

Springtime in Holland including the Floriade 2012:

4 days / 3 nights duration - departing **Friday 27.04.12**

Return Executive Coach Travel with selected pick up points

Return short channel crossings to Calais

3 nights half board accommodation at a 3* hotel well situated for all excursions- all rooms with private en suite facilities.

Excursion package as set out below including entrances, guides etc as per our sample itinerary

Cost from **£ 359.00pp** Twin / Double share

Single room supplement £ 39.00pp (3 nights) - on request only

Deposit £ 70.00pp (non-refundable) Balance due in full by the 12.03.12

Insurance if required is available at £ 26.00pp - NO upper age limit but medical screening applies at all times.

Sample Itinerary

Day 1 – Departing this morning we travel to the coast for the short channel crossing to France. A stop will be made en route as you travel through Belgium towards Holland, where you will be based in the east of Holland for 3 nights. Having checked in at your hotel and freshened up, your evening meal is included tonight.

Day 2 – Today we start with an included visit to the **Palace & Gardens of Het Loo** which reflects the historical ties between the House of Orange-Nassau and the Netherlands. The central part of the palace and the lateral pavilions show how the palace was inhabited by the House of Orange for three centuries starting with the King Stadtholder William III up to and including Queen Wilhelmina. It has a Dutch baroque garden with rich decoration, which was made by William and Mary, who later held the English throne. Visitors have often called Het Loo 'the Versailles of Holland', because of its axial layout, fountains, parterres and statues. This afternoon we return to the Nijmegen area where we will visit the **Gardens of Appeltorn**, entrance included, where you can walk through 170 model gardens. This is the largest Dutch plant collection and it will fill you with inspiration for your own garden and home. But most of all it is a lovely sight and a relaxing experience. The outstanding location of the park in its rivers landscape with its trees, birds, ponds and flower meadows is unique. A visit to "The Gardens of Appeltorn" is equally attractive throughout the year. A new theme is developed each month and there are several outdoor cafés where you can enjoy fresh delicacies.. We return to the hotel later today where your evening meal is included.

Day 3 – Today is dedicated to the **2012 Floriade** (entrance ticket included), which is a world horticultural exposition which has been held in the Netherlands every 10 years since 1960. The Floriade Park covers 66 hectares and encompasses 5 unique themed worlds separated by wooded areas. Each world has its own decor, programme and activities. In each of these worlds you will see, feel and experience nature in a totally different way. The 2012 Floriade will feature not only the most wonderful display of flowers, plants, trees, fruit and vegetables across a 100 acre site, but also a cultural programme of music, dance, literature, theatre and visual art from around the world. On your return to the hotel later today, your evening meal is included.

Day 4 – Checking out of the hotel this morning, we retrace our steps through Holland and in to Belgium where a visit to the **Chateau and Gardens of Grand-Bigard** is included. Here you will visit the **flower exhibition** at the castle, an unforgettable floral experience. The park, approx 14 hectares, incorporates nearly all spring bulb varieties and the castles' gardeners have planted by hand, under the direction of specialists from The Netherlands, more than 1 million bulbs. During the four weeks in which the **exhibition** takes place flower lovers will have the opportunity to discover 500 varieties including 300 tulip varieties.

The tulips are divided into three categories: early flowering, midseason and late flowering but may also be labelled as classic *triumph*, botanic tulips, *lily flowers*, *viridiflora*, *parrots* and *multi-flora*. Amongst the narcissi and daffodils, very rare varieties can be discovered such as the *papillon* narcissus and numerous botanical varieties. A sea of muscari, wild tulips, violets, azaleas and rhododendrons spreads out under the ancient trees... There is also a **prestigious indoor exhibition** in the 1000m² newly restored green house. Most of the flower beds and flower arrangements will be changed every week where approximately 120 creations, reflecting the trends and current fashions, will be presented in a beautiful indoor garden. Well known in Holland, the artist Hans Danko will produce the flower arrangements with no less than 10.000 flowers. Departing here mid afternoon, we continue on to Calais, for your early evening crossing back to the UK and onward to your original departure points.

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