

# Christopher Barrett Sheridan

## The Flower Sommelier

Specialist in Scent and Color. Proponent of Wild and Romantic gardens. Advocate for Heirloom Plants.



For more information: explore  
[www.flowersommelier.com](http://www.flowersommelier.com) or email  
[christopher.barrett.sheridan@gmail.com](mailto:christopher.barrett.sheridan@gmail.com)

2025 venues include: West Virginia Nursery and Landscaping Association, Philadelphia Flower Show (floral design demonstration), International Master Gardeners' Conference (two presentations accepted), Talbot County Garden Club



### DISTINCTIVE AND ENGAGING PROGRAMMING

**Embracing the Spirit of the Night:**  
**Vespertine Gardens** (debuting 2025)

**Fragrant Victorian Pot en Fleur** (debuting 2025)

**Iconic Flower Designs of Yesterday and Tomorrow** (Philadelphia Flower Show 2025)

**Designing with Scents: Benefits of Incorporating Fragrance in Sustainable Meadows & Woodland Gardens** (Native Plants) (GardenCOMM 2024)

**Sharing Space: Layered Bulb Containers** (Longwood Gardens 2024, 2025)

**Capture the Spirit of the Garden with "Scentsational" Arrangements** (Philadelphia Flower Show 2024)

**Timeless Tussie-Mussie Workshop** (Longwood Gardens 2024, 2025)

**Communicating the Ephemeral: An Experience in the Vocabulary of Fragrance** (GardenCOMM 2023)

### Let's talk about timeless gardens and well-loved plants, including:

Antique Roses  
Arts and Crafts Design  
Cottage Gardens  
French Potager  
Heirloom Flowers  
Impressionist Landscapes  
Pleasure Gardens  
Rural Cemeteries  
Spring Ephemerals  
Vespertine Gardens  
Victorian Glasshouses  
Walled Gardens  
Winter Gardens

**The Flower Sommelier Design Philosophy:** While biodiversity and sustainability are core values, gardens should also be compelling and distinctive, with plant palettes reflecting their locality and the creativity of their designer. The places listed on the left resonate because of their abundance of color, fragrance, texture, movement, and ephemeral nature. These genres and spaces have endured for generations because they respond to our fundamental need to connect with nature and at least occasionally immerse ourselves in beauty and serenity.

**What about Formal Gardens?** These magnificent spaces deserve great respect, but they can sometimes be hard to love, unless they are supported by abundant and naturalist plantings. For example, carpet bedding is painfully static, but with the right plant palette, its cousin, the "Paisley Garden" evolves beautifully for months, serving a wide range of pollinators and wildlife. In general, hardscape should be the frame and not the picture. Arts and Crafts gardens may be the perfect balance of formal and informal, but harmony can also be achieved in most horticultural genres.



### **Our Three Part Approach to Garden Education: Slides, Steps, and Stems**

(we have combined all three in one day, and we can also add a wine tasting)

**Presentations:** Chris lectures at the Philadelphia Flower Show, GardenCOMM conferences, and is an instructor at Longwood Gardens. He recently gave his first presentation at a statewide symposium for landscape professionals and is looking forward to speaking at an international conference later this year. Chris welcomes programming inquiries from public gardens, garden clubs, plant societies, museums/historic sites, and other horticultural enthusiasts.

**Garden Tours:** While teaching at Longwood Gardens and historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, Chris has led tours of a range of gardens and meadows. Living plants speak well for themselves and when feasible, he loves to include a walking tour in his classes. Savoring the scent and colors of individual species or cultivars is delightful and helps participants understand the cultural needs of plants they may be considering for their own garden.

**Floral Arranging:** Chris is an accidental florist! While teaching the Language of Flowers at a historic garden, he realized that Tussie-Mussies (Victorian posies) are a wonderful educational tool. These small, inexpensive bouquets provide an intimate flower arranging experience for all ages. Chris now also teaches bulb lasagna and floating arrangements. Garden design is still his passion, but small bouquets and hands-on flower arranging are here to stay.

"Scent is the soul of the garden."  
 "Biodiversity equals resilience."  
 "Heirlooms represent our heritage."

**Brief Biography:** Chris is an award-winning civic educator, pursuing a second career in horticulture. He specializes in fragrant flowers, aromatic foliage, Cottage Garden design, Arts and Crafts design, the Language of Flowers, garden history, and heirloom plants.

Because of his emphasis on scented plants and experience in the wine industry, Chris decided to call his website "The Flower Sommelier" It's not meant to be stuffy or judgmental, but to remind everyone that flowers are best appreciated up close, with the eyes, hands, and nose. This is why he especially enjoys leading outside tours and offering "make and take" floral design classes.

Chris has been published in The American Gardener and is frequently interviewed by fellow garden writers when their subject includes scented plants or sensory gardens. He enjoys being a guest on radio and podcasts, and hopes to launch a podcast in 2025, something fun, unconventional, and focused on Wild and Romantic Gardens.

Chris has a Certificate in Ornamental Horticulture from Longwood Gardens. He also holds degrees from Villanova University (B.A. in Literature and M.A. in Political Science) and Tulane Law School (J.D. and Certificate in Environmental Law). He is an active member of GardenCOMM, the Ecological Landscape Alliance, the Slow Flowers Society, the Garden Conservancy, the American Horticultural Society, the Southern Garden History Society, and the Hardy Plant Society.

Chris was recently accepted into the Historic Landscape Institute at Monticello, and he actively seeks out enriching educational and garden touring opportunities. Every Flower Sommelier program is refreshed since it was last offered and the plant palette refined to resonate with each audience.

