



## Keukenhof celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary

**LISSE – Flower exhibition Keukenhof will open its doors on 21 March 2024 which is exactly 75 years after it first opened for the public. During the almost eight weeks it is open, well over 1.4 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.

### **75 years of Keukenhof**

In 2024, flower exhibition Keukenhof will celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It's set to be a festive season, featuring an anniversary exhibition and countless other activities. It takes a bit of doing to turn 75. Keukenhof is thankful and proud to celebrate this occasion with visitors, bulb growers, inhabitants, the (local)government, staff and all those that contributed to the park's development. None of which was plain sailing. For 75 years, a large number of people have enthusiastically worked to evolve the flower exhibition into its current form: Keukenhof. The park first opened its doors in 1950 and has since developed into a global phenomena.

### **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.

The flower arranger 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.



## 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, new designs are 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 almost 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.

Shrubs and perennials are combined with bulb crops gone wild at the natural garden and in the Mill Forest. The historic garden focuses on heirloom 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 its own small Keukenhof.

The various species of flowers each have their stage at one of the pavilions. For instance, the Beatrix pavilion is home to the orchid and anthurium shows and the 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 a 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 sculpture collection comprising approximately 100 works in a wide variety of styles. Annually, many artists are given the opportunity to exhibit at Keukenhof.



### **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.

Its beautiful to see what flowers can do. We overwhelm visitors from around the world with Dutch spring bulb flowers. Their positive energy connects visitors. Millions of photographs are taken at the park and posted on social media.

### **Important to the tourist industry**

Keukenhof is an icon for the floriculture sector, for the flower bulb region and for the Netherlands. In spring, Keukenhof and the flowering bulb fields attract visitors to our country as there are few other crowd-pullers at that time of the year. The park is as 'must see' destination on travel itineraries.

Keukenhof cooperates with major tourism partners to positively promote the Netherlands.

Keukenhof is exceptionally important to tourism, annually receiving over 1.4 million visitors from over 100 countries. In spring, Keukenhof and the flowering bulb fields are some of the few audience draws attracting tourists to the country at that time of year. 80% of visitors originate abroad. The main countries of origin are Germany, the USA, France and the UK.

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

### **Keukenhof's history**

The initiative for Keukenhof was taken by 10 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.

### **Royal Interest**

From its very first year, in 1950, Keukenhof has had the privilege of receiving a great deal of the Dutch royal family. In that year, the former Queen Juliana was the patron of the exhibition. She made numerous visits to Keukenhof, both private and official, often as part of state visits during which she was accompanied by the four princesses and Prince Bernhard.





The princesses once sat on the jury for a garden contest and their completed score cards have been preserved for posterity. In 1962, the royal couple even made a visit to Keukenhof as part of their 25th wedding anniversary.

In 1974, the 25th edition of Keukenhof was a very special and festive occasion, because Her Majesty Queen Juliana agreed to do the honours during the official opening. She inaugurated a new pavilion, named in her honour.

The openings have been conducted by members of the royal family on a number of occasions: Queen Beatrix, Princess Margriet and the Prince of Orange. The planting of the Royal Lime Tree in 2001 by Mrs Máxima Zorreguieta was one of the future Queen's first official presentations to the Dutch people.

There have also been regular visits from royal guests from abroad, including the royal couples of Norway, England, Belgium and Spain and the Queen of Sweden. In 2023, first lady Brigitte Macron accompanied by Queen Máxima visited the park as part of the French president's state visit to the Netherlands.

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## Keukenhof facts & figures

- The most beautiful spring park in the world is open for almost 8 weeks every spring
- In 2023, Keukenhof welcomed 1.4 million visitors of whom 80% originated abroad
- The park is 32 hectares in size and the entire estate, including the castle covers some 250 hectares and features 16 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 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 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 1594
- The original design for the park was created around 1857 by father and son Zocher, landscape architects from Haarlem
- In 1949, a group of bulb growers and exporters came up with the idea of organising an exhibition to showcase the flower bulb trade

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