

North Berwick and Spring Bulbs

The Royal Burgh of North Berwick is one of the most beautiful coastal towns in Scotland, and has won many awards in both Beautiful Scotland and Britain in Bloom. Over the years, East Lothian Council has planted over a million spring bulbs in North Berwick, and the display is added to every year by North Berwick in Bloom and the Rotary Club.

For 2012 more than two thousand tulip bulbs have been planted in beds and planters around the town. There are examples of each variety of tulip. Every display has a label with the name of the tulip and the group to which it belongs. Early varieties will be in flower by March, mid-season in April and the late varieties in May, although the weather can affect the flowering time.



Restored Edwardian rockery in the Lodge, where many of the species tulips may be found.

This leaflet was produced by North Berwick in Bloom. Thanks to the North Berwick team at ELC Landscape and Countryside. ©2012 RJO

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North Berwick in Bloom



Tulipa Unicum, in the Lodge.

Tulip Festival



2012



The War Memorial Garden, North Berwick.

Tulip Facts

The tulip is a spring flowering bulb with over one hundred species. The wild tulip originated in mountainous areas of central Asia, and was first cultivated in the Ottoman empire as early as 1000AD. Tulips were introduced to Europe in the 16th century, where the large colourful blooms quickly became a coveted luxury, and a huge number of new varieties were bred. The most sought after were those with patterns on the flower caused by a type of mosaic virus, and during the 1630s so-called "Tulipmania" in the Netherlands led to collectors paying huge sums of money for rare examples. To this day, tulips are associated with the Netherlands, home to many commercial bulb growers and the famous Keukenhof gardens.

In horticulture, tulips are divided into fifteen groups or divisions, as described in this leaflet. Most tulips have one flower per stem, although some, such as *T. turkestanica*, have multiple flowers. They come in a huge variety of colours, although not a true blue.

Division 11 - Double late or peony-flowered tulips

These have large, fully double flowers up to 12cm (5in) wide. They have so many petals that the bloom is rather squat, and they are very long lasting, so may last well into early summer. Their height is 40-60cm (16-24in). They flower in late spring. *Carnaval de Nice - red and white.*



Division 12 - Kaufmanniana hybrids

These have waterlily-like flowers, which open out flat to 6cm (2½in) wide and are usually bi-coloured. The leaves of some are striped or mottled with red or brown.

They grow to only 10-25cm (4-10in) high. They flower in early spring and are derived from *Tulipa kaufmanniana*, a species from central Asia.



Corona - red and yellow;
Shakespeare - orange/apricot.



Division 13 - Fosteriana hybrids

Their flowers are slender when closed up, opening to 18-20cm (7-8in) wide in full sun and have a flower colour ranging from scarlet to yellow or white. They grow to 20-40cm (8-16in). They flower in mid spring. These have been cultivated mainly from *Tulipa fosteriana*, a shiny green-leaved red-flowered species from the mountains of Central Asia.

Red Emperor - bright red.



Division 14 - Greigii hybrids

This group have large, brightly coloured flowers with wavy edged, brown striped leaves. Most grow up to 20-30cm (8-12in) tall, but some up to 50cm (20in), with marked leaves. They flower early to mid-spring. They are derived largely from *T. greigii*, again from Central Asia.

Red Riding Hood - red.



Division 15 - Species tulips

This group covers all the wild tulips and some of their selected garden forms. There is a wide range of flower colours, shapes and sizes. Most are smaller and more delicate in appearance than the modern hybrids but are equally hardy. Many are grown in the Lodge rockery.

Tulipa clusiana Honky Tonk and Van Tubergen's variety;
turkestanica;
T. humilis Little Beauty and Lilliput;
T. praestans Fusilier and Unicum.



How to grow Tulips

Tulips are very easy to grow and will give a good display in almost any soil that is well drained. For the best blooms in spring, choose plump healthy bulbs with no sign of mould. They should be planted at four times their own depth, from late October until December. To improve drainage add sand and compost to the soil. Tulips enjoy full sun during growth, so do not plant in shady areas. They are very disease resistant, but to avoid "tulip fire" which causes deformed and stunted leaves, clear away dropped petals and dead leaves as they fall.