



Colonial Revival Garden

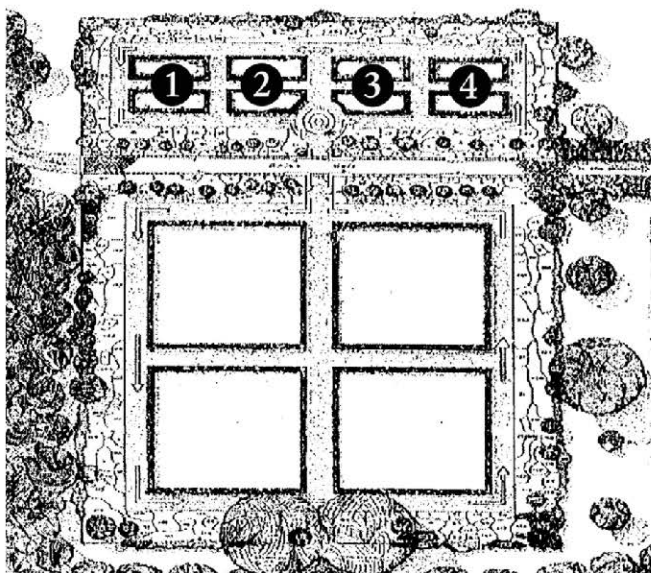
Gardening was an essential skill in the early 1700s. Colonists relied upon their kitchen gardens to provide vegetables and fruits for the family. Herbs were also planted for medicinal uses, cosmetics, household products, and fabric dyes. While large tobacco crops were tended by male gentry planters and their enslaved or indentured servants, kitchen gardens were cared for by the lady of the household, children, and enslaved people.

Vegetables grown in the kitchen garden would have included beets, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, cucumbers, squash, turnips, and radishes. Flowers found throughout the garden had a variety of uses. Violets were added to salads for flavor, oils for fragrance, and used as medicines. Roses were used for jellies and tarts, as well as for sore throats.

The exact layout of the kitchen garden that belonged to George Washington's family is unknown. The present garden is a 1932 re-creation in the Colonial Revival style. In contrast to colonial gardens, which for most colonists were entirely practical, Colonial Revival gardens were mostly decorative.

Fun Facts!

- In colonial times, regular bathing was considered unnecessary and even unhealthy. Herbs such as thyme and lavender were placed in clothing and bed linens to mask body odors.
- Comfrey was used to dress or bandage wounds. Yarrow leaves were used to close up wounds and stop bleeding.
- Lemon balm was placed in amulets or sachets as a love potion.
- President Theodore Roosevelt visited this location in 1906. He wrote that "although it must be a hundred years since the place was deserted, there are still multitudes of flowers which must have come from those in the old garden."



Herb Garden Map

1

Herbs for dying wool and linens are also found in the garden. These beds include woad, common barberry, St. John's wort, tansy, and madder.

2

Plants for medicinal uses include feverfew, rosemary, calendula, sage, comfrey, fennel, hyssop, and rue.

3

Culinary herbs for food preparation and cooking are found here. During spring and summer keep an eye out for basil, dill, parsley, rosemary, garlic, and sage.

4

These beds are devoted to necessary household herbs used in insect repellent, soaps, and to mask body odor. Plants include tansy, santolina, yarrow, lavender, barberry, and thyme.

The National Park Service gratefully acknowledges The Northern Neck Master Gardeners, through the Virginia Cooperative Extension, who volunteer to cultivate the herb garden.

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