

75 YEARS OF FREEDOM

From Memory to Remembrance

How to Plan a Planting Ceremony

No matter how we chose to do it, we think it's important to put in time and care when honouring our veterans. A Planting Ceremony can be a beautiful and enduring way to keep the memory of our heroes alive. We have put together some steps to help you plan a Tulip Planting Ceremony.



Select a Date

Just like with any important event, make sure to select a date that allows the most people to attend. The bulbs can be planted up until the first frost.

Create a Guest List & Send Invites Early

To lend the ceremony the dignity and authority it deserves, reach out to local public officials and members of your Royal Canadian Legion Branch. Regardless of their position, we believe every member of the community can benefit from being part of a Liberation75 Planting Ceremony. Again, just like with any special event, be sure to send out the invitations with ample time for your VIPS and guests to review and respond.

Select the Ceremony Site

Once the invitations have been sent, it's time to select and prepare a site for the ceremony itself. Tulips do best in a full-sun or afternoon sun environment. Tulips also prefer well-drained or drier sandy soil, and do not thrive in a damp area. Ideally your Liberation75 Ceremony Site will be easily visible to your community.

You will need to decide if you are going to plant the majority of your bulbs in advance and just leave a few for the ceremony, or if you will plant the remaining bulbs after the ceremony. We recommend planting no more than 1-2 bulbs at a ceremony, this way the ceremony stays focused.

Prepare the Garden

Start preparing the site by clearing any weeds or debris from the area. Dig a hole for the bulb(s) at least 15-20 cm or 6-8 inches deep. If you are planning to plant multiple bulbs make sure to dig the holes 10-15 cm or 4-6 inches apart to allow the flowers room to grow. Now all that is left to do is plant, cover with dirt and water the tulip bulbs once the ceremony begins.

Create an Event Plan

Think about the flow of your ceremony. You can structure it in a way that will work for your location and your audience. You might consider reaching out to your local military or Legion Branch for advice on planning a ceremony to remember military veterans.

Select one person to Emcee the event and keep your program moving. Consider opening remarks from the main official in your organization (principal, CEO, president). Invite your special guests (government official, mayor, or legion member) to say a few words about the importance of the commemoration garden you are planting.

Invite your special guests to your prepared site to ceremonially drop the bulbs in the holes and cover them with dirt. You may want to pose at a few stages through the planting for pictures: holding the bulbs over the hole, placing them in, covering them over. You may want to have an opportunity for questions from the attendees, or you may decide to close the formal portion of your ceremony at that time. Some may also choose to have a small reception with light refreshments for the guests.

After the Ceremony

Once the Ceremony is complete and your guests have all gone, its time to complete the planting. If you chose to plant your bulbs in advance you will just need to ensure all are covered and watered. If you chose to plant the remainder of your bulbs after the ceremony, you will need to dig the remaining holes, cover and water your bulbs.

Additional Considerations

Consider investing in a ceremonial trowel. It adds a sense of occasion and celebration to the proceedings. Don't forget to have an official photographer. Photographs of your ceremony may be requested by the media. You can also share them with the Canadian Tulip Festival on social media using #75YrsFreedom and #PlantingLib75 or share your images and media stories via email to info@tulipfestival.ca.

We hope however and whenever you choose to hold your planting ceremony that it conveys great meaning and brings your community closer together.

