



AMERICAN  
HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY

# Bermuda's Gardens, Homes and Holiday Magic

December 3–8, 2024

*With AHS Host Naomi Mermin*



Dear Friends,

I am excited to invite you to join the AHS on a captivating journey to Bermuda, one of the world's most remote island paradises, offering a special kick-off to your 2024 holiday season. In 1609, on their way to the Jamestown colony, British sailors shipwrecked on the uninhabited island of Bermuda. This unfortunate event ultimately and unexpectedly led to the creation of a unique wonderland that blends British formality with a relaxed island ambiance. Characterized by graceful Georgian houses with whitewashed coral limestone roofs, manicured gardens, spectacular nature preserves, and sparkling turquoise waters, present-day Bermuda exudes an exceptional and unrivaled charm.

Throughout the journey, we will enjoy exclusive entrée to many of the island's most impressive properties and gardens. We'll be welcomed by distinguished hosts into several of the most elegant private homes in Bermuda. We'll experience behind-the-scenes tours of the island's finest museums and cultural institutions, including a curator-led tour of the Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art and a special visit to St. Peter's Church. We'll also receive a guided tour of St. George's arranged by the Bermuda National Trust, which owns more than 60 historic properties and open-space areas, an important and formidable force in the preservation of this fragile island.

Of special note is the rare opportunity to experience Bermuda's signature winter holiday event, the celebratory "Christmas Walkabout." Engaging for visitors of all ages, on the first Friday in December, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of St. George's and all its residents get into the Christmas spirit, decking out homes and historic sites with lavish Christmas décor, candlelit streets, live performances, shopping, caroling, food, spirits, and merriment. During this once-a-year event, numerous historic houses are opened to the public, creating a unique opportunity to connect with residents on one of Bermuda's most festive nights.

I am thrilled that joining us on this custom-designed program is American Horticultural Society Host, Naomi Mermin. Naomi is an avid gardener who studied Horticulture at Smith College and founded a strategy firm that specializes in addressing environmental issues with companies, foundations, and nonprofits. She has acted as a strategic advisor for the AHS and has become an enthusiastic member of the AHS family. Naomi serves on several civic organization boards and is proudest to be a founding member of the Brentwood Community Garden in Portland, Maine.

Our group will be guided by Tim Rogers, an expert on Bermuda's gardens and nature reserves. Tim earned his BS in Biological Sciences and his PhD in Plant Ecology from the University of East Anglia in England.

We hope you will join us for this unforgettable adventure to Bermuda in December 2024. Limited spaces are available for this special AHS journey, so we recommend making your reservation early. For your convenience, a reservation form is included in the brochure.

Warmest regards,



Suzanne Laporte  
President & CEO

## AHS Host Naomi Mermin



Naomi is an avid gardener who studied Horticulture at Smith College and completed a degree in Ecology at Cornell. She has pursued her love of the natural world as the founder of a pioneering woman-owned environmental strategy firm and as an advocate for urban gardens, including helping to found Brentwood Community Garden in Portland, Maine.

As a professional, Naomi has worked on a variety of projects, including serving as the strategic advisor and evaluator for the Barr Foundation's climate change portfolio, and as a strategic advisor for the American Horticultural Society. Naomi has received recognition for her work in public health and environmental advocacy, including the 2008 EPA Children's Environmental Health Champion Award.

Naomi's personal garden is devoted to providing sustenance for wildlife and nurturing native species. Her commitment to biodiversity in her own backyard is complemented by a passion for exploring gardens far and wide, both manmade and natural.

## Accommodations at the Grotto Bay Beach Resort

The Grotto Bay Beach Resort sits on a lush tropical estate featuring dramatic caves along the water's edge in Bailey's Bay. Scattered over 21 acres and sloping down toward two private beaches are 11 colorful cottages in traditional Bermudian architecture overlooking the clear turquoise waters dotted with small islands. Swim in the shallow waters off the resort's private pink sand beach; take a dip in the resort's freshwater pool; or lounge in the outdoor Jacuzzi situated amidst a lush garden above the beach. The resort is conveniently located within five minutes of the L.F. Wade International Airport and a short drive from the charming historic city of St. George's, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Grotto Bay Beach Resort is also home to the island's most renowned spa, housed in a 500,000-year-old cave.



**When you travel with the AHS, you make a difference.**

Designed for garden enthusiasts who love to explore horticultural wonders around the world, AHS Travel Study offers exceptional programs that include many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Your participation in an AHS Travel Study program supports the AHS's nonprofit work to increase knowledge among gardeners, inspire passion for plants and the natural world, and encourage responsible stewardship of the earth.

# Itinerary

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

## Welcome to Historic Bermuda

Arrive independently at the Bermuda International Airport (BDA). Meet fellow AHS travelers and join an afternoon group transfer by private motorcoach to the Grotto Bay Beach Resort, a luxury four-star property, just minutes away from the airport. After time to freshen up, gather in one of the resort's meeting rooms for an introductory presentation on Bermuda's flora and fauna, and then get your first taste of Bermudian cuisine during a welcome dinner at the resort's excellent restaurant.

*(Included meals: Dinner)*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

## St. George's, a UNESCO World Heritage Site

After breakfast at the hotel, set out for historic St. George's, Bermuda's capital until 1815 and arguably the oldest continuously inhabited English town in the New World. During a walking tour along St. George's narrow streets, see King's Square; the Town Hall; and St. Peter's Church, the oldest Anglican church in continuous use in the western hemisphere. At the 18th-century Tucker House, discover Bermudian furniture, portraits, hand-sewn quilts, and silver. Next, drive to a spectacular waterfront home and enjoy lunch with the owners followed by a walk in their lovely gardens, featuring a beautiful Asian Garden and an endemic area of cedars, dogwood and palmetto, some of which have been there for over forty years, rare in Bermuda. During an afternoon visit to St. David's Island, see the Carter House, an example of early Bermudian vernacular architecture that was built circa 1640 of stone. Then proceed to Cooper's Island Nature Reserve to hear about the culling of invasive plants and replanting of native and endemic plants. Return to the resort in the late afternoon. Dinner is independent this evening.

*(Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch)*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

## Royal Naval Dockyard & Sunset Cocktail Cruise

Enjoy spectacular scenery as you travel from Bermuda's eastern end to its far western point with spectacular stops along the way, including a stop at Gibb's Hill Lighthouse (1846) with its spectacular 360° views over Bermuda. Then visit Fort Scaur, which sports cannons, gun emplacements, and a cleverly designed defensive moat, not to mention gorgeous ocean views. Be introduced to the Royal Naval Dockyard during a walking tour followed by a luncheon of traditional British favorites in Bermuda's most beloved pub. Then visit the National Museum of Bermuda, housed within a large fortress and dedicated to Bermuda's maritime history, and learn about the largest restoration project ever undertaken in Bermuda during a special visit to the Commissioner's House. Embark on a private sunset cocktail cruise to Hamilton crossing Bermuda's "Great Sound," providing a different perspective on the island. Disembark in Bermuda's capital of Hamilton, and linger in town for shopping and dinner, or return to the hotel for an evening at leisure.

*(Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch)*



Photos (from top):  
Moongate, Bermuda (kansasphoto);  
St. Peter's Church, St. George (TravelingOtter);  
Commissioner's House, Royal Naval Dockyard (Joel Wesseldyke)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

## Great Houses and Gardens and the festive Christmas Walkabout

Drive to Waterville, one of the oldest and most elegant houses on Bermuda, and the Bermuda National Trust's current headquarters. The waterfront grounds include the Bermuda Rose Society's showcase garden of old roses. Pop into Aberfeldy Garden Center, Bermuda's largest plant nursery and garden center. At the Bermuda Natural History Museum, learn about the island's unique geological history and diversity of habitats and see the museum's 140,000-gallon North Rock Exhibit that showcases live corals and 200 species of fish, including large predatory fish. Spend time in one of the museum's newest exhibition rooms that tells the inspiring story of the rescue of the Cahow from the brink of extinction. Following a visit to a lovely private garden, pause for lunch at a favorite island restaurant. Return to the hotel to relax and enjoy the resort's amenities or join a guided walk at the Spittal Pond Nature Reserve, a verdant, 64-acre conservation area with a winding trail along the rocky coastline. Spittal Pond was declared a Wetland of International Importance in 1999 due to the high concentration of different habitats within a small area. It is also one of the best spots for birdwatching in Bermuda. Reconvene in the early evening and drive to St. George's to take in the festive celebrations of the Bermuda National Trust's Christmas Walkabout. Experience the enchanting ambiance as historic homes and sites come alive with holiday decorations, candlelit streets, and live entertainment, offering a unique chance to connect with residents on Bermuda's most joyful night.

*(Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch)*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

## Art, Ancestry and Hamilton

Enjoy a relaxing morning to sleep in or enjoy the resort's amenities or walk to Bermuda's most stunning underground natural attraction, the renowned Crystal Cave, to view the cave's crystal-clear lake reflecting pristine white stalactites. Set out for Camden and enjoy a curator-led tour of the Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art, with a world-class collection including works by Henry Moore, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Winslow Homer. Stroll through the Bermuda Arboretum, exploring its rich variety of natural habitats. Then visit Verdmont, a unique example of early Georgian architecture built around 1710, which has remained virtually unchanged for 300 years and houses a collection of Bermuda-made cedar furniture, portraits, and English and Chinese porcelain. Continue to another private home with magnificent gardens, including one of the largest trees on the entire island, a towering 200-year-old Kapok tree, and be treated to lunch hosted by the owner, a sixth-generation Bermudian. Continue to Fort Hamilton built by the British in 1870. Today, the moat has been transformed into a lush garden. Catch panoramic views of Hamilton Harbor from the walls of this Victorian-era stone garrison. Proceed to Hamilton, Bermuda's capital, and have a city orientation tour, including a short walk in Queen Elizabeth/Par-la-Ville Park, Hamilton's beloved city park. Return to the hotel to relax and enjoy the resort's amenities or enjoy free time for shopping in Hamilton before joining a later transfer back to the hotel. Return to the hotel to freshen up before heading out to our celebratory farewell dinner in a historic restaurant renowned for its exceptional cuisine.

*(Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

## Departures

Check out of the Grotto Bay Beach Resort and depart on a late morning group transfer to the Bermuda International Airport (BDA) for return flights home.

*(Included meals: Breakfast)*



Photos (from top):  
Christmas Lights at King's Square, St. George (Vernaccia);  
Royal Poinciana Tree and Pink House, Bermuda (kansasphoto);  
Hibiscus on Bermuda (kansasphoto)



# Bermuda's Gardens, Homes and Holiday Magic

December 3–8, 2024

## Trip Information

### AHS TRAVEL STUDY BERMUDA'S GARDENS, HOMES AND HOLIDAY MAGIC December 3–8, 2024

*This custom AHS Travel Study program has been created uniquely for AHS members and is offered in collaboration with International Seminar Design, Inc.*

#### TOUR COST:

|                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| Land Package.....      | \$5,395 |
| Single Supplement..... | \$995   |

*Land Package is per person, based on double occupancy and a minimum of 12 paying participants.*

#### AHS TRAVEL STUDY ACTIVITY LEVEL DESCRIPTION: AHS

Travel Study programs are designed to offer immersive experiences and often involve long days filled with exploration and extensive walking on uneven terrain. To participate in a program, it is recommended to be in good physical condition and prepared to walk for a minimum of two miles each day.

**DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT:** A deposit of \$1,000 per registrant is required to reserve space on the tour, of which \$500 is nonrefundable for ISDI's registration and planning fee unless the tour is cancelled due to low enrollment. This deposit may be paid by check or by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. Final balance will be invoiced and is due on August 22, 2024, and must be paid by check to International Seminar Design, Inc. Registrations are accepted after this date on a space-available basis.

**FLIGHTS:** Airfare is not included in the tour price. Participants are responsible for their own air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed by ISDI.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** Cancellation by participant must be made in writing to ISDI and is effective only upon acknowledged receipt by ISDI. There is a non-refundable registration and planning fee of \$500 per person regardless of cancellation date. Written cancellation received by ISDI on or before August 22, 2024: full refund minus the \$500 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by ISDI between August 23 and October 17, 2024: full refund minus \$2,700 per person cancellation fee (includes the registration and planning fee). Written cancellation received by ISDI on or after October 18, 2024: no refund. Tour registration is non-transferable. In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not allowed. After the tour has commenced, no refunds will be issued for any reason including, but not limited to, unused portions of tour. If the tour is cancelled by ISDI or the American Horticultural Society due to low enrollment, active registrants will receive a full refund of all tour payments.

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:** Upon receipt of registration, ISDI will send registrant a Participant Tour Agreement detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to ISDI before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** Travel Insurance is not included in the tour cost, but participants are strongly encouraged to purchase a travel protection plan in conjunction with this tour, including coverage of trip cancellation, trip interruption, emergency evacuation/repatriation, medical expenses, lost or damaged baggage, and other expenses and/or losses incurred due to unexpected situations. Should a participant cancel at any time after registering for the tour, ISDI must strictly abide by the cancellation policy outlined herein. Travel insurance information will be provided upon receipt of your registration. One travel insurance provider to consider is USI Affinity Travel Insurance Services. For more information on the plan for AHS travelers, visit [www.ahsgardening.org/travel](http://www.ahsgardening.org/travel). Information is also available at this link regarding optional flight and travel arrangement services.

**TOUR PRICE INCLUSIONS:** 5 nights at the Grotto Bay Beach Resort; breakfast daily at the hotel, 4 lunches, 2 dinners (water, soft drinks, coffee, tea included with all meals; 2 glasses of wine or beer included with dinners); ground transportation by private motor coach, including 1 group airport transfer upon arrival from Bermuda International Airport (BDA) to the Grotto Bay Beach Resort on December 3, 2024, and 1 group airport transfer upon departure from the Grotto Bay Beach Resort to BDA on December 8, 2024; entrance fees to sites per itinerary; services of an ISDI Tour Manager; expert local guides; handling of 2 pieces of luggage per person at hotel; gratuities for guides, drivers, and restaurant staff at included group meals; bottled water on motor coach; service charges and taxes.

**TOUR PRICE EXCLUSIONS:** Airline tickets, airline taxes and surcharges, and baggage fees; airport portage; airport transfers for those not taking the scheduled group transfers; meals other than those specified in the itinerary; gratuities for hotel housekeeping; personal items such as telephone calls, room service, valet service, à-la-carte orders, specialty wines and liquors, laundry charges, travel extensions, or tour deviations; travel insurance; any other items not specifically included in the itinerary.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AHS TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAMS:

Please contact [travel@ahsgardening.org](mailto:travel@ahsgardening.org) or 703-768-5700, ext. 117. Information is also available at [www.ahsgardening.org/travel](http://www.ahsgardening.org/travel).



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## Registration Form

Name - Participant 1

Name - Participant 2

Address

City

State

Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

E-mail Address - Participant 1

E-mail Address - Participant 2

### ROOMING OPTIONS: (please select)

- Double Occupancy; I will share a room with \_\_\_\_\_
  - We prefer separate beds
- Single Occupancy (\$995 single supplement)
  - I would like a roommate but will pay the single supplement if one cannot be found

### TOUR DOCUMENTS:

ISDI will send all documents pertaining to the tour by email to the email address listed above.

- If you wish to receive hardcopy versions of the tour documents by post as well, please check this circle. Paper documents will not be sent to your home address unless this circle is checked.

### DEPOSIT (\$1,000 per person):

\_\_\_\_\_ # of persons \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed

- Visa  MasterCard  American Express  Check (make check payable to International Seminar Design, Inc.)

Card Number

Exp. (mm/yy)

Name as it appears on card

CVV Security Code

### EACH PARTICIPANT MUST SIGN

By registering and paying the deposit for this tour, registrant acknowledges that he/she has carefully read and understands all information contained in the tour brochure, recognizes and accepts any risks therein, and agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions outlined above.

Signature - Participant 1 / Date

Signature - Participant 2 / Date

### COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO:

International Seminar Design, Inc.  
5614 Connecticut Ave NW, #295  
Washington, DC 20015  
or by email at [info@isditravel.com](mailto:info@isditravel.com)

### TO REGISTER BY PHONE, CALL:

International Seminar Design, Inc. at 202-244-1448 ext. 1

### FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AHS TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAMS:

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Information is also available at [www.ahsgardening.org/travel](http://www.ahsgardening.org/travel).