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# The Tulip: The Story of the Flower That Has Made Men Mad

*Anna Pavord*

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#121739 in Books Bloomsbury USA 1999-01-15 1999-01-15 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.94 x .7 x 7.78l, 3.60 #File Name: 1582340137388 pages | File size: 61.Mb

**Anna Pavord : The Tulip: The Story of the Flower That Has Made Men Mad** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Tulip: The Story of the Flower That Has Made Men Mad:

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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.

.com In an auction held in Holland in February 1637, 99 lots of tulip bulbs fetched a staggering 90,000 guilders, more than \$3.5 million in today's money. Tulipomania had reached its height, and its story is told in just one of the fascinating sections of Anna Pavord's wonderful book on this most seductive of flowers. Pavord's passion for the flower is evident from the opening pages of the book, where she tells of scrambling across the hillsides of Crete in search of an obscure, indigenous purple tulip. The story of the discovery of this tulip leads into Pavord's extraordinary history of this beautiful, enigmatic flower. As with all the best love stories, Pavord's is told from the perspective of the object of affection--in this case, the tulip--from its adoption by the Ottoman sultans of Istanbul in the 18th century to its present cultivation by the Wakefield Tulip Society. Along the way, incredible stories of people's investments in the flower emerge, the result, as Pavord explains, of a unique feature of the tulip. Its variegated colors are produced by a small parasitic aphid, which weakens the plant but produces its gorgeous hues. The tulipomania that gripped 17th-century Europe was a form of futures trading, as people purchased tulip bulbs at increasingly inflated prices with the hope that they would flower into the most beautiful and kaleidoscopic colors imaginable. Tulip is an extraordinary book, beautifully illustrated and offering a fascinating story of our obsession with the most ephemeral of objects. Buying tulip bulbs will never be the same again. --Jerry Brotton  
From Publishers Weekly  
This splendidly extravagant history is only the latest example of how far an obsession with Queen Tulipa can lead. Pavord (*The Flowering Year*), the gardening correspondent for the Independent, searched the world's libraries and archives and trekked over war-torn mountainsides to put together an astonishing bouquet of economic and cultural lore, grand historic trends and horticultural exotica. Her witty, frighteningly erudite story starts in Turkey, where Sultans of old held nightly entertainments in gardens lit by mirrored lanterns and required guests to dress in colors to match the tulips. Holland of 1634-1637 saw the famous Tulipomania, during which a single bulb could be traded for the price of the most expensive house in Amsterdam. Seventeenth-century French ladies of fashion wore tulips like jewels (and paid as much for them), and monographists puzzled endlessly over why plain blossoms could suddenly transform themselves into feathered and flamed curiosities. As for Enlightenment England, supposedly sensible people were not immune to the rage, and burgeoning florists' societies were dedicated to growing the flower in the island's wet and clammy soil. Though this isn't a how-to manual, gardeners will appreciate the encyclopedic descriptions of wild species and garden varieties of tulips. Lastly, the sumptuous illustrations covering five centuries of tulip-inspired art and artifacts will dazzle browsers and botanists alike. About much more than a lovely flower, this book will give readers a panoramic eyeful of culture, aesthetics, politics and economics?in short, the spectrum of human endeavor as revealed in the passage of the tulip through history. 50,000 first printing; major ad/promo; author tour. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From Library Journal  
Pavord (*The New Kitchen Garden*, DK, 1996) has clearly been touched by some of the madness that appears throughout the history of the tulip, and her simple title belies the complexity of the story she tells. She traces the fascination for this flower from the first mania for its use in 14th-century Turkey to its evolution as a common garden flower. Using contemporary sources, which also supply some of the lavish illustrations, she documents the tulip's introduction to Western Europe in the 15th century. She also tells the personal stories of the gardeners who devoted their lives and fortunes to developing new varieties. The tulip's mysterious habit of "breaking" and developing new forms and colors was the basis for speculative crazes, first with the Dutch in the 17th century and then later the English and French, since the gardener who grew a desirable new variety could make a fortune. The second half of the book is a comprehensive listing and description of all tulip species as well as some of the 2600 varieties of garden tulips still in general cultivation. Pavord's lively history is recommended for all gardening collections.  
A Daniel Starr, Museum of Modern Art Lib., New York  
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