



The Rite of Spring

THE FLOWER FIELDS, CARLSBAD'S ANNUAL CELEBRATION, RETURNS IN ALL ITS COLORFUL GLORY.

WRITTEN BY LOIS SWAGERTY





Some things never change. Whether it's the ball dropping at Times Square, or the Rose Parade on New Year's Day or Punxsutawney Phil on Groundhog Day, we find special joy in events we can count on each year. And in Carlsbad, we rely on The Flower Fields to delight us with a dazzling display of color each spring.

"It's a place that brings joy to so many," says Kari Prevost, CEO, CB Ranch Enterprises. "We create unforgettable moments of joy through breathtaking color and beauty." Every year, millions of ranunculus flowers erupt into bloom over 55 acres—roughly the size of 42 football fields—creating a riot of color on the Carlsbad hillside.

As we spring into spring, it's time to see it again with fresh eyes. Let's take advantage of everything The Flower Fields has to offer and keep this breathtaking tradition alive.

KEEPING IT FLOWERY

The celebrated ranunculus blossoms explode into a vivid rainbow of 13 vibrant shades in solid colors and variegated. The once-tiny flower bulb farm that began in 1965 has evolved into a world-famous springtime destination for visitors and locals alike.

Along with 80 million Giant Tecolote Ranunculus blooms, guests can wander through poinsettias, cymbidium orchids, sunflowers, a sweet pea maze and a colossal American flag made from red, white and blue petunias. Spectacular gardens provide hidden surprises such as art, aviaries, fountains and larger-than-life glass sculptures by Alex Heveri.

KEEPING IT FRESH

In addition to its well-loved attractions, The Flower Fields has exciting new offerings for the 2026 season.

"**The Butterfly Encounter** has been greatly expanded," Prevost says. "A brand-new enclosed greenhouse contains hundreds of butterflies which people can feed and enjoy up close. We've added exotic varieties such as the Emperor Birdwing and Blue Morpho to create an intimate, interactive experience for all ages."

A **pop-up vendor** series is also joining the lineup. "We retrofitted an old Studebaker truck as a backdrop for pop-ups selling specialty foods, gifts and seasonal finds from Lofty Coffee, Sugar Bear Sweets, Fox Point Farms and more," says Prevost. "We'll partner with a different vendor each week, beginning later in March. Look for details on the website and social media."

The new **Bloomside Reserved Parking Bundle** appeals to guests seeking a VIP package. It includes general admission, unlimited wagon rides, unlimited Butterfly Encounter entry and a reserved parking space with access from Cannon Road (available only on weekends, starting March 21).

KEEPING IT FUN

It's not just about the flowers. Fan favorites include wagon rides, Santa's playground, Carlsbad Mining Company and U-Pick blueberries. Daily concessions tempt the palate with pizza, tacos, ice cream, lemonade and Strawberry Shack's treats, with kettle corn, cotton candy and coffee added from Thursday through

a) The field boasts 13 shades of Giant Tecolote Ranunculus blooms. **b)** You can pick blueberries at the fields for a sweet reminder of your visit. **c)** The expanded Butterfly Encounter offers even more opportunities to enjoy the creatures up close (photos courtesy of The Flower Fields).



Monday. Live music on the weekends is returning, along with wellness programs, flower arranging, wine tasting and Tea in the Garden (see website for calendar).

Professional half- or one-hour photo sessions are available, and are perfect for grad photos, birthdays, spring break, families, proposals, engagements, weddings and maternity photos. Cutouts in the fields provide a charming giant chair, tractor and glass sculpture to pose with.

"We are passionate about the experience that our visitors have with us," says Prevost. "Yes, the flowers have been here a long time, but where can you go to experience nature and color and joy all at once? We all need more of that, and it's right here!"



The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch

MARCH 1 THROUGH MAY 10

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THEFLOWERFIELDS.COM

WAYS TO ENJOY THE FLOWER FIELDS

- Get a season pass
- Explore a different section each visit
- Take a child
- Ride the wagon
- Pick fresh blueberries
- Drop in for lunch or a snack
- Shop at a pop-up vendor
- Sign up for yoga or meditation
- Schedule a photo shoot
- Visit the butterflies
- Conquer the Sweet Pea Maze
- Splurge on a Bloomside Reserved Parking Bundle

ADMISSION *(Must be purchased online before arrival)*

- Adults: \$27
- Seniors (60+) & Military: \$25
- Children (3-10): \$17
- Children younger than 3: Free

SEASON PASSES

- Adults: \$65
- Seniors (60+): \$60
- Children (3-10): \$40

WEEKDAY SPECIALS

- Monday–Wednesday: One child free with purchase of adult/senior/military ticket
- Thursday: \$5 off for seniors

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES

- Wagon Tours: \$8 for adults; \$4 for children
- Butterfly Encounter: \$8 for adults, \$4 for children
- U-Pick Blueberries (Monday–Tuesday when available) \$8/pint
- Bloomside Reserved Parking Bundle (weekends starting March 21)
- Sluice Mining: \$5 per person
- Group Tours Available: details online
- Private Events: book year-round