

ARDCHATTAN PRIORY GARDEN

A garden has existed at Ardchattan since the thirteenth century. Little is known of its early history or development, although a few names suggesting its origins linger on, the Monk's Walk with its magnificent old trees, the Prior's Walk is full of scented roses and Sorbus trees.

The four acres of garden you see today were mainly planted in the twentieth century, they take full advantage of the neutral free draining soil and mild coastal climate. A wide variety of plants are grown giving colour and scent throughout the season. With in the kitchen garden a greenhouse holds an extensive collection of Cacti.

The garden surrounding Ardchattan Priory offers views over Loch Etive, towards Mull in the west and Ben Cruachan to the east. The extensive lawn to the front of the house is surrounded by herbaceous, rose, shrub borders and a rockery. Either side of the drive is a wilder garden with numerous shrubs, roses and ornamental trees.

The Priory, now a private house, was founded in 1230 by Sir Duncan Macdougall, of the family of the Lords of Lorn. The monks were of the Valliscaulian order. The ruined Chapel at the back of the garden, dates from the 13th Century. There are some fine early stones, including the recently restored Ardchattan Cross. The ruins are in the care of Historic Scotland, and are open with the garden.

Information for the 2012 season:

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1st April – 31st Oct, 2010, 9.30am – 5.30pm daily

The price is £3.50 per person, payable at an honesty box on entry, cash or a cheque made out to Ardchattan Estate.

Group payments may be made in advance (or by voucher by special arrangement) by writing to me at the above address. A £5 surcharge per booking is made for the use of vouchers. Cheques payable to 'Ardchattan Estate'.

The car park is suitable for cars and minibuses. It is situated just inside the front gates at the start of the garden. Buses can park on the verge outside the gates, as the garden starts immediately inside the gate, this does not involve any extra walking for visitors. Buses can turn by following the road on for 300m where there is a pier and ample turning space.

Directions: the garden is situated five miles east on the Bonawe road, from the turn off from the Oban/Fort William road, along the north side of Loch Etive. It is well signed. Although the last 5 miles is on a narrow road, buses can use it with care.

The paths are suitable for wheelchairs, although they can become soft in very wet weather. We regret there is no garden guiding facility available, however there are information sheets available by the pay box (Please return after use). There is a disabled toilet, there is no catering, shop or plant sales.

www.gardens-of-argyll.co.uk