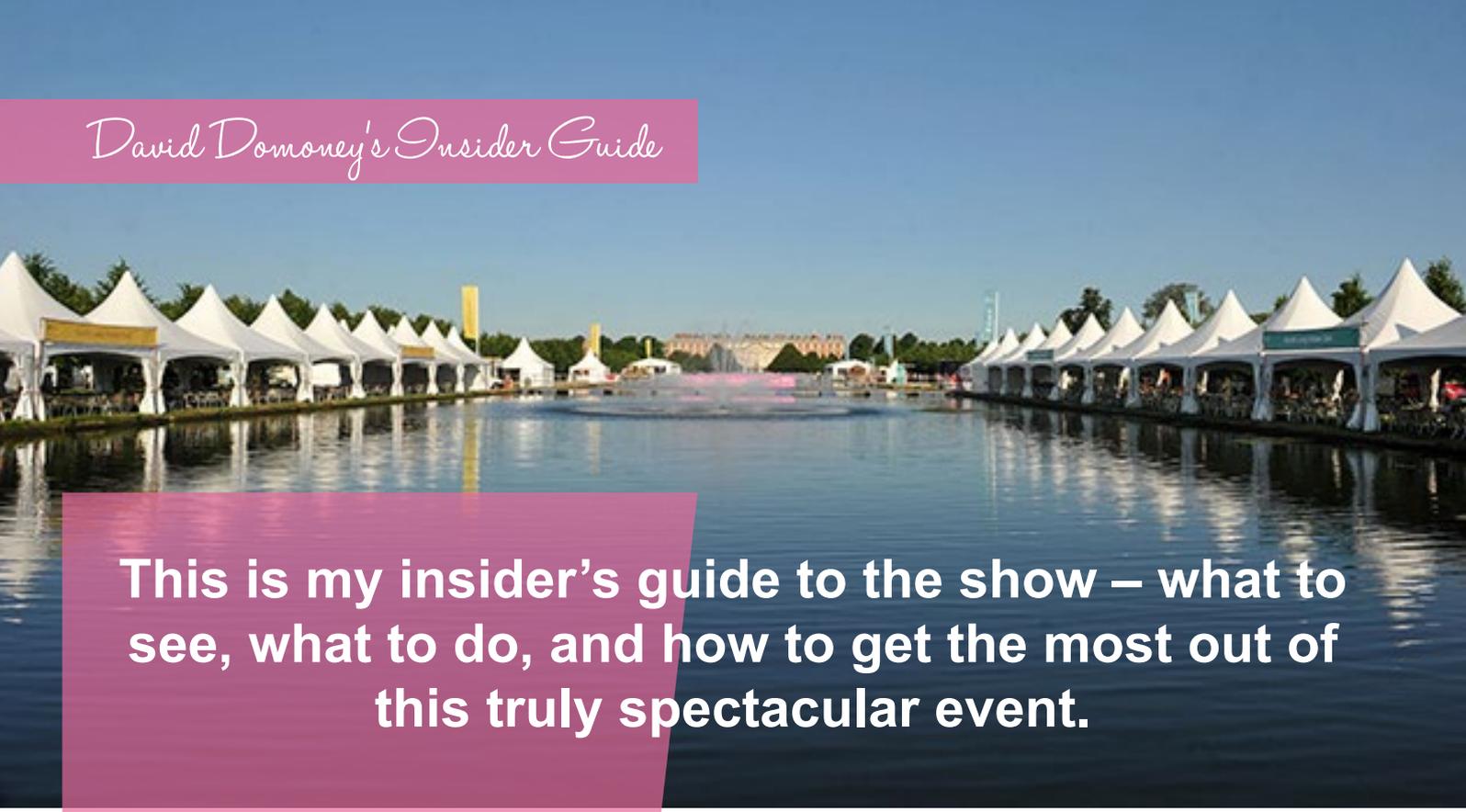
Floral Displays

Magnificent floral displays and a huge range of plants you can buy and take home - Hampton is the home of anyone who loves horticulture.



A Wonderful Day Out

Celebrity speakers, fabulous food, exciting shopping... there's no shortage of things to do at this wonderful show.



This is my insider's guide to the show – what to see, what to do, and how to get the most out of this truly spectacular event.

Set in the stunning 60 acre grounds of the palace, it has an open and relaxed atmosphere that can't be matched.

Did you know that Hampton is the largest annual flower show in the world?

The flower show itself stretches over 34 acres, and there's plenty to amaze and entertain all generations.

July is high-season for plants and everything looks at its glorious best. And, unlike at Chelsea, here you can buy direct from the floral exhibits.

With the Pimms flowing and the sun streaming down, it's the best summer party you'll attend all year!

I hope you have an incredible day out, and be sure to come and see me at the RHS Celebrity Theatre!



Fun Hampton facts...

Hampton by numbers:

539 exhibitors **27** years old

140,000 visitors

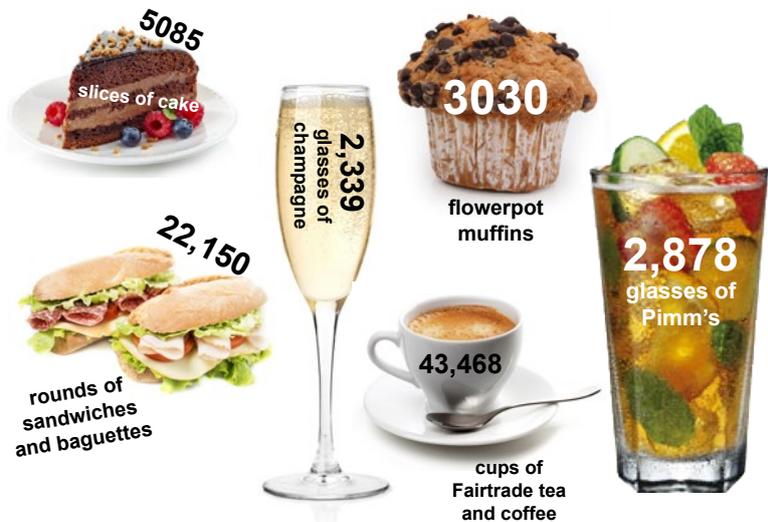
28 show gardens **6750m²**
floor area of the Floral Marquee



More flowers are sold per square mile at RHS Hampton than anywhere else in the UK.



During the 2016 show, visitors consumed:



Did you know?

Hampton Court Palace was King Henry VIII's favourite royal residence

size of the palace kitchen **36,000ft²**

600 number of people that were employed at the palace

The palace gardens are home to the worlds largest productive grape vine



Top 10 things to see and do

1 The RHS Celebrity Theatre

First up, have a look at the RHS Celebrity Theatre timetable. I'll be there, along with loads of friends and colleagues from the industry. We will be regaling stories and anecdotes from the television world, as well as sharing plenty of hints and tips on how you can make the most of your garden at home.

This year's line-up includes Michaela Strachan, Christine Walkden, Chris Packham, Alistair Griffiths, David Domoney, Ben Faulks (CBeebies' Mr Bloom), Charlie Dimmock, Pippa Greenwood, Helen Bostock, Justin Fletcher from CBeebies, and Martin Hughes-Games.

The first show starts at 11am each day and a celebrity will take to the stage every hour. *See the programme at the end of the guide.*

2 The Show Gardens

There will be many show gardens where you can experience and be inspired by some of the most exciting talent in garden design.

Some are small in size to show what you can do in a limited space, while others are much grander. But they are all incredible, with unique themes and stories behind each of them, as well as fantastic planting combinations, structures and hard landscaping.

It's well worth taking the camera and a pen and paper (or maybe just a smartphone these days) for you to note down some of those plant varieties that you may wish to include in your own garden.

Look out for the RHS Watch This Space Garden, where international award-winning garden designer Andy Sturgeon has created a series of interconnected gardens reusing and re-imagining iconic elements from the last decade of RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

3 The Floral Marquee

Just imagine thousands upon thousands of plants for sale, as well as the opportunity to meet the experts that actually grow them! Whether it is Japanese maples, bonsais, herbaceous perennials, shrubs, succulents... there's a whole host of them. The place is huge and packed out with great things.

And the special thing at Hampton, unlike some flower shows, is that you can buy all of the plants!

You will find rare beauties and old classics all displayed wondrously.

4 Festival of Roses

Every year this is one of my favourite exhibits - a whole marquee dedicated to the nation's favourite plant. There's climbers, there's standards, there's bush, there's miniature, there's ground cover... a whole host of exhibits from some of the best rose growers in the country. It will literally make your head spin.

It's an ideal opportunity to treat yourself to something or to buy someone a present. But it's also a unique chance to talk to some of the experts and glean some great info on how you can get the best out of your own roses.

Keep an eye out for the Plant of the year launched at the show this year - 'Rosa Lovestruck'.

5 Family Weekend

If you've got kids, bring them along on Saturday or Sunday for fun-filled days packed with awesome

activities.

The theme this year is 'A Walk On The Wild Side', and the amazing scarecrow competition will blow the kids away!

There's a Storytelling Bus, face-painting, a Bug Hunt interactive theatre experience, sowing seeds, Punch & Judy, and even children's cookery classes!

6 The Butterfly Dome

This is an amazing chance for you to walk through a wonderful tropical world with thousands of free-flying butterflies from all over the world - from Indonesia to South America. It's utterly mesmerising.

There's also a beautiful array of tropical vegetation, and it's perfect for taking marvellous photographs. Butterfly Guardians will be on hand to help you find out about their life cycle and what to plant to attract native types to your garden.

7 Country Living Marquee

Packed with beautifully crafted goods, it's always magical to get lost in the Country Living Marquee with its myriad of stands. You can find everything from pieces of art to gorgeous clothing and much, much more.

Definitely well worth a visit, whether you are looking to treat yourself or someone you care about.

8 Join Pimm's o'clock!

Hampton Court Flower Show is famous for its love of Pimms!

Pop into the special tents all around the showground and refresh your palate with a jug of Pimm's. There's nothing better to get you in a relaxed, summery mood!

9 Cook & Grow Theatre

Now summer's here, fruit, vegetables and salad crops are in abundance. So, in this theatre, celebrity chefs, bakers and food experts will be giving mouth watering presentations.

TV chef Jean-Christophe Novelli, Helmsley + Helmsley, and Great British Bake Off winner Frances Quinn are among the names offering entertaining demonstrations and inspirational ideas. Plus many are holding book-signing sessions.

10 Palace Garden Room

Sit down to eat in style at the heart of the show in the Palace Garden Room.

Enjoy the views over the Long Water with a refreshing drink and something to eat. It offers sandwiches, salads and cakes as well as a full afternoon tea.

All food at the show is provided by local producers – think English strawberries, breads and cakes from artisan bakeries in London and even local ale! Check out the Aspoll Suffolk Cyder and London Pride Bitter. Or try the tasty sustainable fish and chips.

RHS Celebrity Theatre



Michaela Strachan Christine Walkden Chris Packham Alistair Griffiths David Domoney Ben Faulks Charlie Dimmock Pippa Greenwood Helen Bostock Justin Fletcher Martin Hughes-Games

TIME	TUESDAY 4TH	WEDNESDAY 5TH	THURSDAY 6TH	FRIDAY 7TH	SATURDAY 8TH	SUNDAY 9TH
11.00am	Chris Packham	Michaela Strachan	Christine Walkden	Martin Hughes-Games	David Domoney	Justin Fletcher from CBeebies
12.00pm	Charlie Dimmock	Pippa Greenwood	Helen Bostock	David Domoney	Ben Faulks from CBeebies Mr Bloom	Alistair Griffiths
1.00pm	Chris Packham	Michaela Strachan	Christine Walkden	Martin Hughes-Games	David Domoney	Justin Fletcher from CBeebies
2.00pm	Charlie Dimmock	Pippa Greenwood	Helen Bostock	David Domoney	Ben Faulks from CBeebies Mr Bloom	Alistair Griffiths
3.00pm	Chris Packham	Michaela Strachan	Christine Walkden	Martin Hughes-Games	David Domoney	Alistair Griffiths
4.00pm	Charlie Dimmock	Pippa Greenwood	Helen Bostock	David Domoney	Ben Faulks from CBeebies Mr Bloom	-
5.00pm	Chris Packham	Michaela Strachan	Christine Walkden	Martin Hughes-Games	David Domoney	-

PREVIEW EVENING...
Come along and enjoy some
live music from 6pm onwards.

This timetable is subject to change, please check this board for updates before you take your seats.

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Royal
Horticultural
Society

supported by



I'll be joining some of the nation's best-loved gardeners live on stage at the RHS Celebrity Theatre supported by Everest Home Improvements!

www.everest.co.uk

Come down and see us for some good laughs and expert advice!



Basic information and facilities

GETTING THERE



Cycling

There are free bicycle racks at the Thames entrance.

Driving and Parking

Be aware that local traffic restrictions come into force as you approach the site, so follow the signs rather than your sat nav! Take junction 12 on the M25.

Showground parking costs £15 a day and can get very busy.

The Stud Gate (black) car park is on the A308 Hampton Court Road.

Hampton Court (green) car park is opposite the palace also on the A308.

Both can be prebooked by calling 0844 995 9664.

Rail and River

You can get the train from Waterloo to Hampton Court Station or Kingston Station.

From Hampton Court Station, the showground is a 15 minute walk or a short ferry ride. Ferry tickets cost £3.20 each way. I love sailing in on the Thames!

If you choose Kingston Station, the showground is a longer walk or a pleasant 30 minute ferry ride. The ferry costs £7.00 single or £8.80 return, and RHS members, children, and OAPs get £2 off the adult fare.

Visit turks.co.uk for more information.

Park and Ride

There is a park and ride facility for £8 at Apps Court Farm on the A3050, close to junction 11 of the M25.

Frequent courtesy buses run to and from the show all day.

Bus & Tube

This varies depending on where you're coming from, so your best bet is to go to:

**Hampton Court Palace,
East Moseley, Surrey,
KT8 9AU**

tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey

Basic information and facilities

PRACTICAL INFO AND EATING & DRINKING

Tickets

Prices vary depending on when you visit and whether you're an RHS member.

The show is open to RHS members only on Tuesday and Wednesday, and opens to the general public from Thursday to Sunday.

Entrance is cheaper after 3pm. Visit <http://rhshamptoncourtpalace.seetickets.com/> or call 0844 995 9664.

Plant Crèche and Porters

You can leave plants and product purchases at the north crèche at the top of the Floral Marquee, or at the south crèche by the Plant Heritage Marquee.

Porters are available from both areas to carry plants to the gate, car park or station if you need help.



Eating and Drinking

There's always loads to choose from, and all food and drink comes from local suppliers and is prepared fresh on-site.

Try one of the many food courts for hot and cold food and refreshing drinks.

For more of a sit-down meal, grab a table at the Allium restaurant, which offers a bistro menu as well as afternoon tea.

Alternatively, the Champagne and Seafood Bar by the Long Water is a really extravagant treat.

Seating

There is seating and a picnic area alongside the Long Water.

For more show info visit:
www.rhs.org.uk

How to make the most of your day

Top 10 Tips from flower show veterans

Use the facilities

At many flower shows there are porters – young guys and gals with wheel barrows that will be happy to help you get your purchases back to your car. Take advantage of it.

Some shows also have plant crèches where you can leave your plants so that you're not lugging them around all day.

Entertainment

There are often fantastic celebrity talks and entertainment at flower shows. Plan for it, and arrive early enough to get a good seat, grab a coffee and enjoy it.

It's good to break up your day and have a rest from walking and shopping at least every two hours. If you plan for it you can use the entertainment as a break to keep yourself from getting worn out.

Arrive early

Get in when the show opens and you will be able to see a lot of the features before the crowds pour in.

It's also a good idea to have lunch early. If you can eat around 12:00 the food vendors will be quiet, the food will be fresh, and the best seats will be available. Then, when you're finished you can enjoy the trade stands while the crowds are thinning out for their own lunches.

Research

Check out the show's website for information on what's going on at the show.

Print off a map of the site and mark the places you want to visit. This allows you to bypass all of that wasted time on the day talking about 'what are we going to do next?'

Also, talk to friends who have been to the show, and take advantage of any tips they may have on what's good, where to park, timings and so on.

Be practical

Comfort is key on a long day out, so dress to chill, not to kill. Check the weather report and be prepared for the temperature and any possible rain.

If the forecast is for scattered showers but it's dry when you arrive, go to the outdoor features first and save the marquees for later when it might be wet.

A wheeled shopping bag can also be helpful.

Try before you buy

Many of the food stands will be happy to let you sample goods such as cheeses and honeys before you buy them. Again, don't be afraid to ask before parting with your precious pounds.

Energy

Take breaks and keep food in your system for energy. Stop for a morning cuppa, a good lunch and an afternoon break too.

It's also good to carry a couple of energy or cereal bars for a quick fix.

Negotiate

If you're buying more than one plant, see if you can get a discount! There's no harm in asking.

On the last day they are very eager to sell. And the later in the day, the better the discount!

Hydrate

Stay hydrated – it helps avoid the afternoon slump. Be sure you have bottled water, and maybe an energy drink like Lucozade to perk you up.

Use the experts

Take along photos of your garden. There's always lots of very clever experts at flower shows that can help you with your own gardening conundrums, so take along some pictures of anything you might want help with.

It can also help to have a visual reference when selecting plants to buy.