

FLORAL TRAVEL BLOOMS: TOUR OPERATORS SPOTLIGHT COLORFUL ITINERARIES

2019 Trips Include Botanical Gardens, Flower Shows, and More



Photo Courtesy of CroisiEurope River Cruises

NEW YORK – April 24, 2019 – As the winter melts away and flowers begin to bloom, spring is one of the most colorful times of year to visit new destinations. Cherry blossoms take over Japan’s landscape in March, followed by Holland’s famous tulips bursting out of the ground in April, and London’s RHS Chelsea Flower in May welcomes more than 157,000 visitors.

“Floral tourism certainly thrives in spring,” said Terry Dale, president and CEO of the [United States Tour Operators Association](#) (USTOA). “But throughout the year, the tour operator members of USTOA offer even more floral attractions, botanical gardens, and celebrations all over the world.”

The tour operators of USTOA compiled flower-powered itineraries and excursions, many of which also feature immersive culinary and cultural experiences.

Tournament of the Roses Parade

Southern California welcomes the New Year with the Tournament of the Roses Parade, showcasing animated floral floats followed by marching bands with high-stepping equestrians. **Mayflower Cruises and Tours’** “Tournament of Roses Parade 2019” itinerary is packed with private events surrounding the parade, including a walking tour of Los Angeles and Hollywood, a private New Year’s Eve gala with a live orchestra, and exclusive seats at the parade for a magnificent view of the celebration. Departure is available December 30 starting at \$1,699 per person. www.mayflowercruisesandtours.com/

Flower Farms and Flower Shows

Colombia's flower farms, coffee production, and rich history can be explored with **Intrepid Travel's** nine-day "Café Colombia" itinerary. The trip takes guests to Santa Elena, located outside of Medellin, where a silletero (chair maker) at a local flower farm will teach travelers how to make the flower displays that compete in the Fiesta de las Flores each year. Free time can be spent in a mud bath in Cartagena or at the Plaza Minorista Market purchasing local fruits. As one of the world's largest coffee producers, travelers will also learn how beans are grown, harvested, and roasted. Departures are available throughout 2019 starting at \$2,350 per person. www.intrepidtravel.com/us

Each year in May, the RHS Chelsea Flower Show showcases impressive English garden designs across an 11-acre property in London. **Abercrombie and Kent's** "English Gardens & The Chelsea Flower Show" itinerary dedicates a day to exploring the show's finest English gardening in the world, and guests have access to an exclusive Royal Horticultural Society hospitality area for morning and afternoon tea. The rest of the ten-day trip is spent strolling through the Arts and Crafts-style gardens of Sissinghurst Castle, visiting Blenheim Palace, and more. Departures are available May 14, 2019 starting at \$10,495. www.abercrombiekent.com/

Cherry Blossom Viewing

APT Botanica World Discoveries offers botanically-themed river and small ship cruises to combine a passion for travel and history with gardening. The 12-day "Cherry Blossoms, Culture & Sights of Japan" cruise takes place during peak cherry blossom season. This itinerary includes the exploration of the 350-year-old garden, Ritsurin Park, and the famous landscape garden of Okayama, Korakuen Garden. Guests will visit a Samurai's home, study Japan's history, and learn about Japanese plants and gardening from a Botanical guide. Departures are available from January to April, 2020, starting at \$11,495 per person. www.aptouring.com/

Tulip Season

Travelers can admire the Dutch countryside and visit a tulip farm with **Viking River Cruises'** "Tulips & Windmills" tour. Tulips have always been important to local communities in Holland, and visitors will visit the village of Sloodorp, which produces 25 million tulips every year on its own. A lesson on the evolution of windmills and a sampling of Belgian beers and chocolates will be provided, and guests will lay eyes on the world's largest floral park, the Keukenhof Gardens, and explore Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum. Departures are available March through May every year, starting at \$3,399 per person. www.vikingrivercruises.com/

Botanical Gardens and More

Adventures by Disney's "Seine River Cruise" includes trips to French gardens and the beaches of Normandy. First, guests will stop at Monet's Gardens, where the famous impressionist Claude Monet found inspiration for renowned works such as *Water Lilies* and *Wheatstacks*. Afterwards, travelers will tour the Château de Bizy castle with its vast gardens, fountains, and English vegetable garden. The trip includes gourmet food tastings, a tour of the Eiffel Tower, and a hands-on painting workshop. Departures are available throughout 2019 starting at \$4,669 per person. www.adventuresbydisney.com/

Avanti Destinations takes travelers to the Rio de Janeiro Botanical Gardens and the Tijuca Forest by jeep. Created in 1817, Rio's Botanical Gardens showcases native and exotic plants from around the world across a 346-acre property located at the foot of Corcovado Mountain. The property contains 6,000 species of plants and 900 varieties of palm trees, a cactus garden, and the Fountain of the Muses. The excursion is available to book daily while traveling on any Avanti Destinations tour, starting at \$99 per person. Contact your travel advisor for more information, or find a USTOA-certified travel advisor by visiting <https://ustoa.com/travel-advisor-directory>.

For more information on USTOA, visit www.ustoa.com, call 212-599-6599, or email information@ustoa.com.

About USTOA:

Representing nearly \$19 billion in revenue, the member companies of U.S. Tour Operators Association provide tours, packages and custom arrangements that allow 9.8 million travelers annually unparalleled access, insider knowledge, peace-of-mind, value and freedom to enjoy destinations and experiences across the entire globe. Each member company has met the travel industry's highest standards, including participation in the USTOA's Travelers Assistance Program, which protects consumer payments up to \$1 million if the company goes out of business. As a voice for the tour operator industry for more than 40 years, USTOA also provides education and assistance for consumers and travel agents.

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