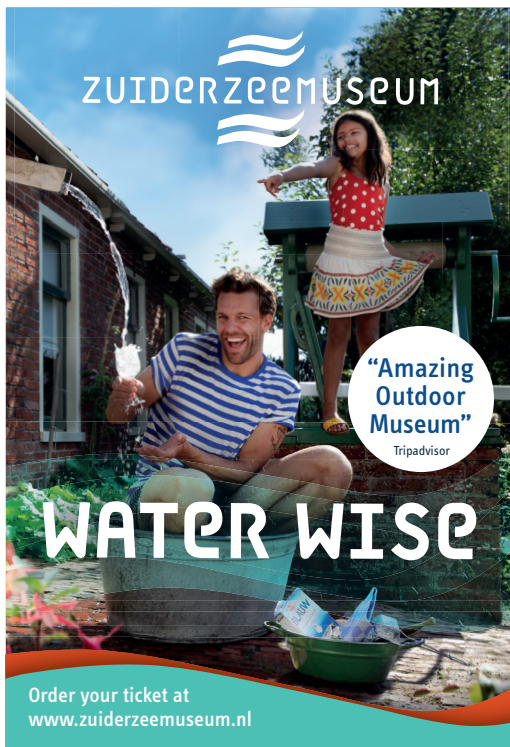


Amsterdam Area Guide

I amsterdam.

Authentic Haarlem ■ Amsterdam Beach
Flowers of Amsterdam ■ Castles & Gardens
New Land ■ Old Holland

iamsterdam.com/area



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Amsterdam Centraal Station, IJ-side
www.iamsterdam.com/store

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Lush countryside, industrial heritage and quaint villages **30 minutes from Amsterdam**

DISCOVER THE AMSTERDAM AREA

To truly experience Amsterdam, be sure to head out beyond the city borders and explore the greater Amsterdam Area. In less than 30 minutes, you'll find excellent shopping cities such as Haarlem, golden sand and wild dunes at Amsterdam Beach and historic harbour towns in Old Holland. Visit the famous tulip fields around Keukenhof, the magical medieval Amsterdam Castle Muiderstot or the wild nature areas and cutting-edge architecture in New Land.

The Amsterdam Area is easy to explore by public transport, with most destinations being accessible by train or bus. Whether you have a half-day to explore or are looking for a full day trip, this guide highlights the best experiences to be had in the Amsterdam Area.

Find out more about the Amsterdam Area on:
iamsterdam.com/area

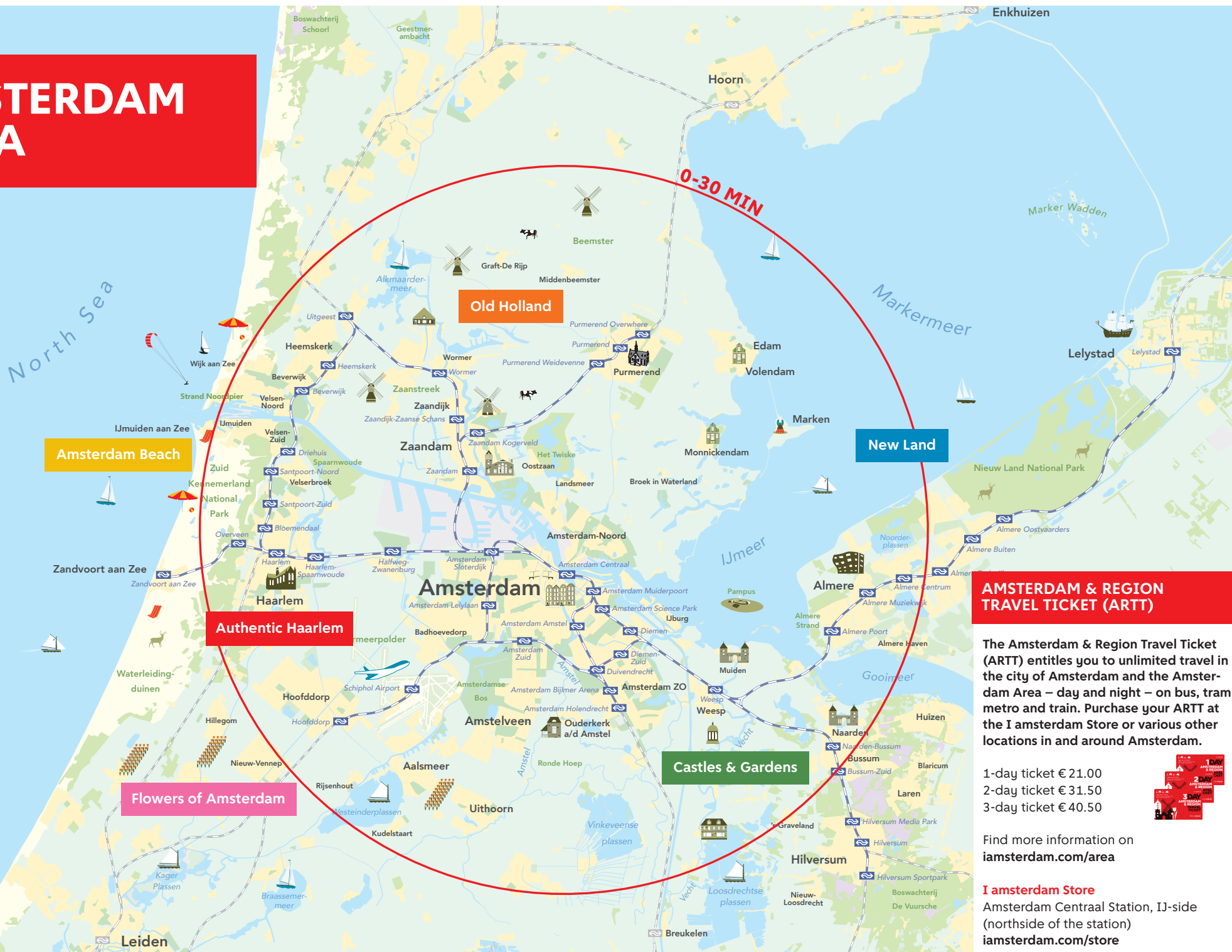
I AMSTERDAM CITY CARD

Your I amsterdam City Card gives you access to over 70 museums and top attractions in Amsterdam – along with various highlights in the surrounding area. Visit the iconic windmills at Zaanse Schans, climb the ramparts at Castle Muiderstot and discover Haarlem's world-class art museums. All for free – or with a significant discount! In addition, the City Card gives you unlimited access to public transport within the city of Amsterdam for 24, 48, 72, 96, or 120 hours!



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AMSTERDAM AREA



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2-day ticket € 31.50
3-day ticket € 40.50

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iamsterdam.com/area

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Amsterdam Centraal Station, IJ-side
(northside of the station)
iamsterdam.com/store



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Magnificent windmills, 17th-century art, fields of flowers and Dutch traditions await in the Amsterdam Area. Visit them all -- and save money -- by using the I amsterdam City Card.

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- ✓ Meet the Dutch Masters of 17th-century art at the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem
- ✓ Cycle through the Dutch countryside with an 24-hour bike rental included

Your I amsterdam City Card includes:

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- 🚢 **Free** canal cruise
- 🚗 **Free** citywide public transport
- 🚲 **Free** 24-hour bike rental
- 💰 **Discounts** for various attractions

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Teylers Museum
photo: Kees Hageman

NEXT STOP: HAARLEM



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AND INTERESTING MUSEUMS
ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER**
[VISITHAARLEM.COM](https://visithaarlem.com)

AUTHENTIC HAARLEM



photo Koen Smilde

HOW TO GET THERE

Haarlem

Start your journey at Amsterdam Centraal Station. Buy your Amsterdam & Region Travel Ticket at the I amsterdam Store (or a separate ticket inside the station).

- Direct train service from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Haarlem Station - 20 minutes.

Plan your journey on Google Maps or use the 9292 app.

For centuries, Haarlem has been a hub of art and culture: from works by master painter Frans Hals and historic architecture to modern galleries and quirky museums. There's something for everyone. Grab some retail therapy at the concept stores and vintage shops that line the Gouden Straatjes (Golden Streets). Explore the local craft ateliers or relax in the city's lush green areas. When the sun sets, head out for a lively evening at one of Haarlem's Michelin-starred restaurants, friendly cafés, world-class concert venues or cutting-edge theatres.

iamsterdam.com/haarlem

map
on page
12-13

ART & CULTURE

HOLY HISTORY

Haarlem is home to many great churches of varying architectural styles. The skyline of Haarlem's market square is dominated by the Gothic, cross-shaped Grote of St. Bavokerk. **1** Work on the church started in 1370, but the 78-metre tall spire wasn't completed until 1520. You can see the resemblance in style to the white stone steeple of the late-15th-century Bakenesserkerk located nearby. **2** By contrast, the Nieuwe Kerk – constructed between 1613 and 1616 by the Flemish city architect Lieven de Key – has distinctive Renaissance-style elements. **3**

MUSEUM VAN DE GEEST | DOLHUYDS

Voted European Museum of the Year 2022, Museum van de Geest (Museum of the Mind) is a former mental health institute and sick house now transformed into a fascinating museum. The exhibitions explore the mind and motivations of people who lived on the fringes of society, whether they wanted to or not. Discover works by thinkers



Frans Hals Museum
Haarlem Marketing

and scientists who dealt with disabilities or mental illness, including artists like Edvard Munch, best-known for painting 'The Scream', and Vincent van Gogh. Audio tours in English are available. **4**
museumvandegeest.nl

TEYLERS MUSEUM

A perfectly preserved world of the 18th-century Enlightenment awaits behind the heavy monumental doors of the oldest museum in the Netherlands. Visitors can rediscover the 'newest' scientific experiments of the time, including recently excavated fossils and drawings, and accounts of journeys of discovery. Wandering amongst the collection of authentic display cases is like leafing through an antique encyclopedia, allowing each object to tell its own story.

The free audio tour is highly recommended. You can also learn more about the museum's founder at the beautifully restored Pieter Teylers Huis. Explore this unique national monument, home to stately period rooms and lavish 18th-century interiors. **5**
teylersmuseum.nl

GROTE MARKT

Flanked by cafés and restaurants – plus plenty of historic buildings – Grote Markt, previously called 't Sant, is the original centre of Haarlem and is considered by many to be the most beautiful urban square in the country. In the 13th and 14th centuries, gallows loomed over 't Sant, jousting tournaments were held in the square, and traders pedalled their wares. The City Hall **6** (which also houses the Tourist Information Centre) stands on the spot of the Counts of Holland hunting lodge. The wooden building was almost entirely destroyed by a fire in the 14th-century but was rebuilt in a flamboyant style. Opposite the City Hall on Grote Markt looms the Gothic Grote of St. Bavokerk, whose 78-metre steeple has dominated Haarlem's skyline for centuries. Built between 1370 and 1520, the church is UNESCO-protected and contains beautiful Renaissance artworks. Famous



Grote Markt (Main Square) with Grote of St. Bavokerk
photo Marie Charlotte Peze

painters Frans Hals and Pieter Saenredam are buried here, and the renowned Müller organ – one of the finest in the world, standing 30 metres high with about 5,000 pipes – was once played by Mozart at the age of ten. **1**
bavo.nl

FRANS HALS MUSEUM

A must-see for anyone interested in the Dutch Masters, the Frans Hals Museum celebrates Haarlem's most famous native. It is Haarlem's museum of fine art, home to the world's biggest collection of Frans Hals paintings, alongside works by famous Haarlem artists. The jewel in the crown is Hals' group portraits of the civic guards. Thanks to his loose brush technique and their exceptionally lively composition, these works are truly a feast for the eye. Discover the Frans Hals Museum at two historical locations in Haarlem's old city centre: Frans Hals Museum Groot Heiligland **7** and HAL **8**, just a seven-minute walk away which presents modern and contemporary art exhibitions. Across both locations, you'll find a stimulating mixture of Haarlem's 16th and 17th-century, modern and contemporary art.
franshalsmuseum.nl

VERWEY MUSEUM

Past meets present at Verwey Museum Haarlem, where the city's history takes centre stage in an engaging permanent exhibition. Several temporary exhibitions a year highlight Haarlem's historical or artistic heritage in a more comprehensive way. These are combined with lectures, guided tours, city tours and children's

workshops. Open seven days a week, Verwey Museum Haarlem is the ideal starting point to explore the city. **9**
verweymuseumhaarlem.nl

MOLEN DE ADRIAAN

In the heart of Haarlem, the Molen de Adriaan, originally built in 1778, is a windmill that sits along the river Spaarne on the foundations of the tower that once defended the city centre. When the windmill burned down in 1932, a central focal point of the city was lost. It took 70 years for local citizens to raise enough money to rebuild it. The view of old Haarlem from the platform above the river is not to be missed. **10**
molenadriaan.nl

KOEPELKATHEDRAAL

This unique cathedral is ranked amongst the top five most important churches in the world built between 1850 and 1950. Designed by Joseph Cuypers in a range of architectural styles, the building features 12 towers and a 65-meter-tall dome. Explore it fully with a guided tour or admire artefacts in the church's museum. **11**
koepelkathedraal.nl

DE FILMKOEPEL

This art-house cinema is housed in a national monument that was once, of all things, a prison. Constructed at the end of the 19th century, the design of this stunning building was based upon panopticon principles and features a mesmerising free-standing domed ceiling. Nowadays, De Filmkoepel is the place to catch beautiful arthouse films, the best of Hollywood and everything in between. **12**
filmkoepel.nl



DAY TRIP HAARLEM CULTURE

Half day

Haarlem is vibrant with history, architecture and an exciting cultural scene.

Make the most of your I amsterdam City Card by stuffing as much culture as possible into your Haarlem trip!

START at Amsterdam Centraal Station. Trains to Haarlem depart every 10 minutes (check the screens), and you're there in just 15!

MARVEL at the masterpieces of Haarlem's golden boy, 17th-century portrait painter Frans Hals. The Frans Hals Museum is located a 20-minute walk from Haarlem Station (Groot Heiligland 62). **7 8**

REFUEL with lunch or a cup of coffee at one of the many cafés and restaurants on the Grote Markt square in the city centre. **1**

DISCOVER the charmingly eccentric Teylers Museum (the Netherlands' first and oldest museum), which focuses on art, history and science (Spaarne 16). **5**

ROUND OFF your cultural day with a movie at De Filmkoepel. This arthouse cinema with its stunning domed ceiling is housed in a national monument that was once, of all things, a prison. **12**
filmkoepel.nl

OUT & ABOUT

LOCAL BREWERIES

Beer is definitely a religion for some, but former church-turned brewery Jopenkerk ¹³ takes it to extremes. Brewing Jopen craft beers onsite according to old recipes and modern innovations, the former Jacobskerk has been beautifully restored – with vaulted ceilings and stained glass intact – and also houses a grand café and restaurant. Hidden amongst the city's 17th-century brick interior is this nifty little 'Owly Bar'. The owners rolled up their sleeves and transformed 120 square metres of prime Haarlem real estate into the city's first uncompromised craft beer bar with a constant carousel of 30 draught beers and more than 120 bottles. A hoppy paradise with beer chilled differently according to type and origin. ¹⁴ jopenkerk.nl uiltjecraftbeer.com

PHIL HAARLEM

Located at the heart of old Haarlem, Phil is the city's finest concert hall and home to the perfectly preserved late Romantic Cavaillé-Coll organ. This striking 19th-century building features numerous galleries with high ceilings and state-of-the-art technical installations. The language-no-problem programme includes dance performances, pop concerts, classical music, and plays in English or without any speech. ¹⁵ philhaarlem.nl

HAARLEMMERHOUTPARK

Haarlemmerhout is the Netherlands' oldest green monument. Located on the south side of Haarlem, 'The



Wood', as it is popularly called, has an area of 60 acres complete with a deer park, petting zoo and tearoom and is host to excellent summer music festivals. Located on the edge of the park, Paviljoen Welgelegen has been the seat of the government of the province of North Holland since 1930. Built during the revolutionary year of 1789, it became a retreat for Napoleon and Wilhelmina of Prussia, the mother of King William I. During opening hours, you can visit inside with free entrance. ¹⁶

DE WAAG

The buildings along the River Spaarne, which winds its way through Haarlem, are some of the city's most impressive. Take De Waag (the Weigh House) dating from 1599, for example, where traders weighed cheese and butter. The Renaissance-style building has two virtually identical stone façades and characteristic round-arched and cross windows. Settle down at the riverside café, Taverne de Waag, to admire what has been one of the most striking features of the Haarlem skyline for centuries. ¹⁷ tavernedewaag.nl

CANAL CRUISING

Discover Haarlem's beautiful city centre from a different perspective: the water. Cruise along the historic canals

and River Spaarne with an experienced skipper, leaving plenty of room for explanations about the history, art and important landmarks of the city. The various tour operators - including Smidtje Canal Cruises, Haarlem Canal Tours and Luxe Sloepen Haarlem - offer boats in different styles with a range of optional refreshments packages thrown in. visithaarlem.com ¹⁸

KLEINE HOUTSTRAAT

Part of the city's Gouden Straatjes (Golden Streets), Kleine Houtstraat boasts boutique shops, unique concept stores and enticing restaurants. And once you experience it for yourself, it'll come as no surprise to learn it's been voted 'Best Shopping Street of the Netherlands' – twice. ¹⁸ visithaarlem.com/en



TIP BIKE RENTAL

Explore the city, nearby beach and dunes at your own pace. Rent a Bike Haarlem has English- and German-speaking staff who will walk you through everything you need to know, or even guide you. ¹⁹ rentabikehaarlem.nl

A TASTE OF HAARLEM

CULINARY EVENTS

If you love to travel by your stomach, then Haarlem is the place to be this year. Annual food truck festival Rrrollend Haarlem rocks up at Lichtfabriek for a few days of exceptional streetfood in the summer (5-7 July) ²⁰. The city's annual culinary festival sees restaurants from Haarlem and the surrounding area serve up an array of delicious and affordable dishes against the backdrop of the Grote of St. Bavokerk on the city's Grote Markt square. As well as food from around the world and regional dishes made with local produce, visitors can also enjoy speciality beers and wines – and a whole range of live music (1-4 August). Elsewhere, Proefpark arrives the first weekend of September at Kenaupark, ²¹ where more than 30 food trucks and mobile kitchens descend upon this monumental green space. From wood-oven pizzas to pulled pork sandwiches or vegan fish 'n chips, tuck into cuisines from all continents with all dietary requirements catered for. The bar will be showcasing local beers, wines, soft drinks and kombuchas, as well as freshly prepared scroppinos. ²² (30 August-1 September). rrrollend.nl haarlemculinair.nl proefparkhaarlem.nl

DANÉ

Overlooking the Rivervismarkt – the square that once played host to the (river) fish market – is Restaurant Dané. Seafood unsurprisingly plays a big part on the menu, with halibut ceviche, the seasonal fish and

gravlax all making a welcome and delicious appearance. Tuck into one of these dishes while enjoying a glass of chilled white wine as you gaze through the floor-to-ceiling windows out to the bustle beyond. restaurantdane.nl



JACOBUS PIECK

For almost 30 years, Jacobus Pieck has been a welcome retreat for Haarlemmers on snug Warmoestraat. Home to a terrace and courtyard garden, as well as a flower-adorned exterior, Jacobus Pieck looks the part. Luckily the menu is just as good, with a low-key lunch centred on burgers, soups and salads, and a dinner service that allows guests to create a custom three-course meal from any of the dishes on offer. jacobuspieck.nl

NOLITA

With a striped red awning and a wooden exterior, Nolita Haarlem packs plenty of retro appeal as the city's local pizza parlour. One for the thin crust lovers, tuck into classics like anchovy and caper-heavy Neapolitana pizza or the herby goodness of a Finocchiona, topped with fennel salami and artichokes. And while pizza is the star here, the gnocchi starter with spinach, gorgonzola and walnuts is a big hit with guests. nolita.nl/haarlem



DAY TRIP BIKE TO THE BEACH

Full day

Haarlem is just a short bike ride from rolling white sand dunes, broad beaches and lively beach cafés.

START at Amsterdam Centraal Station and take the train to Haarlem (15 minutes). Head to Rent a Bike across the station square to arrange your wheels. ¹⁹

PEDAL along the winding River Spaarne, passing a picturesque restored windmill, the Molen de Adriaan. ¹⁰

FOLLOW Kampersingel and Raamsingel to marvel at the magnificent Koepel Kathedraal. ¹¹ Continue on through the dunes and to Zandvoort aan Zee.

STROLL along the beach, stopping at one of the inviting cafés. When you're done, return to Haarlem. Make sure to return your bicycle by 18:00 when Rent a Bike closes. ¹⁹

DINE Breton-style at Ti Bisou Crêpes Boutique, an ode to the homely atmosphere and food of France's northwestern region. Tuck into galettes – buckwheat pancakes – with eggs and farmer ham, and crêpes with stroop (Dutch syrup) or classic sugar and lemon for the traditionalists. tibisoucrepes.nl

LAST CALL (if you still have the energy) can be ordered at one of the cafés on Oude Groenmarkt.

MAP AUTHENTIC HAARLEM



Visitor Centres & Highlights

A Haarlem Tourist Information (VVV Haarlem)

- 1 Grote Markt & Grote of St. Bavokerk
- 2 Bakenesserkerk
- 3 Nieuwe Kerk
- 4 Museum van de Geest | Dolhuys
- 5 Teylers Museum
- 6 City Hall
- 7 Frans Hals Museum Groot Heiligland
- 8 Frans Hals Museum – HAL
- 9 Verwey Museum Haarlem
- 10 Molen de Adriaan
- 11 KoepelKathedraal
- 12 De Filmkoepel
- 13 Jopenkerk
- 14 Uiltje Craft Beer
- 15 PHIL Haarlem
- 16 Haarlemmerhout Park
- 17 De Waag
- 18 Smidje Canal Cruises
- 19 Haarlem Canal Tours
- 20 Luxe Sloepen Haarlem
- 21 Rent a Bike Haarlem
- 22 Restaurant DeDAKKAS
- 23 Proefpark
- 24 Rrrolend Haarlem
- 25 Haarlem Culinair
- 26 Restaurant Dané
- 27 Jacobus Pieck
- 28 Nolita Haarlem
- 29 Ti Bisou Crêpes Boutique
- 30 Kleine Houtstraat

TIP EASY-TO-USE CYCLE ROUTES

If you like what you see on these pages and fancy taking in more without the fuss of planning a route yourself, then let us guide you through the best the area has to offer. Simply download our easy-to-use digital routes and, phone in hand, follow us around the city. iamsterdam.com/cycleseeing

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AMSTERDAM BEACH



Zandvoort Beach photo Kyara Janssen

From wild parties to sweeping dunes and blissed-out beaches to blustery coastal paths, there's something for everyone at Amsterdam Beach, no matter what the season. Spring and autumn are great for sandy strolls or tranquil hikes, and catching a breath of fresh air (or as the Dutch like to call it: *uitwaaien*). Winter walkers embrace the coastal air as the bravest of the brave take a dip in the North Sea. Come summer, sun-lovers bask on the beautiful golden beaches of (among others) Zandvoort aan Zee and visit the hip cafés, restaurants and trendy beach clubs. Alternatively, IJmuiden is characterised by its raw beauty – from the rugged beach to the industrial port, with its formidable harbours and an enormous lock system – and the North Sea wind makes this spot a haven for wind and watersports fans.

iamsterdam.com/beach

map
on page
20-21

HOW TO GET THERE

Zandvoort

- Direct train service from Amsterdam Centraal to Zandvoort aan Zee - 30 minutes.

IJmuiden

- Take bus 382 from Amsterdam Sloterdijk Station to IJmuiden aan Zee - 45 minutes.

Heemskerk

- Train service from Amsterdam Centraal to Heemskerk - 35 minutes.

National Park Zuid-Kennemerland

- Train service from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Overveen station - 25 minutes. From there it's just a short walk to the Visitors Centre.
- National Park South Kennemerland can also be visited from station Santpoort Noord. The entrance is a 10-minute walk away.

Plan your journey on Google Maps or use the 9292 app.

COASTAL ADVENTURES

ZANDVOORT BEACH

Visit the charming town of Zandvoort for a seaside stroll or to hop from one sunny beachside terrace to the next. Enjoy the exceptionally wide sandy beach and the amazing views from the beautiful promenade that extends for several kilometres north and south of town. Zandvoort is one of the Netherlands' oldest beach resorts, with the first bathhouse put into use back in 1829. This was the start of the development of a luxury bathing resort frequented by many people of renown – including Empress Elisabeth of Austria – and it remains one of the region's most popular beaches. Come on a cloudy day to take in the peaceful stretches of sand or see Zandvoort in full swing during one of the many themed events hosted here year-round. ¹ visitzandvoort.com

DUTCH GRAND PRIX 22-25 AUGUST 2024

Thrill-seekers have the chance to feel like Max Verstappen all year round at Circuit Zandvoort, a motorsports racetrack hidden among the dunes. Hop in a Lamborghini, Aston Martin or McLaren and test your driving skills, while the younger ones can practice in a go-kart. Then in August, the Netherlands gets set for the annual Formula 1 Heineken Dutch Grand Prix 2024, which hits the tarmac in Zandvoort. Make your way down to the coast for an unmissable weekend of high-speed manoeuvres and screaming engines. ² circuitzandvoort.nl

Blokarting at IJmuiden beach
photo Creative bros



WIND AND WATER SPORTS

With a complete range of water sports on offer, the wide sandy beaches at IJmuiden, Wijk aan Zee, Zandvoort and Bloemendaal are the ideal place for thrill-seekers to get their fix! The Netherlands has a big surfing and windsurfing scene and you'll find plenty of schools and rental options along the coastline. Or, for some proper adventure, test out your paddle power on a thrilling sea kayaking adventure through the choppy waves. Other sports available include sea rafting, kitesurfing (a spectacular version of windsurfing that allows for very high jumps and incredible manoeuvres) and stand up paddleboarding. And, if you're not into getting wet, there are still plenty of ways to get your heart pumping at the beach. Try blokarting, a unique wind-powered go-kart that lets you zoom along the coast very fast – no rules, no jams, no oncoming traffic.

DRINKS WITH A VIEW

Zandvoort's dozens of beach clubs, restaurants and pavilions offer the perfect place to relax, with wind-screened terraces and delicious food and drink options. May we suggest a luxurious sunset cocktail at

Mango's Beachbar? ³ Choose between views of the rolling dunes or the crashing waves. mangosbeachbar.nl

PRIDE AT THE BEACH 28-30 JULY 2024

Rain or shine, it's time to break out the beachwear as Pride Amsterdam heads to the beach at Zandvoort aan Zee. This annual celebration of LGBTQI+ pride and diversity has a sun-soaked twist, encompassing a colourful parade and a variety of events, games and parties at the local beach bars. ¹ visitzandvoort.com/calendar

EXPERIENCE WILDLIFE

If you're looking for more peace and quiet, Zandvoort offers access to two large nature parks (see page 19), which guarantee the chance to spot Konik horses, fallow deer, Scottish Highland cattle and the impressive bison all year round. Every October, the famous sand dunes fill with the calls of male deer, noisily hunting for a mate. This must-see sight (and unforgettable sound) is also a great excuse to visit the town centre, beach and racetrack – all hosting their own activities to help Zandvoort go 'wild'. ¹¹ visitzandvoort.com/calendar

RUGGED BEACHES

ESCAPE TO THE SEA IN IJMUIDEN

The wild beach at IJmuiden is the perfect location for a stroll on the sand or a frolic in the waves. The fresh gusts of wind coming in from the North Sea ensure that IJmuiden is a haven for sports like kitesurfing and flyboarding. Or, take a walk to the end of the long pier to marvel at Zeeluis IJmuiden – Europe's largest lock complex. To try your hand at fishing, head to the colourful port, home to many fishing boats. Feeling hungry? Enjoy some fresh fish straight off the boats at the harbour's many excellent restaurants. ⁴

ijmuidenaanzee.nl

EXPERIENCE HISTORY

IJmuiden is seaside beauty at its rawest. Behind the beach, the wide, bunker-studded dunes – great for cycling through – frame the sea, on which there is always an enormous ship disappearing over the horizon. The Bunker Museum ⁵ is housed in five fascinating German bunkers from the Second World War. Take a walking tour here to learn more about the battles of decades past. At the mouth of the North Sea Canal is Forteiland IJmuiden ⁶, an impressive fortress dating from 1880. This former military defence offers plenty of history, adventure and relaxation, and is part of the Defence Line of Amsterdam, a unique UNESCO World Heritage Site. Open every first Sunday of the month from March to November. bunkermuseum.nl ijmuidenaanzee.nl

HARBOUR FESTIVAL 22-23 JUNE 2024

The annual IJmuiden Harbour Festival returns in 2024 and will take place on Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June. For two days, the Trawlerkade will be completely dedicated to art and culture, fishing, offshore industry and the ports. havenfestivalijmuiden.nl

HEEMSKERK

Only 35 minutes away by train or car, Heemskerk is the North Sea coastline's best-kept secret. Sandwiched between the dunes and the sea, this historic town is known for its monuments, churches and castles, surrounded by lush green parks. The town centre is bustling with shoppers exploring the speciality boutiques, cosy cafés and restaurants. There is also an extensive market on Fridays for fresh groceries and regional delicacies. For centuries, this area's primary industry was farming, but from the 19th-century onwards, a strong tradition of flower bulb and strawberry cultivation emerged. In any season, you can explore the region's horticultural history, by hiring bike to explore the various cycling paths traversing the countryside. Or anyone looking for a coastal adventure, can take an easy 20-minute cycle towards the beach, passing through stunning dunes and forested areas dotted with grazing sheep and Scottish highlanders. The family-friendly beach is equipped with all conveniences including beach chairs, parasols and rentable windbreaks, with refreshments available from the beach pavilion. Be sure to check the link below for lots of other things to do in Heemskerk. ⁷ heemskerkezevantijd.nl

CHATEAU MARQUETTE & SLOT ASSUMBURG

The Heemskerk area was once the home turf of various noble families in Noord-Holland with no less than nine castles dotted around the region. Nowadays, two castles preserving this antiquity remain open to the public. Surrounded by its very own moat, the enchanting Chateau Marquette ⁸ offers fine dining and a memorable overnight stay. Meanwhile budget-conscious guests will feel like royalty – without paying the royal fee – at Slot Assumburg ⁹, a one-of-a-kind hostel. This impressive castle boasts an array of fantastical turrets and towers, rich medieval style interiors and extensive rose gardens to explore. There are also history-themed guided tours and treasure hunts for the

little ones.

langoed-marquette.com
stayokay.com/nl/hostel/heemskerk

SPORTS & RECREATION

On the edge of Heemskerk, in the middle of some stunning natural scenery, lies the Heemskerk Golf Club which boasts a beautiful 27-hole course. For other sports, just visit the sports boulevard with its gym, swimming pool, sauna and riding school. Here you can also play a few rounds of squash, tennis, volleyball or badminton. heemskerksegolfclub.nl ¹⁰

NATURE & DUNES

EXCITING BEACHES

Noordpier beach at IJmuiden is particularly popular for kitesurfing, due to the exceptional wind and wave flow caused by the pier. There's a surfing centre right on the beach where you can learn the basics, as well as rent wetsuits and gear, and while you probably won't master kitesurfing in a single day, it's all the more reason to come back. IJmuiden aan Zee beach is also great for active water sports and racing kite buggies across the sand. The quieter IJmuiderslag beach is a fantastic spot for Nordic walkers, nature lovers and dog walkers. Again, this beach is also perfect for wind and water sports. ¹¹

NATURE AREAS

This rugged stretch of coastline is the home to the spectacular nature reserves of The Zuid-Kennemerland National Park and the Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen. These protected areas provide a habitat for over 100



different species of birds, deer, rabbits, foxes and large grazers such as Highland cattle and European bison. There are various marked footpaths through beautiful valleys, lakes and magnificent viewpoints and the visitor centres offer bike rentals, maps, cycling routes and information on the landscape and history of the area. ¹² np-zuidkennemerland.nl

AMSTERDAMSE WATERLEIDINGDUINEN

South of Zuid-Kennemerland National Park lies another extraordinary nature reserve, the Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen (water pipe dunes), an area which supplies drinking water to the residents of Amsterdam. It's an excellent place for a walk, run or hike, but bicycles aren't allowed in – helping to protect the dune landscape. Instead, a dedicated cycle path connects the park to the coastline. It's not uncommon to see grazing deer and wild foxes romping through the

underbrush. ¹³ visitzandvoort.com

MANORS IN THE DUNES

The Dutch dunes are full of beautifully preserved historical manorial estates, open to the public for fine or brasserie-style dining and overnight stays. Duin & Kruidberg Country Estate, dating from 1682, offers 75 luxury hotel rooms within the Zuid-Kennemerland National Park. Beekestijn ¹⁴, meanwhile, is an 18th-century estate created from an older property as a summer residence for a wealthy Amsterdam regent, whose gardens are an outdoor museum. ¹⁵ duin-kruidberg.nl buitenplaatsbeekestijn.nl



TIP ROUTES




Bike rental and walking/cycling routes are available at regional Tourist Information Centres (VVV).

MAP AMSTERDAM BEACH

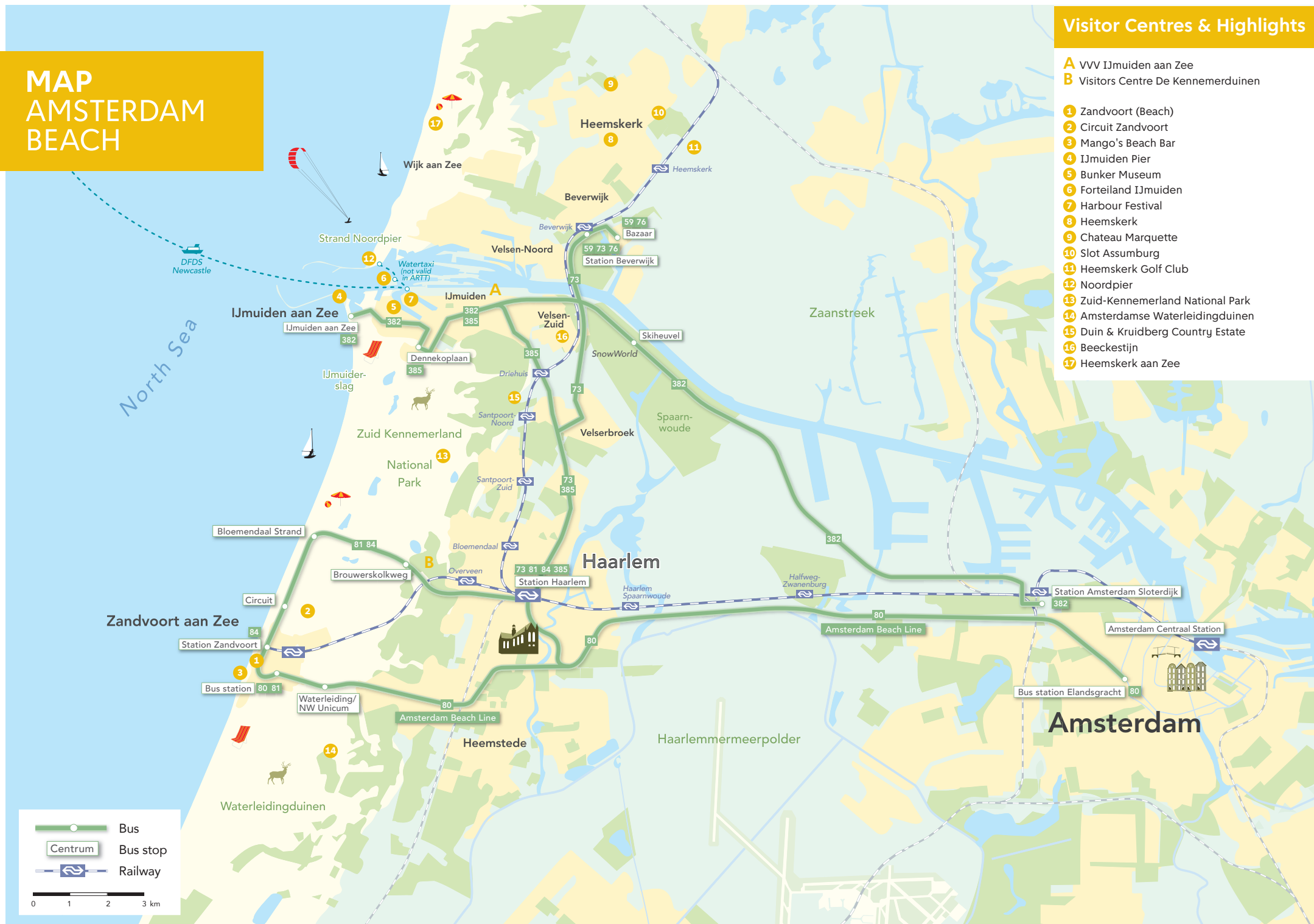
Visitor Centres & Highlights

- A** VVV IJmuiden aan Zee
- B** Visitors Centre De Kennemerduinen

- 1 Zandvoort (Beach)
- 2 Circuit Zandvoort
- 3 Mango's Beach Bar
- 4 IJmuiden Pier
- 5 Bunker Museum
- 6 Forteiland IJmuiden
- 7 Harbour Festival
- 8 Heemskerk
- 9 Chateau Marquette
- 10 Slot Assumburg
- 11 Heemskerk Golf Club
- 12 Noordpier
- 13 Zuid-Kennemerland National Park
- 14 Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen
- 15 Duin & Kruidberg Country Estate
- 16 Beeckestijn
- 17 Heemskerk aan Zee

-  Bus
-  Centrum Bus stop
-  Railway

0 1 2 3 km



FLOWERS OF AMSTERDAM



Keukenhof photo Laurens Lindhout

Every spring, the iconic Flower Strip attracts admirers worldwide as millions of eye-popping tulips burst into bloom. One of the biggest attractions is Keukenhof, the world's most extensive flower gardens, home to more bulb varieties than you could imagine. Bike or sail through kaleidoscopic flower fields, before taking in the excitement of the world's largest flower auction in Aalsmeer, or celebrating at local festivals and annual flower parades. Year-round, pay a visit to the various museums examining the region's horticultural history, garden estates or castles home to quaint tearooms. Elsewhere, the reclaimed polder landscape is dotted with charming villages like Lisse and Hillegom, fascinating forts and monuments which tell the story of the Dutch struggle against the water.

iamsterdam.com/flowers

HOW TO GET THERE

Keukenhof

- Take the Keukenhof Express Bus 852 from Amsterdam RAI Station to bus stop Keukenhof - 35 minutes

Stop by the I amsterdam Store at Amsterdam Centraal Station for tickets and information

Royal FloraHolland

- Take bus 357 from Amsterdam Elandsgracht bus station to bus stop FloraHolland - 55 minutes.

Cruquius Steam Pumping Station

- Train from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Haarlem. Transfer to bus 340, bus stop Cruquius, Ringvaartbrug - 45 minutes.

Plan your journey on Google Maps or use the 9292 app.

map
on page
28-29

THE NETHERLANDS IN BLOOM

BIKING THE BULB FIELDS

Cycling is by far the best option when you want to explore somewhere at your own pace. You can rent bikes from Rent-a-Bike van Dam at the main entrance of Keukenhof for €16 a day (€11 for three hours), including a cycle route map. There are four signposted and marked routes in total, ranging from 5 to 25 kilometres long, available in nine languages. Combine your flower bike tour with a trip to the beach with route number 3. ¹ rentabikevandam-keukenhof.com

RENZY ELECTRIC VEHICLE TOURS

Another unique way to explore the region is by hiring a 100% electric two-seater vehicle. Renzy's excursions take you around the colourful flower fields, featuring a GPS and an audio guide to tell you all about the destinations you're driving through. There's also a dedicated kids tour, which includes



Photo Cris Toala Olivares

two vehicles (one adult + child per Renzy) and a photo treasure hunt. If you find the numerical code, open the safe and collect a special prize on your return. ²

PICK YOUR OWN

Amsterdam's flower strip has been the top producer of unique flowers, particularly tulips, for centuries. Annemieke's Pluktuin (picking garden) ³, an organic tulip nursery in Hillegom offers visitors the chance to wander through the tulip fields and pick your own vibrant bunch to take home. Thanks to the fertile sandy soil in the region, you'll also find beautiful organic fruit farms such as Land-

goed de Olmenhorst (Olmenhorst Estate) ⁴. This green oasis of apple and pear orchards in the village of Lissebroek is over 160 years old. You can enjoy a stroll through the grounds or high tea on the terrace all year round. Or in Autumn, when the fruit is ripe, join one of the pick-your-own events. annemiekespluktuin.nl olmenhorst.nl

MUSEUM DE ZWARTE TULP

Located on the Dorpsplein 't Vierkant square in the centre of Lisse, Museum De Zwarte Tulp (Black Tulip Museum) tells the history of the Netherlands' bulb region as well as the origins and the development of bulb culture through an interactive exhibition for the whole family. There's also a significant collection of botanical prints alongside paintings, glass, silver and porcelain, and changing exhibitions of contemporary art. ⁵ museumdezwartetulp.nl

KEUKENHOF 21 MARCH-12 MAY 2024

Nowhere is the Dutch cult of the tulip celebrated in a more glorious fashion than at the 'the most beautiful spring garden in the world', located in the bulb region south of Amsterdam.



Keukenhof photo Koen Smilde

This annual spectacle is open for just eight weeks each year in accordance with the tulip's national flowering season. Keukenhof Gardens boasts a staggering seven million flowers planted across a 32-hectare park. Over 500 growers present their most beautiful blooms, and leading florists create truly unique displays with them. You can easily spend an entire day in the gardens, but the rest of Lisse and the surrounding bulb area is also well worth exploring. ⁶

KEUKENHOF CASTLE

It may be perpetually outshone by its showy neighbour Keukenhof Gardens, but this castle boasts an impressive history with 17th-century roots. Inside, you'll find portraits, artefacts and period furniture. The estate



now measures some 240 hectares and is home to 15 listed buildings, an art museum, café, petting farm and walking paths. For details of upcoming events and exhibitions, please check the website. ⁷

THE STYLE OUTLETS

The Style Outlets, offering almost 100 international and na-

tional brands like Nike, Adidas, G-Star Raw and Hunkemöller, is the ideal destination for a shopping break. Along with fashion, you'll find stores selling sporting goods, accessories and home furnishings, and various restaurants. The outlet is very easy to reach by public transport due to the nearby Halfweg train station. ⁸

VIEW THE TULIPS UP CLOSE!



RENZY.NL



WWW.RENTABIKEVANDAM-KEUKENHOF.COM

WORLD OF FLOWERS

ROYAL FLORAHOLLAND

Royal FloraHolland in Aalsmeer – just 15 kilometres outside of Amsterdam – is the world's biggest flower auction (a whopping 400 football fields' worth in size). It's so large that the workers get around the site by bike. Royal FloraHolland handles more than 21 million cut flowers and 2 million potted plants each day, mainly for export. The unusual sales method used gave rise to the phrase 'Dutch auction'. Dealers bid by pushing a button to stop a 'clock' that counts from 100 down to 1; meaning that the price is lowered – rather than raised – until a buyer is found. Bidders risk either paying too much for the goods or not getting them if someone else bids first. The best action is before 9:00 so you'll have to get up early to see it, but there are flowers stretching as far as the eye can see. The smell is divine, and with an (optional) knowledgeable, multilingual guide, you'll witness the auction process first-hand. Open weekdays 07:00-11:00;

Thursday until 09:00 (closed on public holidays). ⁹
royalfloraholland.com

FLOWER ART MUSEUM

The Flower Art Museum is the world's first museum entirely dedicated to floral-inspired contemporary art. Located in the former water cellar of Aalsmeer (opposite the water tower), this 1,000-m² museum organises exhibitions with renowned artists and challenging themes in which flowers and plants play the leading role. ¹⁰
flowerartmuseum.nl

AALSMEER HISTORICAL GARDENS

Explore the greenhouses of yesteryear, dotted with gardening tools from a bygone era. The Aalsmeer Historical Gardens are home to a vast selection of long-forgotten strains of plants and fruit varieties. Every last Saturday of the month, from April to September, the impressive auction house hosts a flower and plant auction. Afterwards, take a perch on the charming waterside terrace at the Tuinhuis cafe for sun-soaked refreshments. ¹¹
historischetuinaalsmeer.nl



Aalsmeer Flower Festival
Photo Joyce Goverde

AALSMEER FLOWER FESTIVAL 21-23 JUNE 2024

If you love flowers, don't miss the Aalsmeer Flower Festival, where colourful blooms are showcased in beautiful arrangements, surprising works of art and special locations. See designers at work and enjoy the exhibitions and live music, before rolling up your sleeves during a mini workshop. Locations include the horticultural museum, a rose nursery, a floral design school and a spectacular waterfront venue. Visitors can travel around by bus and boat, and there is also a bike tour available. ¹²
aalsmeerflowerfestival.nl

LISSE FLOWER VILLAGE

Every spring, visitors from around the world descend on the village of Lisse to visit the famous Keukenhof gardens and the blooming fields that surround it. But the town itself has more to offer than that! It's a charming spot to stroll, (window) shop and grab a tasty bite to eat. Need more time to take in an event or the theatre, cinema and Museum De Zwarte Tulp? Cosy up in one of the many charming hotels or B&Bs. When you're ready, leave town to set off on your own biking adventure around the breathtaking fields, lakes and dunes at your doorstep. ^A
vvvlisse.nl

Day trips to the most breathtaking destinations



Keukenhof



Countryside



Zaanse Schans



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www.hoponhopoffholland.com

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Save money, buy a Combi-ticket!

Departure Amsterdam RAI or Amsterdam City Center



Child € 17,50 Adult € 36,50



WATER & HISTORY

CRUQUIUS STEAM PUMPING STATION

Four metres below sea level, the municipality of Haarlemmermeer harbours a historic pumping station with the world's largest steam engine. In the middle of the 19th-century, the Cruquius steam engine was used to drain a lake in order to create new land. The only pumping station saved from demolition, Cruquius is now part of a fascinating museum. Learn about the Dutch struggle against water, marvel at a model of how the Netherlands would look without dykes, and experience a live steam engine demonstration. ¹³ haarlemmermeermuseum.nl

BOAT CRUISES

The Aalsmeer area is famous for its horticultural industry, and the small islands of the Westeinderplassen (Westeinder Lakes) still grow strawberries and lilacs – just as they did long ago. After exploring the greenhouses at the Aalsmeer Historical Gardens ¹⁴, book an organised boat tour by Westerinder Rondvaart from the neighbouring jetty. During this fascinating 1-hour cruise, a knowledgeable skipper will float you through a network of channels teeming with local plant and wildlife. Tours can be booked from May to October. ¹⁵ historischetuinaalsmeer.nl westeinderrondvaart.nl

WESTEINDER LAKES & WATER TOWER

The Westeinder Lakes offer plenty of watersports, from swimming to sailing lessons and boat rentals. Everyone is welcome to moor their boat at Starteiland. For stunning views

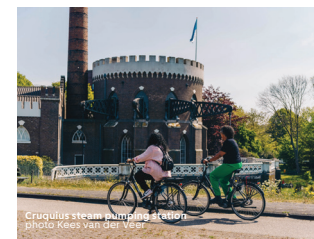
of the lake and surrounding region, climb to the top of the Aalsmeer Watertoren - an elaborately decorated Art Deco water tower stretching 50m. Alternatively, take a seat at On the Rock waterfront restaurant where the view and sunset are spectacular every season and especially lovely from the large waterfront terrace. ¹⁵ ontherock.nl aalsmeer-watertoren.nl

FORT VAN HOOFFDORP

This fortress island has undergone a large-scale renovation in recent years. With the re-designation, Fort van Hoofddorp has been transformed into a unique meeting place with space for hospitality, landscaping and cultural activities. Here you will find a restaurant, terraces, a wine bar, an open-air theatre and an education centre. ¹⁶ fortvanhoofddorp.nl

DE ZUILEN

De Zuilen is a beautiful garden estate in Hilegom that boasts 3,500 square metres of groomed, walkable grounds and courtyards filled with Roman and Greek statues, fountains and columns, from which the estate gets its name. From 1 April to 31 May, De Zuilen's gardens bloom with narcissus, hyacinths and tulips, the latter of which is cultivated by a tulip specialist from Lelystad. ¹⁶ de-zuilen.nl



DAY TRIP A BLOOMING LOVELY DAY

Half day

Get up early and head to the Royal FloraHolland flower auction before sailing across some of the Netherlands' most picturesque lakes and waterways.

START at Elandsgracht bus stop in Amsterdam. Take bus 357 to Aalsmeer and get off at stop FloraHolland (55 minutes). ⁸

TAKE IN the hustle and bustle of the auction floor, watch traders bid against the clock and be amazed at the amount of beautiful blooms traded daily from more than ten countries. Remember: the earlier you get there, the more you'll see.

JUMP ON bus 357 again (direction Aalsmeer) and get off at the Hortensiaaplein stop. Walk to Westerinder Rondvaart ¹² (20 minutes, westeinderrondvaart.nl), take a boat tour on the Aalsmeer lakes and marvel at the countless islands teeming with flora and fauna.

WALK around Aalsmeer and take in the numerous historical monuments before jumping on the bus 357 from Hortensiaaplein back to Amsterdam.

MAP FLOWERS OF AMSTERDAM



CASTLES & GARDENS



Amsterdam Castle Muiderslot
photo Frenk Volt

Home to many old castles, fortified towns and ruins, this picturesque fortress stretch – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – offers a fascinating glimpse into medieval times. And if water is more your thing, you'll find a number of lakes located just outside of Amsterdam. Perfect for a day of fun and exploration on – and in – the water, there's a wide range of options available when it comes to renting a sailboat, electric boat, canoe or surfboard. What's more, you can relax in the quiet, green and unspoiled back garden of Amsterdam and retrace the footsteps of the wealthy 17th-century merchants who escaped the city to their estates along the River Amstel and River Vecht. iamsterdam.com/castles

map
on page
36-37

HOW TO GET THERE

Amsterdam Castle Muiderslot & Fortress Island Pampus

- Direct train service from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Weesp station, transfer to bus stop Muiden, Centrum by bus 110 or rental bike - 45 minutes.

Naarden

- Take bus 209 from Amsterdam Bijlmer ArenA Station to bus stop Westwalstraat, Naarden – 40 minutes
- Train service from Amsterdam Central Station to Naarden-Bussem – 30 minutes, then take bus 110 to bus stop Naarden, Westwalstraat – 8 minutes (or walk – 25 minutes)

Hilversum, Huizen and Singer Laren Museum

- Train from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Hilversum, transfer to bus 108 or 109 to Laren - 50 minutes
- Take bus 320 from Amsterdam Amstel Station to bus stop Huizen, Crailo P+R - 30 minutes. From there, it's a scenic 20-minute walk to the museum

Amstelveen

- Tram 5 from Amsterdam Zuid Station to
- Amstelveen Stadshart – 20 minutes

FORTRESS STRETCH

WEEPS

Just 15 minutes by train from Amsterdam Centraal Station, the charming 700-year-old fortified town of Weesp is a honeycomb of cosy cafés, soaring church steeples and photogenic drawbridges. Its rich architecture includes the spectacular Ossenmarkt and Issenmeer forts, a stunning interwoven canal network, three historical windmills and the former town hall – a stately, neoclassical building which now houses the municipal museum. Don't miss Wispe Brouwerij - a unique brewery in a historic church, now converted into a stunning grand café. Between the copper kettles, the high ceilings and airy interiors make for a beautiful setting to enjoy home-brewed seasonal beers, Dutch snack platters and juicy burgers. ¹ visitgooiivecht.com/weesp/wispe.nl

THEETUIN NOTEN

Tucked away on an island and nestled behind Weesp's historical fort at Ossenmarkt, you'll find the idyllic Theetuin Noten. A former ammunition shed turned tea garden, the menu here is farm-to-table, meaning most of the produce is grown in the surrounding fields. Studded with gravel paths, leaf-covered archways, rounded bushes and pistachio cabins, this is the spot for dreamy afternoon teas. ² theetuin.nl

AMSTERDAM CASTLE MUIDERSLOT

Muiden is home to the grand Amsterdam Castle Muiderslot



Weesp
photo Koen Smilde

– built around 1285 – which looms over the mouth of the River Vecht. Take a tour through the impressive knight's hall, towers, dungeon and armoury or dress up like a real knight and try your hand at jousting. A great day of fun for the whole family. 1 April-31 October: open daily; 1 November-31 March: Tuesday–Sunday. ³ muiderslot.nl

FORTRESS ISLAND PAMPUS

Seen across the water, the small island of Pampus looks like any other island. But take a closer look and you'll see this is no natural landmass at all, but a submerged sea fort built in the 1890s to protect Amsterdam from its enemies. Visit Pampus by boat to explore the various secret tunnels, battlements and historical artefacts dotted around the island. The fortress was once part of the Defence Line of Amsterdam and makes for a fascinating day out for visitors of all ages. ⁴ pampus.nl

SUMMER LIGHTS ON PAMPUS

An artificial island fort, Pampus once served as part of Amsterdam's line of defence and as a port for traders. These days, however, it's a getaway for intrepid day trippers. Summer Lights on Pampus (19 July - 31

August 2024) capitalises on this, inviting visitors for a boat ride to the island (departing from sleepy Muiden or Amsterdam IJburg) followed by a delicious picnic dinner and sweeping sunset views across the water. For an optional sprinkle of summer magic and a memorable overnight stay on the island, end the night in one of the custom tents, complete with mattresses and linen. ⁵ pampus.nl

DEFENCE LINE OF AMSTERDAM

Both Muiden and Weesp are fantastic starting points for exploring Stelling van Amsterdam (the Defence Line of Amsterdam), a 135-kilometre



TIP ROUTES


Travel by boat from Amsterdam IJburg or Almere to Forteiland Pampus and Amsterdam Castle Muiderslot and get a 25% discount with your I amsterdam City Card. Ferries run Tuesday-Sunday, April-October from IJburg (take tram 26 from Amsterdam Centraal Station to the Pampuslaan stop). amsterdamtouristferry.com

ring of fortifications around the city that once protected it from invaders and now holds UNESCO World Heritage status. Special bike routes (in English) take you past the most beautiful highlights, among them Fortress Island Pampus ⁶, Fort aan de Ossenmarkt ⁷, Fort Uitermeer ref and Amsterdam Castle Muiderstot ⁸.

defencelineamsterdam.com

NAARDEN

Naarden is one of the most remarkable examples of a preserved fortified town. From the air, the town's unique layout resembles a gigantic snowflake, comprising six bastions, a double rampart and a double ring of canals. The history of Naarden is explained at the fascinating Dutch Fortress Museum, which features canons, weapons, uniforms and an audiovisual presentation. Experience how the soldiers protected Amsterdam and surroundings from enemies from the Far East, and explore the dark corners of the fortress, where the soldiers once fought, lived and slept. The interiors of Naarden's Grote Kerk are also well worth a visit, with impressive architectural details such as the famous barrel-vaulted ceiling and acoustics which make for spectacular classical concerts. Check the website for the full agenda. ⁹

visitgooivecht.nl/naarden  grotekerknaarden.nl



Singer Laren Museum



Muiden
photo Creativebros

MUIDEN

Besides Amsterdam Castle Muiderstot, the fortified town of Muiden offers a cosy harbour with historical flatboats and lovely terraces. Time seems to pass more slowly on the banks near the lock. For some of the best views, head over to Café Ome Ko. A former hangout for skippers and sailors, it's the oldest pub in town and has been pouring beer since 1810. It is said that even Napoleon Bonaparte visited once on horseback. ¹⁰

visitgooivecht.com/muiden

LEISURE LAKES

LOOSDRECHT LAKES

The Loosdrechtse Plassen (Loosdrecht Lakes) are perfect for water sports: sailing, rowing, canoeing, waterskiing and speedboating are all possible here. If taking a boat out yourself is not your thing, then join a sailboat or speedboat excursion, or just relax on a terrace and admire the view from dry land. Check the website for rental options. ¹¹

visitgooivecht.com

HUIZEN

Huizen – literally 'Houses' – was originally an agricultural village about two kilometres

from the sea. It later expanded to become a coastal town, boasting the IJsselmeer's most vibrant fishing industry. In recent years Huizen has developed into a modern village bordering the Gooimeer (Gooi Lake), with several marinas and a lively historic centre offering great shopping as well as the medieval Dutch Reformed Church. Built around the Oude Haven (Old Harbour) where you can still see beautiful flatboats, some of them over 100 years old, Huizen's Nautical Quarter includes a lovely hotel, restaurants and convivial cafés. ¹²

visitgooivecht.com/huizen

RIVER VECHT BY BOAT & BIKE

Why choose between land and water when exploring the lovely country estates of the River Vecht? De Fietsboot



TIP LEISURE LAKES

Connected by rivers, canals and small channels, the picturesque lakes just south of Amsterdam make for a perfect getaway. Rent a sailboat, electric boat, canoe or surfboard and explore, enjoy and relax. visitgooivecht.com

(the Bike Boat) lets you hop on and off and continue by bike as you please! There are three departure points on the Loosdrecht Lakes at Porseleinhaven, the Fuut and the Strook. ¹³

defietsboot.nl

WONDERFEEL FESTIVAL


Classic festival meets classical music in this three-day summertime music event on the stately grounds of nature reserve Schaeap en Burgh, between Hilversum and Naarden. Each tent caters to a different theme, with six centuries of musical history on show, from Mozart all the way up to classical jazz fusion. Catering to music lovers and families, Wonderfeel Festival (19-21 July 2024) is a special occasion embodying the region's grand

heart and heritage. ¹⁴

wonderfeel.nl

SINGER LAREN MUSEUM

At the end of the 19th century, the picture-perfect beauty of Laren attracted artists like Jozef Israëls, Anton Mauve, Albert Neuhuys and Hein Kever - to become known as the Laren School of Painting. Situated in a former villa built in 1911 the Singer Laren Museum houses an impressive modern art collection assembled by Anna and William Singer in the early 20th century. Along with various changing exhibitions, the stunning sculpture garden - designed by renowned landscape architect Piet Oudolf - features work by contemporary Dutch artists and is well worth a visit. ¹⁵

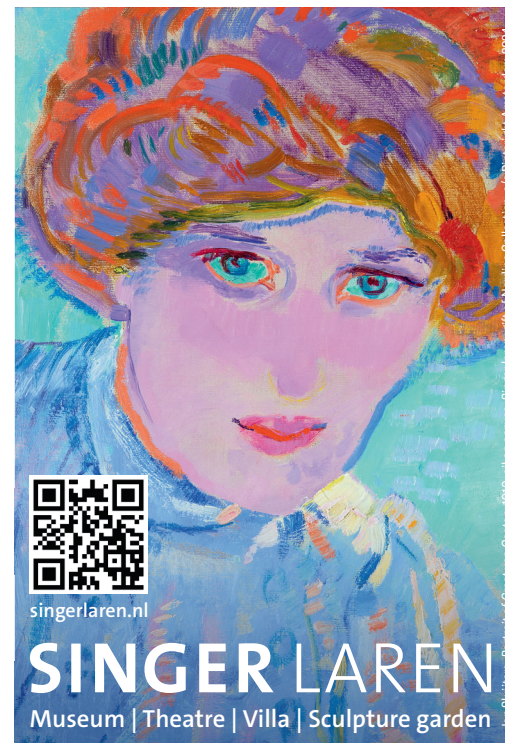
singerlaren.nl 

GOOI & VECHT-STREEK


The area known as the Gooi & Vechtstreek is characterised by its lush surroundings, picturesque and historic villages, untouched natural spaces and beautiful lakes. Positioned southeast of Amsterdam city centre, the area is made up of cities and towns which include Hilversum, Bussum, Naarden, Huizen, Laren, Blaricum and Muiden – all offering a popular blend of upmarket luxury, traditional village atmospheres and green escapes.

NARDINCLANT ESTATE

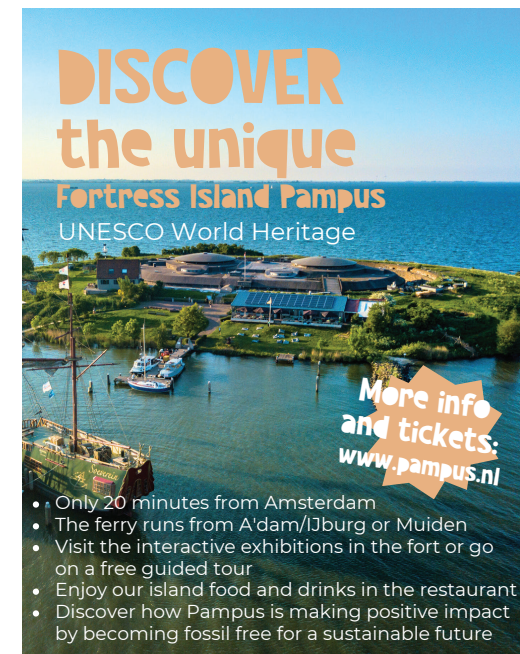
In Laren, the Nardinclant Estate, fondly referred to as the



Jan Stijlers, Portrait of Geertruida van Cooten, 1910, oil on canvas, Singer Laren, gift of Nardine Collection, c/o PhotoGraf Amsterdam, 2024


singerlaren.nl

SINGER LAREN
Museum | Theatre | Villa | Sculpture garden



DISCOVER the unique
Fortress Island Pampus
UNESCO World Heritage

More info and tickets:
www.pampus.nl

- Only 20 minutes from Amsterdam
- The ferry runs from A'dam/IJburg or Muiden
- Visit the interactive exhibitions in the fort or go on a free guided tour
- Enjoy our island food and drinks in the restaurant
- Discover how Pampus is making positive impact by becoming fossil free for a sustainable future



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GREEN ESCAPE TO AMSTELVEEN

VISIT AMSTERDAM FOREST TO ESCAPE
THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF THE CITY.
FOR INSPIRATION: VISITAMSTELVEEN.NL/FOREST

VISIT **AMSTELVEEN**

Amsterdam Garden, is a tranquil spot to reconnect with nature as you indulge in luxurious spa treatments. Within the estate, you'll find high-end wellness facilities including a sauna, steam room, massage services, a jet-stream swimming pool and tennis courts. The immaculately well-kept grounds provide one of the few remaining examples of the Dutch decorative garden style and tours are available. Boutique accommodation is available in the villa, attached cottage and luxurious garden suite. ¹⁶

amsterdamgarden.com

oud valkeveen

Located just outside Naarden, old-school thrills and shows feature at this traditional amusement park. With attractions for kids of all ages, play paradise Oud Valkenveen offers a perfect fun-filled day out. After starting out as a pancake farm, the venue has now grown into an amusement park with rollercoasters, slides, trains and climbing frames. ¹⁷

oudvalkeveen.nl

hilversum

Situated in the heart of the Gooi & Vechtstreek region, Hilversum is a thriving cultural centre. Also known as the 'Media City' of the Netherlands, this vibrant city offers architectural surprises, concept stores, artisanal bakeries and impressive photography museums. Hilversum is also the only city in the country to be developed as a large-scale garden city. You'll find green is in abundance here, from botanical gardens to the neighbouring Coversbos, the beech-tree lined national forest and surrounding heathlands known as the Heidevelden. ¹⁸

visitgooivecht.com/hilversum

beeld & geluid media museum

The Beeld & Geluid Media Museum (Institute of Sound and Vision) at Hilversum's Media Park, a short train ride from Amsterdam, houses an impressive collection of various types of media such as radio, television, film and music recordings, video games, political cartoons and gifs. English-speaking visitors can participate in one of their guided tours through the archive - one of the largest collections of audio and visual material in the world. ¹⁹

museum hilversum

Located in Hilversum's 250-year-old former town hall, this inspiring museum has a particular focus on new media arts and photography. On top of a changing programme of roughly ten exhibitions a year, the museum hosts both World Press Photo and De Zilveren Camera - the most important journalistic photo competition in the country. Keep an eye on the agenda for lectures, performances or media labs. ²⁰

museumhilversum.nl



Oud Valkeveen
photo Martijn van Lokven

pinetum blijdenstein botanical garden

Tucked away in a residential suburb within walking distance from the centre of Hilversum, Pinetum Blijdenstein is a stunning botanical garden. Whilst the greenhouses are packed with various tropical plants, the grounds are home to a variety of tree species including blooming rhododendrons and one of the most important collections of conifers in the world. Pinetum regularly organises exhibitions, tours, lectures and activities for green-fingered little ones. ²¹

pinetum.nl



Heidevelden
photo Koen Smilde

AMSTEL-VEEN

FOREST & CITY CENTRE

Amstelveen owes its existence to the Amstel River, which once played a crucial role in connecting Amsterdam to the rest of the Netherlands. Today, it is one of the greenest and most diverse municipalities in the Amsterdam Area with plenty of options for recreation and entertainment. Alongside two national monuments - the Amsterdamse Bos (Amsterdam Forest) and the Heemparken (a botanic gardens dedicated to native flora) - you'll also find Stadshart Amstelveen, a covered shopping centre with over 200 luxury stores. Hop aboard the historic Electric Tram from Haarlemmermeer station to Amstelveen for a nostalgic adventure (every Sunday from April to October). ²² visitamstelveen.nl museumtramlijn.org

COBRA MUSEUM

The Cobra Museum is a must-see for modern art lovers, with changing exhibitions featuring the great names of the mid-20th-century CoBrA movement, such as Karel Appel, Constant, Corneille and Jan Sierhuis.



Museum JAN
photo Eddy Wenting



Museumtram
photo Daan Vazquez

There are also major temporary exhibitions of work by individual artists and their contemporaries from related movements, as well as temporary exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. ²³ cobra-museum.nl day-travel.nl

SCHOUWBURG AMSTELVEEN

With two theatre stages and a cinema, Schouwburg Amstelveen is one of the larger regional theatres in the Netherlands. The programme offers a range of cabaret, music, dance, music and drama performances in different languages to delight all ages. ²⁴ schouwburgamstelveen.nl

MUSEUM JAN

Situated in Amstelveen's 'Old Village', Museum JAN specialises in glass art and Dutch design. Over the years it has assembled a rich collection of modern work by the masters in this field, as well as other sculptures and paintings. Discover mesmerising glass art collected by founder Jan van der Togt alongside contemporary art exhibitions such as Lisa Konno: The Porcelain Body (14 February to 16 June). The exhibit reflects on beauty ideals in Japan and the Netherlands through a combination of Japanese porcelain and textiles. ²⁵ museumjan.nl

FUN FOREST

Looking for a unique experience amongst the treetops? This high-rope adventure park offers visitors the chance to move through the Amsterdam Forest on ropes, ladders, bridges, zip lines and various other climbing elements. Enjoy an adventure with your friends, family or colleagues and feel connected by nature. ³⁰ funforest.nl/en day-travel.nl

AMSTERDAMSE BOS

The Amsterdamse Bos (Amsterdam Forest) is three times the size of New York's Central Park and entirely man-made. Spanning an impressive 1,000 hectares, this exceptional green space is among the largest city parks of Europe. Wander the activity-packed central zones framed by quieter forests and fields of rustic flora and fauna. Along the various walking or cycling paths, keep your eyes peeled for wildlife as the lush forests and open water of this nature area make a cosy home for marsh harriers, kingfishers, squirrels, grass snakes and even some highland cattle. ²⁷ amsterdamsebos.nl/english

BOSTHEATER

Deep within the Amsterdamse Bos lies a magical open-air venue that has delighted

theatre and music fans every summer since 1985. With a programme ranging from large-scale and offbeat theatre productions to atmospheric musical performances, the performances make for a great summer evening beneath the stars in an intimate tree-lined setting. There's also delicious food; visitors can grab dinner, appetizers and drinks at De Lastpost, the theatre's own café and bistro. ²⁸ bostheater.nl

RIDAMMERHOEVE GOAT FARM

Right in the heart of the Amsterdamse Bos, Ridammerhoeve is an organic goat farm which produces a range of dairy products – all for sale at the café and farm shop. Enjoy a goat's milk hot chocolate or an organic sandwich with goat cheese on the terrace. Younger guests will find lots to entertain themselves amongst the animals, with opportunities to feed and pet the baby goats depending on the time of year. The farm also organises all kinds of activities including cheese-making workshops, high teas and birthday parties. ²⁹ geitenboerderij.nl

P60

To catch everything from gigs by smaller touring bands to ABBA tribute nights, keep an eye on what's on at P60 in Amstelveen. The concert hall boasts superb acoustics and an intimate vibe, making it an ideal spot to discover new artists and up-and-coming local talent. The venue also hosts various club nights focussing on techno, electro and indie genres, and don't miss the regular Jam Sessions in the P60 Café, which are free to attend. ²⁶ p60.nl

ALONG THE AMSTEL

OUDERKERK AAN DE AMSTEL

Featuring some of Amsterdam's most breathtaking rural views and bustling riverside terraces, historical Ouderkerk aan de Amstel is a charming spot to spend an afternoon. It's just an idyllic bike ride along the River Amstel from the centre of Amsterdam. This medieval village is separated from Amsterdam and Amstelveen by the Ronde Hoep nature reserve and photo-ready fields dotted with windmills and stately riverside homes. It's the ideal destination when you're looking for a local (bike) trip that offers a little bit of everything. Don't miss its waterfront restaurants, like fine dining SAAM, Mediterranean-inspired Heisa and KEK! - a brewpub with church views After you've refuelled, visit the Netherlands' oldest Jewish cemetery, Beth Haim, a fascinating place for a tranquil stroll filled with ornately carved marble gravestones. ³¹ amstelgoed.nl/en saamrestaurant.nl caferestauranthesia.nl kek-bier.nl



Rembrandthoeve
photo Rudenko Photography

Advertorial

REMBRANDT HOEVE

Perched at a stunning riverside location along the Amstel, Rembrandthoeve is an authentic farm that's still making two of the most traditional Dutch products: cheese and clogs. Step back in time as you watch skillful craftsmen transform a block of wood into these iconic old-Dutch wooden shoes - and try on a pair yourself! Or follow the farmer for a tour of the dairy farm to see how traditional Gouda cheese is crafted with wonderful unique flavours.

Tip: Free tours (including cheese-tastings) are available daily.

Rembrandthoeve is open open 365 days a year from 08:00 - 18:00. The farm is just a 30 minute cycle from central Amsterdam, along a riverside bike route - arguably the most scenic easy ride in the region. It's a 10-minute drive from the centre of Amsterdam and offers ample free parking for cars and coaches.

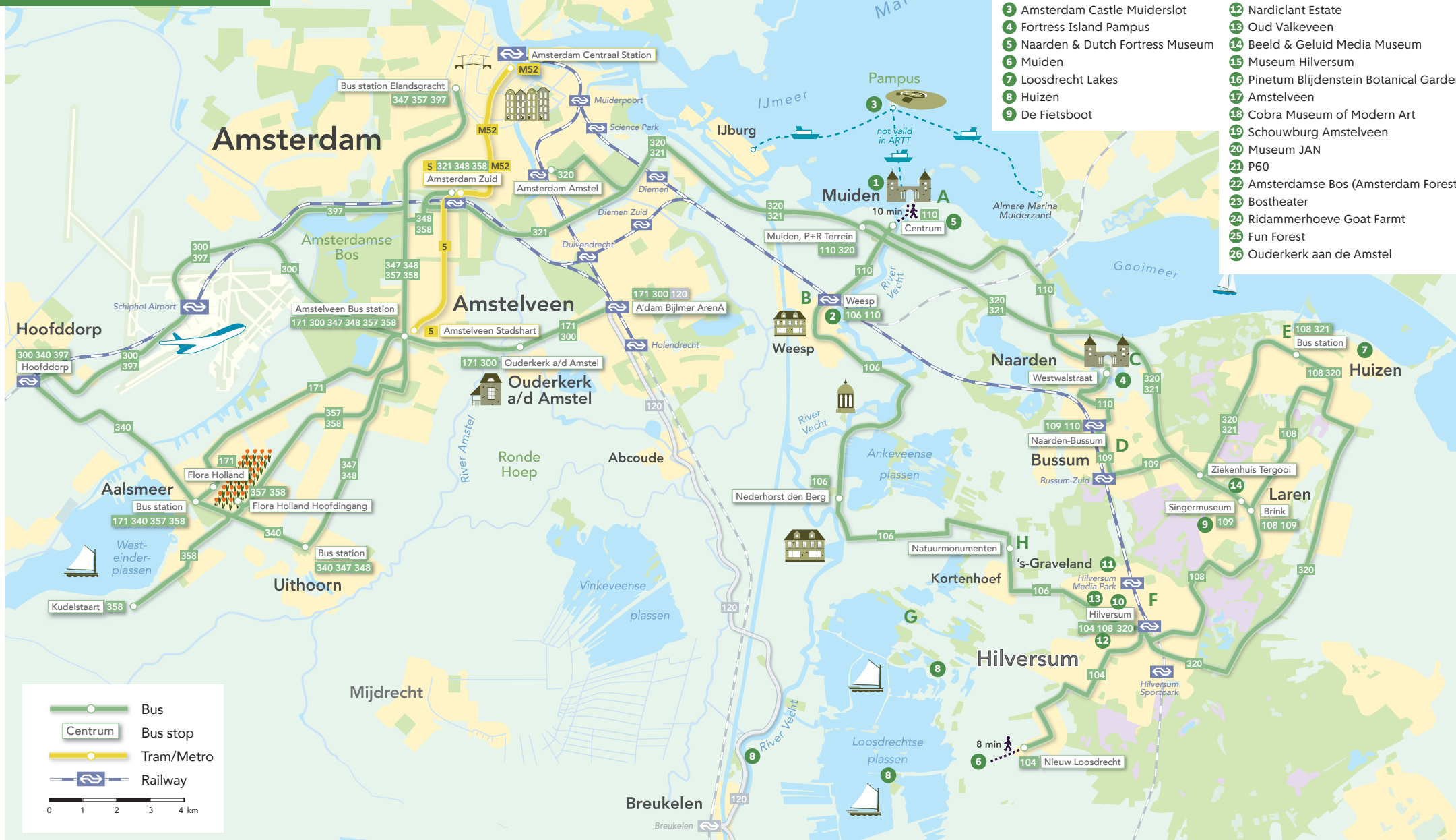
rembrandthoeveamsterdam.nl

MAP CASTLES & GARDENS

Visitor Centres & Highlights

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|---|
| A VVV Muiden | D VVV Bussum | G VVV Kortenhoef |
| B VVV Weesp | E VVV Huizen | H Gooi & Vechtstreek
Visitor Centre |
| C VVV Naarden | F VVV Hilversum | |

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Weesp | 10 Wonderfeel Festival |
| 2 Theetuin Noten | 11 Singer Laren Museum |
| 3 Amsterdam Castle Muiderslot | 12 Nardiclant Estate |
| 4 Fortress Island Pampus | 13 Oud Valkeveen |
| 5 Naarden & Dutch Fortress Museum | 14 Beeld & Geluid Media Museum |
| 6 Muiden | 15 Museum Hilversum |
| 7 Loosdrecht Lakes | 16 Pinetum Blijdenstein Botanical Garden |
| 8 Huizen | 17 Amstelveen |
| 9 De Fietsboot | 18 Cobra Museum of Modern Art |
| | 19 Schouwburg Amstelveen |
| | 20 Museum JAN |
| | 21 P60 |
| | 22 Amsterdamse Bos (Amsterdam Forest) |
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| | 26 Ouderkerk aan de Amstel |



NEW LAND



Nationaal Park Nieuw Land
photo Visit Flevoland

Living four metres below sea level, Flevoland - the result of a large-scale land reclamation project in the 1930s - is a province associated with cutting-edge architecture and a sustainable vision. Lelystad and Almere are fast-growing urban centres teeming with recreational activities, cultural hotspots, exceptional shopping and mindblowing urban art. These modern polder cities blend forward-thinking design with futuristic urban planning, all the while embracing the water and nature right on their doorstep. Elsewhere, the region's watery past is still apparent in its nautical history and impressive natural landscapes. Unique man-made nature reserves provide vast swathes of protected marshlands for migrating birds and ample opportunity for walking, cycling and wildlife tours. Meanwhile, the not-to-be-missed Land Art throughout the region makes for an ideal day trip. iamsterdam.com/newland

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HOW TO GET THERE

Almere and Lelystad City Centres

- Direct train service from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Almere Centrum station - 20 minutes.
- Direct train service from Almere Centrum station to Lelystad Centrum station - 14 minutes. You can download an audio tour specially made to enjoy during the journey by train from Amsterdam to New Land here: www.visitflevoland.nl/en/audiotours

New Land National Park

- Train service to Almere Oostvaarders Station. From there, it's a 20-minute walk to the Visitor Centre - 60 minutes.

From Lelystad Centrum station it's a 20-minute bike trip.

Plan your journey on Google Maps or use the 9292 app.

RECLAIMED WATERS

EXPLORING THE POLDER

Wherever you walk in Flevoland, you're actually walking on the seabed, the former Zuiderzee. A system of dykes holds back the surrounding water, the level of which is, on average, 5 metres higher. The Zuiderzee posed a looming and constant threat to the inhabitants of the surrounding area, with thousands of people losing their lives during storm floods. The idea to drain the Zuiderzee had been raised as far back as the 17th-century, but it took modern engineering to complete the project. In the 20th-century, work began on reclaiming more than 1,800 km² from the inland Zuiderzee, creating the Netherlands' youngest province, Flevoland, and cities like Almere and Lelystad in the process. Today, the area's remarkable history, modern architecture, friendly beaches and a unique nature reserve make New Land well worth a visit. visitflevoland.com/en

BATAVIALAND

Take a journey spanning 7,000 years of Dutch history at Batavialand. ❶ The shipyard shows how the Dutch have mastered shipbuilding over the centuries, building robust ships that were capable of traversing Dutch and international waters. Climb aboard the famous reconstruction of the VOC ship, the *Batavia*, and find out how these powerful 17th-century trade ships were constructed. Want to see where the battle against the water started in Lelystad? Visit Werkeiland ❷ and find out. batavialand.nl/en/shipyard

Presenting a broad outline of the history of Flevoland, from the prehistoric Swifterbant people to the largest reclamation project ever: the Zuiderzee project. The collection includes 6,000-year-old archaeological finds from the days when Flevoland was still an extensive marshland, as well as archives with thousands of photographs, documents and much more. There's plenty for children to do, including presentations that let them step into the shoes of a dyke builder, archaeologist or lock keeper. Fun experiments and games teach them about one of the Netherlands' key challenges: water management. ❶ batavialand.nl/en/museum

LAND ART

During the creation of the Flevoland polder, the engineers and planners decided to mark the momentous occasion with art. They turned to an art form that spoke to their imagination: Land Art. The result is a collection of nine Land Art works – the highest concentration anywhere in the world – by world-famous artists such as Robert Morris, Anthony Gormley and Daniel Libeskind. All nine can be visited in a single day. Discover these gems by yourself (by car) or during an organised bus tour (in summer) – and take in the amazing history of Flevoland's creation at the same time. ❸ visitflevoland.nl/landart



Batavialand
photo Koen Smits

NEW NATURE

NATUURPARK LELYSTAD

Discover endangered species and impressive wisents (bison) in the beautiful setting of Natuurpark Lelystad, an important link in the circle of wildlife. The nature park features an extensive system of hiking and cycling trails and several picnic areas. The visitor centre offers information on tours and packages, and there's a shop where you can rent bikes. They will provide you with all the information you need about Natuurpark Lelystad ❹ and other stunning nature reserves, such as Lepelaarplassen. visitlelystad.nl/en/gebied/natuurpark

NEW LAND NATIONAL PARK

New Land National Park is a truly unique landscape in the Netherlands. It's rugged, wide, full of contrast, there's always water nearby – and of course, there's the well-known dyke: a constant reminder that you are indeed on a former seabed. This unpolished landscape is home to many animals. There are tens of thousands of birds, large groups of wild herbivores, horses, red deer, foxes, sea eagles, beavers, otters, grass snakes, butterflies and dragonflies. ❺ ❻ nationaalparknieuwland.nl/en

OOSTVAARDERSPLASSEN

The Oostvaardersplassen is the largest man-made nature reserve in the world and is one unlike any other in Europe. During their annual migration, tens of thousands of birds stop to refuel or breed in the lake complex. You can also find yourself face to face with wild

cattle, horses and red deer crossing the open landscape. In the Natuurbelevingscentrum (Nature Experience Centre), there are telescopes to help you spot the wildlife from a distance.

DE KEMPHAAN

For an adventurous day out, head to De Kempphaan, close to Almere, where kids will delight in tackling the high ropes and zip lines of Klimbos Fun Forest Almere or observing the rescued monkeys at Stichting AAP. The unmissable Almere Jungle offers exotic animal surprises, a tropical cafe and exceptional play areas. This amusing wildlife park, staffed by passionate volunteers, has lashings of humour, imagination and care in how the enclosures are constructed. Take a break at one of the local restaurants or even spend the night in one of the estate's camping pitches or tipi tents on the nature campsite. ¹⁰ kempphaan.nl/en/forest

MARKER WADDEN

Marker Wadden, part of New Land National Park, is a unique nature reserve still in development. The small islands, in between Lelystad and Enkhuizen, are constructed with sand, clay and silt from the Markermeer. As new plants blossom both under and above water, it is quickly becoming a natural paradise for fish and birds. Delve deeper into the Marker Wadden with your own boat or taking the ferry. On the island, a guide from Natuurmonumenten will explain the environment's fascinating features. Alternatively, join the Marker Wadden Experience Tour – boarding from either Lelystad or Almere. Your adventure starts

on a VR bus, and includes a memorable cruise where the educational guide will take you through the unique history of Flevoland. ¹¹ nieuwland-experience.nl/visitleystad.nl/en/locatie/markerwadden

MODERN CITIES

ALMERE CITY CENTRE

Approximately 400 shops with international allure thread through modern architectural highlights in the centre of Almere, one of the youngest and fastest-growing cities in the Netherlands, nestled in a green polder. Shop for everything from local curiosities to world-famous brands and then head to the 'restaurant squares' of Stations-plein, Belfort restaurant square and Grote Markt. Alternatively, see Almere's architecture from an insider's perspective with a guided tour of the city centre or other neighbourhoods. Or grab the walking tour flyer at the Tourist Information Centre (VVV Almere) ⁸ and explore Almere by yourself. Bike rentals and information about guided tours are available as well. ¹² visitalmere.com/en

BOAT HIRE

For the perfect introduction to this modern city built on water, step aboard an electric sloop boat courtesy of Sloepverhuur Almere. During a short cruise, you'll gain a magnificent impression of the skyline and surrounding green spaces. Boarding is available from the Esplanade, in the center of Almere. sloepverhuuralmere.nl



Oostvaardersplassen
photo Koen Smilde

THERMEN LA MER

Refresh your body and soul at this exclusive day spa located just outside, dreaming away in the Finnish Kelo saunas, swimming pool or hot tub. After a plunge, stroll around the Mediterranean garden or indulge in tasty – and healthy – dishes at the restaurant. Located in Almere, the spa allows you to truly immerse yourself in luxury and pleasure – if only for one day. thermenlamer.nl

KUNSTLINIE THEATRE

At first glance, the Kunstlinie Theatre appears to be floating, jutting over Weerwater Lake in a dramatic horizontal slice. Japanese architects Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa opted for stylistic simplicity and transparency in their designs, using glass facades to fill the building with light and reflect the beautiful natural surroundings. The stage is taken over by everyone from dance and theatre companies, pop singers, jazz bands, comedians, cabaret acts and touring musicals – so keep an eye on the agenda for the full programme. ¹⁴ kunstlinie.nl

CABLEPARK ALMERE

Calling all (water-based) thrill-seekers! Spend a day whizzing around the Weerwater lake on water skis or a wakeboard, aided by a kilometre-long cable track that allows users to reach speeds of up to 30km/ph. Experienced water sportsers can make the most of the various obstacles on the course to try out tricks, while beginners can get acquainted with the sports on the dedicated training track. All equipment required to hit the water is available for hire. After working up an appetite, grab a seat on the restaurant terrace and take in the tremendous views of the Almere skyline. ¹⁵ cableparkviewalmere.nl

BOUTIQ ALMERE

Almere's latest hotspot on the Grote Markt, restaurant Boutiq is the place for all-day brunches, small plates at dinner and expert-made cocktails. It's an aesthetic spot too, complete with extravagant geometric-patterned walls and hanging flower pieces, grand chandeliers and crushed velvet chairs. ¹⁷ boutiqalmere.nl

ROSITA'S ALMERE

For Mexican food, Rosita's is the go-to spot. After numerous trips to Mexico and gaining years of experience with top chefs, hostess Sonja and chef Ton opened their own restaurant. They capture the spirit of the Land of Mariachi, with a menu filled with traditional dishes from empanadas to molé as well as plenty of mezcal and cocktails. The decor helps too, with a yellow stone interior, tiled floors and a colourful terrace all helping bring a little bit of Mexico City to Flevoland. ¹⁸ rositas.nl

LELYSTAD

AGORA THEATRE & RESTAURANT APPLAUS

The attention-grabbing Agora Theater is located in a bright orange building designed by Ben van Berkel. Inside you'll find a theatre, cinema, and congress centre which form the cultural heart of the city. Swing by for a bite to eat at the highly-rated Restaurant Grand Cafe Applaus – a modern yet intimate setting to enjoy a delicious meal devised by head chef Martijn van Wegen. Whether it's for a cappuccino on the sunny terrace, a relaxed business lunch, a selection of appetisers or the sumptuous 5-course menu, Applaus has got it covered. ¹⁹

agora-lelystad.nl/restaurantapplaus.nl

AVIODROME AVIATION MUSEUM

Discover a world full of adventurous airplane action for young and old in the Luchtvaart Museum Aviodrome – dedicated to 100 years of civil aviation. Admire more than 100 old and new aircraft inside and outside. Board a Boeing 747 and experience the adrenaline of a real pilot in the flight simulator and 4D film theatre! Enthusiastic volunteers give free guided tours daily, taking you into the world of airplanes and aviation from then and now. ²⁰ aviodrome.nl

BATAVIA STAD FASHION OUTLET

Batavia Stad Amsterdam Fashion Outlet offers visitors a unique shopping experience. Amidst this charming, reconstructed 17th-century village laid out with pristine streets and leafy squares, discover more than 250

international fashion, jewellery and homeware brands across 150 stores. After bagging bargains and uncovering the latest trends, grab a coffee and treat yourself at one of the hip cafes or pleasant restaurants. The outlet is open seven days a week and is easily accessible by public transport or car. ²¹ bataviastad.com



DAYTRIP YOUNGEST PROVINCE

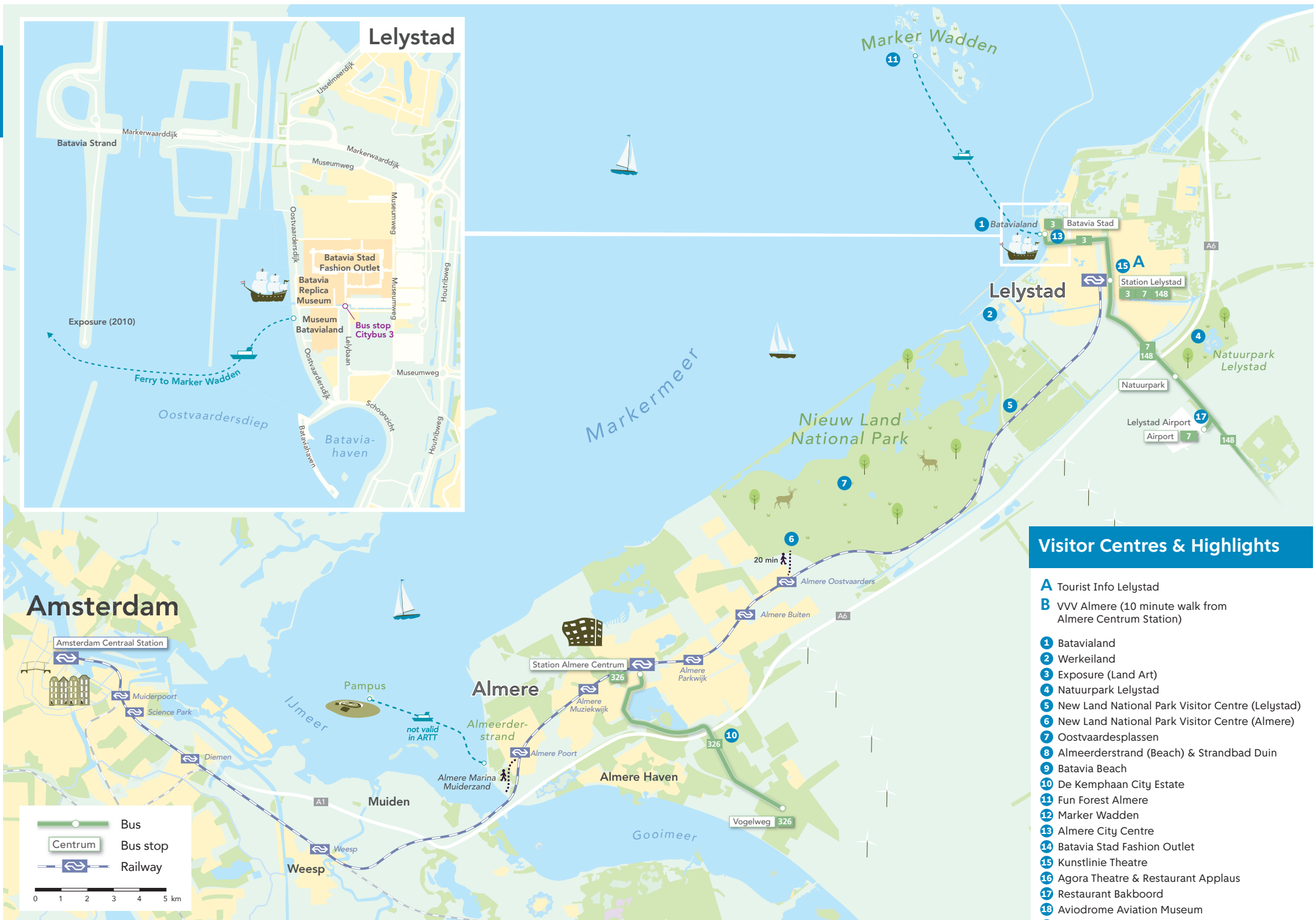
Half or full day

START at Amsterdam Centraal Station. The best way to experience New Land is to take the train to Lelystad Centrum. The views from the train are spectacular, as you can even spot native species in the Nieuw Land National Park along the way. Tip: take a seat on the left side of the train for the best views. The train ride is only 40 minutes from Amsterdam Centraal Station.

DISCOVER the history of the reclamation of Flevoland at Batavialand Museum. Next to the museum is a replica of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) ship *The Batavia*. ¹

VISIT Almere City Centre to admire the stunning modern architecture of this new city. Special 'architecture routes' are available from the Tourist Information Centre. ⁸

REFUEL at one of the many eateries on Belfort restaurant square before you hop on the train back to Amsterdam Centrum Station. ¹²



Visitor Centres & Highlights

- A** Tourist Info Lelystad
- B** VVV Almere (10 minute walk from Almere Centrum Station)
- 1** Batavialand
- 2** Werkeiland
- 3** Exposure (Land Art)
- 4** Natuurpark Lelystad
- 5** New Land National Park Visitor Centre (Lelystad)
- 6** New Land National Park Visitor Centre (Almere)
- 7** Oostvaardersplassen
- 8** Almeerderstrand (Beach) & Strandbad Duin
- 9** Batavia Beach
- 10** De Kemphaan City Estate
- 11** Fun Forest Almere
- 12** Marker Wadden
- 13** Almere City Centre
- 14** Batavia Stad Fashion Outlet
- 15** Kunstlinie Theatre
- 16** Agora Theatre & Restaurant Applaus
- 17** Restaurant Bakboord
- 18** Aviodrome Aviation Museum
- 19** Cablepark Almere

OLD HOLLAND



Wetlands Safari photo Floris Kok

The Zaan region is a magnificent piece of perfectly preserved industrial heritage, and a visit here is like travelling back in time. For those who wish to soak up this legacy, visit the characteristic towns of Old-Zaandijk, Westzaan and Wormer known for their iconic windmills and well-preserved wooden houses which offer a glimpse into the area's vibrant trading past. Further north, the former Zuiderzee boasts historic market towns and picturesque fishing villages such as Edam, Volendam, Marken and Monnickendam. Several traditional cheese farms keep the old-fashioned Dutch craft of cheese-making alive, with staff demonstrating their artisan skills. With its green meadows, traditional farmhouses, and two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Amsterdam Waterland offers an abundance of activities for anyone who enjoys the outdoors.

iamsterdam.com/oldholland

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HOW TO GET THERE

Zaandam + Zaanse Schans

- Direct train service from Amsterdam Centraal to Zaandam – 12 minutes
- Direct train service from Amsterdam Centraal to Zaandijk - Zaanse Schans - 17 minutes, followed by a short walk - 15 minutes

Tourist bus: Zaanse Schans, Edam, Volendam

- Take bus from Amsterdam Noord metro station to Monnickendam (15 minutes), Volendam (30 minutes), Edam (30 minutes), Marken (30 minutes).

Purmerend

- Take bus 301 from metro station Noord to bus stop Tramplein, Purmerend - 20 minutes.

Plan your journey on Google Maps or use the 9292 app.

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

INTEL HOTELS & CLAUDE MONET

'Zaandam is quite remarkable,' wrote Claude Monet, 'and there is enough to paint for a lifetime.' Indeed, the region does seem to have inspired him: during his short stay here in 1871, Monet created 25 paintings. But what would Monet have painted had he walked around Zaandam today? Probably the Inntel Hotels Amsterdam Zaandam.

1 A modern interpretation of the traditional green Zaan houses, the 12-storey structure is the showpiece of the Inntel Hotels chain. The blue house at the top is based on Monet's eponymous painting in 1871 in Zaandam. Replicas of Monet's 25 Zaandam paintings can be seen in the MonetAtelier 2 along the River Zaan in the centre of Zaandam. The Monet Atelier is located in the rebuilt 'Luchthuis aan de Zaan', a house from one of Monet's paintings. The Zaanse Museum 3 also owns a real Monet; definitely worth a visit. zaans.nl/visitors

ZAANSE SCHANS

From the 17th to 19th centuries, the Zaanstreek flourished as one of Europe's first and most important industrial areas. With its traditional houses, windmills, warehouses and workshops, the Zaanse Schans open-air museum offers a perfectly preserved glimpse into Old Holland's past. While the attraction can be visited any time of year, most of the windmills are open to visitors from April to October. Besides windmills, you can also visit the souvenir shops, see clogs being made or visit a cheese farm – offering a surprising and fun day



Lassie Erfgoedwand Wormer photo Koen Smilde

out for all ages. The interactive Windmill Museum, only a 15-minute walk from Zaanse Schans, forms an excellent beginning or end point of a visit to area. Here you can see countless paintings, models and original instruments that will transport visitors back in time. 4 dezaanseschans.nl

HEMBRUGTERREIN

Once a hub for the production of ammunition and weaponry, Zaandam's Hembrugterrein is a historically significant site with a compelling blend of industrial heritage and contemporary development. In recent decades the remarkable architectural spaces of this former military complex have been transformed into restaurants and creative venues. The focal point is Het HEM, a former munitions factory where multidisciplinary art and music programmes unfold (reopening after renovation in Autumn 2024). Just around the corner, The light-drenched Museum of Humanity features dozens of thought-provoking portraits of people from all over the world to pose questions about what it means to be human. A GVB ferry service runs between Hemptonplein (Amsterdam West) and Zaandam over the North Sea Canal. 5 hethem.nl museumofhumanity.nl

ZAAN WATERFRONT

The 11-km Zaan waterfront connects some 75 vintage industrial buildings. Each piece of heritage tells a story about the region's glorious past - beginning in the 1600s when wood was sawn, and sails were woven in the windmills which still flank the river. At the start is the historic Czar Peter House 9 where Peter the Great spent a week learning the craft of shipbuilding in 1697. The most beautiful stretch is at Wormer, known as the Industrial Wall, where monumental warehouses and beautifully restored factories line the banks. This bend is a perfect backdrop for a stroll or cycle, before a stopping at a waterside terraces. zaans.nl/visitors



TIP VERKADE EXPERIENCE

At the heart of the Zaanse Museum, you will find the Verkade Experience. A treat for young and old alike, the Verkade Experience transports you back to the chocolate-and-biscuit factory of the early 20th-century, where the original machines are still churning away. 10 zaansmuseum.nl/en

OUD-ZAANDIJK & GORTERSHOEK

Across the water from Zaanse Schans 6, you will find the protected village of Gortershoek with its beautiful 17th- and 18th-century green merchant houses known for their curly facades.

7 One of the former residences is now the Honig Breethuis Museum, housing an exhibition on the history of Zaanse paper, original hand-painted wallpaper from the 18th-century, beautiful porcelain and much more. Guides will be happy to show you around the house and explain the history of the families who lived there 8 Elsewhere in Oud-Zaandijk, sample the local tipples at Brouwerij Hoop, a craft brewery with tastings and tours on offer.

honigbreethuis.nl
hoopbier.nl



Zaandijk photo Koen Smilde



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HARBOUR VILLAGES

MONNICKENDAM

The beautiful harbour town of Monnickendam is home to dozens of monumental buildings. In the 17th century, shipyards and fish smokehouses were established here, and they never left: even now, the historic buildings and street names are reminiscent of its industrious past, when trades and crafts flourished. Today, the town's relationship with the water is unmistakable and sailing enthusiasts flock here. Watch the boats launch from a unique culinary spot overlooking the marina or end the day at one of the cosy beach bars along the Gouwzee. Don't miss the chance to pause for freshly baked apple pie and refreshments in the waterside tea garden at Het Weeshuis - a stunning volunteer-run cafe and crafts atelier. 10

laagholland.com
weeshuismonnickendam.nl

VOLENDAM

Volendam is known for its traditional costumes, music and fish, whilst the characteristic tiny houses, made incredibly picturesque by the beautiful harbour, create an atmosphere of friendliness and romance. To soak up the ambience, sample a smoked eel or herring dish from one of the fish vendors and take a stroll along dyke as you watch the rippling water of the Markermeer. Don't miss the Volendams Museum, undoubtedly one of the most unconventional museums in the Netherlands, where visitors can glimpse into unique elements of early Dutch life in the region. 11

laagholland.com
volendamsmuseum.nl



Marken
photo Robert Franken

EDAM

Edam was once one of the country's most important historic centres and its rich trading history is still visible today. It continues to be known around the world for its eponymous cheese, which you can learn all about at the Story of Edam Cheese Museum 12. Of course, visiting in July and August when the famous cheese market is on is certainly a plus, but a tour of the town's centuries-old buildings (such as the monumental Grote Kerk) and picturesque streets at any time delivers various sightseeing opportunities. Cruise the canals on a former cattle boat, taking in views of the traditional houses and hand-operated drawbridges. Roam through the dark passageways of Fort bij Edam, encountering fascinating hands-on exhibits dedicated to military history. And don't miss the Edam Museum to find out all about the shipbuilding, timber and cheese-trading industries which built the wealth of this charming market town. 13

laagholland.com
fortbijedam.nl

MARKEN

So picture-perfect it's like stepping into a 17th-century Dutch landscape painting, historic Marken with its characteristic green wooden houses – 145 of which are national monuments – was an island in the Zuiderzee until 1957, when it was connected to the mainland by a dyke. Get a glimpse into this remarkable fishing village's heritage and distinctive way of life at the Marker Museum and don't miss the Sijtje Boes Experience - the fascinatingly restored home of a legendary souvenir seller from the early 20th century. For the perfect end to the day, check out the excellent dining options along the harbour with phenomenal views at sunrise and sunset. Visitors can board the Volendam Marken Express (ferry, sails year-round) to travel between the old fishing villages of Volendam and Marken. This nostalgic vessel has been in operation for 100 years and departs daily. 14

laagholland.com
markenexpress.nl

WATER- LAND

BROEK IN WATERLAND

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the village of Broek in Waterland was the home of many successful ship owners, captains and merchants. Their wealth made it one of the most prosperous villages in the area. Today, the charming wooden houses - carefully restored and painted in authentic 'Broeker' grey - undoubtedly make for some of the prettiest views in Old Holland. Surrounded by green meadows, Broek in Waterland is a delightful place for a leisurely stroll or a pitstop as part of a cycling adventure if you wish to further explore the surroundings. Be sure to visit the beautiful church, the Broekerkerk, where you'll find a tearoom and exhibitions by local artists inside. laagholland.com



Broek in WaterLand photo Geert Snoeijer

half a day, whilst the lively restaurant terraces lining the former Koemarkt (Cattle Market) square are buzzing through the warmer months. Look upwards for stunning architectural details and gabled houses, and don't miss the Art Nouveau pottery collection in the municipal Purmerend Museum. laagholland.com

BEEMSTER POLDER

Reclaimed from the water in the 17th century, the Beemster Polder is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that lies approximately 3.5 metres below sea level. The region boasts scenic waterways, dykes, restored mills and traditional farmhouses - the old-style

stolpboerderijen - such as those in the villages of Jisp and De Woude. Nearby you'll also find De Rijp, which has been dubbed 'Holland's most beautiful village'. The landscape is conveniently organised into perfectly geometrical quadrant - perfect to explore by bike or on foot before embarking on an family adventure amidst the forts and farms. Be sure to start your visit at VVV Beemster **C**, which supplies walking and cycling routes and delicious regional products from the rich clay soil. **15** laagholland.com

FORT RESORT BEEMSTER

As one of the most luxurious wellness resorts in the country, Fort Resort Beemster has a long list of facilities to suit every pampering need. Located deep in the countryside behind the historic walls of the beautiful Beemster Polder, the centre is part of UNESCO's Defence Line of Amsterdam. From unique saunas and salt baths and elegant hotel rooms to wholesome food and relaxing face and body treatments, guests can enjoy top-notch gastronomy, hospitality and wellness in stunning surroundings that feel a world away from the city hustle. **16** fortbeemster.nl



Koemarkt Purmerend photo Laag Holland

NATURE AREAS

The lush windmill-studded landscapes, green pastures, quaint villages and waterways that make the Dutch countryside so famous can all be found in Old Holland. Just to the North of Amsterdam, Het Twiske **17** is a green recreational area with various watersports options, as well as some spectacular cycle routes. Refuel with refreshments from the various pavillions, or at Twiske Haven, rent canoes, rowboats, pedal boats and sailboats. Nearby, the reed-lined channels and islands of the Ilperveld **18** meadows are a protected area inhabited by rare birds and local plant species. You can observe these species from the water by renting boats or taking a guided nature cruise. If you'd rather explore on foot, pass by the visitor centre to get acquainted with the best walking trails, bird hides or the most scenic spots for a waterside picnic. twiske-waterland.nl

DE POELBOERDERIJ NATURE CRUISE

With its winding channels, unique vegetation, and exquisite bird-watching opportunities, the best way to experience the natural beauty of Old Holland is undoubtedly with a guided nature cruise. Under the direction of an experienced skipper and nature guide, the Visitor Centre De Poelboerderij organises various boat trips through the Womer and Jisperveld nature areas - the largest peat meadow in Europe. Many tours are themed, focussing on specific flora or bird of prey species or combined with an activity such as landscape photography or sketching. **19** bezoekerscentrumpoelboerderij.nl



Het Twiske photo Koen Smilde

JACOBS HOEVE KATWOUDE

This authentic cheese farm and dairy is located in Katwoude in the picturesque polder countryside between Monnickendam and Volendam. Enjoy cheese-making demonstrations and farm tours by staff wearing

traditional costumes. The cosy shop offers a wide range of Henri Willig cheese, souvenirs and typical Dutch fine foods such as 'stroopwafels' (syrup waffles) and chocolate. Admission is free. **20** henriwillig.com



DAY TRIP EXPLORE AMSTERDAM WATERLAND BY BIKE

Half a day or full day

Did you know that the stunning Old Holland countryside – a landscape full of windmills, dykes, boats and cows – is just a short bike ride from Amsterdam?

RENT a bicycle at Centraal Station, then take the free ferry to Buiksloterweg. From there, follow the white bicycle signs along the dyke and through the countryside to Broek in Waterland (45-60 minutes).

STROLL around the charming village of Broek in Waterland **21**, full of restored wooden houses home to wealthy merchants and seafarers in

the 17th and 18th centuries. Enjoy a traditional Dutch pancake at the village's atmospheric De Witte Swaen restaurant. **22**

CONTINUE pedalling through green fields to Monnickendam to explore the beautiful monuments and characteristic dwellings with elaborate plaques that reference the booming trade that once brought prosperity to the city.

PAUSE for freshly baked apple pie and refreshments in the waterside tea garden at Het Weeshuis Monnickendam - a stunning volunteer-run cafe and crafts atelier. **23** weeshuismonnickendam.nl

FLOAT through Waterland's unique watery landscape in a silent, electrically-propelled 'whisper boat'. Boats and kayaks can be rented at Bootverhuur Overleek, a 10-minute cycle from Monnickendam. **24** Check their availability online. bootverhuuroverleek.nl

MAP OLD HOLLAND



Visitor Centres & Highlights

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| A The Zaanstore | E VVV Volendam |
| B VVV Purmerend | F VVV Monnickendam |
| C VVV Beemster | G VVV Marken |
| D VVV Edam | H VVV De Rijp |
| 1 Intel Hotels Amsterdam Zaandam | |
| 2 MonetAtelier | |
| 3 Zaanse Museum | |
| 4 Verkade Experience | |
| 5 Zaanse Schans | |
| 6 Zandijk & Gortershoek | |
| 7 Honig Breethuis Museum | |
| 8 Czar Peter House | |
| 9 Monnickendam | |
| 10 Volendams Museum | |
| 11 Edam (Cheese Market) | |
| 12 Volendam Marken Express | |
| 13 Broek in Waterland | |
| 14 Tea House Overleek | |
| 15 Beemster Polder | |
| 16 Fort Resort Beemster | |
| 17 Het Twiske | |
| 18 Ilperveld | |
| 19 Visitor Centre De Poelboerderij | |
| 20 Restaurant De Witte Swaen | |

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