

## ***A FABULOUS CURE FOR THE WINTER BLAHS***

***.....Susan Rightmyer***

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Although we've had a truly wonderful autumn and start into the winter season, there's always a time when we crave the fragrance and visual beauty of plants. My suggestion is to visit a city greenhouse or conservatory during these cold winter months to get your fix, and the best part is we don't have to maintain it. There are a number of greenhouses and conservatories run by the city.

I have visited Allan Gardens in the winter and it was the perfect tonic. I've also seen the Butterfly Conservatory on a truly brutal day in January. Although the focus isn't on plants it's so revitalizing and refreshing to be transported to the tropics. To see so many butterflies at this time of the year is truly magical. It was a shock to step outside the glass enclosure to see it was still winter outside.

While it may be a bit of an effort to stir ourselves and bundle up to brave the elements or face a bit of a drive, I guarantee it will be worth it. Perhaps if we get our dose of nature in winter we might not succumb to the allure of pretty plant pictures when the catalogues arrive in March. A word of caution to avoid disappointment; the pretty colourful pictures in catalogues don't live up to the hype.

### *Allan Gardens Conservatory*



Allan Gardens Conservatory is a major landmark and tourist attraction in downtown Toronto. Its historic, cast-iron and glass domed "Palm House" was built in 1910 and is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. A botanical gem in the heart of the city, Allan Gardens has a permanent collection of exotic plants and beautiful seasonal flower shows.

**Hours of operation:**

10 am - 5 pm,  
365 days/year ~  
Free admission &  
Wheelchair accessible.



**Check out the website :**

[http://www.blogto.com/sports\\_play/201510/the\\_top\\_5\\_indoor\\_gardens\\_in\\_and\\_around\\_toronto/](http://www.blogto.com/sports_play/201510/the_top_5_indoor_gardens_in_and_around_toronto/)

Allan Gardens has six greenhouses with an area of over 16,000 square feet. These showcase a diverse and beautiful **permanent collection** of plants from around the world. Experience nature in a whole new way by getting to know palms, banana trees, orchids, jasmine, and gingers.

## *Centennial Park Conservatory*



The Centennial Park Conservatory Road, located at 151 Elmcrest Road, Etobicoke, has three greenhouses with an area of over 12,000 square feet. With a tropical house, an arid house and a show house it offers a variety of interesting plant collections and exciting seasonal displays. Among its highlights is a varied permanent collection of plants from around the world. Visitors can enjoy tropical plants that bloom year-round, unusual fruit trees like sour sop and papaya, and a great collection of cacti. This tropical paradise is a great place to relax and refresh your spirit.

**Hours of operation:** 10 am - 5 pm, 365 days/year ~ Free admission, Wheel chair accessible.



## *Butterfly Conservatory*



This magical attraction features over 2,000 colourful tropical butterflies floating freely among lush exotic blossoms and greenery. Paths wind through the rainforest setting, past a pond and waterfall and the 'Emergency window', where the butterflies leave their pupae and prepare to take their first flight! The self guided walking tour of the Butterfly Conservatory begins with a short informative video that is close captioned for the hearing impaired.

The Butterfly Conservatory is located on the grounds of the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens, 10 minutes north of the Falls. Explore the 180 metres of pathways winding through this lush tropical environment to experience the 45 different species that call this beautiful space home

Admission :

Adults & Children 13 years & up are \$14.25.

Children 6-12 years are \$9.25.

Children under 5 are free.

Parking is \$ 5.00

