**Keukenhof, the most beautiful spring garden in the world**

**LISSE – Flower exhibition Keukenhof is set to open its doors for the 74th time on 23 March 2023. During the eight weeks it is open, well over 1 million people from around the world will visit the exhibition. Keukenhof thereby provides a major contribution to the tourist and flower sector in the Netherlands.**

**Mission**

Keukenhof is the independent international showcase for the Dutch floriculture sector with an emphasis on flower bulbs.

**Landgoed Keukenhof**

Flower exhibition Keukenhof is situated in the Bollenstreek (flower bulb region). The 32 ha exhibition is held on the Keukenhof Estate which is 250 ha in size and features some 16 nationally listed buildings. Kasteel Keukenhof was built in 1641 by a wealthy merchant from Amsterdam. Only later did the estate fall into aristocratic hands. The English landscape garden was designed in 1857 by Zocher and laid the foundations for the current Keukenhof park.

**Keukenhof for the sector: flower bulb, flower and plant growers**

Keukenhof is *the* platform for the Dutch floriculture sector. It offers suppliers to and participants in the flower shows a beautiful venue in which to highlight their bulbs, flowers and plants. The park is redesigned annually. Keukenhof’s designer is inspired by (fashion) trends and incorporates growers’ wishes into the design. This gives visitors new ideas they can apply at home. The flower arrangers also utilise the latest trends at the flower shows. This allows Keukenhof and the growers to reinforce one another’s business.

Professional flower arrangers create marvellous flower shows at the three pavilions. 600 growers and trading companies supply their best flowers and plants for these shows. This provides a great platform for showcasing roses, orchids and all those other flowers the Netherlands are so famous for. It also provides major PR value.

A large number of meetings are organised coinciding with these flower shows at which industry colleagues can gather and inspire one another.

15% of Keukenhof visitors are trade professionals.

**The park**

The historic English landscape-style park, that dates back to 1857 and was designed by Zocher, helps highlight the flowering bulbs. Visitors can personally become acquainted with the most beautiful and best trees, shrubs, plants and cut flowers. Originally the emphasis was on flower bulbs, but Keukenhof has much much more to offer.

40 Keukenhof gardeners annually plant 7 million flower bulbs at the 32 ha park. After the season is over, these are dug up enabling the cycle of autumn planting, spring flowering and summer harvesting to start anew.

To keep changing Keukenhof’s appearance, a new design is created every year. 1,600 varieties of bulbs are used of which 800 varieties of tulips. These are combined in such a manner that the park flowers for 8 weeks every spring.

Keukenhof inspires its visitors with gardens in various styles in which flower bulbs play a major role. The park features elements from an English landscape garden to a French Baroque one. Other areas of the park provide surprising vistas and exciting views, doing justice to the mature trees.

Scrubs and perennials are combined with bulb crops gone wild at the natural garden and in the Mill Forest. The historic garden focuses on heritage varieties, some of which have been cultivated for four centuries. The flowering tulips introduce visitors to the flower’s history: how it was brought from the mountains of Asia to the Netherlands.

The inspirational gardens provide visitors with ideas for their own gardens. There are a tropical and a romantic garden and thanks to the implementation of flower bulbs in all manner of planters and pots, visitors can see that every garden or balcony is suitable for their own small Keukenhof.

The various species of flowers each have their stage at one of the pavilions. For instance, the heated Beatrix pavilion is home to the orchid and anthurium shows and the air-conditioned Oranje Nassau pavilion showcases flowers including roses, chrysanthemums and daffodils. The pavilions each have their own theme determined in conjunction with the growers. The themes align with occasions that often involve flowers such as marriages, special holidays and interior design.

There is a maze for children at Keukenhof, a playground and petting zoo as well as a Miffy-themed playground. An informative treasure hunt takes children to all the park’s prettiest places.

The windmill at Keukenhof is over a century old. It was built in Groningen in 1892 and was used as a pumping mill. In 1957 the Holland Amerika Lijn, a cruise company, purchased the windmill and donated it to Keukenhof. Keukenhof also features a wonderful sculpture collection comprising approximately 100 works in a wide variety of styles. Annually, many artists are given the opportunity to exhibit at Keukenhof.

**Positive publicity**

Keukenhof is a great place for photography. Visitor photos are disseminated globally using social media, reaching millions of consumers.

The international press also enjoy reporting on Keukenhof and the flowering bulb fields: typically Dutch, spring and every imaginable colour of flower.

**Important to the tourist industry**Keukenhof is an icon for the floriculture sector, for the flower bulb region and for the Netherlands, providing an important contribution to the country’s image.

Large numbers of international tourists visit the Netherlands every year to see unique Dutch icons such as tulips, windmills, Rembrandt and Amsterdam’s canals. These typically Dutch icons tell the Netherlands’ story.

Keukenhof cooperates with major tourism partners to positively promote the Netherlands. Keukenhof is exceptionally important to tourism, annually receiving over 1 million visitors from more than 100 countries. In spring, Keukenhof and the flowering bulb fields are some of the few audience draws to attract tourists to the country at that time of year. 80% of visitors originate abroad. The main countries of origin are Germany, the USA, France, the UK and China.

Keukenhof’s appeal isn’t just important for its own sector, but also for the hotel, restaurant and catering industry as well as for the retail trade, accommodation providers, transit companies, museums as well as other attractions and events.

**Keukenhof: a meeting place for fellow professionals**

Keukenhof makes a great meeting place for business contacts. The organisation actively maintains excellent ties with all the relevant players in the tourist & floriculture sectors as well as in the surrounding area and these, in turn, enjoy availing themselves of Keukenhof’s facilities.

**Keukenhof’s history**

The initiative for Keukenhof was taken by ten bulb growers/exporters who wanted to create a showcase for their trade. In 1949 they picked the ideal location: the gardens surrounding Keukenhof castle.

Jacoba van Beieren has been Keukenhof’s figurehead for years. During the 15th century she owned the area Keukenhof is currently situated. Back then it was unspoilt nature used for hunting and collecting herbs for the castle kitchen. This is where the name Keukenhof (kitchen gardens) comes from.

Countess Jacoba van Beieren was born in 1401 and died in 1436. She reigned over Holland, Zeeland and Hainault from 1417 to 1433. Never a dull moment is perhaps the most accurate description of this somewhat tempestuous lady’s life as she was married four times, spent a number of years imprisoned as well as being (forcibly or not) exiled to England. Warring seems to have been one of her favourite pastimes and she did not spare her former husbands in this respect. In 1433, she was forced to relinquish her counties.

She withdrew from the public eye, dying aged 35 of tuberculosis at Slot Teylingen, not far from Keukenhof.

**Keukenhof facts & figures**

* The most beautiful spring park in the world is open for 8 weeks every spring
* In 2019, Keukenhof welcomed 1.5 million visitors of whom 80% originated abroad
* In 2022, after two years of being closed due to Covid-19 restrictions, Keukenhof received well over 1.1 million visitors of whom 75% originated abroad.
* The park is 32 hectares in size and the entire estate, including the castle covers some 240 hectares and features 15 listed buildings
* 7 million bulbs showcasing over 1,600 varieties are planted annually
* The flower bulbs are provided by 100 exhibitors: flower bulb growers and exporters
* Annually well over 7,000 kg of annual grass seed is sown
* The paths at Keukenhof measure 15 km in total
* There are over 2,500 trees at Keukenhof representing over 100 species
* There are well over 100 varieties of prunus (cherry blossoms) that bloom wonderfully
* Keukenhof is home to approximately 100 art objects by various artists
* The historic garden features authentic 16th and 17th-century tulip varieties that illustrate the development of 400 years of bulb growing in the Netherlands
* Inspirational gardens provide consumers with gardening ideas and tips
* There are a variety of bicycle tours you can take through Keukenhof’s surrounding area
* Electrically powered boats cruise down the channels between the bulb fields around Keukenhof
* The windmill, which dates back to 1892, has been at Keukenhof since 1957
* Carolus Clusius brought the first tulips to the Netherlands in 1593
* The original design for the park was created around 1865 by father and son Zocher, landscape architects from Haarlem
* In 1949 a group of bulb growers and exporters came up with the idea to organise an exhibition to showcase the flower bulb trade

For more information: [www.keukenhof.nl](http://www.keukenhof.nl).