

IPPS LOUISVILLE 2025: CONFERENCE TOURS

After a morning of excellent presentations, the buses departed on Wednesday, October 15, for the first afternoon of official conference tours. Picking up on the mornings theme of Oaks, we departed for a tour of Buffalo Trace Distillery and the Albert Blanton Botanical Gardens in Frankfort, KY. Attendees were given a guided tour of the 450-acre Level II arboretum. We toured around Blanton's historic 1934 residence and buildings and discussed some of the challenges from the recent spring floods on the property. After the botanic tours we were treated to a tasting of the several brands that are produced at Buffalo Trace and of course several bourbons that have to be aged in nothing other than new white oak barrels.



Our second stop was Wilsons Plant Co., a beautiful retail and wholesale growing operation. This 100% woman owned business was an excellent example of how to create a garden center destination. The retail side included a butterfly house that was currently operating as a spider exhibit and a whimsical and interactive children's garden. Their business also includes an on-site garden-to-table restaurant, the Sage Garden Cafe.



The last stop for the day was at Summers Nursery & Landscape new facility in Shelbyville, KY. Summers is a family-owned business that specialize in growing and grafting unique varieties of plant species, including Japanese maples, ginkgo biloba, and conifers. Here, the father/Son team showed us how they are combining old grafting techniques with new and innovative equipment including mist boxes and remote access technology.



After wrapping up the morning education sessions Thursday, featuring some long time IPPS members, we headed off to Riverfarm Nursery. Located in beautiful Goshen, KY, and surrounded by rolling hills and horse farms, Riverview has over 250 acres of production area. We jumped on wagons and toured their pot in pot fields and B&B fields. Attention to quality was on display throughout the fields and product.



Our last stop of the conference was at the Yew Dell Botanical Gardens & the next-door Kentucky Artisan Distillery. Paul Cappiello and his horticultural team did an excellent job of taking us through Yew Dell gardens and production areas. From old glass framed in ground greenhouses, to new roof vented poly structures there was a lot to see in the production areas. The gardens continue the legacy Theodore and Martha Lee Klein began when they purchased the original thirty-four acres in 1941. The next-door Kentucky Artisan Distillery opened its doors to us for a tour and tasting. They produce several brands of bourbon that were sampled including Jefferson's Reserve famous ocean aged bourbon.



Thanks to all our tour hosts for their time and effort in preparing for our visits and showcasing their business for our attendees. Tours are so valuable and unique to IPPS conferences, epitomizing the IPPS "To Seek & To Share" motto!