

## **Rest-Stop-Ranch**

**Address:** 202 Haverhill Road, Topsfield, MA 01983

**Website:** <https://rest-stop-ranch.org/>

**Is there parking available at this location?** Yes

**Is there a fee for parking? If yes, how much is parking?** No fee, donations appreciated.

**When is parking available?** Reserve by phone (978-887-4202), at least 24 hours in advance, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1pm - 4pm. Last reservation 3pm. Monthly events include Memory Café in the Garden, and Sunday Stroll. Visit the website for event dates.

**Is there lighting, such as street lamps, on this path?** No

**Is there clear signage marking the trails/paths?** Yes

**Are there benches along this path?** Yes

**Are public restrooms located near the trail or path?** Yes (April - December)

**What type of setting is the path?** Botanical garden at Private Home.

**Are multiple trails/paths available at this location?** Yes - Three garden areas offer a private and quiet experience for at least three groups concurrently.

**Trail map:** <https://rest-stop-ranch.org/gardens/map-tour/>

**Approximate length of the walk:** Less than 1/2 mile (2200 feet; 0.4 mi.). Choose a short or long adventure from parked space. Most guests enjoy exploring the "Front Garden Loop," and many continue to see the "Secret Garden" and "Cottage Garden."

**What type of terrain?** ADA compliant 3-5' wide walking trails are edged. Most paved with pavers or stone dust for wheelchair-, walker-, and stroller- use. Some dirt paths.

**Is the path/trail accessible for those using a walker, wheelchair, or pushing a stroller?** Wheelchair; Walker; Stroller

**What is the grade of the walk?** ADA compliant 1:12 is the maximum grade.

**Rate the walk for level of exertion:** (1 = easy, 5 = difficult): 1

**Describe the amount of activity at the site:** Quiet, private retreat environment.

**What types of activities can be done at this location?** Long-term care-partners come individually for respite... “a breath of fresh air” or... they come with a care-receiver (client, friend, or family member) to enjoy the wheelchair-accessible trail (picnics welcome). Three private accessible picnic areas available. Plant Sale. Plants, Birds & Fish observation. Forest Bathing. Learning Opportunities (educational signage and programs, guided tours available).

**Summary:** Starting in 2009, home-owners Karl Ackerman and Mary MacDonald began transforming their private property- an overgrown wilderness- into wheelchair-accessible gardens that are shared publicly with people needing respite and recreation the most: dementia care-partners and care-receivers. Since that early vision, the gardens have welcomed many more individuals, couples, and groups living with long-term-care and different abilities. Year-round guests enjoy reserved time in the private garden. Memorial flower festivals (April - July) include the Bulb Parade, Lilac Fest, Rose Rodeo, and Lily Fest. The Front Garden Loop includes: Cut Flower Garden, Kitchen Garden, Orchard Ave., Ornamental Trees & Shrubs, Raspberry Patch, Cedar Grove & Tunnel, and Koi Pond. The Secret Garden is a shady perennial place with a wheelchair-accessible tree house experience. The Cottage Garden offers access to the original 1909 Carriage House, now headquarters for the non-profit organization.

**Additional information:** National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat ([nwf.org](http://nwf.org)). American Public Garden: Small Garden ([publicgardens.org](http://publicgardens.org)).

Public Garden Operating Hours (starting Tuesday, September 14, 2021)

Tuesdays and Thursdays 1PM to 4PM with last reservation at 3PM  
Call 978-887-4202 to reserve private garden time, at least 24 hours in advance.

**Are there any notable activities in the area that people might want to check out?**  
The home & garden location is 1 mile from I-95 (exit 76A), adjacent to Ipswich and Boxford, Middleton and Danvers are close-by. Topsfield Center offers limited food and shopping options; Topsfield Fair (October).

Volunteer regularly to monitor the spectacular change of seasons as a citizen scientist in cooperation with [Budburst.org](http://Budburst.org)

Listing updated 9/1/21