

The Botanic Garden

X *X marks the spot*

The grand entrance to the Gardens, completed in July 1999, is on the corner of Great King Street and Opoho Road and features patterned paving and columns reflecting the iron work of the much older gates. There are eight other official entrances to the Gardens dotted around its perimeter.

Local nuggets

Children and adults alike enjoy feeding the ducks in the heart of the Lower Gardens area. Food is available free at the Garden Information Centre and the ducks are friendly and happy to eat from your hand. A word of warning though, they are very hungry on a cold wintery day when people are scarce and the ensuing feeding frenzy can be quite boisterous!

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Established in 1863, on the grounds where the University of Otago now sits, the Gardens were moved to their current location after flooding from the Water of Leith in 1867.

In the pipeline

The Aviary at the Gardens is breeding native birds for the Otago Natural History Trust. This Trust is setting up the Orokonui Ecosanctuary just north of Dunedin, a 300 hectare block that has been completely surrounded by a pest-proof fence. The ecosanctuary, which will protect our native flora and fauna, is due to open for people to explore in 2008.

The Scottish settlers who arrived in Otago in 1848 had a vision of creating a society incorporating the best features from 'home'. As part of this a 'Botanical Garden Reserve' was clearly marked on their survey plan for the town of Dunedin.

The Dunedin Botanic Garden now occupies 28 hectares and includes something for everyone. The plant attractions range from large trees to tiny annuals and perennials, with dedicated collections of plants showing off strong colours or fragrance. The winter garden houses a wide variety of tropical plants, cacti and succulents and even carnivorous plants! Other garden experiences include feeding the ducks, visiting the café, a children's playground and an aviary.

If you enjoy fragrant flowers, the lower gardens in the spring and summer have much to offer. The rose garden is a sensory delight both for colour and fragrance and among the thematic plant collection along Great King Street are plantings of numerous fragrant to downright pungent plants. The herb garden is also a must visit. Here you are welcome to pick and rub small amounts of herb plants between your fingers, to enjoy the scents you may associate with your kitchen spice rack or favourite restaurant.

In spring, for their colours, the azalea garden and rhododendron dell are unbeatable. The deciduous azaleas provide some of the most vividly coloured flowers you can find in the plant world. There are so many different rhododendrons in the gardens that you'll find something in flower almost all year round and, just across the entrance to the azalea garden, you can sit amongst thousands of daffodils on a sunny spring day.

The Dunedin Botanic Garden is one of Dunedin's favourite places. It is open every day of the year and entry is free!



The rhododendron dell



Duck feeding is a popular activity at the Gardens

