

In 1899 Samuel Untermyer purchased the stately Greystone manor on the banks of the Hudson River, and in his forty-one years of stewardship transformed the gardens and greenhouses into some of the most celebrated in America. The magnificent gardens sprawled over 150 picturesque acres and were maintained by 60 gardeners, supplied by 60 greenhouses. Today these enchanting public gardens encompass 43 acres and continue to be brilliantly restored in partnership between the City of Yonkers and the Garden Conservancy to rave reviews from the garden-loving public.

Samuel Untermyer's stated ambition for the garden was that it be no less than "the finest garden in America." Unlike most wealthy garden owners of the era, Untermyer was expertly knowledgeable and passionate about horticulture. The level of horticulture at the Untermyer Gardens was nationally famous, and was a training ground for many notable gardeners. The gardens today display a dazzling array of plant specimens planted in multi-layered beds showcasing their textures, colors and habits to delight in all seasons.

While there are several distinct sections within the park, the Walled Garden is truly the grand centerpiece. Entering the main gate in the towering walls, one passes between two massive weeping beech trees which form a living curtain, giving way to the first view of the paradise beyond. It's Indo-Persian inspired rectangular layout is divided into quadrants intersected by four waterways with fastigate beeches forming a backdrop along two walls. At the apex is an amphitheater framed by two soaring Corinthian columns crowned with Sphinx figures, a columned promenade to each side and a koi pool below. Magical summer evening concerts are held in this amphitheater.

The Temple of Love sits on a formidable rock outcropping overlooking the Rock and Stream Garden with peak-a-boo views of the Hudson River. A tunnel carved in the roughhewn rock leads visitors through the garden below to the Temple gazebo above. The setting is enchanting and in the tradition a garden folly.

Not to be missed is The Vista walk. This broad stone stepped stairway evokes the Appian Way as it descends down to an outlook platform perched above the River. Framed with classical columns, the walkway is bordered by a special cultivar of tall Japanese Cedars with variegated ornamental grasses at their feet. The view across to the cliffs of the Palisades will be resplendent with autumn colors when you visit.

All of these special gardens and more await you during your tour of the famed Untermyer Gardens.