



Photo courtesy Susan Canup

“Born on the Bayou” 2020 National Convention Preview: Houston, Texas March 12-14, 2020

At the Charleston Convention, Bart Brechter, Curator of Bayou Bend Gardens, head of Gardens and Landscape Operations at Bayou Bend, and Texas Chapter member, gave two lists of reasons to come to Houston for the 2020 convention. (See Sidebars). In addition, consider that Houston’s climate (Zone 8) means that most evergreen azaleas will be in full bloom that “early” and that you can then return home to a second season of bloom.

More information about venues and details about schedules will be forthcoming, both on the ASA Web (at www.azaleas.org/convention-2020) and in the Winter 2019 issue of *The Azalean*.

The hotel reservation block has already been reserved, and it is really important to make those hotel reservations as soon as possible, due to other major events in Houston. Yes, the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo is that big an event, attracting crowds to Houston at the same time.

The 2020 convention is co-hosted by the River Oaks

Garden Club and Texas Chapter members and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. 2020 will be the 84th year of River Oaks Garden Club Houston Azalea Trail. Our convention will visit these home gardens plus Bayou Bend.

All events will be held in the Museum District, including:

- Tour the home gardens that are on the River Oaks Garden Club’s Azalea Trail.
- Bayou Bend—the Museum of Fine Arts Houston house museum for American Decorative Arts and Paintings. Displayed in the former home of Houston civic leader and philanthropist Ima Hogg (1882-1975) Bayou Bend showcases one of the finest collections of American furnishings, silver, ceramics, and paintings in the world, surrounded by 14 acres of organically maintained gardens in Houston’s historic River Oaks neighborhood. The garden of azaleas and camellias have been



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◀ Photo 1—Southern Indica Azaleas along the trail leading to Bayou Bend home are glorious in the spring, but do not fully prepare the visitor for the manicured gardens around the historic Bayou Bend home.

▲ Photo 2—This view looks up toward the Bayou Bend home, showing the wealth of Southern Indica Azaleas in the spring.

propagated to maintain Miss Hogg’s original species and cultivars as she dictated in her design.

- Rienzi—the Museum of Fine Arts Houston museum for European Decorative Arts, especially of the 18th and 19th century.

Special events include:

- Lunch at the Forum of Civics, the home of the River Oaks Garden Club.
- Lectures on the azalea influence on Asian Art, the history of the Azalea Trail, and Miss Ima Hogg and her legacy of the Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens.
- Plant sale at the hotel.

Convention Registration

Open to all members of the Azalea Society of America, non-members who join the Azalea Society of America and guests to promote the goals of the ASA. Early registration fee is \$275.00, if this registration is received by Feb. 1, 2020.

Why Come to Houston?

- To visit the 4th largest city in the US
- 11,000 restaurants in the city; more than any other US city
- You can sleep well knowing it has the largest Medical Center in the US
- You could also visit the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo
- There are 145 different languages spoken in the city
- The Museum District has 19 museums— one of the largest in the US
- Has more park acreage than any city over 1,000,000



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▲ Photo 3—Kurume and Southern Indica azaleas frame Bayou Bend's Diana Terrace, so called because the view from this terrace is centered on the Diana Statue and reflecting pool down the manicured, sloping lawn.

After Feb. 1 the registration is \$290.00. This registration fee includes breakfast Friday and Saturday mornings, Friday and Saturday lunches, and the Saturday evening banquet. Refunds for cancellations are: 100% before Feb. 1, 2020; 50% between Feb. 2-12; and no refunds after Feb. 12.

Event Locations

All events, except tours, will be held at the Houston Marriott West Loop Hotel.

Hotel

Convention lodging will be at the Houston Marriott West Loop, 1750 West Loop South, Houston TX 77027. Their phone number is 713-960-0111. The special rate is \$119 (plus 17% tax and lodging fee). Reservations should be made under the name of the Azalea Society of America Convention. Parking is \$20 a day.

Logistics Note

No hotel shuttle is available to the hotel from the airport. Uber fares run \$35-\$40 depending on which airport you travel to, Hobby or Houston Intercontinental.

Registration

Convention registration forms are posted on the ASA website. (Visit: <https://www.azaleas.org/wp-content/uploads/convention/2020/attach/RegistrationForm2020.pdf>) There is the option to sign up online. Or, fill in and mail the form on the wrapper of this issue.

Be sure to book your hotel rooms early at:

Houston Marriott West Loop
 1750 West Loop South
 \$119.00/night—rate subject to sales
 and local taxes (currently 17%)
 Toll Free: 800-228-9290
 Phone: 713-960-0111

These hotel numbers will transfer you to Reservations; mention you are with the Azalea Society of American Convention 2020 and ask for their special rate.



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▲ Photo 4—Early morning sunlight over the Bayou Bend “Butterfly Garden” created from varying colors of Kurume Azaleas. The garden, developed in 1942, includes 350 Kurume azalea plants that are meticulously pruned annually by expert Bayou Bend groundskeepers to maintain the butterfly’s wings. Brick paths allow access and form the body of the butterfly.

► Photo 5— The Diana Statue in the formal azalea garden by the Visitor Center at Bayou Bend. Laid out between 1937 and 1939, this garden exemplifies the combined effects of architectural and landscape design. The focal point is the Diana statue, Roman goddess of wild animals and the hunt. Bayou Bend owner Ima Hogg commissioned the work from the Frilli studio in 1937. Not shown here, water jets form arches over a long reflecting pool. This garden is on an axis with the main door of the house.

Things to Keep in Mind

- Houston has more rainfall than Seattle
- Houston is the third most humid city in the US
- Houston’s metro area is larger than the state of New Jersey
- The Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo is going on at the same time, so register early!
- You will be in Texas, so the 2020 conference will be bigger than ever

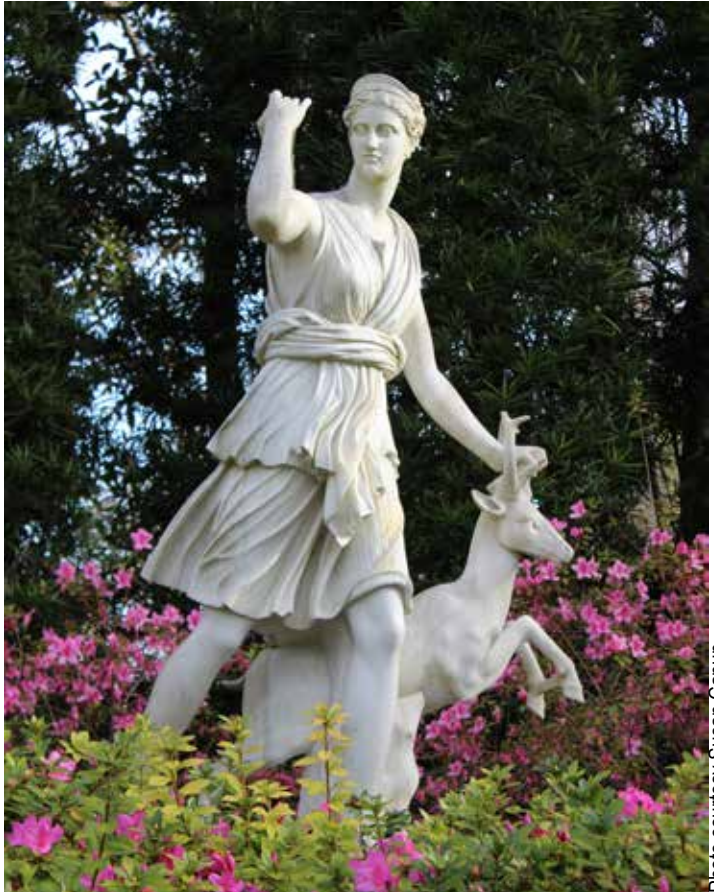


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