

# Mediterranean Gardening Association – Portugal

ASSOCIAÇÃO DE PLANTAS E JARDINS EM CLIMAS MEDITERRÂNICOS



In Partnership with  
The Linnean Society of London and  
Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A.



INTERNATIONAL SPRING CONFERENCE 2015

## *The Portuguese Garden*

Past, Present and Future



MONSERRATE PALACE

Friday/Saturday/Sunday May 1 / 2 / 3 Estoril, Lisbon

Keynote Speakers – Jorge Paiva & Gerald Luckhurst

*“This event has been organised to reveal the unique character of gardens in Portugal, through their history, current projects and their future potential.”*

We invite you to learn more about the gardens of Portugal and the elements that have shaped them. We believe these gardens should be better known and have much to teach us about adapting to climate and conditions. The combination of historic and private gardens around Lisbon, and in Sintra with its special microclimate, give contrasts in landscape, style and vegetation.

The Mediterranean Gardening Association of Portugal gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement of our partners for this event.

**Parks of Sintra-Monte da Lua SA** Since 2000 PSML has managed Sintra's Cultural Landscape and the historic site of Queluz. In 1992, UNESCO extended the categories of World Heritage and added "Cultural Landscape". Sintra was the first cultural landscape in Europe, classified in 1995. PSML management involves recovery, rehabilitation, revitalization, conservation and research as well as opening them for public enjoyment and enhancing tourist significance. [www.parquesdesintra.pt](http://www.parquesdesintra.pt)

**The Linnean Society of London** [www.linnean.org](http://www.linnean.org) The Linnean Society has provided a forum for natural history since 1788 and aims to inspire and inform the public in all areas of natural history through its broad range of events and publications.

The many elements that shaped gardens in Portugal produced great garden architecture with colourful tiles, pools and shaded walks enclosed by high walls. The major development of gardens came in the eighteenth century in Lisbon, though some have suffered from neglect. The gardens around Sintra came later in the following century when a more natural landscape design was preferred, with plants adapted to both the climate and terrain.

The use of plants from all corners of the globe illustrates the influence of Portuguese history and we will show modern trends towards use of native plants for sustainable gardens together with the future potential for garden tourism to support development, use and appreciation of gardens in Portugal.

The Spring Conference will also offer an opportunity to see **wonderful wild flowers** and some **notable local private gardens** will be opened to delegates on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May and Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May. These are offered as an optional extension to the Conference weekend. **We are very grateful to the private garden owners who will open their homes and gardens to us.**

We will repeat the popular feature of **discussion sessions with our speakers**, when other well respected authorities on the plants and gardens that are the subject of the conference may also join us. We have a wonderful panel of speakers who are keen to share their knowledge and enthusiasm.

All presentations and talks will be in English.

This event will be open to other gardening groups in the Lisbon area. The Friends of Monserrate **Amigos de Monserrate** (<http://amigosdemonserrate.com/en>) Friends of Botanic Garden of Ajuda **Associação dos Amigos do Jardim Botânico da Ajuda** (<http://www.ajba.com>) and the Association for Historic Parks and Gardens in Portugal **Associação Portuguesa de Jardins e Sítios Históricos** (<http://www.jardinshistoricos.pt>)

## The Venue and Accommodation

The conference will be based in Estoril, the charming sea side town to the west of Lisbon. Our conference base is the Four Star Vila Galé Hotel, fully renovated in 2013, and in the centre of town, overlooking Tamariz beach and near to the famous Casino. Also close by is the train station on the main line that connects Cascais to Lisbon (Cais de Sodre).



Accommodation is in modern and comfortable hotel rooms. On site facilities include: an outdoor pool with a view to the beach and the Cascais Bay, a gym, a bar and a restaurant with a modern and sophisticated atmosphere and specialising in local dishes. The hotel is wheelchair friendly with disabled rooms and toilets.

Residential all-inclusive packages are available for the duration of the conference, with the option to extend your stay at favourable rates. Alternatively, arrangements have been made for day delegates, and for those who may wish only to attend part of the weekend.

The hotel is at the heart of Estoril, with easy access to all the facilities of the town and the famous promenade. There are a range of other excellent hotels within easy walking distance of our conference base. Estoril town attracts a variety of events such as film festivals and the legendary jazz concerts.

We have arranged reduced conference rates, which includes breakfast in the hotel. There are also restaurants & cafes close by. There will be kettles in the rooms for hot drinks and a minibar.

The hotel offers free Wi-Fi in all public areas with free Wi-Fi access for conference delegates also available throughout the hotel during the three days of our event included in the cost. There is also parking and a hotel garage.

More information on the hotel facilities at <http://www.vilagale.com/en/hotels/lisbon/vila-gale-estoril>  
Hotel location GPS N38° 42' 14.16' - W 9° 23' 48.38'

There are other hotels in Estoril, many within easy walking distance of our base. For alternative good quality accommodation and for any help finding accommodation in Estoril please let me know and I am happy to help with any more details needed. However, if you stay in another hotel, you will need to organise your own transport to and from the conference hotel. There is direct main line train access from Lisbon with links to the airport. Full details can be provided.

As our dates are also a Bank Holiday weekend you are advised to secure travel and accommodation as soon as possible. We have some rooms reserved at the Vila Galé that can be booked on a "first come first served" basis, and can advise on other hotels as needed.

If you wish to extend your stay there is much to see in the magnificent museums and city of Lisbon and in the lovely surrounding countryside. Estoril has been chosen to provide a good base for further visits.

**Information on local nurseries and garden centres, gardens and good locations to view wild flowers will be available at the Conference.**

**An excellent online flora of Portugal is available here [www.flora-on.pt](http://www.flora-on.pt)**

**Wildflower walks** information and ideas for further excursions  
<http://www.iberianwildlife.com/teresa-farino.htm#Teresa-Farino-Trips>

## CONFERENCE INFORMATION

### Speaker Profiles



**Dr Jorge Paiva**, eminent scientist and Portuguese botanist, was principal investigator in the Department of Botany, University of Coimbra, where he also taught. He worked for three years in London at Kew Gardens and at the British Museum of Natural History. He has travelled widely in Europe, particularly the Iberian Peninsula, also Macronesian Islands, Africa, South America and Asia, and has also visited Australia.

Dr Paiva is well known for his unambiguous defence of the environment, and is an active member of various associations and national and international committees. He was honoured in 1993 with the National Award of Quercus (National Association for Nature Conservation) and in 2005 with the Life Achievement Award of the National Confederation of Environment Protection Associations.

**Dr Gerald Luckhurst** is a well respected historic gardens consultant and landscape architect living and working in Portugal for the last twenty five years. Gerald wrote *'The Gardens of Madeira'* published in November 2010. He is an expert horticulturist and plantsman with an unrivalled knowledge of sub-tropical flora.



Currently he is working on Monserrate in Sintra, an historic landscape garden which was awarded the 2013 European Garden Award for the "Best Development of an Historic Park or Garden". Gerald will talk on the recovery and restoration of the historic gardens at Monserrate including the historic rose garden.



**Dr Cristina Castel Branco** is a distinguished garden historian well known on the international stage for her work in the restoration and management of historic landscapes. She teaches and works in Landscape Architecture and has her own company.

She also lectures regularly in the History of Art in Gardens, Landscape Ecology and the Restoration and Management of Historical Landscapes both at the University of Lisbon and academic bodies worldwide. She is the author of many books and papers on the history of gardens and landscapes and her

latest book is *Jardins de Portugal*, the result of many years research. This new book highlights 60 gardens carefully chosen to represent the best of the wonderful gardens in Portugal.

**Jean-Paul Brigand** After completing studies in Biology and Economics, he divided his time in Paris between financial mathematics (financial actuary) and his passion for gardens. In 2001 he and his wife Ann Kenny moved to the Alentejo coast in Portugal to start a garden. Over the last 10 years they have created a traditional Mediterranean garden with only edible or fragrant plants. The main collections are citrus (the largest collection in the south of Europe after l'INRA), pomegranates, mulberries (*Morus alba* & *M. nigra*), fig trees, abutilons, rare varieties of ginger, day lilies, desert fruits etc.



They accompany the work of planting with research on the use of old or not yet acclimatized varieties; how to grow them, cook them, store them, and then share this knowledge. Jean-Paul writes a monthly article on fruit orchards for the Portuguese gardening magazine *Jardins*. Blog at <http://olharfeliz.typepad.com>

Other speakers will be confirmed and all garden visits in the core programme will be with guides or owners.

## GARDENS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMME

The extensive gardens of **Quinta de Monserrate** were created in the mid-nineteenth century for an inspired English owner, Francis Cook. He encountered the shattered remains of previous historic buildings and plantings. The gardens are currently being restored with advice from Gerald Luckhurst. In the mid-1800's, Sir Francis Cook, a wealthy English textile merchant, came to Portugal and fell in love with both his future wife and Monserrate. He rebuilt the palace on Gerard De Visme's foundations, but this time it was a Moorish fantasy, now open to the public. With the help of a renowned English landscape-painter, William Stockdale, the botanist, William Nevill, and his head gardener, James Burt, he also created the masterpiece of Victorian naturalistic landscaping that Monserrate became. He bought much of the surrounding land, enlarging the property considerably. He brought in plants from all over the world, creating collections to represent the five continents. It truly became (from Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*) "A Glorious Eden", and enjoys world-wide fame.

**The Ajuda Botanic Gardens** (the first botanic gardens in Portugal) were created between 1765 and 1769 and were close to the royal palace in use at the time. Initially these gardens were created to educate the young princes but they were also used as a place of relaxation for the royal family. At the gardens' peak in the early 18th century more than 5000 species were on display. However, by the 19th century, the collection had dwindled to just 1200 species. In 1918, the gardens were handed over to the Agronomy Institute of Lisbon Technical University and restored to the way they were in 1869. From the entrance, a balustrade affords a view over the lower terrace which has four kilometres of box hedging arranged in two formal square parterres separated by an impressive fountain decorated with serpents and other aquatic forms. Following the raised walkway to the right of the lower terrace is a collection of plants laid out formally in eight regional sections according to their geographical origin, interspersed with big trees, some of which are now over 300 years old.

**Palacio dos Marqueses da Fronteira** This beautiful garden is distinguished by its great stairways, water tanks, coloured glazed tiles (azulejos) and decorative parterres. From the plan, one might think it a renaissance garden inspired by du Cerceau and dating from the 1550s and. In fact, as the exuberant detailing reveals, the garden was made in the 1660s. The water tanks have tile panels adding brilliant hues to the garden: terracotta, indigo, cerulean, turquoise, lemon-yellow. The Chapel Walk is an outdoor gallery with tiled panels showing allegories of the arts and sciences. Fronteira is perhaps the finest examples of a uniquely Portuguese approach to garden design: comfortable, grand, lush, intimate and brilliantly coloured. The Duke of Wellington lived here when defending Lisbon from Napoleon's army.

**SIGMETUM** is the first and only plant nursery dedicated solely to the native plants of Portugal. Eng. Filipe Tavares Soares and Eng. João Gomes will be our guides. This is a working nursery in the grounds of the Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Lisbon University. You will be shown all the stages of production and the collections of plants for various environments. Many of their plants are the result of wild collected seed to ensure only truly native plants are offered for sale. **They also offer seed for sale and this will be available at the conference. If you wish to order plants to collect** at the Conference you can request their plant list from contact email [info.sigmetum@gmail.com](mailto:info.sigmetum@gmail.com) Web site <http://sigmetum.blogspot.com/>

**Optional Garden Visits and Wildflower Walks** - If numbers for the garden visits and wildflower walks are sufficient we will organise transport at an extra charge, please let me know if you wish to take part.

### **Colares/Sintra Gardens Friday May 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Quinta da Fonte Velha** is a 12th century estate of 9.000 sq m with the main buildings dating from the 18th century. Restoration began in the 1960's with the aim to maintain the harmony between the house, garden and valley where it is situated. **Ambassador José Cornélio da Silva** has kindly agreed to our visit to the special garden he has created in Colares. The gardens are terraced with avenues of box hedges, fountains, belvedere, lemon tree lined walk and a row of cypresses which gives the garden a classic Italian and romantic atmosphere. Quinta da Fonte Velha, with its rich botanic collection, shows Monserrate's influence on the Quintas and Gardens in Sintra.

### **Monday May 4th**

**Francoise Baudry's garden** is an outstanding plantsman's paradise of 5 acres that is set on a sheltered hillside just outside of Sintra. The stage is set with magnificent mature trees that provide plenty of shade near the house combined with informal planting. Retaining walls create large terraces on the slopes which are linked by cleverly hidden stairs or sloping paths amongst the shrubbery. Near the house, the planting is lush and exuberant – an interesting mix of plants from Australia and New Zealand with palms, birches and plane trees – but as you move away from the house the planting becomes more restrained and natural. Winding verdant lawns near the house refresh the eye, and the numerous seating opportunities cleverly placed around the garden mean that the casual explorer has plenty of opportunity to rest and take in the views or just enjoy the ambience.

**Merren van der Tak** has taken to gardening after retiring from working in an office and is relishing the opportunity to try many different plants in her steeply sloping 15,000 sq m garden. Rolling pathways give access to the interesting areas made in the garden. She has retained many of the native trees and shrubs as background to her own experiments in planting. The garden is English in style but very Portuguese in content taking advantage of the special growing conditions.

Other gardens will be available and full details will be circulated.

**Wildflower walks** The Arrabida Mountain National Park is in the Setubal Peninsula to the south of Lisbon and makes an easy day trip. The Park covers 110 square kilometers and extends from the summit of the Serra da Arrabida, the highest point of the park at 500m, down to the rugged cliffs and great beaches of the Praia do Figueirinha and the Praia do Creiro. Dotted throughout the region are pretty villages, ancient religious chapels or monument and stunning panoramic viewpoints. One of the most popular hiking trails starts from the village of Palmela to the north east of the park. The hiking trail is called the Rota Moinhos (windmill path) due to the number of traditional windmills that are passed along the 13km route. This can be combined with a visit to the pretty sea side town of Sesimbra which is surrounded by the park. **Maps, directions and further information on request - All details and timings subject to confirmation. It may be possible to pair up with local members for those without transport.**

## Conference Programme

All timings subject to confirmation, full details will be circulated.

DATE	TIME	EVENT
<b>Friday 1st May</b>	11.00 – 16.00	Visits to private gardens in Colares, Sintra during day
		And/or wildflower walks
	16.00 – 17.00	Arrival of delegates at hotel Vila Gale, Estoril
	17.30	Welcome Reception
Cristina Castel-Branco	18.00-19.00	<b>TALK</b> Why Portuguese Gardens are special - Introduction to Portuguese Garden History
	19.30	Buffet Dinner
<b>Saturday 2nd May</b>		
Sonia Azambuja	10.00-11.00	<b>TALK</b> Botanic Gardens of Lisbon <i>to be confirmed</i>
	11.00-11.30	Coffee
Jorge Paiva	11.30-12.30	<b>TALK</b> Native Plants in Gardens, Case study School garden in Barcelos, 24 years of nature conservation
	12.30-14.00	Buffet Lunch
Cristina Castel Branco	14.00-15.00	Garden Visits Jardim de Ajuda
	15.00-15.30	Tea/coffee break at garden if possible
Gerald Luckhurst	15.30-16.30	Sigmatum and Garden Visit Palacio Fronteira
	17.00-18.00	Open Discussion, national garden register for Portugal ?
	19.30	Buffet Dinner
<b>Sunday 3rd May</b>		
Jean-Paul Brigand	10.00-11.00	<b>TALK</b> Garden Tourism in Portugal, the financial case
	11.00-11.30	Coffee
Gerald Luckhurst	11.30-12.30	<b>TALK</b> Monserrate Park, history and the future
	12.30-14.00	Buffet Lunch
Guides with groups	14.00-15.00	Garden Visits Monserrate Park and Palace
	15.00-15.30	Tea/coffee break at garden if possible
	15.30-16.30	Garden Visits Monserrate visit continues Rose Garden visit
	17.00-18.00	Open Discussion, Elements that make a Portuguese garden
	19.30	Buffet Dinner and end of Conference
<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May</b>	11.00 – 16.00	Visits to private gardens during day
		And/or wildflower walks