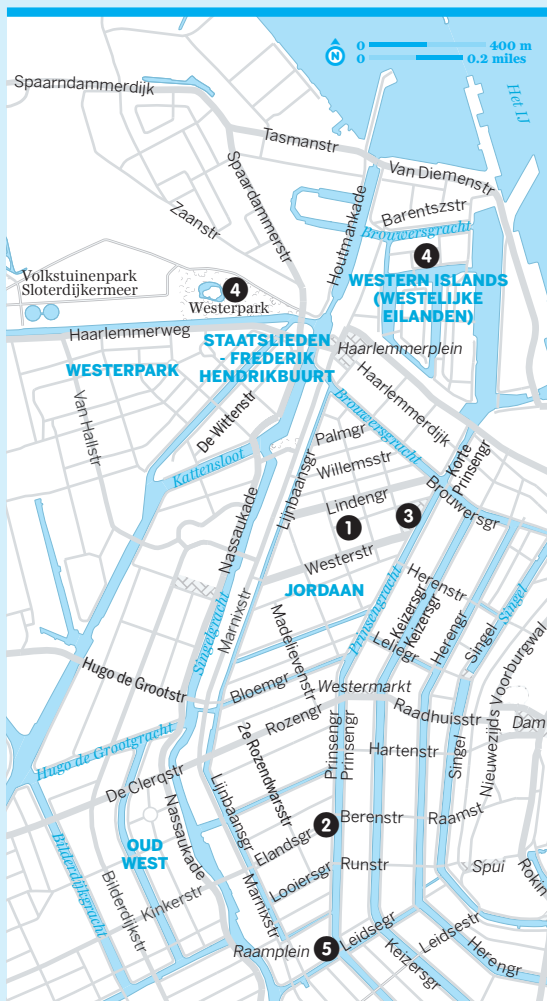


# Jordaan & the West

JORDAAN | WESTERPARK | WESTERN ISLANDS



## Neighbourhood Top Five

❶ There's really nothing more quintessentially Amsterdam than simply getting lost in the **Jordaan** (p132), as you wander the cosy labyrinth of streets and canals in Holland's most beloved neighbourhood.

❷ Head to **Johnny Jordaanplein** (p133) to find the epicentre of the Queen's Day party.

❸ Morning bliss in the Jordaan means cruising the weekly outdoor markets, including the **Noordermarkt** (p132), for organic food, bargain clothes and funky flea market treasures.

❹ A gorgeous city park, a post-industrial culture complex and an island adventure await those who go exploring around the **Westerpark** (p134) and **Western Islands** (p136).

❺ There are many ways to experience the 'real' Amsterdam, but little equals an evening drinking beer in one of the Jordaan's famed brown cafes, such as **De Pieper** (p140).

## Explore: Jordaan & the West

Though gentrified today, the Jordaan was a rough working-class district in the early 17th century, and that history still shows. You'll soon discover that this neighbourhood is a curiously enchanting mix of traditionally gritty, hard-drinking, leftist character (you can't throw a rock without hitting a sociable old *bruin café*) and its revitalised, trend-conscious sheen.

The area doesn't hold many traditional sights, but that's not the point. The Jordaan is about taking your time wandering the narrow lanes and not worrying if you get lost.

We like to start the day at the northern end of the Jordaan and crisscross our way towards the southern part. If it's a Saturday or Monday, start your day browsing one of the street markets such as the Noordmarkt; if it's not, start off exploring Haarlemmerdijk's up-and-coming shopping scene. Take a coffee break at one of the many brown cafes on the Prinsengracht.

On day two, go west. Hop on a bike and cruise the Western Islands for shopping and lunch, before a pre-dinner spin around verdant Westerpark. In the evening, revel in the exciting possibilities that any evening in the Westergasfabriek presents, from an arthouse film at Het Ketelhuis to rock and roll at Pacific Parc.

## Local Life

- ➔ **The Movies** The perfect antidote to the age of the soulless cineplex, this is the oldest – and most charming – cinema in a town of great cinemas.
- ➔ **Off the Beaten Canal** To get the feeling that you have a canal (practically) all to yourself, amble down the elegant and serene Eglantiersgracht.
- ➔ **Brouwersgracht Beauty** Among some seriously tough competition, Amsterdammers still swear that this is their fair city's most beautiful canal.
- ➔ **Haarlemmerdijk** This street is fast becoming a culinary destination; not just for restaurants but for gourmet provisions and kitchen shops.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Tram** Tram 10 along Marnixstraat is your best bet for the neighbourhood's western edge; trams 13 and 14 along Rozengracht go through the centre.
- ➔ **Car** Whatever you do, don't try to drive through the Jordaan's narrow streets. We're not kidding.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

To experience the Jordaan's famous (or infamous) tradition of drunken sing-alongs, duck into De Twee Zwaantjes (p141), to witness a rollicking cabaret-meets-karaoke evening. You'll hear a mix of classics and traditional Dutch tunes that everyone from the piano player to the patrons sing with ebullient relish, so don't be afraid to join in.

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Balthazar's Keuken (p134)
  - ➔ Hostaria (p136)
  - ➔ Small World Catering (p136)
  - ➔ Japanese Pancake World (p136)
  - ➔ Winkel (p137)
- For reviews, see p134 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Café 't Smalle (p140)
  - ➔ Finch (p140)
  - ➔ Westergasterras (p142)
- For reviews, see p140 ➔

### Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Kitsch Kitchen (p143)
  - ➔ Petsalon (p143)
  - ➔ Wonen 2000 (p143)
  - ➔ Boutique Petticoat (p144)
  - ➔ Mooi Gallery (p144)
- For reviews, see p143 ➔