

The ARS/DRG 2018 International Rhododendron Conference in Europe

Registration begins Sept. 1st at ARS2018.org. It is limited to ARS members until Nov. 15th.

Overall Description of the Conference

The 2018 ARS Convention will be hosted by the Deutsche Rhododendron Gesellschaft (DRG) in Bremen, Germany. There will be three optional tours before the Convention and one optional tour after the Convention. The first pre-tour in the Netherlands will be hosted by the Dutch Chapter of the ARS and will start on Monday, May 7, 2018, in Amsterdam. The second pre-tour in Germany will be hosted by the DRG, and the third pre-tour in Denmark and Sweden will be hosted by the Danish and Swedish Chapters. The post-tour in Finland will be hosted by the Finnish Chapter. Attendees are responsible to make their own way to the first hotel for each option and to make their way home from the last hotel they stay in. All tours connect with the next tour. Visit <http://ARS2018.org/> to learn more about the tour options, the tour gardens, the hotels, the speakers and registration. The organized activities in sequence are:

1st Pre-Tour: May 7 to May 12, 2018, Netherlands: starting in Amsterdam and ending in Bremen, it will visit Dutch Gardens including Keukenhof Gardens. It will be hosted by the ARS Dutch Chapter.

2nd Pre-Tour: May 12 to May 14, 2018, Germany: starting and ending in Bremen, Germany, it will visit RHODO 2018 Rhododendron Festival in Westerstede, Germany and the famous Hobbie Rhododendron-Park on May 13. It will be hosted by the DRG. This tour overlaps with the next pre-tour and visits Hachmann's Nursery & lunch on May 14. Those not continuing to Denmark will be returned to Bremen.

3rd Pre-Tour: May 13 to May 20, 2018, Denmark & Sweden: starting and ending in Bremen, it will visit public and private gardens in both Denmark & Sweden. It will be hosted by both the Danish & Swedish ARS Chapters. This tour includes an overnight in Bremen on the 13th before leaving for Denmark on the 14th, with a stop at Hachmann's Nursery en route. If you are also on Pre-Tour 2, you will receive a credit.

ARS six-day Convention in Bremen, Germany, from May 20 to 27, 2018: including three tour days to German gardens, programs by an international array of speakers, and the annual meetings of both the ARS and the DRG. It will be hosted by the DRG. The night of May 20th is included.

Post-Tour: May 27 to May 31, Finland: starting in Bremen and ending in Helsinki, it will visit gardens in Finland. This tour includes a train from Bremen to Hamburg, air from Hamburg to Helsinki, and hotels and travel in Finland. On the morning of May 31, participants must book their own travel plans from Helsinki. This tour will be hosted by the Finnish Chapter of the ARS and the Finnish Rhododendron Society.

Hotels: Attendees are responsible to be at the hotel where their tours start on the starting date and to make their own reservations home after the finish date. If the choices are **NOT** contiguous, guests must arrange their own lodging for the missing nights. The first hotel on each tour, the hotel where tours connect and the last hotel on each tour are:

Pre-Tour 1, Holland: starts May 7 at Hampton by Hilton Hotel, Schiphol/Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Pre-Tours 2 (Germany): starts May 12 at Swissotel Bremen, Bremen, Germany.

Pre-Tours 3 (Denmark/Sweden): starts May 13, Swissotel Bremen, Bremen, Germany.

ARS Convention: starts May 20 at Swissotel Bremen, Bremen, Germany.

Convention: ends May 27 & Post-Tour to Finland starts with transfer from Bremen to Helsinki.

Post-Tour, Finland: ends May 31 at Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Helsinki, Finland.

Gardens on Pre-Tour 1: Netherlands, Dutch Chapter ARS (see Summer 2017 JARS)

Zaanse Schans Village, in Zaandam, has a collection of well-preserved historic windmills and houses. It features a bakery museum, clog warehouse, cheese factory, and pewter foundry. Very photogenic.

Keukenhof Gardens, in Lisse, is said to be the most beautiful spring garden in the world. More than seven million tulips, daffodils and hyacinths fill over 32 ha (79 acres) with color and fragrance.

Plantentuin Esveld Nursery, in Boskoop, raises an enormous variety of plants. Nowhere else in Europe will you find as many different garden plants. Their rhododendron collection covers 2.5 acres.

Arboretum Trompenburg, a botanical garden in Rotterdam, hosts a large collection of woody and herbaceous plants. It is situated 13 feet (4 m) below sea level. Canals and pumps are used to drain the land.

Dr. Lou Traas' Garden, in Balaricum, is a relatively small garden that astonishes and amazes many visitors. A small stream meanders through his woodland garden. Afterwards, we visit historic Utrecht Old City Center.

Fort Hoofddijk Botanic Gardens in Utrecht provides an unparalleled unique collection of thousands of plant species from all around the world. Fort Hoofddijk's rock garden is one of the largest in Europe.

Van Gimborn Arboretum, in Doorn, holds many national plant collections, including conifers (particularly *Tsuga*), Ericaceae (*Rhododendron* in particular), Aceraceae, Euonymus, Magnolia and more.

Appeltern Gardens, in Appeltern, provide an exhibition of garden design with over 150 model gardens. It has a large plant collection and designs by well known Dutch garden designers, landscape architects and authors.

Arboretum Belmonte, in Wageningen, is one of the largest botanical gardens in the Netherlands. It has 1500 rhododendron species, the largest rhododendron collection in the Benelux region.

Palace Garden of Het Loo, in Apeldoorn, was the royal summer palace of the Netherlands until 1975. Today it is a state museum. The 17th century gardens of Het Loo are fully restored in the original Baroque Dutch style.

Gardens on Pre-Tour 2: Germany, DRG (see Fall 2017 JARS)

Hobbie Rhododendron Park Westerstede, is Germany's largest rhododendron park. More than 250 rhododendron species and several thousand varieties of rhododendrons are grown.

RHODO 2018, Westerstede, Europe's largest rhododendron festival, transforms the cozy center of the town of Westerstede into a magnificent garden of rhododendrons and azaleas once every four years.

Hachmann Nursery, Barmstedt, is the most important European hybridizer of rhododendrons and azaleas! Holger offers 600 rhododendron varieties, 300 of which they hybridized. Following we will have lunch.

Gardens on Pre-Tour 3: Denmark & Sweden, Danish and Swedish Chapters, ARS (see Fall 2017 JARS)

The Danish private gardens of Jørgen Jørgensen in Rens, of **Finn & Linda Bertelsen** in Farsø, their **Ai Xin Garden**, a very Chinese inspired garden with a lot of rare species, and of **Maren & Søren Tang** in Hadsund, where we will have lunch in their very large garden with lots of rhododendrons.

Bangsbo Botanical Garden's Rhododendron Valley, Frederikshavn, was planted in 1990. Established rhododendrons were moved to a place under a lime tree. They began to thrive so well that there was a basis to expand with more rhododendrons. We will have dinner at the Møllehuset Restaurant.

Gothenburg Botanic Garden in Gothenburg is about 40 ha (100 acres) with about 16,000 different plant species. The Rock Garden has received two stars in the Michelin Green Guide. Other sights include The Rhododendron Valley and the Japanese Glade, where we will have lunch afterwards.

Torsten Nilsson Garden, Mölle, consists mostly of rhododendron, with 80-year-old *R. catawbiense* and young plantations of hybrids and wild species, totaling about 400 rhododendrons and 150 varieties.

Sofiero Castle Garden in Helsingborg is claimed to be "Europe's most beautiful park" and a place to enjoy the thousands of rhododendron plants. The castle is located above the rhododendron ravine.

Kronborg Castle, Helsingor, is the castle Shakespeare made famous in Hamlet, and is situated at the narrowest point between Denmark and Sweden. Castle life in the 1600s is reenacted.

Nivågård Park, Copenhagen, was designed by Edvard Glæsel and laid out in 1901–02. Svend Hansen will show us the large rhododendron garden that was established there in 2007.

Kjeld Didreksen and his wife near Aarhus have a big garden with lots of rhododendrons, and a lot of dogs. He has a big garden with about 180 rhododendrons, all cataloged.

The Zen Garden in Odder is based on Japanese Zen philosophy. We are going to have lunch at the Zen-garden, and this will be a typical Danish lunch with open sandwiches and coffee and home-baked cake.

Henning Andersen's garden in Svinninge is a very large garden and nursery.

The private gardens near Copenhagen are of Mogens Bendix with an historical background, as the garden is very close to an old fortress that was used in the defense of Copenhagen; **of Svend Hansen in Kernehuset** with lots of rhododendron species, where we will stay for lunch and coffee while enjoying the large garden; **of Lulu Tophøj**, a large private garden where we will have coffee; and of **Jørgen Halse**, a long time member of ARS who helped setup the Danish Chapter in 1973, whose has lots of rhododendron species..

Asperup gård courtyard garden and gallery is located on the Island of Fuenen, Denmark. It's a species garden with 400 rhododendrons, 250 different magnolias and more than 500 other plants.

Gardens at the ARS/DRG 2018 Convention, Germany (see Summer 2017 JARS)

Bremen Rhododendron-Park, Bremen, began in 1933 at the initiative of the German Rhododendron Society. It has the world's second largest collection of rhododendrons and azaleas with about 600 species and subspecies (including vireyas in a large conservatory) and more than 3300 cultivars.

Zu Jeddoloh Nursery, Edewecht, is a world-class container nursery and an old Ammerland garden with deciduous trees, conifers, rhododendrons, roses, and perennials.

Park of the Gardens, Rostrup, has a collection of about 2000 species and hybrid rhododendrons in a flowering frenzy beneath the shade of giant trees, with over 9000 labeled plants.

Van den Berk Nursery, Rastede, is dedicated to the cultivation of rhododendrons and azaleas. They produce over 180 species of large-flowered rhododendrons, *R. degronianum* subsp. *yakushmanum* hybrids and azaleas.

Schröder Nursery, Dringenburg, has large flowered varieties, *R. degronianum* subsp. *yakushmanum* hybrids and deciduous azaleas. They have one of the largest rhododendron collections in Europe with about 2000 varieties and species.

Bruns Rhododendron-Park, Bad Zwischenahn, has more than 1000 species and hybrid rhododendrons and azaleas. The Bruns set up the collection in the 1950s to study the characteristics of individual varieties.

Gardens on Post-Tour: Finland, Finnish Chapter ARS (see Spring 2017 JARS)

Haaga Rhododendron Park was established in 1975 as a plant breeding experimental site. Now the park attracts visitors to admire its thousands of huge rhododendrons and beautiful azaleas.

Porvoo Old Town was founded in 1346; Porvoo is one of six medieval-style towns in Finland and is a colorful and charming city with narrow cobbled streets, wooden houses, and a riverfront setting.

Arboretum Mustila in Elimäki is famous for its rhododendrons and azaleas, especially in the Rhododendron Valley with its hundreds of different species and hybrids.

Sapokka Water Garden, in Kotka, offers many things to admire throughout the year. In the spring, there are tens of thousands of flowering bulbs, and in the early summer, rhododendrons and azaleas come into bloom.

Fuksinpuisto Park, also in Kotka, was established in 1995 as a test planting area for azaleas from the Finnish azalea hybridizing program. Later the plantings were diversified with other plants.

Iloa Arboretum, in the Salo countryside, demonstrates landscaping that enhances the diverse natural Finnish landscape and includes ponds, rock garden, exotic trees and about 2000 rhododendrons and azaleas.

Arboretum Apaskeri, located in Kustavi in the southwestern Finnish archipelago, has hundreds of rhododendrons, trees and shrubs in the forest and along the shores of this private Arboretum.

Kristian Theqvist's private Rhodogarden has black peat soil that is perfect for rhododendrons, with over 1000 rhododendrons and azaleas below a canopy of pines. *R. tomentosum* grows in its bogs.

Convention Speakers

Nils Blatt & Gesa Gärtner, Germany: "Contemporary Gardening with Rhododendrons in Germany"

Kenneth Cox, Scotland: "Woodland Gardening-Landscaping with Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Magnolias and Camellias" and "Rhododendron in art, music, and daily life."

Steve Hootman, USA: "The search for new Rhododendron introductions in the outlying regions of south-central and eastern China"

Don Hyatt, USA: "The Crazy World of Rhododendrons"

Ole Jonny Larsen, Norway: "Plant hunting between Lapponicas and Lamas in Sichuan"

Seamus O'Brien, Ireland: "In the footsteps of Augustine Henry in China and Joseph Dalton Hooker in Sikkim"

Ulrich Pietzarka, Germany: "Rhododendrons in Primorje - Exploring the species of the Russian Far East"

Rama Lopez-Rivera, England: "A Quest for Perfection - Plant-hunting on the Pacific Rim"

Dr. Hartwig Schepker, Germany: "Rhododendron expeditions in the past & today" and "Rhododendrons in Europe"

Jürgen Schlenz, Germany: "Ammerland: The world's largest rhododendron production area"

Matthias Ulrich, Germany: "Rhododendrons as medical plants"

ARS 2018 ARS European Convention Registration starts September 1st

All arrangements have been made for the ARS 2018 Convention in Bremen and its tour options in Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland and posted at <http://ars2018.org>. The pricing is posted at <http://ars2018.org/packages.php> and in the chart below. The tour descriptions are posted at <http://ars2018.org/gardens.php>. The speakers are posted at <http://ars2018.org/gardens.php>.

Registration begins September 1st at 12:01 am

Registration for ARS-members only will begin on Sept. 1st and extend until Nov. 15th. The registration form will be made available on September 1st at 12:01 am at <http://ars2018.org/registration.php>. The registration form can be filled out on line and emailed to the registrars; or printed, filled out, and mailed or FAXed to the registrars. If you are unable to print the form, a local print shop should be able to help you. The form will also be in the Fall Journal of the ARS. However, that won't be available until around October sometime. Upon registering you will receive an acknowledgement of your reservation and the expected billing in Euros which you can also figure out for yourself from the website.

Tours may be cancelled if a minimum is not met or may become full if the maximum is exceeded.

The actual billing will be delayed until we know for sure we have met the minimum number on each tour and you will be notified if we have exceeded the maximum for any tour you have selected. We will wait-list any tour that fills up in case new hotel rooms and bus space is found. We will let you know if there is a gap, that is if a tour is full after your first tour and the convention where you would have to make different plans. In that case, you will have the option to change your reservation. Once you receive your bill, we expect payment within 30 days, but no later than Nov. 15 for early bird (ARS-members only) registration.

All registration will be handled by the North American Registrars.

All registration is being handled by the North American registrars for both North America and Europe and anywhere else in the world. All fees will be charged into Euros. However, we will have a secure online PayPal billing system that will bill the correct amount in your local currency to your credit card. For those unable to make payments online, we have an alternative where we will come up with an amount in your currency and you can mail a check or money order in your currency to the registrars and it will be converted into Euros and deposited into a convention bank account in Euros.

Checks will be held until we are sure space is available

In case we need to make any refunds, we will hold checks and money orders until we are sure the space is available. We may get back to you, returning your check and asking for a lesser amount if some tours fill up. The convention should not fill up, but some tours may fill up. The minimum is between 40 and 45 for tours. The maximum is about 45 to 50 before we start wait-listing and try to open up more space. If a tour has met or is approaching its maximum, we will post this on the website and to the convention email list.

Add all desired	Dutch Pre -Tour 1	German Pre -Tour 2	Danish-Swedish Pre -Tour 3	Convention in Bremen	Finnish Post - Tour
Dates	May 7-12	May 12-14	May13*-20	May 20-27	May 27-30
Cost (Euros)	1,018 € double 1,325 € single†	292 € double 398 € single†	1,236* € double 1,730* € single†	1,855 € double 2,279 € single†	1,325 € double 1,547 € single†
Check to Add††	<input type="checkbox"/> check to add	<input type="checkbox"/> check to add	<input type="checkbox"/> check to add	✓ Mandatory	<input type="checkbox"/> check to add

* German Pre-Tour registrants receive a 70 € credit double, 140 € credit single for the night of May 13.

† Double means per person double occupancy. Single means per person single occupancy.

†† If choices are not contiguous, you must arrange your own lodging the missing nights. If you would like travel agent assistance arranging additional lodging or booking your flight, indicate under remarks.