GLORIOUS SPRING GARDENS

ALOWYN Gardens started in June 1997 when the first spadeful of soil was turned in a bare paddock surrounded by vineyards in the beautiful Yarra Valley, next door to the what is now known as the Yarra Valley Chocolaterie and Ice Creamery.

After a two-year process of clearing, cleaning and extensive planning, the first trees were planted in the winter of 1999 and many thousands have followed since.

Inspiration for the gardens has been drawn from the many gardens John has visited over the years, but two particularly - the Buchard Gardens in Canada and Het Loo in Apeldoorn, Holland, where John was born - hold special significance.

Alowyn Gardens consists of eight distinctly different areas, linked together with one of Australia's largest Japanese wisteria arbours, flowering in spectacular fashion for two to three weeks in October each year, followed by the rose display.

The total area of the gardens is about seven acres, which includes an extensive edible garden, a parterre garden, a silver birch forest, perennial border, casuarina forest, small display gardens and of course the wisteria archway.

A fully-stocked extensive nursery is on site and an interesting gift shop sells local produce in season.

Our cafe sells delicious coffee and a range of scones, cakes and toasties.

Alowyn Gardens is a must-see for the general garden enthusiastic who is looking for new ideas or for those visitors who wish to view a beautiful garden for just plain enjoyment.

The venue is open every day from 10am to 5pm, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day.