



TULIP TIPS

MARCH 14, 2008



Being the daughter of a tulip farmer (yes, really) and having grown up on a

tulip farm (acres and acres of flowers complete with a Dutch windmill), I know a thing or two about tulips...

Because we're nearing Spring and tulips are popping up in every flower stand around town, I thought I should write down a few of my best tulip tips.

Buying tulips:

- 1.) Buy the freshest tulips. Don't buy tulips that are limp; make sure the stems are thick, plump and strong. (In general, the bigger the stem-the bigger the bulb- the healthier the flower).
- 2.) Make sure the leaves are tight and curled inward toward the stem. If they are already bending outward, they are not very fresh.
- 3.) The bud should be closed and on the tighter side, but you should still be able to see the color of the flower.

How to care for them:



immediately in cold water. (Remember that the stems will continue to grow in the vase, so you can cut them down to be a bit on the shorter side).

2.) If the flowers came in plastic wrap, you can leave the plastic on for the first couple hours. This will encourage the stems to stay straight instead of bending over. (As soon as you cut the bottom of the stem, the tulip 'comes back to life' and will begin to respond).

3.) Leave the vase in a cool spot (not in direct sunlight). You can even place the vase outside during the night (unless it is freezing) for even longer 'vase life'.

*Don't ever mix daffodils and tulips in the same vase. The daffodil juice taints the water and will 'poison' the tulips!

And apparently all those silly things you've ever been told about putting a penny in the water, or adding sugar, really don't work! Really the most important thing is to buy good, fresh flowers!

See, Dad? I really *was* paying attention all those years...

-Courtney

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