



SAN FRANCISCO  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN

## FRIEND (NORTH) GATE

# magnificent **MAGNOLIAS**

## HIGHLIGHTS WALK 2025

Admire the sights and scents on the branches of more than 200 elegant trees, as velvety silver buds and saucer-sized pink, white, and magenta flowers make an appearance in this always spectacular annual bloom at the Botanical Garden.

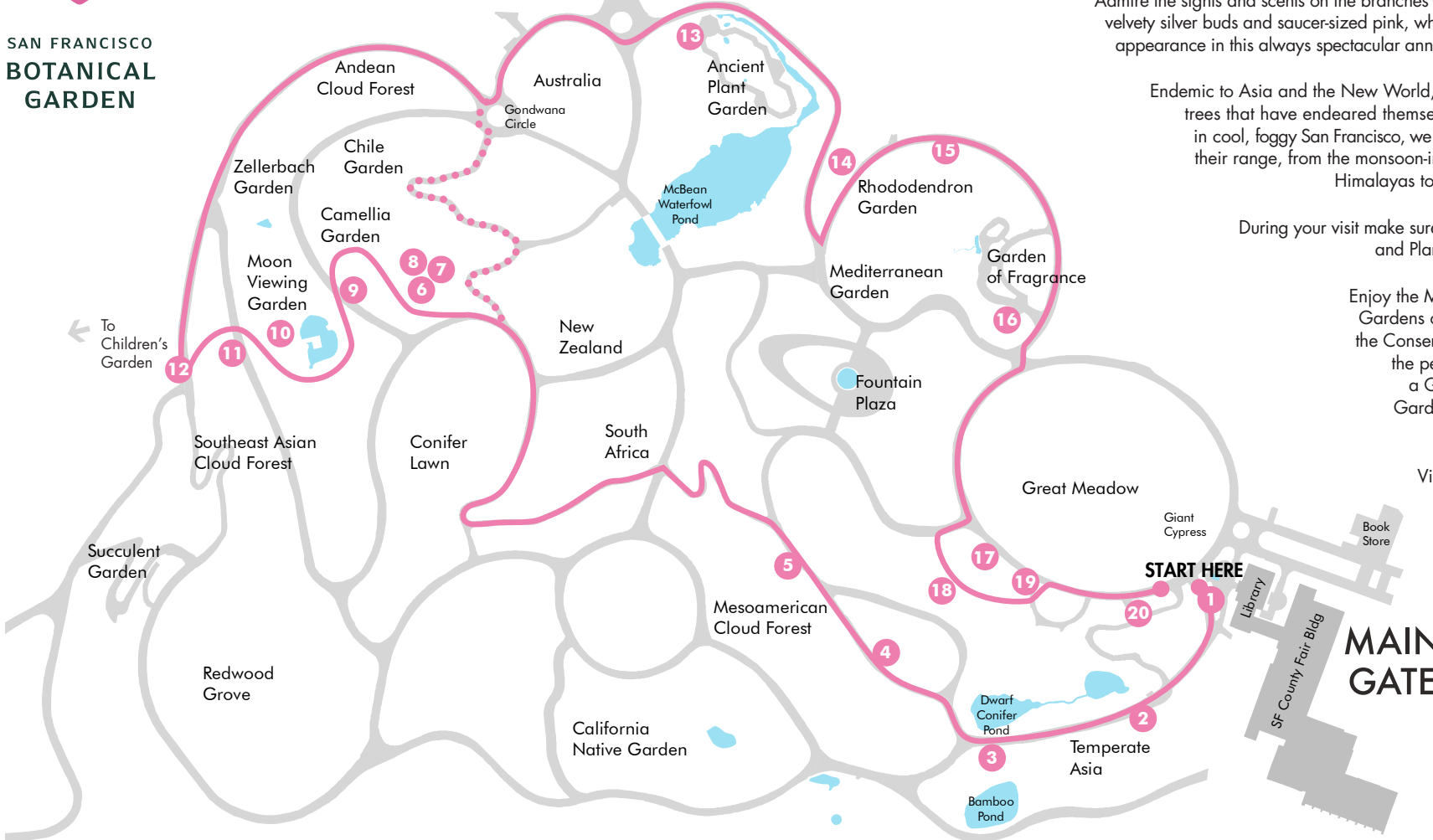
Endemic to Asia and the New World, *Magnolias* are ancient flowering trees that have endeared themselves to humans for millennia. Here in cool, foggy San Francisco, we cultivate species from across most of their range, from the monsoon-influenced, temperate forests of the Himalayas to the cloud forests of Mesoamerica.

During your visit make sure to stop at the Garden's Bookstore and Plant Shop for special Magnolia items.

Enjoy the Magnolias? Continue exploring the Gardens of Golden Gate Park! Warm up at the Conservatory of Flowers and experience the peaceful Japanese Tea Garden with a Gardens Pass—unlimited visits to the Gardens for three days at a discounted price! Buy onsite or online today.

Visit the website for a complete list of programs and events celebrating this magnificent bloom!

[gggp.org](http://gggp.org)



### 2025 MAGNOLIA SEASON SPONSORS

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1. *Magnolia laevifolia* 'Strybing Compact'
2. *Magnolia campbellii* 'Darjeeling'
3. *Magnolia dawsoniana*
4. *Magnolia sharpii*
5. *Magnolia macrophylla* var. *dealbata*
6. *Magnolia liliiflora*
7. *Magnolia x soulangeana* 'Rustic Rubra'

8. *Magnolia campbellii*
9. *Magnolia denudata*
10. *Magnolia campbellii* 'Strybing White'
11. *Magnolia doltsopa*
12. *Magnolia* 'Royal Crown'
13. *Magnolia x alba*
14. *Magnolia x veitchii*

15. *Magnolia campbellii* 'Late Pink'
16. *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Russet'
17. *Magnolia sprengeri*
18. *Magnolia zenii*
19. *Magnolia amoena*
20. *Magnolia stellata* 'Rosea'



## ABOUT THE MAGNIFICENT MAGNOLIA GARDEN COLLECTION

In the winter of 1940, horticultural history was made at the newly-opened San Francisco Botanical Garden when its exotic cup and saucer magnolia (*Magnolia campbellii*) became the first of its kind to bloom in the United States. Huge crowds of excited and curious visitors stood in long lines to see the stunning, large, pink blossoms of this famous *Magnolia* that still stands in the Garden today (map #8). That was just the beginning. The Garden is now home to more than 200 *Magnolias*—many rare and historic. The Garden's current collection includes 55 species, 41 cultivars, and 6 hybrids. Read more about the Garden's prized specimens and enjoy!

**1 *Magnolia laevifolia* 'Strybing Compact'** – This cultivar of *Magnolia laevifolia* was selected here at San Francisco Botanical Garden for its compact form. While 'Strybing Compact' is more shrub-like, wild *Magnolia laevifolia* can grow up to 3 meters in height.

**2 *Magnolia campbellii* 'Darjeeling'** – Thought by many to be the most spectacular of all the *Magnolias* that bloom at the Garden, this Himalayan selection was propagated from a tree at the Lloyd Botanic Garden in Darjeeling, India. It offers magnificent deep pink flowers emerging on leafless branches for a dramatic display.

**3 *Magnolia dawsoniana*** – This endangered *Magnolia* from China is named after the first superintendent of Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum, Jackson Thornton Dawson. It has large pink flowers that droop with age and resemble flags blowing in the wind.

**4 *Magnolia sharpii*** – This endangered *Magnolia* is found in just five locations in the cloud forests of Chiapas, Mexico. Its limited habitat is threatened by human activities such as timber harvesting and agriculture.

**5 *Magnolia macrophylla* var. *dealbata*** – Commonly called bigleaf magnolia, this native of Mexico is appropriately named, as the large leaves can reach up to 30 inches in length. The flowers are cream-colored with a semi-sweet scent. This is one of few *magnolias* in the garden that typically blooms in the summer months.

**6 *Magnolia liliiflora*** – Native to China, this compact, rounded, shrubby, deciduous *Magnolia* typically matures to 8 to 12 feet tall and as wide. Its goblet- or lily-shaped, purple-pink flowers appear in spring at the time of, or shortly before, leaf development. The specific epithet *liliiflora* indicates that its flowers are lily-like.

**7 *Magnolia x soulangeana* 'Rustica Rubra'** – In 1820 Etienne Soulange-Bodin cross-pollinated *M. denudata* with *M. liliiflora* to produce the very popular *M. x soulangeana*. Since then, there have been many selections from the hybrid resulting in many different cultivars including 'Rustica Rubra', a Dutch clone raised at the end of the nineteenth century in Boskoop. The reddish-purple flowers, pink-white within, feature the classic goblet shape.

**8 *Magnolia campbellii*** – This individual was the very first *Magnolia campbellii* to bloom in the United States. It was planted in 1924 in the Garden by the Garden's first Director, Eric Walther, and first bloomed 17 years later in 1940. Commonly called the cup and saucer magnolia, this Himalayan native has large, fragrant flowers that can range in color from white to shades of light to deep pink.

**9 *Magnolia denudata*** – *M. denudata* has the longest known history of cultivation among *magnolias*, dating back to the Tang Dynasty (618 C.E.). Called the "yulan" or "jade orchid" by the Chinese, its exquisite, pure white blossoms are celebrated on ancient Chinese embroideries, scrolls, and porcelains in scenes of the countryside. This was the first *Magnolia* species from the East introduced to the western world when it was brought from China to England in 1780.

**10 *Magnolia campbellii* 'Strybing White'** – The largest *Magnolia* at the Garden, 'Strybing White' towers over 80 feet. This special white form was grown from seed purchased in India in 1934, propagated at the Golden Gate Park Nursery, and planted here in 1940.

**11 *Magnolia doltsopa*** – An evergreen *Magnolia*, the commonly named "sweet michelia" was first described near Kathmandu, Nepal around 1803. The highly fragrant white flowers are about 6 inches across, opening from velvety-brown buds. This species is often grown as a street tree in the Bay Area.

**12 *Magnolia* 'Royal Crown'** – Selected from seedlings grown in Santa Cruz by *Magnolia* Society founder Mr. D. Todd Gresham in 1955 with efforts aimed at producing California-adapted hybrids. *M. 'Royal Crown'* was hybridized from crossing *M. liliiflora* and *M. x veitchii*, two parents selected for their ability to flower early and for their extremes in color and hardiness. Flowers can grow up to 10 inches when fully expanded.

**13 *Magnolia x alba*** – This hybrid consists of two Asian species, *M. champaca* and *M. montana*. It is a beautiful, subtropical tree with deeply fragrant flowers from which an extract is used as a primary ingredient in some of the world's most expensive perfumes.

**14 *Magnolia x veitchii*** – *M. x veitchii* is a deciduous *magnolia*, meaning that it loses its leaves seasonally. It is a cross between *M. campbellii* and *M. denudata*, and was originally produced by Robert Veitch in 1907. Those parent plants were chosen for the beauty of their blooms and overall hardiness.

**15 *Magnolia campbellii* 'Late Pink'** – Introduced at the Garden from seed purchased in 1934 from G. Ghose and Co. in Darjeeling, India, the name 'Late Pink' describes how the flowers of this *Magnolia* appear 2 to 4 weeks later than other *M. campbellii* specimens in our collection.

**16 *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Russet'** – This evergreen *Magnolia* native to southeastern United States is notable for its attractive, dark green leaves and its large, extremely fragrant flowers. The specific epithet *grandiflora* is from Latin meaning "large flowers." Indeed, the flowers can be up to twelve inches across.

**17 *Magnolia sprengeri*** – This deciduous *Magnolia* species is native to forests in central China, where mature specimens have been found growing to heights of 21 meters. Its rosy colored flowers appear before the leaves emerge and have a lovely fragrance.

**18 *Magnolia zenii*** – The rarest *Magnolia* in the Garden and IUCN red-listed as critically endangered, only a few dozen of these plants were found when the species was first described in China in 1931. As of 2014, just 18 individuals are known to grow in the wild on the north slopes of Mount Baohua, where they are protected in a botanical reserve.

**19 *Magnolia amoena*** – This species was first described from an individual found on China's Mt. Hwang in 1933. The species name *amoena* is Latin for beautiful or pleasant. This particular tree was a gift from the Shanghai Botanical Garden, presented to the Garden by then-Mayor Diane Feinstein in 1982.

**20 *Magnolia stellata* 'Rosea'** – The species name, *stellata*, means star. Typically a white flowered species with narrow tepals radiating out like a star, this cultivar, 'Rosea', has fragrant pink flowers.

## BECOME A MEMBER

Support the Gardens of Golden Gate Park and enjoy great benefits year-round:

- Free admission (with a guest) to all three gardens—Conservatory of Flowers, Japanese Tea Garden, and San Francisco Botanical Garden
- Reciprocal admission to over 360 gardens nationwide
- 10% discount at the Plant Shop and Bookstore
- Discounted tickets and pre-sales for popular programs like Garden Camp and Holiday Wreath Making
- And many more!

**Special Offer for New Members!** Join now through March 31 and receive a free plant (\$15 value) at the Plant Shop.

Learn more at [sgggp.org/membership](https://www.sfbg.org/membership).

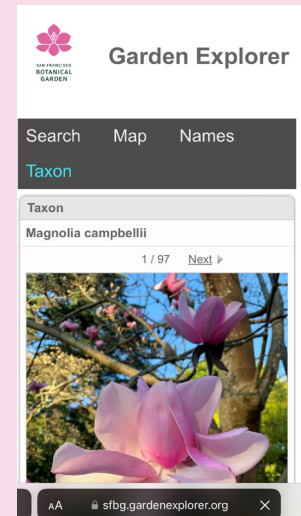
Look for **PINK SIGNS** in the Garden to identify highlighted plants. You can also scan QR codes on signage for additional information and photos.



## CHECK OUT THE MAGNIFICENT MAGNOLIAS ON YOUR SMARTPHONE

### HERE'S HOW:

1. Open your smart phone's camera app
2. Point phone at QR code on numbered pink label
3. Tap link that will appear on screen
4. Learn more about each featured *Magnolia* on Garden Explorer.



## SHARING IS CARING

Take some beautiful magnolia photos? Tag us and share using #magnificentmagnolias for a chance to be featured on the Garden's account!

Social media is also where we share the latest bloom updates, follow us on **Instagram** (@sfbotanicalgarden), **Facebook** (@sfbotanicalgarden), and **Twitter** (@SFBGS).

## BOOKSTORE & PLANT SHOP

Enjoy special *Magnolia* items in the Garden Bookstore. Purchase a plant at the Plant Shop and bring the Garden home!

## ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO BOTANICAL GARDEN

San Francisco Botanical Garden is a living museum within Golden Gate Park, offering 55 acres of both landscaped gardens and open spaces, showcasing 8,000 different kinds of plants from around the world.

## ABOUT GARDENS OF GOLDEN GATE PARK

Gardens of Golden Gate Park is a public/private partnership between the San Francisco Recreation & Park Department and the San Francisco Botanical Garden Society (a nonprofit 501c3 organization doing business as the "Gardens of Golden Gate Park") to jointly operate the Conservatory of Flowers, Japanese Tea Garden, and San Francisco Botanical Garden.