

BEHIND THE GARDEN GATE

Charleston Horticultural Society The Garden Conservancy's National Open Days Program

May 26 and June 2, between 10:00am and 4:00pm

A special Spoleto Festival USA collaboration with Charleston Horticultural Society and The Garden Conservancy, Behind the Garden Gate features self-guided tours through 16 of Charleston's most exquisite private gardens.

THE CHARLESTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY (CHS) is Charleston's pre-eminent organization offering a wide array of programs, garden tours, one-of-a-kind special events, and publications—all aimed at lifting the sights of those interested in gardening and the quality of gardens throughout this, one of the nation's most beautiful planted cities. Founded in 2000, CHS has grown to more than 1,300 members, many of whom contribute to activities that enhance Charleston's greenscape, as well as its educational and cultural life. From monthly lectures and workshops with renowned experts to intimate tours of some of Charleston's most extraordinary gardens, CHS brings excitement, innovation, and a sense of joy to those just discovering an interest in gardening, to the keenest profession—and everyone in between.

In conjunction with Spoleto Festival USA, CHS is participating in The Garden Conservancy's popular Open Days program, which fuels the passion for gardening by inviting visitors behind the garden gate in some of the country's best private gardens and encouraging conversation with fellow gardeners. On two consecutive Saturdays (May 26 and June 2), guests can tour eight private gardens; different gardens are offered on each day. These gardens are rarely open to the public. CHS has a growing and dedicated volunteer corps, receives extensive local press coverage of its events, and offers a variety of publications—in print and on the internet. Its website, Chashortsoc.org, has details.

THE GARDEN CONSERVANCY is a national nonprofit dedicated to saving and sharing outstanding American gardens. Since 1995, Open Days, its award-winning experiential garden education program, has welcomed more than one million visitors into thousands of inspired private landscapes—from urban rooftops to organic farms, historic estates to innovative suburban lots—in 41 states. To augment self-guided tours of private gardens, site-specific Digging Deeper programs invite participants to take a closer look at the garden world with a wide array of experts. Hundreds of volunteers help this robust annual program showcase regional horticultural and stylistic expressions in a national context, celebrating the rich diversity of American gardens. Visit gardenconservancy.org for more information. Get out and get inspired with Open Days!