



Tulips & Tots on Two Wheels - Regular Route

There are lots of family-friendly activities planned at Tulip Festival and bikes are a great way to get between these. The main spots for families are at Lansdowne and Commissioner's Park but we're suggesting a few other stops to keep the young ones (or just the young at heart!) entertained and happy.

This route is about 15km for the whole round, which might be a bit long for our littlest bike buddies, but you

can do any portion of it on its own.

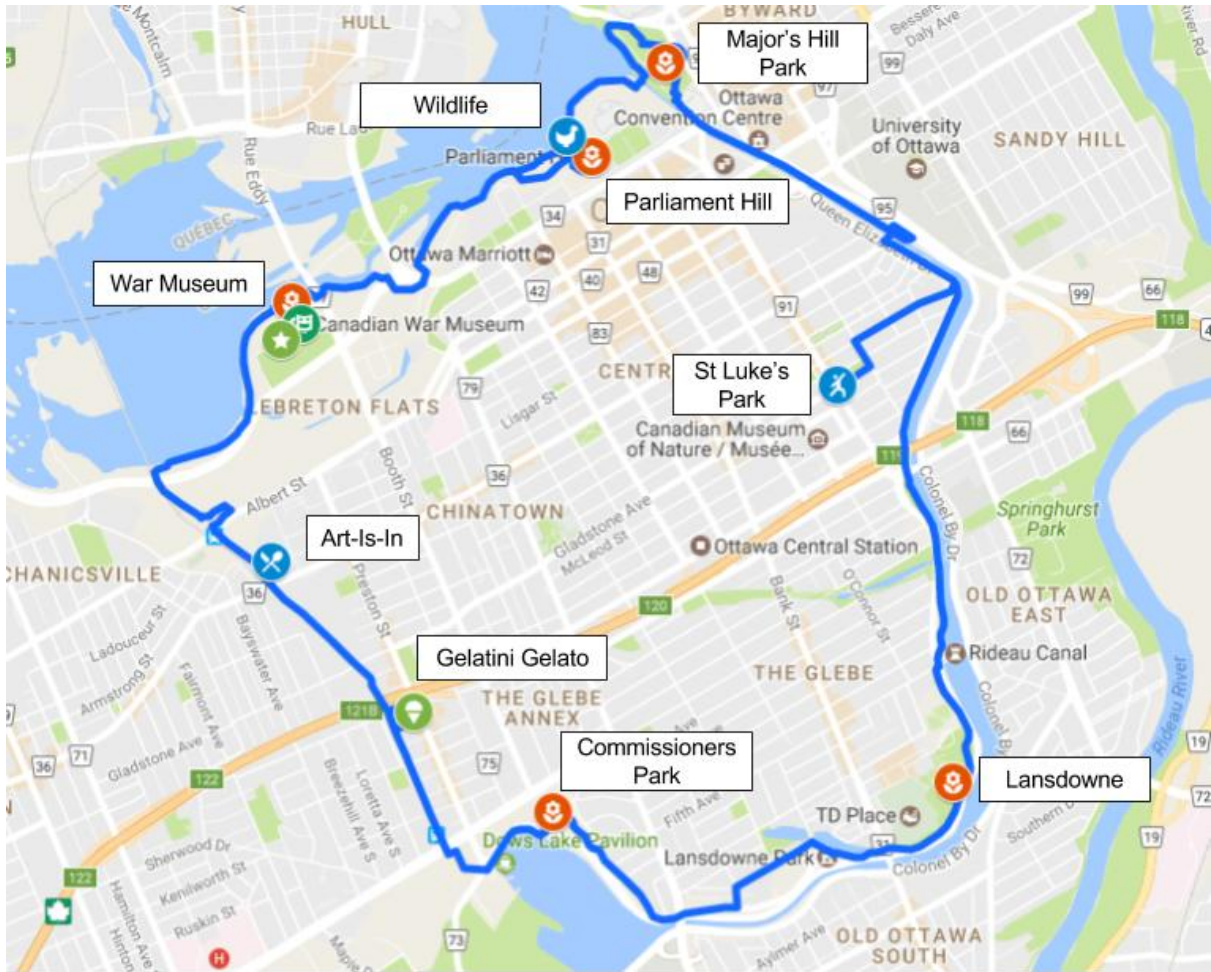
Experience Level: This tour is designed to get you around on car-free pathways and low-traffic streets, so are great for people of all ages with all kinds of experience levels riding bikes.

This route is intended both for families with kids on bikes or in bike seats and for families with kids in trailers. At one point, part of it isn't accessible to trailers and or you may prefer to avoid it if you've got your hands full with young kids, so we've given an alternative option for accessing that part of the tour or you can just skip it altogether.

Tips are provided for dealing with hills (which we avoid in our routes as much as possible!) and bike parking options.

Starting point: You can start from any point in the route, but it's easiest to go in a clockwise direction given the cycling facilities.

We're listing the routes from one start point, but are including information to complete the loop at the bottom of the tour. If you're using OC Transpo's rack and roll to get your bike in, Bayview is a great stop to disembark from if you're coming along the transitway, since it connects nicely to the Trillium Pathway.



Tulips - Commissioners Park

Commissioners Park is the traditional centre of activity for Tulip Festival and is one of the main free access areas. Stop here to see over 250,000 tulips - including the 150th anniversary tulip and for live musical entertainment and artists working among the tulips.

The best place to lock your bike is near to the Dow's Lake Pavilion or to the railing along the Rideau Canal on the water side of the section with the wooden promenade (out of the way of pathway users)

Tots - Gelatini Gelato (344 Preston St) or Art-Is-In Bakery (250 City Centre Ave #112)

Cross the street at Preston and then cut diagonally through the parking lot kitty corner to the Dow's Lake Pavillion until you meet the gravel path along the O-Train Corridor, then turn right. Follow this to Carling and cross at the dedicated bike signal to access the Trillium (O-Train) Pathway. Then follow one of the two directions below for your stop.

Gelatini Gelato - Who doesn't like a stop for ice cream?! Continue along until Young Street (just before you go under the 417), then turn right and go to the corner near Preston to lock your bikes. Turn and walk right (on the same side of the street) to meet with Gelatini Gelato.

Art-is-in (7am to 4pm) is a great place for brunch or sandwich on what is usually said to be the best bread in town. It's at City Centre and is easily accessed from the Trillium pathway - just continue on the pathway until you pass under Somerset Street, then turn right into the parking lot before passing the City Centre building and turn left to head to Art-is-in. There's bike parking out front and to get back on the route just retrace your steps.

Tulips - Canadian War Museum

Those who use the Ottawa River Pathway as part of their regular route to get around town will be familiar with the beautiful "secret garden" of tulip beds that flank the pathway on the river side of the Canadian War Museum near Booth Street. After your gelato, continue north along the Trillium Pathway to where it meets the Ottawa River Pathway and turn right to continue to the War Museum. If you want to lock your bike, the War Museum has parking near their back cafe.

Tots - Canadian War Museum

The Canadian War Museum is also a great place to stop for a snack in the cafe or to check out the museum itself (free on Thursday evenings from 5-8). The kids might also get a kick out of walking up the ramp onto the "roof" of the museum (accessed from the corner of the building furthest way from Booth Street).

Tulips - Parliament Hill

Continue toward Parliament Hill on the pathway, passing under the Portage Bridge via the two tunnels and continue toward Parliament Hill along the Ottawa River Pathway. At the Bank Street sign (just past the small tunnel and bridge over the little creek), turn right to go up to Parliament Hill.

Note that this is a pretty big hill to climb and this tour has you go back down the hill. You can optionally ride up the hill to meet with the Bank Street corner of Parliament Hill if you're feeling energetic (you can do it!), walk your bike up the hill for the rush of riding back down it (there's no shame in that!) or lock your bike up to a pole and walk up the stairs. There are bike racks at the side of Parliament Hill or you can bring your bike with you while you look at the tulips. Either way, this is one of the most impressive venues of the Tulip Festival, photo-wise.

Tots - Wildlife along the Ottawa River

Tulip season is also duckling and gosling season! Check out the little guys' progress through life with their parents along the river pathway here - there's usually lots to see! After Parliament Hill, head on back down the hill and turn right once you meet the pathway again.

Tulips - Major's Hill Park

Non-trailer/over-locks route - Ride toward where the River Pathway meets the Canal Pathway at the Rideau Canal Ottawa Locks, just below the Bytown Museum (a great stop to learn about the city and to get a coffee or popsicle). Cross the locks at the second set of locks from the bottom (these are wider than the lowest and easier to get your bike across!) and then turn left to go up the hill to access Major's Hill (this time bring your bike with you whether you are riding or walking). At the top of the hill, turn right to go into Major's Hill Park. This is another venue with an impressive backdrop (Parliament Hill!) for photos.

With trailer/locks avoiding route - Continue up the hill alongside the locks and the Bytown Museum to the top of the hill and lock your bikes up at the rack near the stone staircase (before going under the tunnel/underpass section) and go up the staircase and turn left at the top and follow the sidewalk to just before the Chateau Laurier, then turn left to go to Major's Hill Park along the promenade. Once you're finished, head back to your bikes.

Tots - St Luke's Park Playground

Time to burn off some energy at the playground! St Luke's Park at Gladstone and Elgin has a great fenced-off playground for kids to climb on.

From non-trailer route - Continue toward the Chateau Laurier on the pathways that cut through Major's Hill Park and take the ramp on the canal side of the hotel down and along the promenade, then enter the access ramp through the bike rental stand (dismount your bike here - there are stairs!), then use the wheel ramp to go down the stairs (hold your brake while you decline - it'll slow your bike down!), then get back on your bike and you're on the Rideau Canal Eastern Pathway. Continue to the Corktown Footbridge (at Somerset) and cross the bridge, then turn left to continue along the Canal pathway. Turn off the path at Waverly, then continue down Waverly to Cartier, turn left, then turn right down Gladstone (it's calm at this section and has a counterflow lane).

From trailer route - Head back to where you locked your bikes and continue south on the pathway to where it heads toward the National Arts Centre and take the detour route (there are small flights of stairs, unfortunately, so this will mean carrying the trailer), and continue along the Canal pathway. Turn off the path at Waverly, then continue down Waverly to Cartier, turn left, then turn right down Gladstone (it's calm at this section and has a counterflow lane). The playground is on your right.

Tulips & Tots - Lansdowne Tulip Gallery

Get back on your ride and head back along Gladstone, Cartier and Waverly to the pathway. Turn right to go toward Lansdowne Park. Ride to the Canal Ritz and cross Queen Elizabeth Drive, then turn left to go along the pathway that runs along the other side of the Drive, then turn right to go in the back entrance of Lansdowne.

One of the main activation areas of the tulip festival is Lansdowne Park, where the Lansdowne Park Tulip Gallery will be. At Lansdowne there will be Floral exhibits and installations, international friendship activities and entertainment, tulip legacy plaza, tulip art celebrations, interactive family programming, 65th Anniversary Fireworks, Tulip Café, and much more. Much of this location is a paid area (\$15 for entry and free for children 12 and under), but you can probably also scope the tulips from outside of the paid area.

There is also a great play structure for kids at Lansdowne, so if they still have some energy to spare, set them loose!

Tulips (Loop) - To connect with the beginning of the tour as it's listed here, head back down 5th avenue to the Canal Pathway and turn right to ride along the pathway to Dow's Lake Pavillion. Commissioners Park is across the street.