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### **RALEIGH'S "SCENT-UAL" GARDENS**

Raleigh, N.C. (April 2008) – Greater Raleigh Parks & Gardens have the unofficial motto, "Trees, Tees and PhD's," and for good reason. With more than 150 Raleigh, North Carolina parks, gardens, lakes and greenways in Raleigh alone, there are plenty of places to enjoy the scenery and see why the area was dubbed as America's No. 8 Great Garden Cities in an issue of Garden Design Magazine.

Enjoy the mild Raleigh weather and take a tour with Master Gardener, Tony Avent, the renowned author of the book, "*So, You Want to Start a Nursery*," and numerous magazine articles and awards to his credit, including Nursery Innovator of the Month Award, Robert Balentine Horticulture Award, and American Horticulture Society Outstanding Commercial Award. He's also the mastermind behind Juniper Level Botanic Gardens in Raleigh, NC, featuring hard-to-find garden perennials.

Nestled over five acres, **Juniper Level Botanic Garden** features unusual aquatics and perennials and more than 11,000 different plants. Here, Avent evaluates plants for their adaptability to the Southeastern climate and propagates them for sale at Plant Delights Nursery. Avent's research and breeding programs, specializing in hostas, have yielded such introductions as Hosta "Elvis Lives" and Hosta "White Wall Tire."

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## *Raleigh's Great Gardens/2*

Special open house events allow garden enthusiasts to witness this wonder in person, although guests calling far in advance can arrange private tours. [www.plantdelights.com](http://www.plantdelights.com)

“Tony’s Tour” also features Raleigh’s other distinctive gardens.

- The eight-acre, nationally-acclaimed **J.C. Raulston Arboretum** at NC State University boasts the most diverse collection of plants adapted for landscape use in the southeastern U.S. The spectacular 300-ft. long Perennial Border is a collage of color and texture. The Arboretum is also home to the world’s only collection of **Dwarf Loblolly Pines**; and the **Nandina Collection**, imported from Japan, is one of the most extensive compilations of the broad-leaved evergreen shrub in the nation. For some practical insight, don’t miss the **Model Gardens** (Townhouse, Water, Reading, and Butterfly), packed with simple ideas to implement at home. Formal tours are available to the public, free of charge, every Sunday at 2:00 PM from April-October. <http://www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum>
- The **North Carolina Executive Mansion** gardens continually evolve, framing the 1891 Queen Anne-style home with an old-fashioned Rose Garden, a Southern Victorian Garden, and practical kitchen, vegetable and cut flower gardens. Artwork by North Carolina artists -- including wooden sculptures by Clyde Jones, and birdbaths by Virginia Bullman -- accents garden areas. Tours of the garden are available each spring. <http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/capitol/exec/gardens.htm>

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### *Raleigh's Great Gardens/3*

- The **Martha Franck Fragrance Garden**, on the grounds of Governor Morehead School for the Blind, features a fragrance and texture-oriented garden, while the **Raleigh Municipal Rose Garden**, with more than 60 varieties of roses, provides aromatherapy, Raleigh-style. <http://www.nccu-vitp.net/FranckGarden/>
- The **Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Gardens**, with its life-size statue of Dr. King and a water monument honoring pioneers in the civil rights movement, set amidst 8,000 flowers, remains the nation's only public park solely dedicated to the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. <http://www.king-raleigh.org/pgms/gardens.html>

While in Raleigh, the city's historical gardens are also a must-see.

- The spectacular **Ellen Mordecai Garden** is recreated from first-hand descriptions of the Mordecai kitchen garden in the 1830s. It contains vegetables, herbs and flowers that were grown in the mid-19th century and arranged in squares of raised beds. *Admission for the home tour is charged. \$6 Adults, \$4 youth ages 7-17, under 7 free. (919) 834-4844.*
- Another historic treasure is the **Raleigh Municipal Rose Garden**, sweetly nestled in a residential neighborhood near N.C. State University. Its 1,200 roses of 60 different varieties are in bloom from late May until autumn. Seasonal flowers include bulbs, annuals, trees and shrubs. *Admission is free. (919) 821-4579.*
- The oldest garden in the city, the **Joel Lane House Gardens**, stems back to the 18th-century, and features espalied fruit trees and pomegranate trees. Brick walkways lead the visitor through the wonderfully fragrant full-scale herb garden. *Admission is free. (919) 833-3431.*

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## Raleigh's Great Gardens/4

In addition to gardens, Raleigh premier parks welcome visitors from around the nation each year.

- **Durant Nature Park**, north of Raleigh, offers self-guided trails, including a walking tour of the interpretive butterfly garden and the one-mile Beavers of Sawmill Lake loop. *Admission is free.* (919) 870-2871.
- Hike right into the heart of the woodlands at the **William B. Umstead State Park** with 20 miles of hiking trails that wander through a pine and hardwood forest. *Admission is free.* (919) 571-4170.

The public can also view:

- **The Hobbit Garden**, as noted in *The New York Times*, is a theatrical and intriguing landscape comprised of secret paths, whimsical collections of dwarf plants, needle-leafed evergreens and pools of flowing water. The garden is also home to unique hybrids, such as the evergreen dogwood. Home to more than 2,000 plants, The Hobbit Garden is dedicated to collecting, testing and designing with rare and unusual dwarf plants. This world-renowned garden is known for demonstrating intensive planning for small urban properties by creating naturalistic environmental settings. By appointment only.

The Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business. For a free visitors guide or more promotional information, call toll-free (800) 849-8499 visit [www.visitraleigh.com](http://www.visitraleigh.com), or e-mail [visit@visitraleigh.com](mailto:visit@visitraleigh.com). That's "City Life, Carolina Style."

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