

# ALLAN GARDENS CONSERVATORY



## An oasis in the city

I tell my son we'll be visiting a greenhouse. "Is the house all painted in green?" he asks incredulously. "No, it's a house made out of glass and full of green plants that believe it's summer all year long!" I reply.

Talk about a greenhouse effect! Five buildings with large windows, covering over 16,000 sq. feet are filled with plants for all occasions. Some are filled with exhibits which gradually change into new ones according to the plants' life cycles. And it's free!

Enter through the building with the high palm tree filled dome. Stepping through a curtain of fine roots, you enter a tropical hothouse with hibiscus set amidst a tapestry-like leafy backdrop. Beyond it, a large selection of hairy, prickly, and fluffy cactuses await the little ones' impatient hands.

Retracing your steps to the other side of the dome, you'll find a cooler space with a small waterfall and a lovely red



fish pond, with its penny-carpeted bottom, at the foot of a nymph statuette.

Further, the tropical mood is definitely on with its hot and humid climate. Here, orchids bloom against the roar of water going through a paddle wheel attached to a small house. In winter, you can admire shapes covered with flowers installed amidst hundreds of poinsettias and palm trees.

For two weeks during **Easter** time, a new selection of flowers adds its sweet perfume to the conservatory. The first **Easter** we visited the hot houses, we were struck by the sweet bouquet and the visual richness of the settings. What a contrast with those of wintertime!

Chrysanthemums bring an autumn look to the Allan Gardens, while December marks the return of the **Victorian Christmas** display.

### TIPS (fun for 3 years +)

- More on their **Victorian Christmas** opening ceremony on p. 176.
- We played at guessing from which plant the fallen leaves belonged. A fun initiation to botany!
- **GOOD NEWS!** There's a revitalisation plan going on. It will eventually add a Children's Garden and play area, a South Garden Terrace and Artists' Gardens.

### NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

Riverdale Farm (5-min.) ..... p. 55  
Mt. Pleasant Cemetery (15-min.) p. 277

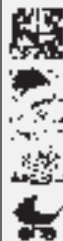
### Allan Gardens Conservatory

(416) 392-7288

[www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca)

(click **Parks & Gardens**, then **Gardens & Conservatories**)

**D-3**  
**Downtown**  
**Toronto**  
**15-min.**



**Schedule:** Open year-round, 10 am to 5 pm.

**Admission:** FREE.

**Directions:** 19 Horticultural Ave., Toronto (south of Carlton, between Jarvis and Sherbourne St.).