

Admission Rates & Hours of Operations

Prices subject to change unless guaranteed through reservation.

Regular Admission Rates

Gardens and Home Package

Adults: \$20.50

Children: \$12.50 (ages 5 – 12)

Gardens Only Package

Adults: \$12.50

Children: \$7 (ages 5 – 12)

*Children 4 and under are free

*Special Magic Christmas in Lights Rates apply the Friday
after Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve

*Group rates available for groups of 20 or more

Hours of Operation

Garden Tours

Daily 8 AM to 5 PM

Museum Home Tours

Hourly beginning at 9 AM

Last tickets are sold at 3:30 PM

Special Extended Hours:

Magic Christmas in Lights

8 AM to 9 PM

Day after Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve

Closed Christmas and New Year's Day

Museum Home Tours

Hourly beginning at 9 AM

Last tickets are sold at 7:30 PM

*The Gardens are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Days.

Annual Blooming Schedule

January

Flowering kale and cabbage, pansies, camellias, Taiwan cherries, snapdragons, Japanese magnolias, dianthus, dusty miller, violas and cyclamen, paper whites, parsley and winter berries.

February

Tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, pansies, camellias, Japanese magnolias, ornamental kale and cabbage, foxglove, delphinium, violas and poppies.

March

Easter lilies, azaleas, pansies, flowering kale and cabbage, tulips, snapdragons, hydrangeas, impatiens, hollyhock, petunia cascades, violas, salvia, marigolds and dianthus.

April

Bellingrath's award-winning Rose Garden and the Harrigan/ExxonMobile Bayou Boardwalk are among the many highlights of this season. Spring annuals include: Delphiniums, Fuchsia, Cape Daisy, Easter lilies, Hydrangea, Geraniums, New Guinea Impatiens, Mexican Heather, Firecracker Plant, Marigolds, Ageratum, Dianthus, Petunia, and Begonias.

May

Roses, Southern Magnolia, Begonias, Yellow Shrimp Plant, Pink Shrimp Plant, Salvia, New Guinea Impatiens, Yellow Elder, Coleus, Cape Jasmine, Verbena, Impatiens, Calibrachoa, Ruellia, Pentas, Bacopa, Angelonia, Caladiums, Cleome, Petunia, Fuchsia Geraniums.

June

Roses, Pink Shrimp Plant, Frangipani, Star Flower, Croton, Yellow Shrimp Plant, Yellow Elder, Salvia, Spiral Ginger, Coleus, Hibiscus, Cape Jasmine, Dragon Wing Begonia, Southern Magnolia, Caladium, Zinnia, New Guinea Impatiens, Allamanda

July-August

Tropical beauties including allamanda, Star Flower, Hibiscus, Coleus, diplodinia, bougainvillea, mandevillias, copper plants, tibonchina, crepe myrtle, chenilles, bottlebrush, roses and summer annuals continue. See the beautiful butterfly garden in full bloom.

September

Tropical flowers give their last bloom and announce the approach of Fall. Roses, hibiscus, allamandas, copper plants, Salvia leucantha (Mexican Sage), Vinca, Encore Azaleas and more.

October

Bellingrath
Gardens and Home

Early-garden style chrysanthemums, Roses, Dianthus, Celosia, Salvia Leucantha (Mexican Sage), Ticomeria (Cape Honeysuckle), Tibouchina, Melampodium, Sweet Cream Marigolds, Tecoma Stans, Alamanda, Hibiscus and Copper Plants

November

Camellias begin their winter show as the Outdoor Cascading Chrysanthemum Display comes to peak. Shades of white, lavender, copper and yellow flow from every balcony and bridge. Salvia madrensis, Cassia Golden Showers, Zinnia angustifolia are also featured. Later in the month there are snapdragons, pansies, kales, dianthus, and dusty millers also in bloom.

December

Graceful displays of poinsettias in shades of red, pink, white, yellow, green and marbled effects. Displays are both indoor and outdoor. Snapdragons, pansies, kale, flowering cabbage, violas, and dianthus are also in bloom.

Bellingrath
Gardens and Home

Bellingrath Gardens and Home Fact Sheet

- Bellingrath Gardens and Home is open 362 days a year, closing on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Days, and is open from 8 AM – 5 PM, except during Magic Christmas in Lights (Day after Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve) when the Gardens remain open until 9 PM.
- Bellingrath Gardens and Home encompasses approximately 900 acres along the Fowl River. Sixty-five acres are cultivated with annual blooms and continuous color.
- Guests may enjoy a tour of the Bellingrath Home, the Rose Garden, Asian-American Garden, Bellingrath Home Terraces, Harrigon/ExxonMobil Bayou Boardwalk and many other Gardens throughout the estate.
- Special events and weddings are held throughout the year on property.
- Walter D. Bellingrath was Mobile's first Coca-Cola bottler.
- Bellingrath Gardens was originally known as *Belle Camp* and was intended to be a fishing camp for Walter D. Bellingrath.
- Walter D. Bellingrath and Bessie Morse Bellingrath opened their gardens to the public for the first time on April 7, 1932. A major traffic jam ensued and admission was charged thereafter for maintenance of the Gardens.
- The 10,500-square-foot Bellingrath Home was completed in July 1936. It features all of its original furnishings from Mrs. Bellingrath and was designed by architect George B. Rogers.
- Bessie Morse Bellingrath died in 1943 at the age of 64. Walter D. Bellingrath died in 1955 at the age of 86.
- Walter D. Bellingrath founded the Bellingrath-Morse Foundation at the age of 80. The foundation benefits Rhodes College in Memphis, Tenn., Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Ala., and Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Ala.



BELLINGRATH GARDENS AND HOME TIMELINE

YEAR	IMAGE	ACTIVITY
1903		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Walter Duncan Bellingrath arrives in Mobile to take over ownership of Coca-Cola Bottling Company at the age of 34.
1906		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Bellingrath marries his former stenographer, Bessie Mae Morse.
1917		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. and Mrs. Bellingrath purchase 25-acre fishing camp on the Fowl River with two dilapidated cabins – Belle Camp.
1923		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the cabins is replaced by a new “Lodge.”
1926		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity comes to Belle Camp with the addition of a generator.
1927		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. & Mrs. Bellingrath tour Europe for several months. They are inspired by the beautiful estate gardens throughout Europe. Upon their return to Mobile, they hire architect Mr. George B. Rogers to create an estate garden. Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Bellingrath search for large established azaleas and camellias for the new gardens from individuals and nurseries throughout the Gulf Coast.
1931		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grotto is completed along with series of runnels and fountains. Flagstones were obtained from downtown Mobile sidewalks. Mrs. Bellingrath paid for their removal and replacement with concrete, to the delight of City of Mobile officials.
1932		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belle Camp is essentially complete. The Rockery, Mirror Lake and bridge, Summer House, Fountain Plaza and waterfront are in place. The Bellingraths invite visiting delegates to a garden club convention to tour their garden. They invite Mobilians to see their gardens the following afternoon. More than 4,700 people arrive at Belle Camp, creating one of the county’s worst traffic jams, on April 7, 1932. The Bellingraths decide to open their Gardens each Spring from January through April. A 50-cent admission is charged.
1933		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors flock to Belle Camp’s Gardens throughout the entire year. Mr. and Mrs. Bellingrath announce that the property will be open year-round beginning in 1934, with a \$1 admission.
1934		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bellingraths ask George Rogers to design a permanent home for them at Belle Camp.
1935		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground is broken for the Bellingrath Home.



1936		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bellingraths create the largest Rose Garden in the South. • The Bellingraths have their first meal in their new home on July 4, 1936.
1938		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bellingraths return from a visit to New Orleans to find a crowd of more than 200 friends and well-wishers in their driveway. A bronze plaque and stone bench had been installed in their absence. It thanks them for opening their estate to the public and "their untiring effort for the up-building of the City of Mobile and this 'Charm Spot of the Deep South.'"
1939		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Guest House replaces the old garage. A wing of the new building contains a small Chapel.
1943		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Bessie Morse Bellingrath dies at the age of 64. • Mr. Bellingrath hires Mr. M. Thomas Brooks from Birmingham to design the Holly Garden as well as a Bird Sanctuary.
1950		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Bellingrath announces the formation of the Bellingrath-Morse Foundation. The Foundation is to maintain the Gardens and Home as a "fitting memorial to my wife." The Bellingrath Home is to be opened to the public after his death.
1955		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Walter Duncan Bellingrath dies at the age of 86. • Mr. George Downing becomes Chairman of the Board of the Bellingrath-Morse Foundation. • Mr. Frederick W. Holder is named General Manager. He is an early organizer of the Junior Miss Program (now Distinguished Young Women), which always includes visits to Bellingrath Gardens and Home.
1956		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property is officially named "Bellingrath Gardens and Home."
1963		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction begins on the new Entrance Building/Cafeteria. • The Lodge is demolished to make way for a new South Terrace Garden. • The first Cascading Mums Display is held. Stock plants for the cascade mums were obtained from Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Penn.
1964		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The South Terrace is completed. • The Entrance Building/Cafeteria and Pet Motel are completed.
1965		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pat Ryan is hired as Assistant Landscape Engineer. • Work begins to turn the Bird Sanctuary into an Oriental American Garden.
1967		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The garage is enclosed to become the Delchamps Gallery of Boehm Porcelain, displaying a collection donated by the Delchamps Family. The facility is dedicated on March 9, 1967.
1977		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bellingrath Home is added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.



1979		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurricane Frederic strikes Mobile on September 12th. Bellingrath Gardens and Home is severely damaged. The damage is estimated to be over \$6 million. More than 1,000 pine trees, 150 Live Oaks and 330 Water Oaks are destroyed by the storm.
1980		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gardens re-open on March 1 for the bulb show. • The public is invited to see the Mum Show on November 23rd, free of charge.
1981		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction begins on the "Education and Information Center." The project includes a picnic area and additional parking.
1982		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bellingrath Home is added to the National Register of Historic Places.
1996		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A&E program "America's Castles" films a segment at Bellingrath Gardens and Home. • New Boardwalk in the Bayou is dedicated. • First Magic Christmas in Lights is held.
1999		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Good Morning America" show is filmed at Bellingrath Gardens with Charles Gibson and Diane Sawyer. • Dr. William E. Barrick is named Executive Director of Bellingrath Gardens and Home.
2000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • America's Junior Miss Program returns to Bellingrath. • Magic Christmas in Lights show redesigned.
2003		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Board established. • The "Friends of Bellingrath" membership programs established.
2004		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bellingrath Gardens and Home Foundation established. • Mobile Rose Society's Show is held at Bellingrath Gardens. • First "Seasons" newsletter published in the spring. • Mobile Rose Society show moves to Bellingrath Gardens and Home. • Mobile Youth Symphony plays for first annual Mother's Day Concert. • Advisory Board established. • Azalea Trail Maid Reunion attended by more than 750. • First Wonderful Wednesday programs held during the summer, including the Kids Kruiise. • The American Horticultural Society's book by Dr. William E. Barrick, "Southeast Smart Garden Regional Guide," is published. • Hurricane Ivan destroys Riverfront Pavilion, damages greenhouses and downs many trees.



2005		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Balloon Glow in the Gardens held in the Fall. • Hurricane Katrina damages gardens. • Partnership with The Grand Hotel and Point Clear Holdings established. • Entry Building renovation completed. • The Little Mermaid Fountain is restored. • 10th Anniversary of Magic Christmas in Lights opened by Alabama's First Lady, Mrs. Patsy Riley. • Bellingrath Family Holiday Party held during Magic Christmas in Lights.
2006		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Riverfront Pavilion completed. • Winter Wednesday programs began. • First Easter Egg Hunt held. • First America's Junior Miss "Breakfast at Bellingrath." • Gift Shop renovation completed. • New website launched.
2007		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75th Anniversary Celebration held on April 7. • First Easter Sunrise Service. • ExxonMobil Ecological Boardwalk reopens with 15 new educational interpretive panels.
2008		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The restored Rockery reopens. • Self-guided educational programs established. • Rose Garden Restoration plans completed.
2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camellia Classic Car Sweet 16 Open Car Show (first held in 1993). • Dr. William E. Barrick's 10-year anniversary. • New cell phone audio tour introduced. • Bellingrath joins Gardens of America Preservation Alliance.
2010		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bellingrath Rosarian Linda Guy awarded American Rose Society Bronze Honor Medal. • Return of Southern Belle River Cruiser. • Rose Garden Fountain installed. • Christmas Village of mini-porcelain buildings displayed.
2011		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bellingrath portraits arrive. • Repairs made in Asian-American Gardens. • 18th Annual Festival of Flowers. • Rose Garden Restoration. • Dr. William E. Barrick receives Meritorious Service Award. • Leslie Schraeder, Director of Marketing, receives tourism marketing professional certification.



2012		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama Magazine's "Best of Bama Awards 2012" honors Bellingrath with "Best Gardens in Bama." • Dr. William E. Barrick receives Governor's Tourism Award from the Alabama Tourism Department.
2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascading Mums Display celebrates 50 years; mum photo contest held. • Better Homes and Gardens' special interest publication, Country Gardens, features Bellingrath Gardens' annual Cascading Mums Display.
2014		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA Today includes Bellingrath Gardens and Home's Magic Christmas in Lights on its list of the "10 Best Public Light Displays in America"; votes from online readers put Bellingrath in sixth place.
2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ConventionSouth magazine, a national multimedia resource for planning events held within the South and Caribbean Seas regions, includes Bellingrath Gardens and Home in its "2015 List of South's Sizzling Attractions for Social Events," a listing of 22 picture-perfect attractions located across 16 states. Bellingrath Gardens is the only representative for the state of Alabama. • Dr. William E. Barrick is selected to receive the American Horticultural Society's 2015 Liberty Hyde Bailey Award. • Dr. William E. Barrick is selected to receive Auburn University's College of Agriculture Outstanding Alumni Award for the Horticulture Program.



The Story of Bellingrath Gardens and Home

In 1903, Walter Duncan Bellingrath began Mobile's first Coca-Cola bottling operation. His franchise spanned a 100-mile radius, which he covered single-handedly at first. It was not uncommon to see Mr. Bellingrath walking the train tracks between small towns because he lacked the train fare. His perseverance and warm personality won him many customers and his hard work made him a tremendous success.

By the time the United States became initiated in World War I, Mr. Bellingrath's Coca-Cola Bottling Company was a major business operation in Mobile. This success, compounded by sugar shortages during the war, took its toll on Mr. Bellingrath's health. In 1917, he was advised by his physician to buy a fishing camp overlooking Fowl River he had been admiring to balance his hectic work schedule with needed rest and relaxation.

By this time, the Bellingraths' home in Mobile on Ann Street was known for its beautiful garden, which the couple graciously allowed drivers to enjoy during the spring. The collection of azaleas was the city's largest and Mrs. Bellingrath began bringing cuttings down to her husband's fishing camp, which had been named *Belle Camp*. The conditions were ideal, and each spring the collection became more spectacular.

After an extensive European tour of gardens, the couple decided to get professional assistance in the design of their property in 1927. They hired George B. Rogers, Mobile's most prominent architect. Rogers worked continuously on developing the property, as well as the couple's home, until his death in 1945. His plan for the Gardens is still being enjoyed today.

In the spring of 1932, the Bellingraths opened their property along the Fowl River up to a Depression-weary public for a day of azalea gazing. The response was phenomenal, as the roads between Mobile and the Gardens became one long traffic jam. The astounded couple decided to open the Gardens permanently, while charging a fee to assist in their care and upkeep.

The Gardens began to expand as azaleas and camellias were shipped in from across the South. In Mobile, Mrs. Bellingrath was known for her generosity in paying tremendous sums for plants from individual's gardens. The higher demand for the plant normally meant a higher price Mrs. Bellingrath was willing to pay.

The Bellingraths had no children, but they enjoyed the company of their young nieces and nephews. As both were from large families, the need for extra guest rooms moved the couple to have George Rogers design a guest house in 1939. The building also contained a large garage, an intimate chapel and a laundry. Since 1967, the garage space has served visitors as the Delchamps Gallery of Edward Marshall Boehm Porcelain. The collection is the largest of its type open to the public and contains a wide variety of wildlife art created by the veterinarian turned sculptor.

After Mrs. Bellingrath died in 1943, Mr. Bellingrath continued the couple's plans for their beloved Gardens until his own death in 1955. Mr. Bellingrath had not only created a tribute to the region's natural beauty, but had also contributed much to his community.

Mr. Bellingrath's obituary listed numerous accomplishments, in addition to creating Bellingrath Gardens. He had been a staunch member of the Mobile Chamber of Commerce, even writing at least two checks to cover annual deficits. He served as the director of the Mobile Community Chest, as well as its President. A Deacon and benefactor at his church, Central Presbyterian, Mr. Bellingrath was also an ardent supporter of the Mobile Infirmary and of the Mobile Rotary Club, of which he was a founding member.



In the business community, he was well respected as the president of the Lerio Corporation, Mobile Warehousing, Inc. and was one of the four founders of the Waterman Steamship Corporation. He served as an officer for several Coca-Cola bottling companies in Mobile, in addition to other cities. He was a director of the First National Bank of Mobile and the Mobile Press Register, Inc.

The Bellingrath-Morse Foundation

At the age of 80, Mr. Bellingrath created the Bellingrath-Morse Foundation to perpetuate the existence of his beloved Home and Gardens for future generations to enjoy. The Foundation is also set up to further the efforts of three church-related colleges: Rhodes College in Memphis, TN; Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, AL; and Huntingdon College in Montgomery, AL. Mr. Bellingrath's church, Central Presbyterian, as well as that of his wife's family, St. Francis Street Methodist, are also beneficiaries of the Foundation. These institutions receive approximately 85 percent of the Foundation's earnings. There is no doubt of Mr. Bellingrath's sincere interest in education. Having a limited formal education himself, Mr. Bellingrath made certain that many others could further themselves through a college education.

