

Canada Blooms

THE FLOWER AND GARDEN FESTIVAL

An affordable escape into a world of breathtaking landscapes and unique gardens

Canada Blooms helps you discover the gardens of Canada, Ireland and more

February 2009 – Toronto, ON – With so many magnificent gardens to explore in Canada and around the world, it is no wonder that there is a growing interest in garden tourism. This year, Canada Blooms will give garden-lovers a taste of some of the world's most beautiful gardens through its Garden Travel area. VIA Rail Garden Route and Tourism Ireland as well as a number of other travel partners, will be on-hand to highlight some of the world's most unique garden destinations.

“Garden Tourism to Ireland has increased in recent years with more than 20,000 Canadian visitors enjoying the wealth of spectacular gardens last year alone. In fact, Ireland is famed for its hauntingly beautiful cultivated gardens with exotic plants, mystical greenery and intriguing character,” says Jayne Shackelford, Manager Canada, Tourism Ireland. “It is also our people and our spectacular scenery that distinguishes the island of Ireland from other destinations.”

From March 18 to 22, 2009, Canada Blooms will transform the Metro Toronto Convention Centre into Canada's largest garden and flower festival. Garden Travel features include:

- **VIA Rail Garden Route Lounge** – VIA Rail has made seeing some of Canada's most spectacular gardens even easier with the VIA Rail Garden Route. Garden lovers can explore Canada by train and follow the VIA Rail Garden Route to 15 spectacular Feature Gardens, local garden attractions and 30 *Communities in Bloom* '5-Bloom' (top award winning) destinations from Victoria to Halifax.

VIA Rail Canada; Butchart Gardens & Tourism Vancouver Island; Burlington's Royal Botanical Gardens; Toronto's Casa Loma Gardens; the Montreal Botanical Garden; Grand-Métis, P.Q.'s Reford Gardens/Jardins de Métis; St. Andrews, N.B.'s Kingsbrae Garden; the City of Oshawa and Halifax Regional Municipality will all have booths in the VIA Rail Garden Route Lounge at Canada Blooms.

Canada Blooms' radio partner, Toronto's EZ Rock (97.4 FM) will also offer visitors the chance to win a fabulous trip to a feature garden of your choice on the VIA Rail Garden Route. The only way to win is to visit the VIA Rail Garden Route Lounge at Canada Blooms where EZ Rock will hand out “tune-in cards”. On March 23rd on their morning show between 6 and 9 a.m., EZ Rock will reveal the special word. If the word matches the one on your “tune-in card,” call in for a chance to win the trip.

For information on how to book train travel at 10% off the best available fare as well as all the Feature Gardens, garden attractions and Communities in Bloom destinations, visit: www.viarail.ca/garden.

- **People's Garden Award** – Courtesy of Tourism Ireland and Air Transat, guests of Canada Blooms can cast their vote for the **People's Garden Award** presented by The National Post, Global, the New Classical 96.3 FM and HGTV to enter to win the chance to jet off to discover the gardens of Ireland courtesy of Tourism Ireland. The grand prize winner will be announced on the Classical 96.3 FM Morning Show on Tuesday, March 24th.

In addition to VIA Rail and Tourism Ireland, Canada Blooms' travel area will also feature tourism information from Spain, Czech Tourism, Barbados, Northumberland Tourism, Club Intrawest and the Ottawa Valley.

About Canada Blooms

Dedicated to providing horticulture expertise, education and resources on an ongoing basis, Canada Blooms is a not-for-profit organization that gives back to the community throughout the year by funding community garden projects around Ontario. Now in its thirteenth year, Canada Blooms was founded by Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto. Each year it is supported by a committed group of partners, sponsors and volunteers. In 2009, sponsors include The Home Depot, Brampton Brick/Oaks, Brookdale Treeland Nurseries Ltd., Canadian Cancer Society, City of Toronto, Dairy Farmers of Canada, Grey Power Insurance, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Indigo Books & Music Inc., JVK, Miracle-Gro, Myers Lawn and Garden Group, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, Pick Ontario, Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation, RBC, Sobeys Ontario, Tourism Ireland, VIA Rail, Vincor, The Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, Universal Studios Home Entertainment Canada, Show Smart, CN Tower, Nestle Canada, Sinclair-Cockburn, CanWest Media, The National Post, EZ Rock, HGTV, CFRB and The New Classical 96.3 FM.

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