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# ROSES ABROAD

## ROSE GARDENS IN SLOVENIA

'Sally Holmes'

Slovenia is a country with a very specific climatic diversity — this offers a possibility of naturally forming various different micro-locations. These have impact on rose gardens that can be roughly divided in two groups: Sub-Mediterranean rose gardens and Continental rose gardens. Some of the more continental rose gardens that Slovenia offers are those in Arboretum Volčji Potok, Tivoli and University Botanical garden in Maribor.

Near the Adriatic Sea we can find three representative rose gardens: Valdoltra and Portorož, accompanied with one in St. Ivan in the near Trieste, Italy. In these gardens the roses bloom a bit earlier than in other parts of the country. This is due for the effects of the sea, which make winters milder and summers longer, but compared with the really Mediterranean areas, here the summers are not that hot. Besides the ones in rose gardens, in the Sub-Mediterranean area the roses are widely used as “common” park plants — in most of

the occasions modern shrub varieties that bloom various times are used.

The rose garden in Valdoltra is a vast collection of more than 200 varieties of park roses, which was opened in 1997. The collection was a gift by professor Gianfranco Fineschi from Tuscany, who owns a museum of all the worldwide recognized rose varieties. The roses are plants that love sun, so in the Valdoltra Park they have perfect conditions for a abundant flowering. The Slovenian Rose Society organizes guided walks in the Valdoltra Rose Garden. SRS members also have the opportunity to participate in various workshops — every year, for example, there is a workshop for trimming rose shrubs.

One of the newest rose gardens on the Slovenian Coast is the one in Portorož. It is situated near the beach and has a wonderful open view on the sea. Roses are also used as urban greening plants (for more than a hundred years) — as the name of the town says



Rose garden of Portorož

photos courtesy Breda Čopi

it: Portorož – Portorose – Port of Roses.

To close with the Sub-Mediterranean rosariums it is important to mention a rose garden that is situated in nearby Trieste (Italy) — Sv. Ivan/St. John.

A specialty between Slovenian rose gardens is for certain the one in Kostanjevica near Nova Gorica. In the small atrium of the Franciscan Monastery there is a collection of bourbon roses. The coincidence is that this same spot also hosts a tomb of some Counts of Bourbon themselves. These rose varieties were first bred in the beginning of the 20th century. They were

a novelty and a sensation in that period, because of their long period of blooming — from spring till the fall. Thanks to their vast diversity they can be used in various ways — as individual plant representatives, in groups like urban roses or also as climbing plants.

The rose garden of Arboretum Volčji Potok was created in the 1960s. Its structure has remained practically the same, but its rose collection was completely renewed in the years 2001 and 2002. The new accent is on resistant varieties that need little chemical protection. The rose garden is really user-friendly. There



Rose garden of Portorož, facing the sea.



Rose garden in Sv. Ivan/St. John, Trieste.

photo courtesy Breda Čopi

are benches positioned in the pleasant shadow of the climbing roses and many paths that are nice for a stroll. The rose garden has a green belt of evergreen trees. The collection of roses in Arboretum Volčji Potok has about 200 different varieties that are marked with names and other information.

The rose garden in Ljubljana — the country capital — central park Tivoli was renewed in 2007. In comparison with the old one, which was created in the first part of the 1990s, it now contains a modern collection of roses, which are beautiful and yet quite healthy. The rose garden is situated at the outskirts of Tivoli. In 1991, a competition was held for the regulation of the area of the pond, playground and city's greenhouse — under the guidance of professor Dušan Ogrin. The projects for these areas, including the rose garden, were made (and executed) in 1993-1994. The renovation of the rose garden was led by various Slovenian professionals and roses enthusiasts (in collaboration with the maintenance company) — the original structure was preserved and extended with some additional

flower beds alongside the promenade. The main purpose of the renovation of the Tivoli's rose garden was to present contemporary achievements in rose breeding. The qualities of modern roses are the long period of blooming (from June until autumn) — or a repeated flowering in September — an expanded color palette of the flowers and their shapes. The scent became an important element, and the focus moved to the consistent appearance of the plant as a whole. Importance was also placed on the health of the plant. The varieties are carefully chosen and marked. The Tivoli rose garden is also a place of learning, a venue for guided tours and various workshops for everyone interested in roses.

The rose garden, that lays the most north of all in Slovenia, is the one in the University Botanical Garden of Maribor.

Enthusiasts all over the country have their private collections of these enchanting plants. These small pearls in the variety of rose gardens can be visited by arrangement with the owner.