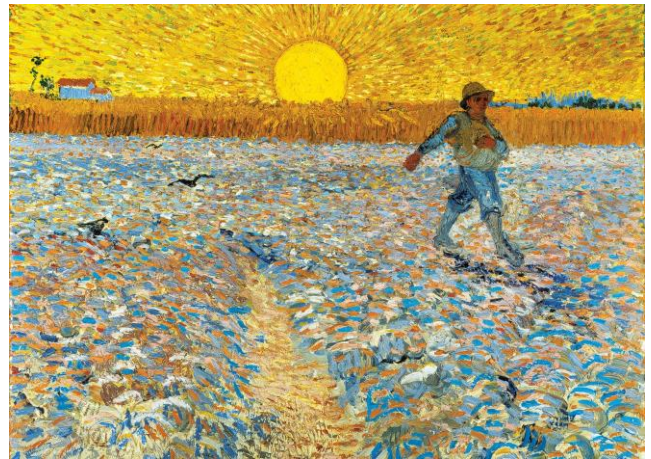


Tour
Information



The Art and History of the Netherlands by Rail





Travel

Passports

Please ensure your 10 year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino or Switzerland valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel to the Netherlands.

Visas

British and EU passport holders are not required to have a visa.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

Dutch Embassy: 38 Hyde Park Gate, London SW7 5DP. Tel: (0)20 7590 3200 or (0871) 376 0023 (visa information line). Fax: (0)20 7225 0947.

Email: consular@netherlands-embassy.org.uk

Website: <http://unitedkingdom.nlembassy.org/>

Open Mon-Fri 0830-1730.



Tickets

You will be issued with a return train ticket.

Please take care not to lose your tickets and please check that the details on your tickets are accurate. Your ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.

Standard Premier on Eurostar tickets is indicated by two asterisks in the class type section in the top right hand corner. A light meal will be served to passengers travelling Standard Premier on Eurostar. Standard class Eurostar tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although there is a buffet car serving drinks and snacks.

Local train tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although a buffet car is available.

Train Seats

On the Eurostar legs of the journey you have reserved seat and carriage numbers which are shown clearly on your ticket.



Baggage

As with most trains, passengers are responsible for carrying baggage onto and off the train. Baggage can be stored on overhead shelves or at the entrance to the carriages. Trolleys are available at St Pancras and Lille, but bags do need to be carried on to the platform. Porters are sometimes but not always available at St Pancras.

Travel Editions recommends a luggage delivery service called **thebaggageman**, where your suitcase can be picked up from your home before departure and delivered straight to your hotel; therefore removing the worry about carrying your cases onto and off the trains.

For further information:

<http://www.thebaggageman.com>

Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

Transfers

On arrival, transfer by coach to Amersfoort (approx. 2 hours 30 minutes) and Hotel NH Amersfoort.

Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



Accommodation

NH Amersfoort Hotel, Amersfoort

The modern and comfortable four-star NH Amersfoort is located just a 10 minute walk from the lovely city centre, close to both the town's historical attractions and a good selection of cafés and restaurants. Facilities at the hotel include a restaurant (please note the restaurant is closed Friday to Sunday), a bar, and a terrace (open in the summer months). The light, airy and modern rooms have a private bath/shower, hairdryer, TV, telephone, safe, wi-fi and coffee/tea making facilities.

For more information visit their website:

<http://www.nh-hotels.com/nh/en/hotels/the-netherlands/amersfoort/nh-amersfoort.html>



Food

There are few dishes that can be described as quintessentially Dutch, and those that do fall into this category are a far cry from the elaborate creations of French or Italian cuisine. Almost every large town, however, has a wide range of restaurants specialising in their own brands of international dishes. The spicy and exotic Indonesian cuisine, a result of the Dutch colonisation of the East Indies, is particularly delicious.

A typical Dutch breakfast usually consists of several varieties of bread, thin slices of Dutch cheese, prepared meats and sausage, butter and *hagelslag* (chocolate sprinkles) or jam, often a boiled egg and a cup of coffee. For lunch, most common are *Koffietafel* (breads, various cold cuts, cheese and preserves with a side dish of omelette, cottage pie or salad and coffee) and *broodjes* (sandwiches), served in the ubiquitous sandwich bars – *broodjeswinkels*.

More substantial dishes are generally reserved by the Dutch themselves for the evening meal: *erwtensoep* (thick pea soup served with smoked sausage, cubes of bacon, pig's knuckle and brown or white bread), *groentensoep* (clear consommé with vegetables, vermicelli and meatballs), *stampot* (hearty, traditional mash-up of potatoes with endive, turnips or some other earthy vegetable, customarily accompanied by smoked sausage), and *boerenkool met rookworst* (frost-

crisped kale and potatoes served with smoked sausage). Seafood dishes are excellent, particularly in Amsterdam, and include *gebakken zeetong* (fried sole), *lekkerbekjes* (fried whiting), *gerookte paling* (smoked eel), royal imperial oysters, shrimps, mussels, and lobster. Lightly salted 'green' herring can be bought from street stalls (they are held by the tail and slipped down into the throat).

Favourite Dutch desserts include *flensjes* or *pannekoeken* (25 varieties of Dutch pancake), *wafels met slagroom* (waffles with whipped cream), *poffertje* (small dough balls fried and dusted with sugar) and *stroopwafel* (two thin layers of waffle filled with sweet sticky syrup – placed on top of a hot cup of tea or coffee, the syrup filling melts deliciously).

Restaurants usually have table service. Bars and cafes generally have the same, though some are self-service. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, but it is customary to leave small change when paying a bill.



Drink

Dutch beer is excellent, with pilsener-style lagers the most popular. It is always served chilled, generally in small (slightly under half a pint) glasses. The most popular brand in Amsterdam is *Amstel*.

The local spirit, *Jenever* (Dutch gin), flavoured with juniper berries and served chilled, is usually taken straight and knocked back in a single go, but it is sometimes drunk with cola or vermouth. It comes in many varieties depending on the spices used. Favoured brands are *Bols*, *Bokma*, *Claeryn* and *De Kuyper*. Other excellent Dutch liqueurs include *Curaçao*, *Parfait d'Amour*, *Triple Sec* (similar to Cointreau) and Dutch-made versions of *crème de menthe*, *apricot brandy* and *anissette*.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

Breakfast – daily



Destination

2015 marks the 125th anniversary of Van Gogh's death with a special exhibition at the amazing Kröller-Müller Museum, beautifully set in a national park, and that houses one of the most important collections of Van Gogh's in the world. This superb art-based tour also includes entrance to the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, the stunningly recently-restored Rijksmuseum, one of the world's finest galleries, and the superb Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem. As well as discovering the wonderful variety of the art and history of the Netherlands, this delightful rail tour also explores Arnhem and the fascinating Open Air Museum, the Royal Palace at Het Loo and charming provincial Dutch architecture and canals.

Places of interest included in the tour:

Amersfoort

Your base for this tour, the attractive city of Amersfoort, is best known for its well-preserved medieval centre full of beautiful old buildings and atmospheric streets – a lovely place to wander at leisure with a host of dining options each evening. Keep an eye out for the original 14th century city gates.

For more information about Amersfoort:
<http://www.visitamersfoort.com/English/>

Haarlem

Little known Haarlem is one of the Netherlands' most appealing cities with a relaxed pace of life and delightful pedestrianised streets in its lovely historic centre, perfect for leisurely exploration. A former centre of cloth-making, in the 17th century Haarlem became the place to be for a flourishing school of painters, much of whose work is displayed in the excellent *Frans Hals Museum*. Housed in a former almshouse where Hals himself lived the last years of his life, the museum's collection consists of works by Hals and a sample of Dutch paintings from the 15th century to the present day. Other sights include the lively *Grote Markt* square, lined with cafés and restaurants, the *Stadhuis*, the *Vieshal meat market* and the *Grote Kerk Gothic church* built between 1400 and 1550 and housing one of Europe's finest organs, said to have been played by Handel.

For more information about Haarlem:
<http://www.visithaarlem.org/>

Kröller-Müller Museum & St Hubertus Hunting Lodge

The wonderful *Kröller-Müller Museum* owes its existence to the vision of its founder Helene Kröller-Müller (and the wealth of her industrialist husband) who started her collection of modern art in 1906. Donated to the state in 1935, the museum was designed by Henry van de Velde and built to house her collection. The museum now boasts one of the world's greatest collections of Van Gogh paintings (278 of them!), as well as works by Monet, Manet, Mondrian, Picasso, Seurat, Redon, Braque, Gauguin and Cézanne and a beautiful sculpture garden. Its location is no less impressive, in the midst of a stunning national park – the energetic can borrow one of their famous white bicycles to reach the museum from the park entrance. For 2015 only, the Kröller-Müller Museum will hold a special exhibition to celebrate the work of Van Gogh, for the 125th anniversary of his death.

St Hubertus hunting lodge was country house of the Kroller Mullers. Located within the De Hoge Veluwe National Park the hunting lodge was designed by Hendrikus Petrus Berlage and visualises the legend of St Hubert, the patron saint of hunters. The design was inspired by an English country house and includes features such as a library, smoking room, bedrooms and a billiards room.

For more information about the Kröller-Müller Museum:
<http://www.kmm.nl/?lang=en>

Arnhem and the Open-air Museum

Arnhem is famous as the location for the failed Operation Market Garden and "A Bridge Too Far." Virtually destroyed in WWII, it has now been rebuilt to its former glory and is an attractive market town with some notable sights including the *Eusebiuskerk* and 16th century *Duivelshuis*. Just outside town is the superb *Open-air Museum* (entrance included) which showcases lovely old houses, farms and factories from different historical periods from all over the Netherlands. In its beautiful Het Loo parkland setting serviced by vintage trams you will also find demonstrations of manufacturing in the traditional ways.

For more information about the Openluchtmuseum:
<http://www.openairmuseum.nl/>

Amsterdam, the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museum

One of Europe's great cities and the capital of The Netherlands, Amsterdam started life as a small fishing village and became one of the world's most important ports during the Dutch Golden Age. Wander the narrow atmospheric lanes and canals lined with 17th century merchant's houses and visit some of the many cultural and historic sites, such as the intensely moving *Anne Frank's house*, the *Flower Market*, the canals such as *Herengracht* and *Singel* with their quaint houseboats, the *Westerkerk Church* and the *Rembrandt House Museum*.

Do not miss visiting two exceptional museums, included in the tour. Reopened after renovation in 2013, the *Rijksmuseum* is one of the world's greatest art galleries with a large collection that spans art and history, with masterpieces by Rembrandt, Hals and Vermeer plus a huge cache of sculptures and applied arts. Celebrate Vincent Van Gogh's work 125 years after his death at the *Van Gogh Museum*, that has some 100 of the post-impressionist artist on display as well as letters to his brother Theo.

For more information about Amsterdam:

<http://www.iamsterdam.com/>

For more information about the Van Gogh Museum:

<http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en>

For more information about the Rijksmuseum:

<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en>

Reading Suggestions

R. H. Fuchs, *Dutch painting (World of Art)*.

An overview of Dutch painting from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, from Van Eycks to Hals, Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh.

Mariët Westermann, *A Wordly Art. The Dutch Republic 1585-1718*.

Placing the art and artists of the Dutch Golden Age in a political, social and historical context, this proves an interesting and informative read, as well as being filled with plenty of high quality colour illustrations.

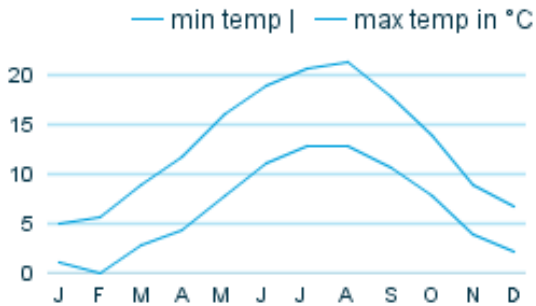
Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Holland at this time of year is likely to be similar to the UK. Evenings can be quite cool and there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



Time – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – Dutch.

Religion – Roman Catholic (30%), Dutch Reformed Church (11%), Other or non (42%).

National holidays – New Year's day (01 Jan); Good Friday; Easter Monday; King's Day; Liberation Day (05 May); Ascension day; Whit Monday; Christmas day (25 Dec); Boxing Day (26 Dec).

Currency – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

Credit cards – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

Electricity – 230 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

Shops and museums – Special purchases include Delft blue pottery, Gouda cheese and diamonds from Amsterdam.

Shops are open Mon 1200-1800, Tue-Fri 0900-1800 and Sat 0900-1700. In Amsterdam and other big cities, supermarkets are open 0800-2000/2100. In large city centres, shops are open Sunday 1200-1700. In many towns, there's evening shopping till 2100 on Thursday or Friday and stores open on the first Sunday of the month.

Please note that some museums close on Mondays.

Clothes & Shoes – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

Camera – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

Bath plugs – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

Telephones/mobiles – You should be able to use your mobile phone in France, depending on your operator and contract.

Tipping –To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



Health

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk



Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC is **not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For more information about the EHIC please visit:

<https://www.ehic.org.uk>



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079 or

00 44 1235 850720

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate General Amsterdam

Koningslaan 44

1075 AE Amsterdam

Netherlands

+31 (0)20 676 4343

Open Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 0900-1230. Telephone enquiries Mon-Fri 0900-1300 and 1400-1630. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +31 (0)20 676 43 43.

Travel Editions

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Email: tours@traveleditions.co.uk www.traveleditions.co.uk

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