



Part 3 The Gardens



Vizcaya's Museum and Gardens are in the Coconut Grove district in Miami, Florida. Like many of the famous European mansions created during the 17th and 18th century in France and Italy, Vizcaya gives one the effect of being there, while in the United States. "The central space is dominated by low hedges, or parterres, in a geometric arrangement. Beyond that are the evocative Secret Garden, the intimate Theater Garden, the playful Maze Garden, and the once-watery domain of the Fountain Garden. On either side of this designed landscape, James Deering preserved the native forest." <vizcaya.org>

The following provides you with an overview of the gardens from <vizcaya.org>.

- Vizcaya's exuberant gardens are characterized by an abundance of architectural structures and details, elaborate fountains, and antique and commissioned sculptures. The use of sculptures that were already old and of soft and porous coral stone resulted, quite intentionally, in the gardens having a weathered appearance soon after their completion. To further the appearance of age, Deering and [Paul Chalfin](#) planted numerous mature trees, along with vines and plants that would drape themselves over the garden structures.
- Landscape architect [Diego Suarez](#) referenced many places in the design of Vizcaya's formal gardens; most are around in Florence and Rome. In the outer gardens that no longer exist, Vizcaya's creators instead looked to the Everglades, North Africa and even Asia for landscape and architectural inspiration.
- The original plan for the formal gardens included a series of terraces that began at the Main House and ended at a large lagoon. Suarez realized that the light reflecting off the water would be blinding to garden visitors and that the formal gardens would melt into the jungle beyond—hardly a fitting conclusion for such a grandly conceived landscape. He cleverly redesigned the entire formal garden and added the Garden Mound, an artificial hill that blocks the view from the house and creates long perspectives on its sides.



[acuri.net](#) shares photos of the gardens but being there is better!







While we were touring the grounds and gardens several young women were being photographed. It was their 15th birthday celebration that they were being photographed for. Below is an explanation.

"Most of the world makes a big deal out of 18th or 21st birthdays, a time-old coming of age ceremony where the youngster is finally regarded as a fully-fledged adult. But for the teenage girls of Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, *la fiesta de quinceañera* (15th birthday party) is the big day, often resulting in a lavish celebration that sees the entire community involved. The **Mexican fiesta de quinceañera**, or XV, is thought to have primarily evolved from the customs of the indigenous Aztec and Mayan groups. Well before the arrival of the Spanish, these ancient cultures would separate young girls from their male peers to provide them with a specialized education to prepare them for the responsibilities of womanhood. The girls were mostly taught about domestic tasks and childrearing, although further education also depended on their expected role in society."

<theculturetrip.com>



Part 1 Overview of Museum and Gardens. Part 2 The Orchids of Vizcaya. Part 3 The Gardens. Part 4 The Mansion and Grounds.

Sources: <https://vizcaya.org/>, <https://vizcaya.org/collections/gardens/about-gardens/>, <https://en-academic.com/dic.nsf/enwiki/1529561>, <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/florida/articles/history-vizcaya-villas/>, <https://floridainsider.com/travel/a-brief-history-of-miamis-vizcaya-museum-and-gardens/>, <https://travelexperta.com/vizcaya-museum-gardens-miami-florida/>, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/vizcaya-museum-and-gardens>, <https://www.miamiscapes.com/vizcaya-museum-and-gardens.html>, https://travel.usnews.com/Miami_FL/Things_To_Do/Vizcaya_Museum_and_Gardens_11608, and <https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/mexico/articles/la-fieta-de-quinceanera-know-mexicos-sweet-sixteenth/>.

acuri.net John R. Vincenti Vizcaya's Gardens