

# THE FLOWER FESTIVAL - BRUSSELS CELEBRATES ITS BEGONIA



For nearly four decades, Brussels has been celebrating its favorite flower - begonia. This year, on 12th - 15th August, the city will once again present its blooming wonder - the begonia Flower Carpet.

Since 1971, Brussels has hosted a very colorful and energizing festival to celebrate Belgium's most favorite flower - begonia. **Every two years, a stunning carpet of flowers is created here, each time honoring a different theme, which attracts considerable tourist attention.** Naturally, the artistic talent of local horticulturists is complemented by other performances and events, creating a fantastic festival.

Officially, the tradition of laying the Floral Carpet started in 1971 on the Grand-Place in Brussels, however, there were many such carpets created before all over Belgium. The tradition was perfected by a floral architect, E. Stautemans. He adored begonias as he believed they were perfect - came in a variety of colors and shades, were easy to work with and lasted long. His reputation spread and invitations poured in. Mr. Stautemans presented his floral creations all over Belgium, as well as Cologne, Hamburg, Paris, London, Amsterdam, or even Buenos Aires.

The themes and plans for this year's carpet have been under consideration for nearly a year. The preparations start with scale models and careful development. The amount of flowers used is astonishing. **Each square meter comprises of circa 300 individual flowers, creating an astonishing carpet of 700,000 flowers.**

The begonias will not be put in soil; they are to be packed tightly together to not succumb to wind. These fascinating flowers can create a micro-climate which will help them last. Under these conditions, the grass will grow up to 4-5 cm in the few days of the festival. Multiple light and music shows will accompany the Flower Festival this year, drawing thousands of admirers to the wonderful blooming Brussels.

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