

# Step into a Paradise Garden

Welcome to Waterlow Park, a hidden gem in London that has been my personal retreat for years.

At its heart stands Lauderdale House, a historic place filled with stories. For me, it feels like a Paradise Garden—a term with Persian roots (Pardis), meaning a walled garden, a peaceful sanctuary filled with beauty.

I want to take you on a journey into a Persian garden, a place where poetry flows like water, and the air is alive with the scent of blossoms.

To help you picture it, I've chosen a stunning 17th-century Persian artwork from The Metropolitan Museum of Art: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/455081> It was created in Isfahan, a city known for its rich artistic heritage. The artwork originally shows four figures—two standing, two seated—enjoying poetry in a lush garden.

But I've made a small change. I removed the seated figures. Why? Because now, you get to take their place.

Take a seat on the bench, where I've placed the artwork behind you. Let it transport you into this world of beauty and thought. Birds sing, a gentle breeze rustles the trees, and the scent of fresh flowers fills the air. To your right, a man holds a delicate wine decanter. To your left, a woman gracefully approaches, carrying a beautifully decorated bowl.

In the 17th century, Persian gardens weren't just places to relax—they were hubs for conversation, learning, and creativity. People gathered here to share poetry, discuss ideas, and celebrate life. Maybe the figures in this artwork were doing just that—talking about love and the fleeting nature of time, much like the famous Persian poet Hafez wrote:

”What is more joyous than love and spring,  
The garden's bloom, the songs they bring?  
O cupbearer, why the delay?  
Tell me, what keeps the wine away?  
Seize each moment, let it not flee,  
For no one can know what fate will be.”

When you visit Lauderdale House for the Nowruz Festival, take a moment to pause, breathe in the beauty, and let your imagination wander. You might just find yourself in a Persian garden, where art, nature, and poetry come to life.

Music courtesy of [Arash Badie](#), with permission.