

## April welcomes the vivid colors of tulips

Tulips will open their colorful petals this month in a familiar and welcome nod to spring that, sadly, lasts only about a week.



Still, the vivid colors of the tulip have been valued throughout the world for a thousand years since Turkish growers began cultivating wild specimens, trading them throughout the Ottoman Empire.

Some speculate that the tulip actually derives its name from the turbans worn by early Turkish traders.

By 1594, the tulip was established in Holland and was traded throughout Europe. The Dutch are still the main exporters of tulips, selling about 3 billion bulbs annually.

The flower didn't arrive in the United States until about 1847 when bulbs were imported for planting on the Fay Estate in Massachusetts.

The tulip can grow and flower from either bulb or seed. However, bulbs are the main way the plants are sold, since a seed takes from five to seven years to produce a flowering plant.

### [Meaning of tulip colors](#)

According to FlowerMeaning.com, tulip colors have special symbolism in art and culture:

- Yellow is the color of unrequited or spurned love. Sending a yellow tulip to someone means you love them, but you know they don't return your feelings.
- Bright red is the color of passion and perfect love. Don't send a bouquet of these flowers to a family member or you'll be sending the wrong message!
- Purple is tied to royalty, but also abundance and prosperity.
- Pink is less intense affection and love, and also offers a more appropriate choice for friends and family.

### Multi-colored tulips

Some early tulips bewitched the 17th century population of Holland because of their intense variegated color. However, in the 1920s it was finally established that these intense variations in color resulted from the Mosaic Virus, a disease that 'broke' the color of the tulip and made it appear flamed or striped.

Today, no infected flowers are sold on the market, mainly because they result in weak and stunted plants. However, many varieties of multi-colored tulips do exist, thanks to experimentation and propagation.

## Your Monthly Maintenance Minute



First, make sure your disposal is operational, and then turn the unit off at the switch. Pack the disposal with a mixture of ice cubes and about 1/4 cup of baking soda; then turn the unit on at the switch. Once the ice-grinding noise slows, pour a kettle of boiling water into the sink.