

Laurel Bank Park - Toowoomba

In a city renowned for its many fine parks and open space areas, Laurel Bank Park continues to be one of Toowoomba's most popular relaxation venues. Only a short stroll from the bustling city centre, many workers escape to the peaceful haven of the park for a quiet lunch while on weekends, it is a favourite venue for families and groups of friends taking a leisurely stroll or enjoying a lazy picnic.

Features of Laurel Bank Park include magnificent shade trees, formal hedges, a croquet lawn, well grassed open areas and, when in bloom, colourful and intricately patterned garden beds. Shade trees include rows of mature *Cedrus deodara*, a golden daimyo oak (*Quercus dentata aurea*) imported from Japan and magnificent ginkgos and evergreen oaks. Camellias, buxus, spirea and murrayas make up hedges. A wisteria arbour installed five years ago has developed into a main feature of the park and, when in bloom during the annual Carnival of Flowers, is very popular with photographers.



During Carnival of Flowers in late September, the annual area really comes alive to become the jewel in the crown of Laurel Bank Park. About 20,000 pansies are planted and themed. A raised viewing platform allows visitors to appreciate the display and see the intricate wording and scenes depicted in flowers. Toowoomba City Council gardeners have planted over 60,000 annuals for the 2006 Carnival of Flowers.

A scented garden of lavenders, michelias, heliotropiums, gardenias and many other varieties in raised garden beds enables vision impaired and people in wheelchairs to also appreciate the beauty of the park.

Initially, Laurel Bank Park was a privately-owned estate until owner G.S. Stephens donated it to the city in 1934.

