



Eastham Garden Tour

HOMEOWNER'S HANDBOOK



 Cape Cod
Hydrangea Festival

CREATIVE GARDENS OF THE OUTER CAPE

Dear Homeowner,

Thank you for joining us in our celebration of the Gardens of Eastham. As a part of the Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival, Eastham has developed a well-deserved reputation for its unique gardens. Our homeowners who have shared their gardens in the past have found it to be an extremely rewarding experience, an opportunity to share their garden and their love of gardening with others. Our garden committee has developed an extensive support system to take care of all of the garden tour details, allowing the homeowners to simply share with visitors their enthusiasm and the beauty of their garden.

Throughout the Homeowner's Handbook you will find background information that will answer many questions you might have about being part of our Garden tour.



*Welcome to our garden tour,
Eastham Garden Tour Committee*

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Previous tour comments by homeowners...

“Taking part in the tour was enormously gratifying. I valued the opportunity to share information about plants and design principles, and felt validated for all the hard work of creating my garden. An added bonus was having local artists spend the day painting in my garden. I appreciated their vision and enjoyment of the garden, and had a chance to purchase their work, a unique gift and family keepsake.”

Garden Tour 2019

“It’s an opportunity to share our garden with others, answer questions on specific motivations for the design, selection of plants, challenges with diseases, wildlife, etc. I enjoy the interaction with visitors both local and from afar.”

Garden Tour 2018

“I had more fun than I ever expected! I loved planning for the day and thinking about sharing my garden with other people who also love gardening. And the day itself turned out to be great fun. It didn’t matter that I couldn’t answer all the questions about species. There was often someone else in the area who knew the answer. I was able to share the story of how the gardens expanded and evolved and also share a few of my little tricks to keep weeding to a minimum. I would recommend this to anyone.”

Garden Tour 2017

“As many gardeners do, we enjoyed sharing our garden with others at the 2018 Eastham Garden Tour. We met so many people who love gardening and were happy to share ideas, which gave us added enjoyment of our garden. It also made us realize how lucky we are to be a part of this community.”

Garden Tour 2018

Should I share my garden?

Homeowners may be interested in joining our tour but wonder if their garden is “tour worthy.” Here are some guidelines for deciding if you should offer to open your landscape to visitors. No garden will have all of these features and even one may be enough to make your yard worthy of joining the tour. Both professionally and homeowner designed or maintained landscapes are welcomed.

- **An abundance of flowers in July** People love seeing flowers bloom, no matter what type of flowers they are. You don’t have to have Hydrangeas even though the Eastham Garden Tour is a part of the Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival.
- **Outside living space** Fire pits, gazebos, attractive patios, tree homes, outdoor kitchens, and any other garden “rooms” are always of interest.
- **Plant collections** If you are a gardener with a collection of a particular type of plant, visitors find that appealing.
- **A beautiful view or a sense of place** If your property is on the water or has a particularly special Cape Cod feel, visitors enjoy seeing how the landscape flows into that vista or reflects this seaside location.
- **Edible landscaping** A large vegetable garden, berry bushes or herb garden is always interesting especially if it is well maintained.
- **Art and ornaments** Yards that make use of garden ornaments, from traditional items to repurposed or funky, can be a draw.
- **Unusual architecture or charming outbuildings** Yards and gardens that compliment these structures are popular. Think delightful cottages, unique sheds, gazebos, or greenhouses.
- **Huge and grand, or preciously small** An unusually large landscape or a very tiny jewel-box garden could be of interest to the public
- **A particular theme or philosophy** Native plant gardens, pollinator gardens, container planting, or other niche landscapes attract visitors.



What to expect as a participating homeowner

On garden tour day our Eastham volunteers play an important role in the success of our tour. They welcome visitors with a special enthusiasm and love of gardens. Two volunteers will be assigned to your garden. If you can donate a table and two chairs to set up in some shade for the volunteers that would be helpful. Otherwise, the committee will locate the table and chairs.

Volunteers are responsible for business details such as ticketing, answering questions about the tour, and tracking the number of visitors to your garden. Owners have the option of being present or not as our volunteers can take care of most everything. However, visitors love to talk with the owner about how the garden evolved and, perhaps, ask questions about a particular plant. You may want to share on a personal level what inspires you and what you appreciate about your garden. Some homeowners have provided handouts about their garden that visitors have appreciated but don't worry! You don't have to know any botanical names of things to still be an excellent host.

It has been our experience that our visitors are generally courteous, appreciative, and interested. The tour has proven to be a very enjoyable experience for visitors and homeowners alike.

As a way of thanking homeowners for participating in our tour, the Eastham Garden Tour Committee offers a special post garden day luncheon with the opportunity to tour each other's gardens before the lunch.

Frequently asked questions by homeowners

What are the hours of the Eastham Garden Tour ?

The tour begins at 10:00 am and ends at 4:00 pm

Will visitors want to see the inside of our home?

Home interiors are not a part of the Eastham Garden Tour and visitors not invited inside your home.

How many visitors can I expect?

You may receive between 100 and 150 visitors. Last year the numbers were higher with over 200 visitors at some of the gardens.

How and when will my address be published?

The Cape Cod Hydrangea web site lists the garden addresses a few days in advance of the tour. Addresses are also listed on a map with the purchase of a \$25 ticket. For those who only want to see a few gardens for \$5 per garden, there is a handout with descriptions of the gardens and their addresses to be picked up at the Eastham library or the Eastham Visitor Information Booth.

How are profits from the festival used?

Profits generated by the festival support library activities sponsored by the Friends of the Eastham Public Library, a 501(c)3 non-profit.

What happens if it rains?

Plants love the rain and so do our visitors. Getting wet on a summer day does not seem to faze people who go on garden tours. If you have a few umbrellas to share, there may be some who appreciate that.

Do you get unruly people on the tour?

We never have had this situation but should this occur, our volunteers will deal with the difficult guest.





Eastham Garden Tour History

The Eastham Garden Tour has been a part of the Cape Cod-wide Hydrangea Festival from its beginning in 2015. The Festival is part of the vision of Master Gardener, C.L. Folnari, “The Garden Lady”, who recognized the potential for a world class garden tour based on Cape Cod’s iconic genus, Hydrangea. The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce serves as the umbrella organization responsible for organizing the ten-day festival in celebration of Cape Cod’s summer gardens. The Creative Gardens of the Outer Cape, offered by The Eastham Garden Tour is a part of the larger Hydrangea Festival. Our Eastham Garden Tour has grown in popularity and attendance each year as people learn of our unique, creative gardens. The sponsors of the Eastham Garden Tour are the Eastham Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Eastham, the Eastham Painters Guild, as well as other local businesses.

Administrative Structure

The Eastham Garden Tour Committee is responsible for all of the details necessary to produce a rewarding experience for the visitors on our tour. The Committee is composed of Eastham gardeners, and representatives from local businesses and organizations. The Committee has developed a smoothly functioning team. Its tasks include garden selection, ticketing, providing a map of garden locations, public relations, advertising, managing our volunteers, and coordinating community involvement. Committee members have found it a pleasure to work with other gardeners to create a successful event.



Volunteers

Our volunteers are led by an experienced member of the Eastham Garden Committee. They bring a heightened enthusiasm and a special love of gardening to the Eastham Garden Tour. These volunteers are essential in helping ensure the success of our tour. Two volunteers are present for the entire day at each

home garden, allowing our homeowners a stress-free experience. The volunteers are tasked with managing the details involved in supporting your successful tour day.

Community Outreach

One of our goals is to make Eastham's Garden Tour a community wide celebration of Eastham and its Creative Gardens of the Outer Cape. We work with community businesses to support their involvement in garden tour activities. We see engaging community businesses as a resource for developing educational and entertainment opportunities within the garden tour structure. Local businesses or organizations are recognized in the literature we distribute as part of our tour materials.

Eastham Garden Tour Committee

Betsy Loomis, Chair
Saul Fisher, Eastham Gardener
Diane Martin, Volunteer Coordinator
Jim Russo, Eastham Chamber of Commerce
Willow Shire, Garden Artists Coordinator
Mike Sarcione, Eastham Gardener
Dale Michaels Wade, Volunteer Coordinator

Helpful Links

www.easthamgardentour.org

www.facebook.com/easthamgardentour

www.capecodchamber.org/hydrangea-fest

