

Hidden Gems

Walking Tour

This walking tour will take you approximately 1 hour and starts from the lower garden entrance. Please be aware the tour includes a variety of terrain, walking both up and down hill.

1

The Weather Station

Head up the Broad Walk.

You will see what looks like a beehive on the Salisbury Lawn to your left. This is actually a weather station. The Head Gardener at Chatsworth has recorded the weather since the 18th century. **How do you think it measures sunlight? Take a look and find out more about how it works on the station itself.**



Rock Garden

2

Make your way up past the Ring Pond to the Rock Garden.

The Rock Garden was created by the 6th Duke's Head Gardener, Joseph Paxton. Rock gardens were becoming increasingly fashionable in the mid-19th century but few were conceived on such a massive scale. **Try and find the balancing rock and give it a gentle push.** It is perfectly balanced so rocks back and forth. This shows the extent of Paxton's genius. Every rock appears haphazardly placed so it looks like at any point they might topple over, but in fact they were perfectly positioned using large steam-powered apparatus designed by Paxton himself.



Willow Tree Fountain

3

Head to the Willow Tree Fountain; you may want to get wet under its showers! Originally created in 1692, the same design still remains despite being replaced twice and restored in 1983. When Princess Victoria visited in 1832 aged 13 she was delighted by this tree and nicknamed it the 'squirry willow tree'. What would you call it?



Hundred Steps

4

Now head back on yourself to the Maze and walk up the Hundred Steps leading up the hill.

Half way up the steps is a monkey puzzle tree. Monkey puzzle trees were a favourite with Victorians.

A rediscovered altar marks the top of the Hundred Steps. **Have a look at the spectacular view over the park across to Edensor Church.**

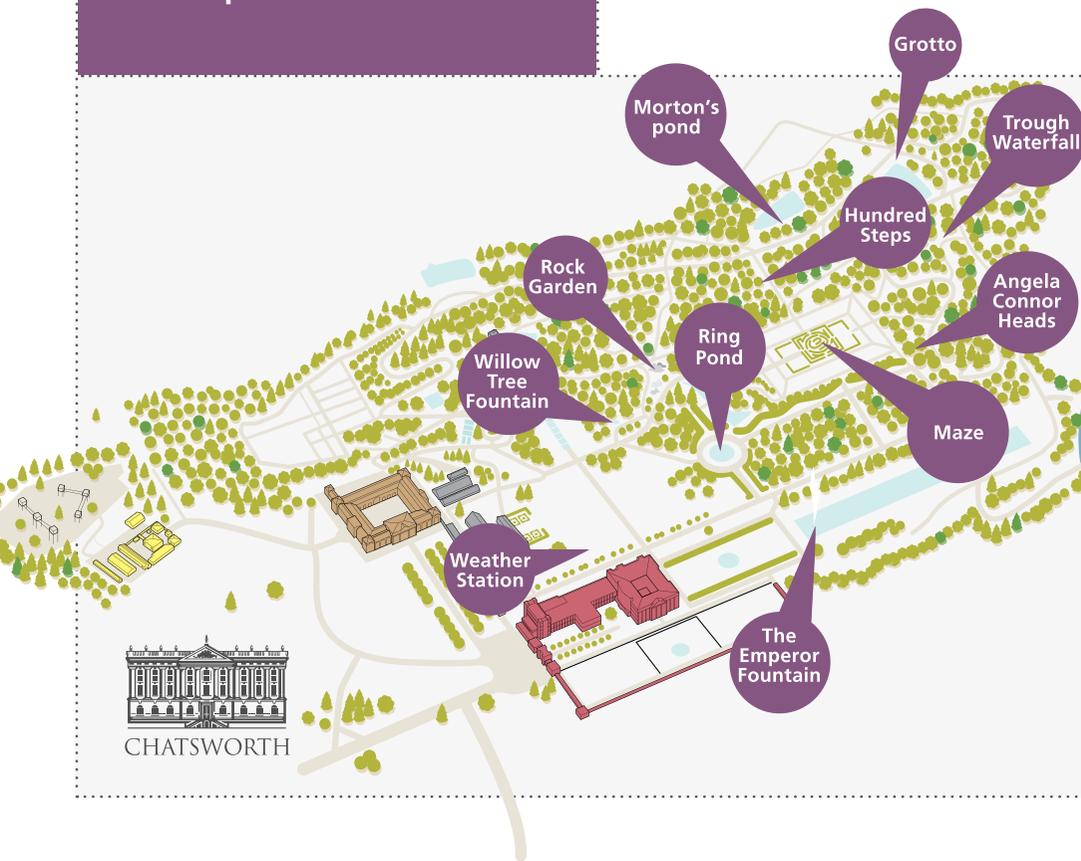


Morton's Pond

5

Turn right at the top of the steps and follow on to Morton's Pond.

One of the most tranquil spots in the garden, Morton's Pond is a real hidden gem. This pond was called the Great Fountain Pond and supplied the gravity-fed fountain in the Canal Pond before the updated Emperor Fountain was built. In the 1st Duke's time the Great Fountain played to 94ft (28m) in comparison to the current Emperor Fountain which plays at 296ft (90m).



CHATSWORTH



Grotto 6

Try to find the Grotto buried away in the hillside.

The Grotto was built in 1798 for Duchess Georgiana, the famous wife of the 5th Duke. The bandstand was added by her son, the 6th Duke. Georgiana was an enthusiastic collector of minerals and fossils, some of which are on display in the house. The Grotto was lined with stalagmites and stalactites and other subterranean finds. These cave-like structures were popular in Renaissance Italy.

It became fashionable in England for some Grotto owners to employ 'druids' to occupy them to add to their mystical atmosphere or sometimes, at less expense, a stuffed hermit. The area surrounding the Grotto was once part of Sherwood Forest and near the Grotto are the remains of some ancient oaks. In the Old park nearby, some of the oaks are over 700 years old. The Old park is not open to visitors as it is a conservation area.



Trough Waterfall 7



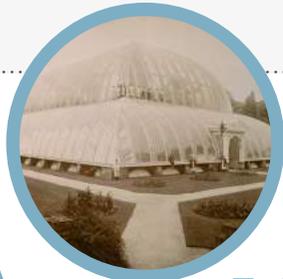
Walk down past the Grotto Pond. You will be able to follow the Trough Waterfall trickling down the hillside. See if you can spot the troughs shaped like a giant cup and horseshoe.

The piped overflow from the Grotto Pond was transformed into a waterfall in 1997 using salvaged stone drinking troughs. They are all shapes and sizes; it is believed there was a saucer that belongs to the cup-shaped trough but it is still missing in the park even today.



Angela Connor Heads 8

Head over the bridge and bear right, then up the steps to the area under the trees. These stars of our recent TV documentary were moved from the house into the garden last year by the current Duke and Duchess so they could be on permanent display to the public. The busts, cast in bronze, include famous faces along with friends and family of the 11th Duke who commissioned them between 1971 and 1995. They include Lord Burlington, Harold Macmillan, The Queen, Prince Charles and Lucien Freud to name but a few.



Maze 9



Head back down the steps and along the bamboo walk to the south end of the maze.

The maze, which originally consisted of 1209 English yews, was planted in 1962. It sits on the site of Paxton's Great Conservatory, the forerunner to the Crystal Palace built for the Great Exhibition in 1851. The Great Conservatory was fuelled by boilers consuming 300 tonnes of coal a year. The conservatory fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1920 leaving only the sandstone foundation walls which surround the maze. The paths inside the maze were originally planted with grass, this was changed to gravel so that worn patches didn't give the route to the centre away. Tulips, lupins and dahlias are planted at either end of the maze to provide plenty of colour throughout the year. More information about Paxton's Great Conservatory is available at the archway leading out of the north side of the maze.



Ring Pond 10

After leaving the maze bear left down through the rockery and over the Strid bridge and you will find a path that leads back down to the Ring Pond.

The pond is surrounded by Hermes statues, which in ancient Athens were commonly used as boundary markers and signposts. These 18th century Hermes statues arrived in 1893 from Lord Burlington's garden at Chiswick House. If you look in the north east corner of the pond you can see a huge pipe. This pipe feeds water from the Emperor Lake to the Emperor Fountain and is entirely gravity fed. Falling 122 metres from the lake, the water in the jet comes out with such force that the valve has to be turned off very slowly to avoid damage.

The Emperor Fountain 11

Carry on walking along the footpath upwards and you will finish the tour at the Canal Pond in front of the house.

Did you know that when Tsar Nicholas I (1796-1855) announced a trip to England, men worked day and night to complete the Emperor Fountain in time for his visit. Work continued at night by the light of flares and the whole project took only 6 months to complete – and after all that, the Tsar never came to Chatsworth!

