

Fields of Dreams

IT'S RANUNCULUS SEASON, WHICH MEANS CARLSBAD IS IN FULL BLOOM.

WRITTEN BY LOIS SWAGERTY



photo by Vin Weathermon

Guinness has its Book of World Records and the Olympics has its history of impressive feats, but Carlsbad boasts an annual display of floral beauty that is unequalled in the world. A spectacular rainbow of color drenches the hillside from March to May, setting remarkable records in our local lexicon.

Take a look at some of the records set at The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch each year.

FINEST FIELDS

The fertile soil of The Flower Fields covers 55 acres in Carlsbad Ranch. It has been a springtime landmark for more than 60 years, originating from seeds brought to Carlsbad by Luther Gage in the 1920s and further developed by Edwin Frazee in the 1960s.

MOST RANUNCULUS

General Manager Fred Clarke says, "We have over 80 million flowers bloom each spring, and approximately 7 million cut stems in 16 different colors and blends of ranunculus."

GREATEST GUESTS

Visitors number more than 250,000 people per year. Most come from Southern California, but many also come from Arizona, Canada and every country you can imagine.

MOST VALUABLE VOLUNTEERS

"We have about 80 seasonal workers and about 150 volunteers," says Clarke. "People love doing it. They come back year after year because it's a high point to be at The Flower Fields. All my workers love working here, being part of the process that brings this beauty to our guests and the world."

TOP TRACTOR TOURS

Nine vintage tractors transport guests in rustic open-air wagons, providing a narrated history of the fields and facts along the way. The tractors make approximately 3,000 circuits of the fields per season, with more than 200 rides per day during peak blooming weeks.

COOLEST CURRICULUM

School kids come to experience the dynamic school program. "It's the best-rated program by both teachers and kids," says Clarke. Students learn about composting, hold earthworms, plant seeds and sing along to the ever-popular tune, "Dirt Made My Lunch" by the Banana Slug String Band. "We're expecting nearly 8,000 first- through fourth-graders this year."



photo courtesy of the Flower Fields



photo by Sam Loera

BIGGEST FLORAL FLAG

A colossal American flag, made of 18,989 red, white and dark blue petunia plants covers one acre on the south end of the property. At 279 feet long and 147 feet wide, it is sized to the scale of a real flag. It was planted in memory of those who were lost on September 11, 2001, and remains up through July 4 each year.

SWEETEST MAZE

Almost a half-mile long with tricky, twisting trails, the sweet pea maze walls are covered with 4,000 of the most fragrant varieties of sweet pea plants. Kids can safely run free in this confined space, as well as enjoying the sluice mine and Santa's Village areas.

PRETTIEST POINSETTIAS

Popular poinsettia plants from the 1960s–1990s are on display in a unique poinsettia library. Clarke says, "These are historic varieties that the Ecke family developed in the late 1950s to become the most iconic Christmas plant."

BEST BARGAINS

Blueberry picking moves to Mondays this year, to coincide with Monday Special Admission prices.

Get one child's admission free with each adult or senior ticket purchased. Bring the kids and grand-kids for a fun-filled day in the fields. And don't worry about packing a picnic—concession stands are available to meet all your refreshment needs.



THE FLOWER FIELDS

Open March 1–May 12

5704 Paseo del Norte

Info: 760.431.0352

Advance ticket sales required online:
theflowerfields.com

Flower Fields Stats We'll Never Know:

- Number of marriage proposals made here
- Number of children lost in the sweet pea maze
- Most blueberries eaten while picking "just one basket"
- Most visits by one person on a season pass
- Number of traffic jams from drivers rubber-necking in passing

STAY ABOVE THE flower fields



Stay & See Package Includes:

- Overnight Accommodation
- Waived Parking
- Two Tickets to the Flower Fields
- Flower Inspired Local Chocolates
- Welcome Drinks



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photos courtesy of the Flower Fields

