

NYBG/125

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***The Orchid Show: Thailand* at The New York Botanical Garden Pays Homage to the Beauty and Cultural History of Thai Gardens**

NYBG's 15th Annual *Orchid Show* Runs from February 18 through April 9, 2017



Dendrobium orchid



Vanda orchid

Bronx, NY—The New York Botanical Garden celebrates its 15th year of spectacular orchid exhibitions with *The Orchid Show: Thailand*, an homage to the wealth of orchids, acclaimed tropical gardens, renowned orchid breeding, and rich cultural history of this Southeast Asian nation, which is home to more than 1,200 native orchid species. From February 18 through April 9, 2017, this year's *Orchid Show* will feature thousands of orchids in a classic Thai garden setting. The grand centerpiece of the design will be the façade of a *sala*, a traditional pavilion used for shade and relaxation, with a signature sweeping gabled roofline festooned with exquisite orchids.

Today Thailand, a leading producer of cultivated orchids for more than a century, is the biggest exporter of tropical orchids in the world. Native and hybrid orchids alike have become almost synonymous with Thailand. Because of the country's hospitable climate, orchids are not only cherished for their color and texture in gardens, these dazzling flowers are also grown on trees that line public streets.

The show's design in the *Seasonal Exhibition Galleries* of NYBG's Enid A. Haupt Conservatory recalls the ancient Thai garden tradition of *mai dat*, in which trees and shrubs are pruned and trained over time to form fanciful shapes. Throughout the exhibition, small ponds and pools create a tranquil atmosphere. Colorful flowers will float in large glazed water jars, providing a moment of beauty and reflection.

An astonishing array of orchids on view will include some of the varieties that have helped Thailand earn its international reputation as a center for orchid horticulture and breeding. It is now world famous for breeding *Vanda* orchids, whose large patterned blooms are popular in Thai gardens and homes, as well as an extraordinary variety of *Dendrobium*, another genus grown widely in Thailand that offers a uniquely tropical quality with cane-like stems resembling bamboo. *Paphiopedilum* orchids, which grow in Thailand's highest mountain forests, captivate with their unusual and beautiful pouch-shaped lips.

To create this irresistible paradise of fragrance and color, NYBG horticulturists assemble thousands of flowers from the Garden's research collections as well as the finest growers across the country. Orchids of seemingly every conceivable color, shape, and provenance, including rare and iconic specimens, will be on display.

The Orchid Show: Thailand is designed by Christian Primeau, who oversees the extensive tropical/subtropical plant collections housed in 11 different environments in the Haupt Conservatory. Marc Hachadourian, Director of the Nolen Greenhouses, curates the exhibition's orchid selection and NYBG's extensive groupings of living plants from around the world maintained in the Nolen Greenhouses, the behind-the-scenes glasshouses where plants for the Garden's indoor and outdoor displays and science research program are grown and maintained.

Since 1990, the Garden has been a designated Plant Rescue Center, charged with nurturing and bringing back to health orchids that have been collected illegally in the wild and seized at international borders through the Convention on Illegal Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). NYBG's orchid experts, Marc Hachadourian and Matthew Pace, Ph.D., Assistant Curator in the Garden's William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, are at the forefront of modern orchidology and conservation.

Complementary programming, including tours and demonstrations, enhance the exhibition. Orchid Evenings, one of New York City's most romantic date destinations, bring a nighttime experience to *The Orchid Show: Thailand*, as guests stroll through the beauty of the exhibition with cocktail in hand while music plays. On select evenings, visitors can upgrade their experience with entry into the Young Garden Circle Orchid Lounge. Upgraded ticket holders will enjoy skip-the-line access to the exhibition, and a private open bar, complimentary light bites, and special DJ in an exclusive space among the orchids in the Conservatory's stunning Aquatic Plants and Vines Gallery. Young Garden Circle Members should contact the Garden Patrons Office at 718.817.8553 or ygevents@nybg.org to reserve their complimentary tickets to these events.

Thousands of top-quality orchids, from exotic, hard-to-find specimens for connoisseurs to elegant yet easy-to-grow varieties for beginners, are available for purchase at NYBG Shop, along with orchid products and books.

During *The Orchid Show*, visitors can enjoy a selection of dining options at the Hudson Garden Grill, NYBG's full-service restaurant, which will have Thai-inspired offerings, and at the Pine Tree Café.

For more information about *The Orchid Show: Thailand* and to purchase tickets, please visit the Garden's Web site, www.nybg.org.

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Exhibitions in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory are made possible by the Estate of Enid A. Haupt.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit www.nybg.org

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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