



A Sunday walk in Holland Park, Notting Hill and North Kensington

Map 9 and 11

4.5km, from Shepherd's Bush to Notting Hill Gate tube stations

Recommended by Garden Co-Ordinator Marlene Johnson

This wonderful area boasts some of the largest and finest squares in London, yet local community gardens abound too. The area is too large to see in a day, so this walk will focus on the larger, more diverse gardens, many of which are open on Sunday.

From Shepherds Bush station take the subway across to Holland Park Avenue, where you will find, right opposite the Hilton, **Royal Crescent Gardens (Sunday 10am-5pm)**. Part of the Norland Estate, which was laid out in 1846 by Robert Cantwell, this is a superb garden to start your tour.

Carry on to pretty, tree-lined Addison Avenue and walk up towards **St James's Gardens (Saturday and Sunday 10am-5pm)**, where you will find St James's Church nestled in its centre. Return back along Addison Avenue until you come to Queensdale Road, then take a left and walk to **Norland Square (Sunday 10am-5pm)**, also originally part of the Norland Estate. Enjoy drinks and cakes here before meandering further along Holland Park Avenue until you come to Ladbroke Grove; take a left and walk up towards **Hanover Gardens (Sunday 1-5pm)** on your left. This is a peaceful woodland garden in the heart of the historic Ladbroke Estate, where the quiet is disturbed only by birdsong and the bells of St John's, Notting Hill.

Head up Landsdown Road to Rosmead Road on your left, where you will find the entrance to **Rosmead Gardens (Sunday 10am-5pm)**. There are many amenities to be found here, so take the time to have a light lunch or tea. Then aim for Ladbroke Grove again, cross the road and start walking back towards Stanley Crescent, which leads to **Stanley Crescent Garden (Sunday 2-6pm)**. Largely designed and built in 1852-53 by Thomas Allom, this is one of the least altered communal gardens in the area, featuring many old, rare and protected trees.

Now it is time to visit our largest garden square, **Ladbroke Square Garden (Sunday 2-6pm)**, a magnificent space and one of the largest private squares in London. Flanked by Ladbroke Grove on one side and Ladbroke Square on the other, you will find the entrance on Kensington Park Road. Get lost in its vast acreage and forget it is a private garden square, as you admire the planting along the colourful herbaceous borders and walk along its ever-changing winding paths. There are also two playgrounds for younger and older children.

On leaving (after tea and homemade cakes), take a right along Kensington Park Road until you come to the junction with Pembridge Road. Take a left and walk until you come to the smaller but perfectly formed **Pembridge Square (Sunday 11am-5pm)**. It is a prizewinning and breathtakingly beautiful space, with various 'rooms' where you can sit and smell the roses, ponder life in a wild garden or dappled woody glade, let the children run free in the play area or discuss planting techniques with the gardeners.

Leaving the gardens, you are then a short walk away from Notting Hill Gate tube station and all its local amenities.