

Old Westbury Gardens

THE GARDENS OF BAR HARBOR & MOUNT DESERT ISLAND

September 10 to 13, 2026 · Thursday to Sunday

Tour arranged by Classical Excursions *exclusively* for Old Westbury Gardens



Our four-day visit to Bar Harbor includes private gardens and many other sites to be enjoyed and explored. Mt. Desert Island is considered one of Maine's most revered summer resort islands where such towns as Bar Harbor, Seal Harbor and Northeast Harbor dot the area. The island has been a destination for inspiration, relaxation and outdoor activities since the 1840s. At first, Hudson Valley School painters, most notably Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, travelled to Mount Desert Island and in particular to Bar Harbor to paint images of the area's spectacular seascapes and landscapes.



A major aspect of Mt. Desert Island is nature and the cultivation of beautiful gardens. Not only is its beauty unique, but according to the Wild Gardens of Acadia organization at the Acadia National Park, “the glacial accidents which left it with flora from both the cold north and the warmer south.” One person stands out for her highly talented contribution, the legendary landscape designer Beatrix Farrand, who summured at Bar Harbor for over half a century, creating over 60 gardens on the island. One of Farrand's greatest projects was the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden at Seal Harbor designed collaboratively with Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Last year the garden came under the ownership of the Mt. Desert Land & Garden Preserve, “Set within acres of moss-carpeted woods, [there is an] unique atmosphere...derived from a combination of Eastern statuary with a border garden in which perennials build the foundation of the flower beds and annuals provide an explosion of color.”

Collections of plants from Farrand's Reef Point home that no longer exists can now be seen at the Asticou Azalea Garden, a Japanese-style flowering garden, and at the Thuya Garden, both at Northeast Harbor. The latter offers a variety of annuals and perennials that line two long sides of the garden. Another Farrand garden can be found at her last home, Garland Farm, Salisbury Cove, now maintained by the Beatrix Farrand Society and where a lecture will be given on her life and work.

Old Westbury Garden invites you to join an exclusive tour to discover these gardens and more. We plan a three-night stay with four-star accommodations at the Harborside Hotel and Spa with waterfront views of beautiful Mt. Desert Narrows and Frenchman's Bay.



OVERVIEW OF OUR DAYS

Day 1 • THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2026

- 3:30 pm Check-in to the **Harborside Hotel & Spa** for three-nights (55 West Street Bar Harbor).
- 6:00 pm Welcome dinner.

Day 2 • FRIDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER

Breakfast at the hotel.

- 8:30 am Departure for Seal Harbor.
- 9:00 am Private garden tour of **Skylands** led by the gardeners. The house was designed by architect Duncan Candler, c. 1924-1926, for Edsel and Eleanor Ford. Refreshments on the terrace. TBC[Image right]
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 1:30 pm Private tour of the **Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden** in Seal Harbor. This was created by Beatrix Farrand, 1926 – 1935. Today it is maintained by Mt. Desert Land & Garden Preserve; the previous owner was David Rockefeller. [Images on page one.]
- 3:30 pm Private tour of **Garland Farm**, a vernacular farm, with architectural elements taken from Reef Point, razed home of Beatrix Farrand by Rotch & Tilden, and other elements from another period cottage by Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Jr.; renovations by Robert Patterson, 1955. Beatrix Farrand was the original owner, today it is maintained by the Beatrix Farrand Society.



Dinner on your own this evening. Our hotel is well located for easy walking into the town of Bar Harbor.

Day 3 • SATURDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER

Breakfast at the hotel.

- 8:30 am Departure for Southwest Harbor.
- 9:00 am Visit with the Director of the **Charlotte Rhoades Park & Butterfly Garden** in Southwest Harbor. The plants here support a butterfly habitat and the garden is a certified monarch habitat site.
- 10:30 am Private tour of house and garden of **The Yellow House**, architect Fred L. Savage, c. 1893. Patrick Chassé, garden designer.
- 12:15 pm Lunch in Northeast Harbor at the **Asticou Inn**, architect Fred L. Savage, c. 1883, rebuilt 1901 following a fire.
- 1:45 pm Special tour of the **Asticou Garden**, garden designer Charles K. Savage, c. 1957. Now a Property of the Mt. Desert Land & Garden Preserve. [image below]
- 3:00 pm Private tour of **Thuja Garden & Lodge** in Northeast Harbor. Garden designer Charles K. Savage, c. 1956–61; Joseph H. Curtis, 1912–16 was the original owner, it is now a property of Mt. Desert Land & Garden Preserve.



Group dinner tonight.

Day 4 • SUNDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

Breakfast at the hotel.

- 9:30 am **The Wild Gardens of Acadia.** This is our last visit of the tour. Here we will meet with the Conservation Director as we visit 12 sections set on just a three-quarters of an acre, each reflecting a typical habitat found on Mt. Desert Island.



- 10:45 am Return to hotel. Check-out of room.
Independent departures.



CLASSICAL EXCURSIONS, 97 Arbor Alcove Lane, St. Augustine FL 32084 | T. 413-446-8728
www.ClassicalExcursions.com | Lani@ClassicalExcursions.com