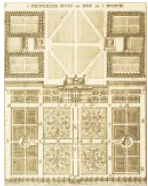


Four Centuries of Gardening in the Netherlands: 1600-2000



Renaissance: After the long struggle for independence from Spain (1609) the Dutch Garden began to flourish, its design following rectilinear patterns and division into enclosed, square areas, without a clear, main axis. The structural elements comprised leafy arbors, fountains, and mazes. **Jan Vredeman de Vries** (1527-1604) prints show such layouts, and first use of bulbs, introduced at the end of the 16th c. They soon became a status symbol, giving rise to the frantic speculation in the 1630s known as 'tulipomania.' Other plants portrayed in illustrations of the day included sunflowers, African marigolds, tobacco plants, carnations, and poppies. Notable examples include the Botanical Gardens of Leiden (1590), and classical inspired garden layouts at the Princely Court of The Hague (Buitenhof, c1620).



Dutch Classical Garden (1630-1690)

With the increasing prosperity from trade, shipping and industry, many newly rich merchants began to build country houses and extensive gardens, stimulating the development of architecture and landscape gardening in the Republic. Italian architectural treatises by Alberti, Serlio, Vignola, Palladio and Scamozzi (based on Vitruvius) were translated into Dutch and these books contributed to the creation of a new style of garden architecture, defined as the Dutch Classical style, with its emphasis on proportion, symmetry and harmony. The Dutch classical style generally decreed that garden layout be rectangular in form, following precise classic proportion (often 4:3, or combined with Golden Mean). A strict axis of symmetry, divided this rectangle into two equal parts, on either side of the centrally placed house. The whole estate was enclosed by tree-lined canals. Best examples are Huis ten Bosch (1647) by **Jacob van Campen** and **Pieter Post** (The Hague). Large country estates were laid out along the waterways and newly reclaimed polders such as the **Beemster**.



French-inspired Baroque Garden (1680-1750)

At the end of the 17th-century the layout of Dutch gardens became strongly influenced by the French Baroque, as developed at the Court of Versailles. The rectangular classical Dutch garden with its enclosing canals was opened up, with the main axis now visually extending beyond the outer perimeter of the estate proper; the inner garden sections decorated with increasingly complex parterres designs. The principal structural elements of these French inspired gardens consisted of parterres, starwoods, cabinets, wildernesses, mazes, and elegantly shaped hedges. **Daniel Marot** and **Jacob Roman's** gardens for **William & Mary** at **Het Loo** are an excellent example. Variety and liveliness are characteristic of its layout: statues, spouting fountains, shell grottoes (surviving at **Castle Rosendael**), arbors of latticework, aviaries, menageries and orangeries all complete a rich picture. In the early 18th-century the plethora of decorative elements increased and planting also became more varied. Famous were the exotic plant collections at country houses along the **Vecht River**, especially **Gunterstein**, which had hothouses filled with pomegranates, oleanders, myrtles, laurels, and aloes.



Early landscape gardening (1750-1800)

The early landscape style in the Netherlands developed in reaction to the strict formality and artificiality of the classical baroque garden, combined with a new appreciation for 17th -c landscape painting. The Dutch landscape garden knew a transitional phase, which meant that irregular shapes initially were only applied to the confines of the existing formal framework. On a walk through the park's meandering paths one would come across follies (ruins, hermitages) in Chinese, Old Dutch or Gothic style. Important garden designers working in the early landscape style were **J.G. Michael** and **J.D. Zocher Sr.**, as well as J.P. Posth and P.W. Schonk. Examples of estates incorporating new landscape features: **Beeckestein** (1770) and **Elswout** (1781).



Later Landscape style (1815-1870)

After the creation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1813, the first public parks were established and some country estates were opened to the public for recreation. During this period, the character of gardens changed to incorporate the surrounding, providing wide vistas across these open spaces towards points in the distance. The old features characteristic of classical baroque garden architecture had disappeared and been replaced by open meadows with trees planted in clumps around serpentine lakes. Important designers working in the late 19th c. landscape style were **Zocher Jr.** and **C.E.A. Petzold**. Estates laid out in late landscape style include- **Het Loo** (1807-1808) and public parks, such as the Amsterdam **Vondelpark** (1864).



Mixed garden style (1870-1940)

From 1870 onwards prosperous merchants built new villas in rural places accessible by rail. Parks were designed for health and enjoyment of factory workers, such as the Sarphatipark in Amsterdam, others to help combat unemployment (**Amsterdamse Bos**). After 1870, a more mixed style of landscaping developed, reincorporating formal elements. This style was introduced by the French architect E.F. André, assisted by landscape architect **H.A.C. Poortman**, who worked at **Middachten**. Gardens were walled with decorative stone balustrades. Influential designers were **H. Copijn**, and L.A. Springer, responsible for restoring many historical parks. Early modernist like J.T.P. Bijhouwer, and P.A.M. Buijs designed important public parks.



Functionalism, Modernism and New Perennial Movement (1950-2013-)

From the 1950's onward many owners of suburban gardens followed garden architect **Mien Ruys'** ideas, focused on lawns with flower borders, encompassed by brick and stonework. Her gardens feature pergolas, lawns and small lakes, with perennial flower borders and grasses; her design and planting principles greatly influenced the development of the **New Perennial Movement**, in which **Piet Oudolf** is a leading figure. Garden architecture in the Netherlands at the beginning of the 21st -century has shown a continuing

trend towards geometric layouts in connection with the restoration of historic gardens--on the one hand, and an alternative, natural approach, focused on different plantings requiring limited maintenance, to accommodate the increasing need for expansive urban green spaces.

[Based in part on "Gids voor de Nederlandse Tuin-en Landschapsarchitectuur," Carla Oldenburger-Ebbers, *The New Royal Horticultural Society Dictionary of Gardening*. London : Macmillan, 1992].