

# WILSHIRE GARDEN M A R K E T

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## WHAT IS IT ABOUT BULBS?

Spring bulb planting time approaches. Nearly everyone appreciates bulbs as they appear and bloom in the spring, banishing the dull, dismal, cold winter. Indeed, of the three billion bulbs produced in Holland, the United States imports nearly *one billion* annually, with tulips being the primary product. Americans are hooked on bulbs, tulips in particular.

Although it is commonly thought that tulips and other bulbs are native to Holland, they are not. Few bulbous plants are native to that part of the world. Tulips originated in central Asia in the Tien-Shan and Pamir Alai Mountain Ranges near Islamabad (sound familiar?). Tulips spread to other regions including China and Mongolia and to the west and northwest. From secondary genetic centers Azerbaijan and Armenia, they spread to Europe and are still found growing wild in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France.



How did the tulip come to get its name? The flower resembled turbans, the headgear worn by many people in the Middle East. The word "turban" could also be written as "toliban" (NOT Taliban!), changed to Latin it became "tulipa". But the actual origin of the word is unknown.

In 1593 Dutch botanist Carolus Clusius came to Leiden, Holland, to become the head of the new botanical garden at the University of Leiden. He planted the first known tulips in Holland, assisted by Cluyt, a skilled botanist and pharmacist in the town of Delft, south of The Hague. And now, 400 years later, tulips are the first thing most people associate with Holland.

Gorgeous illustrations of tulips were made due to the introduction of the bulbs to botanists. Many prints of these botanical illustrations remain popular today. A strange feature to notice about these illustrations is that they usually included a butter-



fly; however, butterflies rarely land on tulips. Just as strange, the tulips painted were usually flamed tulips that came to be known as Rembrandt tulips, whereas Rembrandt cared little about painting them. After microscopes became more powerful, it was discovered that an aphid transmitted virus caused the color variations.

Tulips are associated with economics due to the famous *tulipomania* or tulip mania of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Rembrandt and the other Dutch masters were most active. After tulips were introduced in the late 1500's, they became a sign of wealth and status; the members of Holland's middle class struggled to outdo each other in possession of the rarest tulips. The dried bulbs were easily traded and shipped. By 1635, a sale of 40 bulbs was recorded sold for 100,000 florins. To give some perspective, a *ton* of butter would have sold in that time period for 100 florins. By 1636, tulips were traded on the stock market in numerous Dutch towns. In 1637 the tulip bubble burst, leaving many Dutch investors financially ruined.

Currently, nearly half of Holland's 47,000 acres of flower bulb farms are planted with tulips. Other bulbs include lilies, gladioli, narcissi, and hyacinths.



## PLANT BULBS IN CONTAINERS

Spring flowering bulbs are easy to grow in pots. It is possible to have spots of color nearly anywhere in early spring if you plan to do it now while planting bulbs in the ground.

Choose a sunny spot; bulbs need about five hours of sun to thrive. Select a pot or pots with at least a 10-12 inch diameter to hold a dozen large bulbs; a larger pot with more bulbs is preferable. Use quality potting soil; fill the pot just enough so that the bulbs can be properly covered with enough soil. Mix some slow release bulb fertilizer on the top of the soil. Set bulbs close together, but not touching, on top of that soil. Cover the bulbs with more soil and small mulch up to one inch from the top of the pot; do not overfill or the dirt will flow out when the pots are watered. After planting, water thoroughly.

A single kind of tulip or other bulb planted en masse in a large pot is unbeatably fresh and fashionable. Tulips are very rewarding due to their great color range. There truly is a tulip for every color scheme. From the formality of white or black to the romantic pinks and loud yellow and red, there is a tulip for everyone. For variation, plant several pots together in a group with each pot containing a different type of plant: a pot of white tulips, a pot of pink hyacinths, and a pot of blue pansies.

Bulbs and flowers or several types of bulbs can be planted together in one container; plant the tallest types in the center and the shorter ones near the rim. Straight tall white tulips growing above a blanket of purple pansies is an elegant look. Lengthen the blooming span of a container by planting a variety of early, mid, and late season bulbs in layers. In that instance, plant the largest bulbs on the bottom layer. Compose some beautiful color combinations, experiment, use some wonderful planters and you will be pleasantly surprised next spring!



## WHAT'S NEW



Many beautiful fall garden and home accents have arrived in the store recently. A few of our favorites are pictured below: A 22" autumn forest wreath with russet berries will add warm, welcoming color to an entry door or wall, a nice blend with pumpkins and fall flowers.

Dozens of darling new toadstools have arrived that range in size from one and a half inches to six



inches in diameter, in colors ranging from yellow to black; they are perfect to highlight autumn planters.

Ideal for any time of year, a trio of glazed planters in the newest violet hue looks gorgeous with the rose and pink tones of the toadstools. Imagine them with white pansies or purple and yellow violas, or pink tulips!



For those who love things rustic, there is the 21" x 22" H large antique blue rustic modern olive jar with circle pattern. This is a one of a kind, stand alone piece for the gardener who is looking for the unusual.

Bigger is better. Almost anyone could read the time with this 24" classic oversized outdoor clock, even from across the pool where it is really needed.



A similar style is available with weather gauges on the lower portion of the face. Each is radio controlled to keep perfect time; the case is made of copper. It's nearly the size of Big Ben!

As American as apple pie, or spicy apple pie, these botanical beeswax blend candles filled with colorful apple slices, flowers, and fragrant spices will make magnificent buffet centerpieces for fall and the holidays. Available in 6" x 6" large 200 hour pillar, 6" x 9.5" XL 300 hour pillar, and the Limited Edition 12" x 6" x 9.5" 300 hour elegant oval pillar. Other favorites include Cherries and Chestnuts, Warm Cocoa Spice, English Garden, Lavender, Orange Vanilla, Pink



Grapefruit, and Bayberry and Cloves. Candles are also available in decorative glass tumblers and generous 12 hour votives in all of the delicious scents.

## NOVEMBER TO DO LIST

- Divide Lily of the Valley if overcrowded.
- Add shredded leaves to base of ferns.
- This is a good month to plant Azaleas.
- Dead head Sedums and Chrysanthemums.
- This is a good time to plant new and divide Peonies.
- Clean garden tools and wipe metal surfaces with an oily rag.

## SEMINAR SERIES 2005 / 2006

These seminars begin at 10:30 a.m. and are one hour in length, with time for questions at the conclusion. The fee is \$10 per person; seating is somewhat limited, so call now to reserve a space. Door prizes are given at each seminar. Please join us!

- Fri., Nov. 11 Linda Vater "Holiday Decorating From the Garden"  
*(DON'T MISS THIS ONE; IT WILL BE FABULOUS!)*
- Sat., Dec.3 Linda Vater "Christmas Open House"
- Fri., Feb. 10 Linda Vater "Creating Garden Vignettes"
- Sat., Mar. 11 Linda Vater "Gardening Fundamentals"
- Sat., April 8 Linda Vater "Curb Appeal and Seasonal Color"
- Sat., May 6 Linda Vater "Roses"
- Fri., June 2 Linda Vater "Container Gardening"
- Sat., July 8 Linda Vater "Shade Gardening"
- August Linda Vater SKIP IT! TOO HOT!
- Sat., Sept. 16 Linda Vater "Best Foundation Plants"
- Fri., Oct. 13 Linda Vater "Bulb Container Gardening"

Watch Linda Vater's garden segments on the KFOR-TV4 4:30-4:45 p.m. News with Linda Cavanaugh every Tuesday!

## COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS?

Are there additional products or services that we can provide for you? Give us your feedback at [feedback@wilshiregardenmarket.com](mailto:feedback@wilshiregardenmarket.com) Thank you!

## EXTERIOR DECORATING

This year give yourself a garden retreat, or refresh the one you have. In response to repeated requests, Wilshire Garden Market now provides an exterior decorating consultation service. By appointment and for a fee, we will make a consultation visit followed by written suggestions to make your garden retreat more charming, cohesive, and useful. Call the store for more details or to set up an appointment.

**Let us help you create your outdoor living room!**

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**Use the PREMIERE CARD  
November 3 - 14**

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