



# Plant List of the Pittock Mansion Gardens

*Pittock Mansion Gardens*

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### **Plant List of the Pittock Mansion Gardens** Pittock Mansion Gardens

A Garden of Splendid Vistas, Historic Roots... High on a hill, overlooking downtown Portland, the century-old Pittock Mansion commands views of Oregon and Washington, the magnificent peaks of the Cascade Mountains, mighty rivers, the city center—and gardens of great beauty and historic significance. The Mansion, built in 1909-14 by prominent Portland pioneers, Henry & Georgiana Pittock, stands on 46 wooded acres close to the heart of the city. Consummate businessman, Henry Pittock, who had crossed the Oregon Trail as a young man, built an empire that included the Oregonian newspaper and many other business ventures. He was an avid naturalist and mountaineer, a lover of gadgets, of plants and of family life. His wife, Georgiana, was an interesting and capable woman. The citizens of Portland--and especially gardeners--owe thanks to her for a quite fascinating contribution. In the 1880s, Mrs. Pittock encouraged her reluctant husband to tour the gardens of England, where she discovered roses in all their glory! Georgiana returned home, bringing with her to Oregon the concept of rose competition. In fact, the first judged event, and several to follow, was held in Mrs. Pittock's own yard. Roses soon captured the hearts and imagination of Portlanders, and streets were lined with the beauty and fragrance of roses as the city celebrated a rose "fiesta,"—today internationally known as the Portland Rose Festival. So from Georgiana's days a century ago, Portland has been known as The City of Roses, to her well-deserved credit! This is a city of gardens and green, with roses in center stage. For many years, the Pittocks lived in what is now downtown Portland, in rather modest surroundings. But in their later years, they embarked on the construction of their dream home--high on a hill overlooking the city center. In their 70s when the Mansion was completed, Henry and Georgiana had only a few years to enjoy this magnificent home, so refreshingly different from the Victorian structures of most of the city's elite. After Henry and Georgiana's deaths, the home remained in the family for several decades, until it was damaged severely in the Columbus Day storm of 1962. The citizens of Portland rallied to purchase and restore it. Today it stands high on the hillside, a treasured and beautiful house museum for all to enjoy. However by the late 1990s, the gardens surrounding it had failed to keep pace with the exciting interior restoration. They were standard city park fare, with repetitive beds filled with uninspiring annuals, a different color each year. In the late 1990s, a trickle of change began. Taking a cue from Sleeping Beauty, the gardens awakened. With creative vision and persistence, the staff of the Portland Parks & Recreation Department and a dedicated team of Oregon State University Master Gardener volunteers have created a garden that delights the senses, gives a nod to the splendid history of Pittock Mansion, and showcases Portland's treasured landmark. This Plant List was written as a training tool for Pittock garden guides and volunteers. It lists most plants in each of the various gardens, with brief notes about horticulture or history. It also serves as a handy self-tour guide to the gardens, as well as a reference manual for those wishing to recreate the ambiance of the Pittock Mansion garden in their own landscape.

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