



# Chanticleer: A Pleasure Garden

*Adrian Higgins*

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## **Chanticleer: A Pleasure Garden** Adrian Higgins

Chanticleer, a forty-eight-acre garden on Philadelphia's historic Main Line, is many things simultaneously: a lush display of verdant intensity and variety, an irreverent and informal setting for inventive plant combinations, a homage to the native trees and horticultural heritage of the mid-Atlantic, a testament to one man's devotion to his family's estate and legacy, and a good spot for a stroll and picnic amid the blooms. In *Chanticleer: A Pleasure Garden*, Adrian Higgins and photographer Rob Cardillo chronicle the garden's many charms over the course of two growing cycles.

Built on the grounds of the Rosengarten estate in Wayne, Pennsylvania, Chanticleer retains a domestic scale, resulting in an intimate, welcoming atmosphere. The structure of the estate has been thoughtfully incorporated into the garden's overall design, such that small gardens created in the footprint of the old tennis court and on the foundation of one of the family homes share space with more traditional landscapes woven around streams and an orchard.

Through conversations and rambles with Chanticleer's team of gardeners and artisans, Higgins follows the garden's development and reinvention as it changes from season to season, rejoicing in the hundred thousand daffodils blooming on the Orchard Lawn in spring and marveling at the Serpentine's late summer crop of cotton, planted as a reminder of Pennsylvania's agrarian past. Cardillo's photographs reveal further nuances in Chanticleer's landscape: a rare and venerable black walnut tree near the entrance, pairs of gaily painted chairs along the paths, a backlit arbor draped in mounds of fragrant wisteria. Chanticleer fuses a strenuous devotion to the beauty and health of its plantings with a constant dedication to the mutability and natural energy of a living space. And within the garden, Higgins notes, there is a thread of perfection entwined with whimsy and continuous renewal.

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