

Western Canal Ring



Neighbourhood Top Five

- ❶ Contemplating the amazing life and tragic death of the most famous Dutch girl in history at the poignant **Anne Frank Huis** (p114), where she and her family hid from the Nazis.
- ❷ Browsing the speciality shops along the compact and captivating **Negen Straatjes** (p125).
- ❸ Scaling the bell tower of the mighty **Westerkerk** (p116) and seeing the Netherlands' largest nave.
- ❹ Learning to distinguish an aged Gouda from a young *boerenkaas* at the **Reypenaer Cheese Tasting** (p126).
- ❺ Exploring the neighbourhood's standout **canals** on a Western Canal Ring walking tour (p119).

For more detail of this area see Maps p310 and p312 ➔

Explore Western Canal Ring

This whole area is a Unesco World Heritage site and you could spend a full day admiring the architecture down one canal alone. And although the neighbourhood is loaded with high-profile sights, half the charm here is simply soaking up the atmosphere: from the street, from a boat, from a backyard garden, from a rooftop balcony, or from the terrace of a canal-side cafe.

Begin your first day at the neighbourhood's northern end around the hip Haarlemmerbuurt shopping district and work your way toward the south, weaving in and out of the lanes and canals to visit the Multatuli Museum, admire the architecture of the Huis Met de Hoofden and pay homage to the Homomonument and the Westerkerk until you wind up at Anne Frank Huis in the early evening, when the crowds are thinnest.

On your second day, start with some of Amsterdam's most enjoyable shopping along the Negen Straatjes (Nine Streets) in the neighbourhood's south. This tic-tac-toe board of *straatjes* (small streets) is full of quirky little boutiques stocking antiques, vintage fashions, homewares and one-off speciality shops dedicated to everything from toothbrushes to antique eye wear. The area is peppered with informal drinking and dining venues that spill out into the streets in warmer weather.

Tear yourself away to check out the Bijbels Museum, the canal-house museum Het Grachtenhuis and the Huis Marseille photography museum, before finishing up at the Prinsengracht's bars, cafes and restaurants.

Local Life

➔ **Ad Life** Glance through the windows of the advertising agencies and design firms lining the Singel and Herengracht canals – the arty designer interiors may cause serious job envy.

➔ **Food and Fashion** The Haarlemmerbuurt, incorporating Haarlemmerstraat, is a hotspot for restaurants, gourmet provisions and kitchen shops, interspersed with hip fashion boutiques.

➔ **Snack Time** Join the locals queuing for fries slathered in mayonnaise or spicier sauces at Wil Graanstra Friteshuis (p121).

Getting There & Away

➔ **Trams** Trams 13, 14 and 17 have stops near the main attractions, and any tram or bus that stops near the Dam is just a short walk away.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

In the spring and summer, take advantage of the later evening hours of the Anne Frank Huis. Go for an early dinner at one of the many excellent nearby cafes, and then spend the rest of the evening hours in Amsterdam's most moving sight – with fewer crowds and plenty of time to contemplate this remarkable Dutch girl's life and legacy.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ De Belhamel (p120)
- ➔ Bistro Bij ons (p120)
- ➔ Letting (p118)
- ➔ Vinnies Deli (p118)
- ➔ Singel 404 (p118)

For reviews, see p118. ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ 't Arendsnest (p121)
- ➔ Café Tabac (p121)
- ➔ Café de Vergulde Gaper (p121)
- ➔ Café Het Molenpad (p121)
- ➔ De Doffer (p122)

For reviews, see p121. ➔

Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Frozen Fountain (p123)
- ➔ Tenue de Nîmes (p124)
- ➔ I Love Vintage (p124)
- ➔ De Kaaskamer (p124)
- ➔ Denham the Jeanmaker (p124)

For reviews, see p123. ➔