

## Tulips in Bloom

Spring is just around the corner. After winter's hibernating effect, spring comes as a welcome change. The atmosphere fills with the freshness of flowers. It is the time to plant varieties of flowers, shrubs and bushes. Springtime is also Tulip Time!

Tulips come in a rainbow of colours, shapes and flower forms. Tulips bloom in March through May. But the fall is the tulip planting season, you can buy tulip bulbs in the fall and plant them before a hard frost is expected. It varies depending in which part of the world you are living. Tulips are perennial and you do not have to plant every year. Tulips are brightly colored, upright flowers, and vary in shapes from simple cups, bowls and to more complex forms. Tulips look excellent in beds and borders. You can plant one variety in a bed or can mix varieties of tulips in a bed.



Garden tulips bloom in pink, white, orange, purple, yellow and many other colours. Tulips also come in different shades and names. Negrita, Prinses Irene, Sweetheart, Zurel, Unicum, Black Parrot, Burning Heart, Big Smile, Burgundy Lace and many other varieties of tulips blossom every spring. I was amazed by the Sea of colours in the Terrace of Duke Gardens.

When are the tulips to bloom in 2017? It all depends on the temperature and the rain during winter and springtime. There are festivals, tours, parade and shows arranged by different garden societies. If you have planted bulbs in the fall, tulips will blossom in a few weeks' time.

Holland even has a National Tulip Day. <http://tulipsinholland.com/>

The pictures were taken when "Tulips are in bloom" in the Terrace of Duke Gardens at Duke University, located at Raleigh, North Carolina, USA.

**By Aeman T Rasul**  
Photographs taken by Aeman T Rasul



### TECH

## THE PERFECT HEADPHONE

Never has there been another electronic device more suitable to isolate you into your own world than the headphone. Trying to write down the merits of the headphone will require quite a hefty number of papers, but ones like enjoying a concert on your without bugging your neighbours is definitely up there. Also, drowning out someone or something annoying has never been easier. Sure, anything in excess is bad too, but that can be stowed for another time, as this article is to celebrate all that is great with it.

Headphones have a lot of intricacies that one needs to know about if they wish to invest in a good pair.

First off, the name itself implies just one section of the personal audio gear. Headphones usually refer to the big over-ear variants, while earphones refer to the small units that sit on the ear, and in-ears are, as the name suggests, small units that go inside the ear canal.

Second, quite obvious too, not all are created equally. Each headphone has its different characteristics and specifications that you need to be aware of.

There are those who prefer low-end punch to their tunes, while some prefer the clarity of the vocals, and then some who prefer the absolute balance in audio.

Another thing to consider is the price. While enthusiasts would not mind shelling out top taka for a quality pair, the average consumer will struggle to spend anything more than a few thousand.

Other things to keep in consideration are the connectivity they wish for e.g. wired, Bluetooth, USB based, etc. One last thing to keep in mind is the device source and music file-type, because your headphone, regardless of how much it costs,

cannot turn rubbish quality sound files and device output into classic concert quality by magic. If you want best performance, your device and files have to be up to the standard too.

A small word of warning to buyers; be wary of the Hi-Res stickers you will inevitably find in your search for the perfect pair of headphones. Nine out of ten of these stickers are simply false advertising. A headphone is truly Hi-Res certified if it can produce a bandwidth of 40kHz and above, and this can be found out by looking at the frequency response listed



in the package specifications.

With all that out of the way, here are Star Lifestyle's top picks for headphones across the spectrum.

### BUDGET BUDDIES

#### Xiaomi Piston Series (Tk 3,000)

They have recently taken the market by storm with their budget friendly yet Hi-Fi quality in-ears. The latest in the series is the Iron Ring Pro, which boasts three individual drivers to deliver pitch perfect sound quality.

#### Microlab T1 (Tk 3,500)

The speakers they produce are already getting the right kind of attention in the market, and now they are pushing their

advantage in the headphone game as well. These over-the-ears produce a fantastically balanced sound and come in various colours. They feature all three connectivity types; 3.5mm wired, Bluetooth, and USB, making them a fantastic bargain.

#### Sony MDR-ZX110NC (Tk 4,000)

For the brand conscious, this one offers much of the quality that Sony is famous for without breaking your wallet. With the inclusion of Active Noise Cancelling, this makes a great choice for the budget shopper.

### FOR THE LOVE OF SOUND

#### Shure SE215 (Tk 8,000)

The reputed German brand's budget entry in-ear is enough to wipe the floor with anything that comes near, or even above its price range.

#### Sennheiser Momentum In-Ears (Tk 9,000)

When it comes to personal audio, this company can be considered one of the godfathers. Their latest Momentum in-ears come with crazy good audio and a design that warrants a place in a gallery.

#### Sony MDR-100AAP (Tk 13,000)

Sony's new range of Hi-Res certified headphones have been designed with chronic head-turning in mind, because these things look and feel as good as they sound.

#### Audio Technica ATH-M50X (Tk 16,000)

The go-to choice for people who work in studios across the globe, these things sound otherworldly for their price. To make sure it becomes popular, the folks at AT had it tuned for a slight emphasis on the lows so that it sounds lively.

**By Intisab Shahriyar**