

MARIE SELBY BOTANICAL GARDENS®

School Tour Pre-Visit Info 2018-2019

We look forward to hosting you in The Gardens! We hope your group will enjoy a meaningful learning experience, and a day surrounded by the beauty of The Gardens. Please review this information with your students and chaperones, and make copies as needed. With your help, we can protect The Gardens, and provide a pleasant experience to all visitors.

Make the Most of Your Visit:

Before your class visits The Gardens, you are welcome to come and familiarize yourself with the grounds and the plant collections. *Teachers are always admitted free to The Gardens with a valid teacher ID!* Related lesson plans and teacher resources are available. Contact tcalla@selby.org for more information.

- Using the restroom before arriving at The Gardens is recommended. If that's not possible, please anticipate this need and work with your guide(s) to find a good time to provide a restroom break.
- If possible, provide a snack before leaving school or on the bus. Well-nourished students enjoy their experience much more than hungry ones.
- Please encourage students to leave all non-essential items at home, at school, or on the bus.
- *Please have your class(es) divided into smaller groups prior to arrival--maximum of 15 students per group.*
- Teachers and chaperones are responsible for the behavior and safety of their students. Please be sure to go over **Garden Etiquette** with your students prior to arrival. This is crucial to ensure a positive experience for all.

Garden Etiquette

- Please do not touch the plants, or collect leaves, fruits, flowers, etc. Selby Gardens contains many exotic tropical plants, some of which are toxic or spiny, and others that may be hurt by touching them. As well, collecting things, even when on the ground, can cause unwanted impacts to our Gardens, especially when multiplied by lots of other people who wish to collect the same things. If students see something unique or beautiful, consider taking pictures, drawing, or writing about it instead!
- Please do not reach into the koi pond. Oils, bacteria, and other residues on our hands can make our beloved fish sick!
- Please **walk** on the sidewalks. Guides may invite groups to run on the Great Lawn or explore the roots of the banyan trees, but otherwise, please do not enter planted areas or flower beds, and stick to the sidewalks.
- Groups should stay together so that students do not get lost or hurt.
- Students, chaperones and teachers are expected to put their electronic devices away during the guided portion of your visit.

Enjoy your Gardens exploration! Thank you for visiting!

Field Trip FAQs

What are the prices per student?

For guided tours, the price is \$10.00 per student. For self-guiding groups, the price is \$7.00 per student.

Please note: Because our Guided School Tour program relies on a cadre of trained volunteers, we are unable to guarantee Guide availability for every date and time requested. If we are unable to secure enough guides for your visit, we will convert your reservation to a self-guided visit and adjust the price accordingly..

Can a student/parent use their Selby membership for free admission?

Guided tours are special arrangements, and not included in Selby membership. All members of a tour group must pay for a guided experience, regardless of membership status. For a teacher-led (self-guiding) group, Selby memberships may be used for free or discounted admission.

What kind of payments do you accept?

We accept cash, check, and all major credit cards. All members of the group must be included in one single payment.

How many chaperones do we need?

We require at minimum 1 adult (teacher or other adult chaperone) per 10 students, to a **maximum of 3 chaperones per 10 students**. *In order to offer the best possible experience for guided student groups, chaperones beyond the 3:10 ratio will explore the Gardens on their own, and rejoin the group after the guided portion of the tour.*

Is there a fee for chaperones?

Teachers are free, as is 1 chaperone per 10 students. Chaperones beyond the 1:10 ratio are \$10.00 each. Chaperone fees must be included in the single payment for the group.

Where do we go when we arrive at Selby Gardens?

Selby staff or volunteers will meet the group in front of our Welcome Center, which is at the South end of Palm Ave. The Welcome Center is the building with the green awning on the West (right-hand) side of the street. Buses should drop students off here.

What time should we arrive?

Unless prior arrangements have been made, check-in is from 9:45 a.m. - 10 a.m. Please arrive on time. Our staff and volunteers are on fixed schedules and may not be able to extend your tour if you are late.

Where do buses park?

There are 2 bus parking spots in the parking lot at the South end of Palm Ave., across the from the Welcome Center. If these spots are full, buses may parallel park on the WEST side of Palm Ave. You may also find parking in the shell lot at the north end of Palm Ave. (across from the Mansion). *Please do not park across spaces or in the travel lanes of the parking lots.*

If the bus will stay on-site during the visit, bus drivers are welcome to enjoy The Gardens free of charge. Please exchange phone numbers and coordinate with the driver(s) regarding lunches or other items being stored on the bus, and meeting time/place after your visit.

What are our lunch options?

School groups are welcome to bring bagged lunches to enjoy picnic-style on the lawn. *Please bring blankets or sheets to sit on.* There are also 7 picnic tables overlooking Hudson Bayou, adjacent to the parking area. We have a limited number of wagons available to transport lunches to air-conditioned storage space if needed, but no refrigeration is available. All lunch trash must be packed out.

For guided tours, will my class stay together?

Small groups of 10-15 get the most out of a guided experience, and are best able to stick together while walking through the grounds. Please have your class(es) divided into groups of no more than 15.

May we stay and explore the Gardens or work on our own projects after the guided tour?

Absolutely! Please note, though, that due to space limitations and safety considerations, self-guiding groups may not enter the Tropical Conservatory or the Payne Mansion during special exhibitions.

May we visit the Gift Shop or Cafe?

Yes! Please remember that The Plant Shop and Cafe are part of the Garden and chaperones must stay with their groups at all times. Due to space limitations, please limit groups visiting the Shop or Cafe to 5 students at a time.

What is your rainy day policy?

Selby Gardens is open rain or shine. (We may, however, close the Gardens temporarily if severe weather threatens) Please dress for the outdoors! If you prefer to cancel in the case of inclement weather, we will do our best to reschedule you, but cannot guarantee a booking. There is no cancellation fee.

Change of plans? Other questions or concerns?

Please contact Tracy Calla, Manager of School and Family Programs, as soon as possible at tcalla@selby.org, or 941-366-5731 ext 273.