

Bus Captain Script

WEDNESDAY TOUR August 15, 2018

Buses leave from Navy Pier and proceed in round-robin fashion. Buses load at 12:30 p.m. for first stop, 1:40 p.m. for second stop, 2:50 p.m. for third stop, and 4 p.m. for final leg to hotel.

Bus 1: [Garfield Park Conservatory](#), then Farm on Ogden, then Ping Tom Memorial Park

Bus 2: [Farm on Ogden](#), then Ping Tom Park, then Garfield Park Conservatory

Bus 3: [Ping Tom Memorial Park](#), then Farm on Ogden, then Garfield Park Conservatory

GARFIELD PARK CONSERVATORY

The Garfield Park Conservatory at Central Park Avenue and Lake Street is among the largest and most stunning conservatories in the nation. Designed by pioneering midwestern landscape architect Jens Jensen, it opened in 1908. Jensen conceived the conservatory as a series of naturalistic landscapes under glass, a revolutionary idea at the time.

The simple yet strong shape of the structure, which is meant to emulate the haystacks of the Midwest, complements the collection of plants and foliage that it houses. Its goal was to create a year-round experience of nature for residents of the congested city.

The magnificent Fern Room, sculpted from native limestone, evokes the Midwestern landscape at the time of the Jurassic. The spectacular Palm House has dozens of species of palms.

The conservatory has recovered from repeated disasters. In January 1994, long-neglected steam pipes failed during a cold snap, killing 80 percent of the plants in the Aroid House. This calamity led to a support organization, the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance, and a fundraising campaign for repairs and updating.

In 2001-2002, *Chihuly In The Park: A Garden Of Glass*—which was glass artist Dale Chihuly's first exhibition in a North American public garden—brought

more than 800,000 new visitors to the conservatory and created a new audience and base of support. One Chihuly sculpture can still be seen in the Aroid House's pool.

In June 2011, a brief but catastrophic hailstorm shattered about half of the conservatory's glass panes. Shards had to be plucked from rare plants with tweezers. After another fundraising campaign, all the glass was replaced (with tempered glass) for a re-opening on Earth Day 2015. The conservatory's 4.5 acres, inside and out, include a sweeping outdoor garden, a demonstration garden for edibles, a maze, a popular indoor children's garden, and extensive backstage propagation houses.

The Conservatory is large, about 2.5 acres under glass. Outside are City Garden (the big garden in back with pond), also urban gardening demonstration garden, turf labyrinth. In front is Monet Garden (a perennial and pollinator garden). Behind the scenes are several propagation houses.

For more information on the Garfield Park Conservatory, contact Chicago Park District PR Michele Lemons, 312-742-4790, michele.lemons@chicagoparkdistrict.com.

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WINDY CITY HARVEST FARM ON OGDEN

The brand-new Farm on Ogden, located at Ogden Avenue and Central Park Avenue, is a food hub and training facility for sustainable urban agriculture in Chicago. Established by the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Lawndale Christian Health Center, the farm is intended as a community hub that takes a preventive "whole-person" approach to health and wellness, in particular by providing sources of fresh produce for urban residents.

Windy City Harvest, the Chicago Botanic Garden's urban agriculture training program, which serves youth, ex-offenders, and others, provides workforce development and jobs at the facility. It is adjacent to a Green Youth Farm, also

operated by Windy City Harvest and provides agriculture internships for local teens. It also supports small farm businesses.

Although the Chicago Botanic Garden itself is in north suburban Glencoe, Windy City Harvest has several farm and farm training operations around the Chicago area.

The Farm on Ogden is planned to be a community hub, with an indoor garden and learning space for Lawndale Christian Health Center patients, community residents, and urban farm entrepreneurs.

The building, adapted from an old auto body shop, includes a large greenhouse and large-scale hydroponics/aquaponics system to support year-round fish and leafy greens production and training.

A commercial kitchen and micro-processing center allows farmers and entrepreneurs to process produce into products that can be distributed through an indoor community market. Cold storage will assist with managing the aggregation and distribution of 130,000 pounds of produce. A large multipurpose community space houses classes, nutrition education, food demonstrations, and produce-box pickup.

Windy City Harvest and the Farm on Ogden are part of a growing Chicago-area urban agriculture scene. The Chicago Urban Agriculture Mapping Project estimates that there are more than 820 growing sites across the city, ranging from community and school gardens to rooftop farms, orchards, hydroponic farms inside former factories, and multi-acre urban farms. Chicago urban farming feeds a network of restaurants and farmers markets across the city and suburbs.

To learn more about Windy City Harvest, see chicagobotanic.org/urbanagriculture. The PR contact for the Chicago Botanic Garden is Gloria Ciaccio, PR director, 773-202-1741 (cell) or 847-835-6819 (office), gciaccio@chicagobotanic.org, or see chicagobotanic.org/pr for more contacts.

PING TOM MEMORIAL PARK

Ping Tom Memorial Park was once a railroad yard. The Chicago Park District redeveloped it in the 1990s to provide a badly needed park for Chinatown, an immigrant neighborhood whose only recreational facilities had been demolished for an expressway in the 1960s. It's included in this tour as a glimpse of immigrant Chicago and for the sight of the remarkable new life of the Chicago River.

When railroads ran along the South Branch of the Chicago River from the 1850s to the 1970s, it was a stinking, polluted canal used for industrial transport and sewage disposal. In the last few decades, water treatment has greatly reduced pollution and improved wildlife habitat along the river. It is increasingly used for recreation. The riverfront has become the hottest real estate in Chicago.

This 17-acre park's green space and gardens take full advantage of its riverfront views. Named in honor of prominent Chinatown businessman and civic leader [Ping Tom](#), a bronze [bust](#) of Tom is installed near the park's pavilion.

Ping Tom Park, designed by Ernest C. Wong of Site Design Group of Chicago, has walking paths by the river, a boathouse with kayak rentals and a public dock, in addition to a playground and a pagoda-style pavilion.

The field house has a green roof and second-story outdoor patio with skyline views. The park hosts many events such as concerts and theater and dance performances. Sadly, we will miss the annual Dragon Boat Festival, held in June.

For more information on Ping Tom Park or other Chicago Park District parks, contact Chicago Park District PR officer Michele Lemons, 312-742-4790, michele.lemons@chicagoparkdistrict.com.