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## Unique Gifts for Nature Lovers at Botanical Garden Shops

Find plants, food, jewelry and artwork while supporting these outdoor spaces

by Susan Moeller, **AARP**, December 15, 2020 | Comments: 0



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If you're looking for a gift that will nurture joy as well as support the arts and environment, shop at a botanical garden.

Their gift stores pride themselves on such items as local seeds, artwork and food. And any item you buy serves a dual purpose: pleasing the recipient and supporting the gardens.

For Jane Crockett, the director of retail operations for the Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Garden in San Marino, California, the gifts featured in the nonprofit's 5,500-square-foot store tell a story.

## Purchases help the mission

If Southern California is too far away to visit, you can still enjoy the marmalade. The Huntington is one of hundreds of botanical gardens across the country with both onsite and online stores. The gifts featured in botanical garden boutiques can range from locally sourced arts, foods and books to products for all ages that are educational or promote the garden's environmental role. Many [sell seeds](#); some sell and ship plants. You can also find classes, either in-person or virtual, as well as virtual tours.



COURTESY FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

Glass art featuring orchids, an important flower for the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden in Miami

"The trend I'm seeing is that they are doing more and more of a good job, not just putting logos on stuff but creating proprietary merchandise," said Joan Thomas, director of external relations for the American Public Garden Association, which has 600 gardens as members, ranging from the pocket-sized to those spread over hundreds of acres.

Most botanical gardens also sell gift memberships, and about 300 have reciprocal deals for discounts or entry at other gardens and museums through a program sponsored by the [American Horticultural Society](#). The society's website has details about reciprocity.

Your purchase from a botanic garden helps these organizations with their mission of research, education, native plant preservation and, in these complicated times, providing a safe place to be outdoors. If there's a garden near you, see if it sponsors holiday events, such as the Galaxy of Lights at the Huntsville Botanical Garden in Huntsville, Alabama.

Meanwhile, if you need a few more gifts, here's a sample of what you can find shopping online from five gardens across the United States, from West Coast to East Coast.

### Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Miami

**Website:** <https://fairchildgarden.org/visit/shop/>

**Phone:** 305-667-1651

This 83-acre garden is named after plant collector and explorer David Fairchild, who was one of its cofounders. Its store is focused on the garden's role in native plant conservation, said Nannette Zapata, chief operating officer. Fairchild's Million Orchid Project engages schoolchildren in a project to propagate native orchid species that are then planted in the wild, she said. In that spirit, the store sells a collection of bowls and tea lights (\$40-\$280) by artist Emilio Robba featuring silk orchid blooms that look as if they are floating in glass.