ODYSSEY TRAVELLER

Dutch Tulips | Netherlands Small Group To

Recommended reading for your journey

01

Short History Of The Netherlands

Pjan Rietbergen

The development of the Netherlands over the centuries has been a remarkable one. Situated at "the end of Europe," between land and water, its people have, for more than three thousand years, fought to makethe best of a country unfavoured by nature. They have shaped it into one of the world’s foremost economic powers but also, and even more importantly, into a society that prides itself on having reached a fair balance between material and social well-being. The history of this achievementis a fascinating one. Since time immemorial, it is the history of the struggle against the sea, of man seeking to dominate the forces of water. It is the history of the early medieval Dutch traders, who travelled all over Europe to sell their wares. It is the history of the activities ofthe world’s first multinationals, the Dutch East and West India Companies, that spanned the entire globe. It is also the history of the loss of colonial empire and of the triumphant rebuilding of a mainly commercial economy into a mainly industrial one, whose activities, once again, span the globe. It is, of course, also the history of a culture to match, of commonsense and realism, of the wonderful works of art produced by the Dutch "Golden Age" of the seventeenth century and of the many attainments of Dutch civilization in more recent years. For all those who are often amazed at the industry and achievementsof this small nation, the "Short History of the Netherlands" offers a succinct historical tale that goes a long way to elucidate the country’s past and, thus, explain its present.

02

Holland The History of the Netherlands

Thomas Grattan

Thomas Grattan commences his history with the Roman invasions of what is now the Netherlands. Although the Roman Empire held sway and brought organisation to the locality, but were eventually driven out by successive assaults of Frankish tribes. The strategic bargain the province of Frisia took, in order to retain native control over the lands north of the Lower Rhine, and the growing organisation of the region in the Dark Ages is hereafter discussed. The temporarily dominant position of Frisia eventually gave way to the province of Holland, which became a formal entity in its own right and a province of the Holy Roman Empire. Self-perceptions of Frisian culture were retained until around the 12th century. Thereafter, in part due to the lengthy rule of the House of Holland, the peoples developed a distinct, Hollander identity. Grattan keenly explains the Medieval and Renaissance history of the Netherlands,

in terms of the various alliances and conflicts the nation undertook with Belgium, Spain and France. Although a small nation, the prosperous Dutch were able to negotiate strongly on terms of trade. The later portions of the text examines the circumstances of the Dutch Rebellion against the Habsburgs during the Eighty Years' War. The development of gunpowder and naval power was instrumental in the rebellion, and represented a turning point in conflict during the 16th century. The later rule by France over Holland, and the emergence of William V, the Prince of Orange is detailed. Finally, the book concludes with an examination of Holland's role in the closely proximate Battle of Waterloo during the Napoleonic War. Thomas Grattan's account of Dutch history is intensive yet accessible. Those seeking insight into how the Netherlands developed its distinct culture to the point of playing a decisive role in the geopolitical events of wider Europe will find Grattan's researches, writing style, and attention to detail satisfying and comprehensive.

03

Tulipomania : The Story of the World s Most Coveted Flower & the Extraordinary Passions It Aroused

Mike Dash

In the 1630s, visitors to the prosperous trading cities of the Netherlands couldn't help but notice that thousands of normally sober, hardworking Dutch citizens from every walk of life were caught up in an extraordinary frenzy of buying and selling. The object of this unprecedented speculation was the tulip, a delicate and exotic Eastern import that had bewitched horticulturists, noblemen, and tavern owners alike. For almost a year rare bulbs changed hands for incredible and ever-increasing sums, until single flowers were being sold for more than the cost of a house. Historians would come to call it tulipomania. It was the first futures market in history, and like so many of the ones that would follow, it crashed spectacularly, plunging speculators and investors into economic ruin and despair. This is the history of the tulip, from its origins on the barren, windswept steppes of central Asia to its place of honor in the lush imperial gardens of Constantinople, to its starring moment as the most coveted--and beautiful--commodity in Europe. Historian Mike Dash vividly narrates the story of this amazing flower and the colorful cast of characters--Turkish sultans, Yugoslav soldiers, French botanists, and Dutch tavern keepers--who were centuries apart historically and worlds apart culturally, but who all had one thing in common: tulipomania.

04

Tulipmania: Money, Honor, and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age

Anne Goldgar

In the 1630s the Netherlands was gripped by tulipmania: a speculative fever unprecedented in scale and, as popular history would have it, folly. We all know the outline of the story how otherwise sensible merchants, nobles, and artisans spent all they had (and much that they didn t) on tulip bulbs. We have heard how these bulbs changed hands hundreds of times

in a single day, and how some bulbs, sold and resold for thousands of guilders, never even existed. Tulipmania is seen as an example of the gullibility of crowds and the dangers of financial speculation. But it wasn t like that. As Anne Goldgar reveals in Tulipmania, not one of these stories is true. Making use of extensive archival research, she lays waste to the legends, revealing that while the 1630s did see a speculative bubble in tulip prices, neither the height of the bubble nor its bursting were anywhere near as dramatic as we tend to think. By clearing away the accumulated myths, Goldgar is able to show us instead the far more interesting reality: the ways in which tulipmania reflected deep anxieties about the transformation of Dutch society in the Golden Age. Goldgar tells us at the start of her excellent debunking book: Most of what we have heard of [tulipmania] is not true. . . . She tells a new story. Simon Kuper, Financial Times

05

The Tulip

Anna Pavord

The New York Times bestseller and international publishing sensation. Greed, desire, anguish, and devotion have all played their part in the development of the tulip from a wild flower of the Asian steppes to the worldwide phenomenon it is today. No other flower has ever carried so much cultural baggage: it charts political upheavals, illuminates social behavior, mirrors economic booms and busts, and plots the ebb and flow of religious persecution. Sumptuously illustrated from a wide range of sources, this beautifully produced and irresistible volume has become a bible, a unique source book, a universal gift book, and a joy to all who possess it. Now available in paperback, it’s as irresistible as its subject.

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