

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

10/1/2019

Cheers to an Unusual Greenhouse

Chris Beytes



Granted, you couldn't grow very much in this duo of oddball greenhouses. But that's okay—their point is education, not output. They're the Mediterranean (left) and tropical (right) glasshouses at Bombay Sapphire, the famous gin distiller in Hampshire, England, which *GrowerTalks* visited with the International Garden Center Association tour in September.

Bombay uses the unusual glasshouses to teach visitors about the 10 plants that provide the botanicals that go into their Bombay Sapphire gin: juniper (*Juniperus communis*), coriander seed (*Coriandrum sativum*), orris root (*Iris florentina*), cassia bark (*Cinnamomum cassia*), bitter almonds (*Prunus dulcis* var. *Amara*), lemon peel (*Citrus x Limonum*), grains of paradise (*Aframomum melegueta*), cubeb berries (*Piper cubeba*), liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) and angelica (*Angelica archangelica*).

Not just educational, they're also sculptural, thanks to renowned London designer Thomas Heatherwick (who also designed London's newest double-decker bus and the Olympic Cauldron for the 2012 Olympic Games). Made from 794 panes of structural glass, the glasshouses appear to be funneling the plants' essences into the distillery building.

The location, too, is noteworthy: there's been a mill on this site for at least 1,000 years. Much of the current structure is the Laverstoke Mill, which, beginning in 1718, was a paper mill, producing banknote paper for England and India. It stopped paper production in 1963. Bombay purchased the empty mill in 2010 and opened up the revamped facility, including the two glasshouses, in 2014. **GT**