

The Gold Coast

Visit Long Island's Gold Coast, immortalized in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

Nestled along a short stretch of Long Island's north shore are some of the most opulent grand mansions found anywhere in America. The area, dubbed "Gold Coast" in the early 1900's for the vast wealth that was there, remains home to a number of fabulous "Gatsby" era estates that are meticulously preserved and open for public viewing. Vanderbilt, Chrysler, Woolworth, Phipps, and Guggenheim were the industrial giants of the day whose magnificent estates provided the backdrop for a lifestyle replete with lavish parties, yachting, fox hunts, polo, and midnight squash as F. Scott Fitzgerald so artfully described in his masterpiece *The Great Gatsby*.

Your trip along our spectacular "Gold Coast" will reveal the fantastic beauty, incredible fortunes and careless excess that was so much a part of the lives of Long Island's wealthiest families in the early 20th century. Visit any one



Planting Fields State Park
photo courtesy of Long Island CVB

of the "Gold Coast" mansions discussed below for a trip back in time to an period when over 500 hundred such mansions built by America's captains of industry dotted Long Island's

north shore.

SANDS POINT PRESERVE (CASTLE GOULD)

The unscrupulous American financier and speculator Jay Gould who with James Fisk and Daniel Drew wrested control of the Erie Railroad from Cornelius Vanderbilt in 1867-1868 and who with Fisk caused the financial panic of September 24, 1869 in an attempt to corner the gold market, amassed the family fortune. His son, Howard completed this castle on Sands Point modeled after the Kilkenny Castle in Ireland in 1912. In 1917, Daniel Guggenheim, whose worldwide mining interests dominated the industry for three decades, purchased the property. In an attempt to shun the Gould name and tarnished image, he renamed the mansion "Hempstead House," although



Vanderbilt Museum
photo courtesy of Long Island CVB

"Castle Gould" remains the name by which the stables are sometimes known. The Guggenheims also built a pocket-sized 26-room gothic-style chateau they named "Falaise," French for "Cliffside," where Captain Harry Guggenheim and his third wife, Alicia Patterson, who owned Long Island's Newsday, lived. Falaise is one of the few intact historic houses remaining on the Gold Coast. It was built in 1923 as a summer residence in the style of a 13th century Norman manor house. Mr. Guggenheim was very active in the field of aviation during its early years, and his close friend Charles Lindbergh wrote his book, *We* while staying there. This 216-acre preserve features natural habitats of woodland, field, freshwater pond, and even a mile-long stretch of beach, providing home to a wide variety of animals and birds.

CHelsea

The Benjamin Moore estate, built in 1923, and now the Nassau County Cultural Development Center. Benjamin Moore was the great-great grandson of Clement Moore, author of "Twas The Night Before Christmas." Moore, a loyal New Yorker, named his 32-room country manor-house, built in the French Norman style, "Chelsea" because many of the paving stones used in its construction came from West 23rd Street, the Chelsea district of Manhattan. Chelsea is currently being renovated in preparation for opening to the general public.

PLANTING FIELDS COE HALL

Listed on the National Register of Historic places, this estate in Oyster Bay known to Long Islanders as "The Planting Fields Arboretum," was built

by William Robertson Coe, a shipping insurance tycoon, and Mai Huttleston Rogers, the daughter of one of the men who founded Standard Oil. The gate, constructed in 1712 in Sussex, England, and purchased by Coe in 1919 provides the stately entrance to this circa 1912 mansion. There were protests in England over the selling off of the country's heritage - especially to "Americans." If the gates look familiar it's because scores of scenes from familiar Hollywood movies have been shot in front of them. William Coe's interest in rare species of trees and plants made the estate a botanical marvel in his lifetime, and since Coe deeded the property in 1949, the 353 acre estate has been made a public arboretum. This modern day State Park is also known for the summer concerts that are held there every year. Mansion tours are available.



Old Westbury Gardens
photo courtesy of Long Island CVB

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Coindre Hall The George Brown estate, built in 1910 - Once the 54-acre waterfront province of George McKesson Brown, heir to a pharmaceutical fortune, this 40 room, 80,000 square foot mansion is based on a French chateau design inspired by two castles in the south of France. It is distinctive for the two towers on the front facade. The estate also contains a boathouse of similar design. Coindre Hall currently houses the Museum of Long Island's Gold Coast, containing exhibits, photography and other arti-

facts from that bygone era. Coindre Hall today is a popular site for weddings, holiday celebrations, fund-raisers, auctions & antique shows.

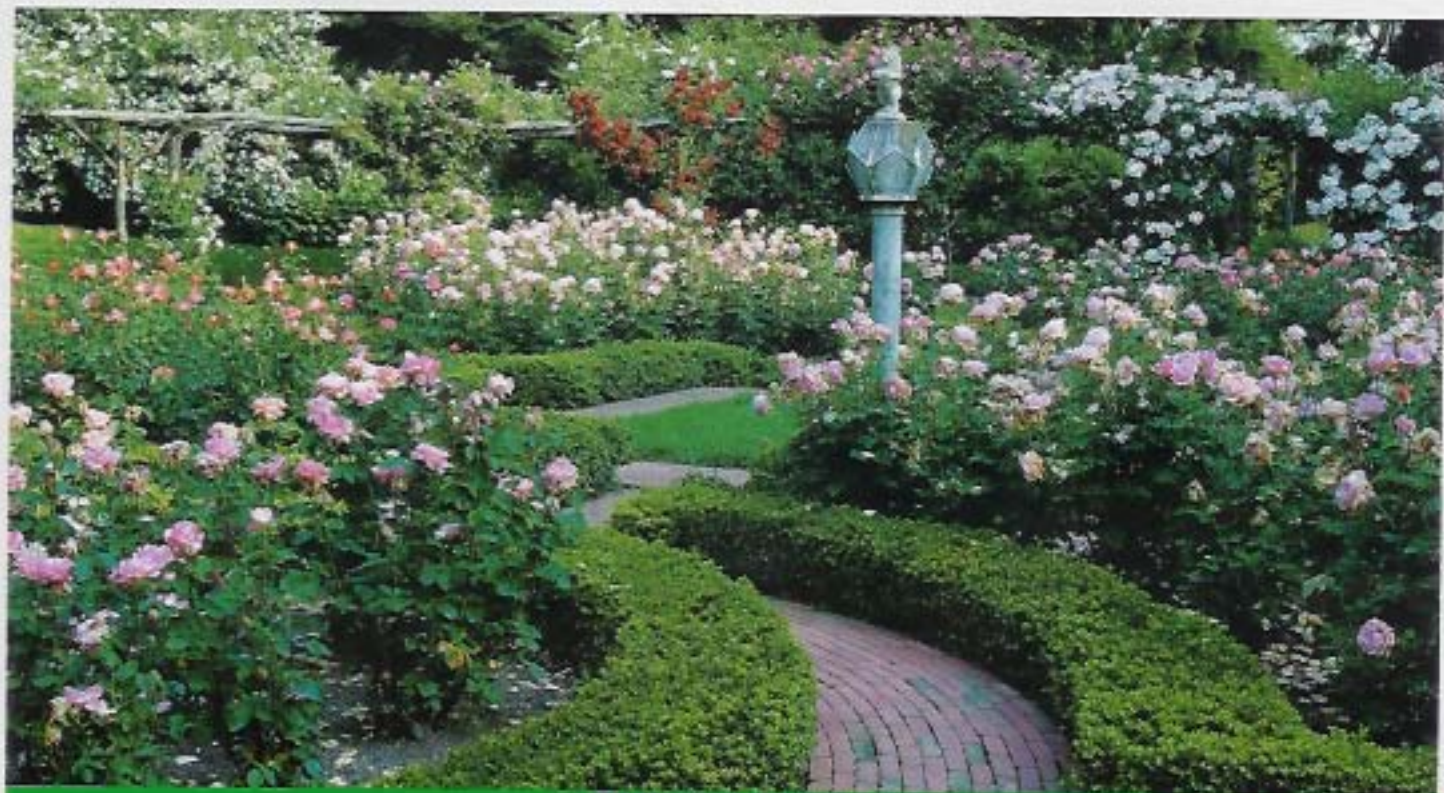
Old Westbury Gardens The Phipps estate, built in 1909 - Arguably, the best preserved Gold Coast mansion and estate. Heir to the American Steel fortune, John "Jay" Phipps and shipping heiress Margarita "Dita" Grace, built this massive country estate in the style of Margarita's favorite childhood home — a formidable English landmark called Battle Abbey— built 900 years ago by William the

Conqueror.

The house and grounds, now open to the public, are managed by the Old Westbury Gardens Foundation. The mansion was designed in the style of an English manor house by George A. Crawley. The gardens, inspired by Margarita Grace, are reminiscent of traditional English formal gardens. The 100 acre estate includes a rose garden, walled garden, a pond, and a 70-room mansion filled with antique furnishings and art.



Coe Hall
photo courtesy of Long Island CVB



Old Westbury Gardens
photo courtesy of Long Island CVB

CHILDS FRICK ESTATE/NASSAU COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

Built in 1904 and owned by NY politician Lloyd Bryce until 1919, the splendid estate of Childs Frick a vertebrate paleontologist, devoted naturalist and, son of Henry Clay Frick, one of the founders of U.S. Steel, is now home to the Nassau County Museum of Art. The exquisite landscape design of this 200-acre estate features formal gardens, reflecting ponds and outdoor sculpture.

VANDERBILT MUSEUM

The elegant Vanderbilt Museum's historic mansion is the former home of William Kissam Vanderbilt II, great grandson of railroad tycoon Commodore Cornelius. The 43 acre estate overlooks Northport Harbor and the LI Sound. The estate is exotically designed in the Spanish Moroccan style, a motif that is carried through all the buildings. The simple columns at the base of the entranceway arch which are thousands of years old, were

preserved from the ruins of ancient Carthage. Open year round, visitors may take guided tours of the mansion or wander through the museum's many exhibits on their own. The Vanderbilt museum also has a 238 seat, state of the art planetarium that features three different shows on weekends and holidays during the summer months. It is one of the largest and best-equipped planetariums in the United States. The projector can show more than 11,3000 stars - about the same number of stars visible in the night sky under perfect atmospheric conditions.

Exhibition and program themes focus upon Long Island's Gold Coast Era and upon William K. Vanderbilt II's desire that his marine, natural history, and ethnographic collections promote appreciation and understanding of the marvelous diversity of life, other cultures, and scientific knowledge.

The Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum is located in Centerport. Acquired in 1947, the museum opened

in 1950. Today's museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

For directions and hours of operation see pages 46-48 or visit the Long Island Convention & Visitors Bureau and Sports Commission (LICVB&SC) website: www.licvb.com.

