Turn right at the top of the steps and follow on to Morton’s Pond. One of the most tranquil spots in the garden, Morton’s Pond is a real hidden gem. This pond was called the Great Fountain Pond and supplied the gravity-fed fountain in the Canal Pond before the updated Emperor Fountain was built. In the 1st Duke’s time the Great Fountain played to 94ft (28m) in comparison to the current Emperor Fountain which plays at 296ft (90m).

Hidden Gems Walking Tour

This walking tour will take you approximately 1 hour and starts from the lower garden entrance. Please be aware the tour includes a variety of terrain, walking both up and down hill.
After leaving the maze bear left down through the rockery and over the Strid bridge and you will find a path that leads back down to the Ring Pond. The pond is surrounded by Hermes statues, which in ancient Athens were commonly used as boundary markers and signposts. These 18th century Hermes statues arrived in 1893 from Lord Burlington’s garden at Chiswick House. If you look in the north east corner of the pond you can see a huge pipe. This pipe feeds water from the Emperor Lake to the Emperor Fountain and is entirely gravity fed. Falling 122 metres from the lake, the water in the jet comes out with such force that the valve has to be turned off very slowly to avoid damage.

Carry on walking along the footpath upwards and you will finish the tour at the Canal Pond in front of the house. Did you know that when Tsar Nicholas I (1796-1855) announced a trip to England, men worked day and night to complete the Emperor Fountain in time for his visit. Work continued at night by the light of flares and the whole project took only 6 months to complete – and after all that, the Tsar never came to Chatsworth!