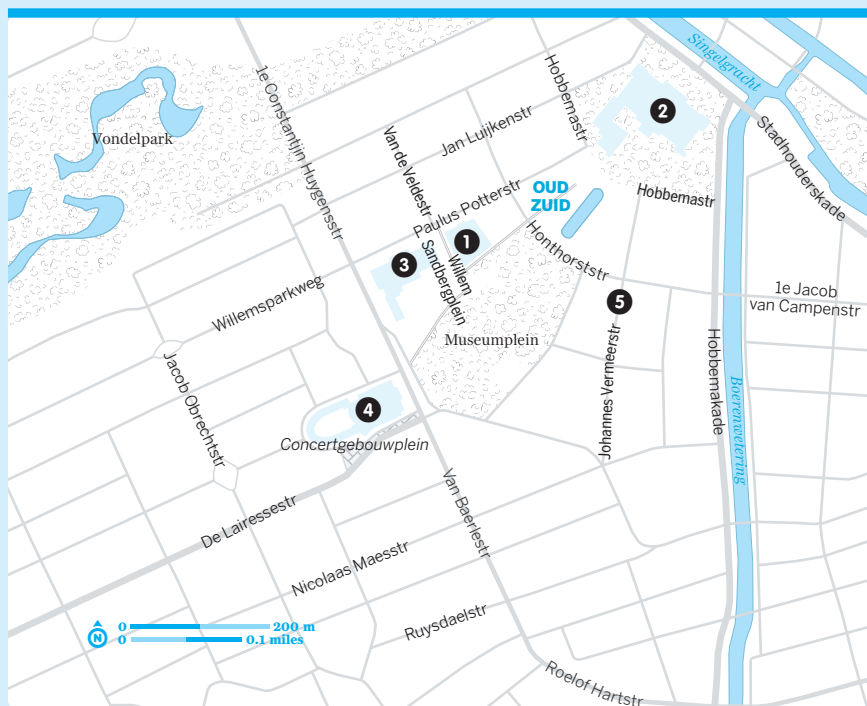


Old South

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 You'll wait in line outside and jostle the crowds inside, but seeing those vivid brushstrokes of yellow sunflowers and purple-blue irises makes it all worthwhile at the **Van Gogh Museum** (p155).
- 2 Plunge into the Golden Age trove of Dutch master paintings, Delft tiles, gold goblets and gilded doll-houses at the **Rijksmuseum** (p158).
- 3 Admire the abstractions of Mondrian, Matisse and all their modern compadres at the **Stedelijk Museum** (p161).
- 4 Listen to music soar in pristine acoustics at the **Concertgebouw** (p164).
- 5 Wander past genteel homes and Amsterdam School **architecture** on streets throughout the Old South, such as Johannes Vermeerstraat.



Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Yes, the Van Gogh and Stedelijk museums have cafes, and snack vendors pave the way to the Rijksmuseum, but we prefer submerging into the Albert Heijn at the Museumplein's foot on Van Baerlestraat. The super-market has prepared salads and sandwiches, or you can buy cheese and a bottle of wine to take out for picnic on the lawn.



Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Loetje (p163)
- ➔ La Falote (p163)
- ➔ Renzo's (p163)

For reviews, see p163 ➔



Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Welling (p163)
- ➔ Wildschut (p163)

For reviews, see p163 ➔



Best Places Beyond the Art Museums

- ➔ Concertgebouw (p162)
- ➔ Museumplein (p162)
- ➔ Coster Diamonds (p162)
- ➔ House of Bols (p162)

For reviews, see p162 ➔

Explore: Old South

The Old South is home to the city's big three art museums, all lined up all in a walkable row. The Rijksmuseum, an 1885 Dutch Renaissance-style behemoth stuffed with Rembrandts, Vermeers and other Golden Age treasures, is the granddaddy. The Van Gogh Museum is the fan favourite, evidenced by the queues winding around the block. The Stedelijk is the triumvirate's third member, open once again to show off its vast modern art collection after a multi-year renovation. No wonder they call it the Museum Quarter. Count on spending a full day here to see the sights.

The big patch of grass behind the museums is called Museumplein, handy for footsore tourists and well used by locals, too, especially in winter, when an ice-skating rink is installed.

While most visitors clear out by late afternoon, there are plenty of reasons to linger. The Old South is one of Amsterdam's most gracious – and richest – neighbourhoods. Impressive manors rise on the leafy streets, and it's fun to wander around and see the cool architecture.

In the evening, the action shifts to the Concertgebouw, the grand music hall built in conjunction with the Rijksmuseum. Well-dressed locals flock to the neighbourhood, and several genteel cafes spring to life.

Local Life

➔ **Plan for the Plein** Yes, the Museumplein is tourist-packed, but locals are out there, too, picnicking, smooching and tossing a frisbee.

➔ **Go Dutch** For eats, the eastern part of Van Baerlestraat leads to several traditional Dutch restaurants and cafes, such as Wildschut.

➔ **Style Tips** Paulus Potterstraat, the street that runs by the museums, turns into Willemsparkweg as you move southeast. Continue along it and you'll pass cafes and local designers' shops where stylish locals sip coffee and get more, er, stylish.

➔ **Go Gliding** In winter, Museumplein's pond becomes a popular ice-skating rink, and the scene looks like the top of a wind-up jewellery box. In warmer weather, skateboarders head to the park's half-pipe.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Trams** Trams 2 and 5 are handy for getting to/from the city centre.

➔ **Bus** Bus 197 zips to the Museumplein from the airport, which is handy if you're staying in the neighbourhood.