



Tree Trail

of over 80 exceptional trees

AVOCA

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Mount Usher Gardens were created by the Walpole family in 1865. The family took care of the gardens for four generations, spanning 115 years, until 1980 when they were bought by Mrs Madeline Jay. Mrs Jay leased the gardens to Avoca in 2007, and we remain the tenants of this stunning place today.

The gardens, through which the River Vartry runs, cover 22 acres and are home to 32 of the Champion Trees of Ireland, as well as approximately 4,500 different varieties of trees, shrubs and plants. Many of these are rarely seen growing elsewhere in Ireland.

The Walpoles were greatly influenced by Ireland's most famous gardener, William Robinson (1838–1935). He campaigned against formal layouts which emphasised structural schemes and the mass planting of annuals, as seen in many parks to this day. Instead, Robinson proposed that gardens should be laid out in harmony with nature and the immediate landscape. He believed they should be maintained naturally, reflective of nature rather than an attempt to conquer it. He was hugely successful both practically and financially, and “Robinsonian” gardens remain much beloved, of which Mount Usher is recognised as one of the greatest examples.



Robinson was not what we call an “organic gardener,” this aspect of Mount Usher was introduced by Mrs Jay. While it is definitely challenging for the Head Gardener and his team, we’re proud to say the garden continues to be maintained without the use of herbicides or pesticides.

The Vartry River provides a wonderful focal point for the gardens. All our visitors love the little weirs and the suspension bridges over it, which were created by Thomas Walpole, son of the founder Edward. We do recommend exploring areas away from the river too, where you will discover some other of the garden’s treasures.

Our Garden Café and Food Market can be found in the Mount Usher Gardens courtyard, along with The Garden Shop. Avoca is famous for its wonderful food, and The Garden Café is no exception.

We wish to thank all our visitors and season ticket holders for their continued support. Without it, we would not be able to maintain these beautiful gardens and keep them open to the public. We may be biased, but we think Mount Usher Gardens is a very special place which should be experienced and enjoyed by everyone.

Happy exploring!

*Denotes a tree of outstanding size or quality.

1/ DOGWOOD *Cornus 'Eddies White Wonder'*.

An award-winning hybrid with stunning white bracts in May that turn pink with age. Planted 1985.

2/ CHILEAN BARBERRY* *Berberis valdiviana*. A tree-like Berberis. Large clusters of bright orange flowers in April.

3/ JAPANESE MAPLE *Acer palmatum var. dissectum*. This beautiful Japanese maple has fine deeply cut leaves. Good autumn colour and an attractive winter silhouette.

4/ BENTHAM'S CORNELL *Cornus capitata*.

This evergreen dogwood from China produces creamy yellow bracts in summer followed by red pendulous fruits in autumn.

5/ CHINESE COFFIN JUNIPER* *Juniperus recurva var. coxii*. This weeping Juniper is considered to be at risk in China due to its valuable timber. Planted 1925.

6/ BOSNIAN PINE* *Pinus heldreichii*.

An outstanding example of this species. Native to the mountainous regions of the Balkan Peninsula. Planted 1930.

7/ JAPANESE MAPLE *Acer palmatum 'Atropurpureum'*.

These small ornamental maples are grown for their fine leaf shapes and their vivid autumn colours.

8/ JAPANESE RED CEDAR *Cryptomeria japonica 'Elegans'*. Conifer grown for its rot resistant timber. Planted 1962.

9/ CORKSCREW HAZEL* *Corylus avellana 'Contorta'*. A variation of the common hazel grown for its fantastically twisted branches. Much used in floristry. Planted 1924.

10/ NOBEL FIR *Abies procera*.

This conifer from the N.W coast of America is commercially grown for Christmas trees. The spiral of scars in the bark was caused by a lightning strike.

11/ NEW ZEALAND RED BEECH* *Nothofagus fusca*.

This magnificent New Zealand hybrid is the best example of its type in Ireland. Planted 1920.



12/ STRAWBERRY DOGWOOD *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis*. This Chinese variety of Japanese dogwood produces a profusion of creamy white bracts in summer followed by red fruits. Brilliant autumn colour. Planted 1905.

13/ FISHTAIL CAMELLIA *Camellia x williamsii* 'C.F. Coates'. This curious hybrid was developed at Kew gardens in the 1930s. Grown ornamentally for its unusual split leaves.

14/ KOBUSHI *Magnolia kobus*. In early spring, before the leaves appear, the entire crown of this Japanese magnolia is covered in masses of small white flowers.

15/ AUSTRALIAN TREE FERN *Dicksonia antarctica*. A slow growing tree fern from Australia.

16/ NEW ZEALAND LEMONWOOD *Pittosporum eugenoides*. A native of New Zealand which produces fragrant star shaped white flowers in summer. Planted 1978.

17/ WINTER'S BARK *Drimys winteri*. Named after Captain William Winter, who discovered that chewing the bark treated scurvy. This evergreen tree from South America produces ivory white flowers in early summer.

18/ HIMALAYAN MAGNOLIA* *Magnolia campbellii*
'Charles Raffill.' An outstanding tree. In spring, masses of
stunning pink flowers appear before the leaves.
Planted 1930.

19/ MARBLELEAF *Carpodetus serratus*.
A New Zealand native. Known locally as the
Putaputaweta which means 'many weta's'. A weta is a
large cricket-like insect that lives in holes in the bark.

20/ EASTERN LEATHERWOOD* *Eucryphia moorei*.
A champion tree and part of the national collection
of Eucryphias at Mount Usher. A native of Australia,
flowering profusely in late summer. Planted 1940.

21/ CHINESE FIR* *Cunninghamia lanceolata*.
Another champion, related to the Redwoods but with
foliage resembling a Monkey Puzzle. A native of China.

22/ JAPANESE UMBRELLA PINE* *Sciadopitys verticillata*.
A prehistoric tree with unusual whorled leaves. The wood
is used for boat building.

23/ NEW ZEALAND RIMU* *Dacrydium cupressinum*. An
elegant slow growing weeping tree from New Zealand.
This one was planted in 1920 and is nearly fully grown.



24/ TULIP TREE* *Liriodendron tulipifera*.

An Irish champion tree. Large tulip shaped yellowish flowers appear in summer followed by brilliant yellow autumn colour. Planted 1880.

25/ ORIENTAL PLANE *Platanus orientalis*.

A handsome tree grown for its deeply toothed leaves that turn bronze in autumn. Small fruits persist on the tree over winter.

26/ TIBETAN CHERRY *Prunus serrula*.

A spring flowering Chinese cherry that is grown for its beautiful, burnished copper coloured bark.

27/ CABBAGE GUM* *Eucalyptus pauciflora*.

Eucalyptus with silver bark from Australia. Planted 1961.

28/ WATSON'S MAGNOLIA *Magnolia x wieseneri*.

A rare hybrid magnolia from Japan. Large highly scented white flowers appear in summer.

29/ TASMANIAN CEDAR. *Athrotaxis selaginoides*.

A rarity from Tasmania. Planted 1908.

30/ HANDKERCHIEF TREE *Davidia involucrata*. Named after the large white bracts that cover this Chinese tree in May, followed in autumn by large spherical seeds. Planted 1930.

31/ MEXICAN BLUE PINE* *Pinus montezumae*. Beautiful blue-green foliage on this large domed Irish champion tree, one of the finest specimens of its type in Europe. Planted 1909.

32/ JAPANESE WHITE PINE *Pinus parviflora*

This species is much used in the art of bonsai due to its dense foliage.

33/ DECIDUOUS EUCRYPHIA *Eucryphia glutinosa*. The best hardy Eucryphia to grow in Ireland. This Chilean tree produces masses of white flowers in summer.

34/ HUON PINE *Lagarostrobos franklinii*.

A Tasmanian podocarp, not a pine at all. Although slow growing some trees in the wild are estimated to be hundreds of years old.



35/ CHINESE TULIP TREE* *Liriodendron chinensis*.

The Chinese relative of the American tulip tree. A fine specimen of this species with excellent autumn colour. Planted 1912.

36/ WHITE GUM* *Eucalyptus viminalis*.

An outstanding specimen from Australia. The bark falls away in strips to reveal a smooth grey trunk. Planted 1911.

37/ CORK OAK *Quercus suber*

Once essential to the wine industry, the introduction of plastic corks has jeopardised the future of the cork forests in Portugal. Planted 1974.

38/ MOUNTAIN CABBAGE PALM *Cordyline indivisa*.

Not a tree or a palm but a woody-stemmed plant. This cordyline from New Zealand is too tender for most gardens.

39/ URN GUM* *Eucalyptus urnigera*.

A Tasmanian tree, noted for its beautifully patterned bark. Planted 1911.

40/ MEXICAN CYPRESS* *Cupressus lusitanica*.

A particularly fine example of its kind.

41/ WOLLEMI PINE *Wollemia nobilis*.

Thought to be extinct but discovered in 1994 growing in a river valley in Australia. This tree is dedicated to former owner of Mount Usher Mrs Madelaine Jay. Planted 2007.

42/ STEWARTIA ROSTRATA

A beautiful Chinese woodland tree. Pretty white rose like flowers appear in summer followed by pointed seed capsules. Planted 1940.

43/ KING GEORGE'S RHODODENDRON *Rhododendron*

'Loderi King George' In late spring pale pink buds open to huge trusses of funnel shaped fragrant white flowers.

44/ INDIAN HORSE CHESTNUT *Aesculus indica* *'Sydney Pearce'*. In early summer, this tree produces upright panicles of pink flowers with yellow centres. Planted 1968.

45/ WILSON'S MAGNOLIA. *Magnolia wilsonii*.

This small Chinese woodland magnolia produces beautiful 'upside down' very fragrant cup shaped white flowers with crimson stamens in early summer.

46/ CHILEAN BEECH* *Nothofagus dombeyi*.

This magnificent fast growing Irish champion tree was planted 1920.

47/ BREWERS WEEPING SPRUCE* *Picea breweriana*.

This American weeping spruce has been almost wiped out by wildfires in the Californian mountains. Planted 1928.

48/ SILVER BEECH* *Nothofagus menziesii*.

A small leaved evergreen tree from New Zealand. Planted 1920.

49/ CHUSAN PALM *Trachycarpus fortunei*.

A fully hardy flowering Asian palm.

50/ TREE HEATH *Erica arborea* var. *alpina*.

A large Mediterranean tree heather producing a mass of scented white flowers in spring.

51/ PURPLE BEECH *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea Tricolor'.

A classic landscape tree usually planted on large country estates. Grown for its dark glossy purple leaves.

52/ CHILEAN MYRTLE* *Luma apiculata*.

One of the oldest surviving plantings in the garden. Masses of small white flowers appear in mid summer. Planted 1890.

53/ ORANGEBARK *Stewartia monadelphica*.

An attractive small tree from Japan. It has white flowers in mid summer and good autumn colour.

54/ PAGODA DOGWOOD *Cornus alternifolia* 'Argentea'.

Useful variegated shrub, the leaves create an attractive hazy effect.

55/ PIGNUT HICKORY. *Carya glabra*.

An Eastern American hickory. The strong shock resistant wood is used for tool handles and sports equipment. Planted 1958.

56/ GREEK STRAWBERRY TREE *Arbutus andrachne*. The outer bark naturally peels off to reveal red, yellow, and green bark beneath. Planted 1928.

57/ GLANLEAM MYRTLE *Luma apiculata* 'Glanleam Gold'.

A variegated version of the Chilean myrtle discovered growing in Glanleam Gardens in County Kerry, Ireland.

58/ EVERGREEN ASIAN OAK *Quercus glauca*.

A very unusual oak, with leaves that have evolved to repel rainwater.

59/ TOTARA *Podocarpus totara*.

A long-lived New Zealand tree. Prized by the Maori people for building their war canoes. Custom requires a felled podocarpus to be replaced by a seedling to appease the forest god "Tane."



60/ WESTERN RED CEDAR *Thuja plicata*.

This North American giant is over a century old. Traditionally used for totem poles and canoes by native Americans. Planted 1907.

61/ EMMENOPTERYS *Emmenopterys henryi*.

A very rare tree from China that has failed to produce flowers anywhere in Ireland.

62/ INCENSE CEDAR. *Calocedrus decurrens*.

One of the oldest introduced trees in Mount Usher. The timber from this North American tree is aromatic and insect resistant. Planted 1890.

63/ HIMALAYAN BIRCH *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii*

‘Trinity College’. A recently discovered Irish form of this white bark birch.

64/ WEDDING CAKE TREE *Cornus controversa* 'Variegata.'

A deciduous, variegated Asian cornus. Also called the 'Pagoda Tree' due to its distinctive tiered branches.

65/ PLATYCARYA *Platycarya strobilacea*.

Related to the walnut family, this Asian tree produces an unusual structure of upright male catkins that surround a central cone. The bark is used in the making of black dye.

66/ TANEKAHA *Phyllocladus trichomanoides*.

A primitive tree rarely seen outside New Zealand. The Maoris extract red dye from its bark. Planted 1920.

67/ CORAL BARK MAPLE *Acer palmatum* 'Sango-Kaku'

A very attractive Japanese maple grown primarily for its soft yellow autumn colour and red winter twigs.

68/ RHODODENDRON BARBATUM

A multi-stemmed Himalayan rhododendron with peeling reddish-purple bark. Bright red tubular flowers appear in March.



69/ AMERICAN SWEET GUM *Liquidambar styraciflua*.

Recently very popular due to its magnificent autumn colour, with the leaves turning purple red and yellow.

70/ DELAVAY'S MAGNOLIA* *Magnolia delavayi*.

A Chinese evergreen magnolia. Large cream flowers up to 8 inches across appear in late summer. Planted 1918.

71/ JAPANESE POPLAR *Populus maximowiczii*.

Long white woolly catkins in summer shed tufts of cotton over the surface of the water. Planted 1925.

72/ TREE FUCHSIA *Fuchsia excorticata*.

Unusual tree-like New Zealand fuchsia with flowers borne on the wood of the branches. It has attractive orange peeling bark.

73/ PACIFIC DOGWOOD *Cornus nuttallii*.

A North American dogwood with white flowers in spring and excellent autumn colour. Sometimes flowers again in autumn.

74/ PURPLE COOTAMUNDRA WATTLE *Acacia baileyana*

'*Purpurea*'. A recently planted tender acacia. A purple version of the common green leaved *Acacia baileyana*.

75/ PERSIAN IRONWOOD *Parrotia persica*.

It has tiny red flowers in early spring, but it is really grown for its spectacular autumn colour. From Northern Iran.

76/ JAPANESE RAISIN TREE *Hovenia dulcis*. Commonly

used as a food supplement and in traditional herbal medicine in Japan, China, and Korea. Planted 1983.

77/ HILLIER'S FALSECYPRESS *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*

'*Hillieri*'. A beautiful tree any time of year. The bright yellow juvenile foliage is particularly notable in spring.

78/ CHESTNUT LEAVED OAK* *Quercus castaneifolia*.

Large growing oak from Northern Iran, not nearly fully grown, only for the largest of gardens. Planted 1940.

79/ PACIFIC SILVER FIR *Abies amabilis*.

A tree usually only found growing on the north-west coast of North America.

80/ WHIPCORD LAWSON CYPRESS *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Imbricata Pendula'. An unusual cultivar of its species and a very elegant specimen tree.

81/ CAUCASIAN MAPLE *Acer cappadocicum*.

A tree native to parts of Asia and the middle east. Grown here at Mount Usher for its spectacular bright yellow autumn colour.

82/ LACEBARK *Hoheria glabrata* 'Glory of Amlwch'.

This award-winning tree is a hybrid of New Zealand parents. It produces white flowers in abundance in mid-summer.

83/ CAUCASIAN WINGNUT *Pterocarya fraxinifolia*.

A fast-growing tree from the Caucasus and Iran with ash-like leaves and curious hanging winged fruit. Planted 1984.

84/ MEXICAN BLUE PINE *Pinus montezumae*.

These are seedlings of our big Montezumae. Planted in the 1920s.

85/ BULL BAY *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Goliath'.

An impressive evergreen Magnolia from S. E. America. Huge creamy white flowers, some nearly a foot across appear over summer.

86/ EUODIA *Tetradium daniellii*.

A large spreading tree from China and Korea. Clusters of scented white flowers appear from late summer followed by masses of reddish-brown fruit.

87/ BLACK LOCUST *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia'.

A beautiful tree with distinctive bright lime green leaves that turn yellow in autumn. Grown in cities due to its resistance to pollution. Planted 2016.

88/ NEPALESE PAPER PLANT *Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postil'. In winter, small pink flowers produce the most beautiful fragrance.

