Keukenhof Cycle Route

Tulip fields in springtime
38 or 31 km

Keukenhof Cycle Route

This route takes you through the tulip fields of the Bulb and Dune region. In springtime the flowering bulbs form coloured stripes in the landscape. Highlight of the route is the Keukenhof, the world famous flower garden.

This route is all about seeing the tulip fields in flower, which is roughly from the end of March to the beginning of May. To have the best chance of seeing a good display of flowers, we recommend doing this route in the second half of April. If you’re in Holland outside the bulb season, we suggest you try one of our other routes in the area.

Distance: 38 km (2h30) or 31 km (2h)

Shorter alternative: From 40 go straight to 48

Starting point: Voorhout train station

Alternative starting point: Keukenhof Gardens in Lisse

Public transport to route:
- Train to Voorhout
- Bicycle rental (OV-bicycle scheme only)
- Car parking (free)
- Bus to Keukenhof
- Bicycle rental
- Car parking (paid)

The route follows the numbered cycle network:


Start: The route starts at the east side of Voorhout train station (Jacoba van Beierenweg)

***: At 40 you start heading towards 13, but turn left at 3e Loosterweg. Turn left again at roundabout (Beeklaan). Here you pick up the numbered cycle network towards 12.

Finish: After 67 follow signs to 59. This will take you back to Voorhout train station.
How the tulip came to Holland

Holland and tulips - they are almost synonymous. The tulip is not only the most famous Dutch export product, but it is also one of the most popular tourist attractions - and rightly so! The tulip might now be seen as a Dutch icon, but did you know that the tulip is not native to Holland at all? The tulip originally came from Turkey.

The story goes that in the 16th century the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman "the Magnificent" gave some of his prized tulip bulbs as a gift to a Flemish diplomat. He in turn gave the bulbs to the pioneering French botanist Carolus Clusius, who took the tulip with him to Holland, when he became professor at the University of Leiden. One night some of the finest tulip bulbs were stolen from his garden. These stolen bulbs are supposed to have formed the beginning of the tulip trade in Holland!

Tulip mania

Once introduced in Holland, the tulip became so highly desired by the wealthy and rich that it resulted in a true tulip mania. As the bulbs were still very scarce, the tulip became a speculative good and prices skyrocketed. Bulbs literally became worth their weight in gold. When the bulb bubble eventually burst, many sellers and buyers were left bankrupt and destitute.

Tulip fields vs. bulb fields

Tourists call them tulip fields, the Dutch talk of bolvenwelden (bulb fields), which is more accurate. As you’ll see along the route, other species of spring bulbs, such as daffodils and hyacinths, are cultivated too. Together all the different flowers form the coloured stripes that make this area so spectacular in the spring.

The farmers are not interested in the beautiful flower display. To them it’s the bulbs that matter. To make sure all the nutrients go into the bulb, the flowers are removed before they’ve finished flowering. When the bulbs are ready, they are harvested and exported all over the world. The cut flowers are used in the in the Bloemencorso flower parade.
Flower parade

The Bloemencorso is the most famous flower parade in the world and attracts many visitors every year. The first parade took place in 1947. WWII was over and the Dutch could do with a festive occasion. It was also a great way to promote the commercial cultivation of flower bulbs.

The many floats and vehicles of the parade are decorated with spectacular displays of spring flowers. The parade travels a 40 km route from Noordwijk to Haarlem. For the date and exact route of this year’s flower parade, go to the website of Bloemencorso Bollenstreek: bloemencorso-bollenstreek.nl/en/.

Keukenhof Gardens

The Keukenhof is the world’s largest flower garden. Around seven million flower bulbs are said to be planted here every year! The garden is designed in the English landscape style, making it quite different from the striped coloured tulip fields outside the park.

The park is open from the mid-March to mid-May. For opening hours and tickets, go to the Keukenhof website: www.keukenhof.nl/en/.