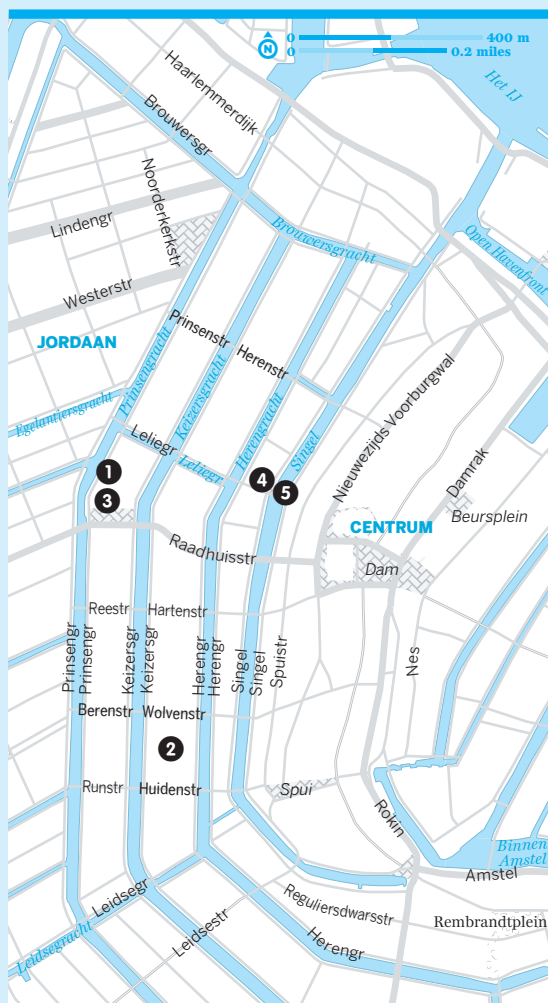


# Western Canal Ring



## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Contemplate the amazing life and tragic death of the most famous Dutch girl in history at **Anne Frank Huis** (p97).
- 2 Shop along the compact, captivating **Negen Straatjes** (Nine Streets; p99).
- 3 Visit the grand **Westerkerk** (p99), home to the largest nave in the Netherlands.
- 4 Learn to distinguish an aged Gouda from a creamy young *boerenkaas* at the **Reyenaer Cheese Tasting** (p99).
- 5 Explore the city's canals on a **Western Canal Ring walking tour** (p100).

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

In the spring and summer, we recommend taking advantage of the later evening hours of the Anne Frank Huis. Go to 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 no crowds, and plenty of time to contemplate this remarkable Dutch girl's life and legacy.



### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Buffet Van Odette (p102)
- ➔ De Belhamel (p102)
- ➔ Stout (p102)
- ➔ Pancakes! (p102)
- ➔ Cilubang (p102)

For reviews, see p102 ➔



### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Café Restaurant Van Puffelen (p104)
- ➔ Café Tabac (p104)
- ➔ Café het Molenpad (p104)
- ➔ Café de Vergulde Gaper (p104)
- ➔ De Doffer (p104)

For reviews, see p104 ➔



### Best Places to Shop

- ➔ De Kaaskamer (p106)
- ➔ Frozen Fountain (p106)
- ➔ Scotch & Soda (p107)
- ➔ Unlimited Delicious (p107)
- ➔ Boekie Woekie (p106)

For reviews, see p106 ➔

## Explore: Western Canal Ring

Before you start out, remember that this whole area is a Unesco World Heritage site; you could spend an entire day admiring the architecture down one canal alone. Although this area is indeed loaded with sights (and in high season attracts the amount of tourists you'd expect), half of the charm is simply soaking up the atmosphere: from the street, from a boat, from a backyard garden or rooftop balcony, or from the terrace of a canalside cafe.

Don't expect to see the entire district in one day. It's easiest to start at the northern end of the neighbourhood, on Haarlemmerdijk, and work your way towards Westerkerk and Anne Frank Huis the first day. Browse through the trendy Haarlemmerdijk and Haarlemmerstraat shops, eat lunch at one of the nearby cafes, stroll the lovely Brouwersgracht, and then spend the afternoon weaving in and out of the lanes and canals until you wind up at Anne Frank Huis in the early evening, when the crowds are thinnest.

On the south side of the neighbourhood, the Negen Straatjes (Nine Streets) comprise a tic-tac-toe board of perhaps Amsterdam's most enjoyable shopping. The *straatjes* (streets) are full of quirky little shops dealing in antiques, vintage fashions, housewares and one-offs including everything from toothbrushes to antique eye-glass frames. It's all peppered with pubs, cafes and informal dining that spills out into the streets in warmer weather. Fair warning: many a traveller has happened upon the Nine Streets and inadvertently spent the whole day wandering the shops, eating and drinking.

## Local Life

➔ **Ad perfect** As you mosey down the Singel and the Herengracht canal, glance into the windows of some of the posh advertising agencies and design firms that line the streets, where the artistically designed interiors might cause serious job envy.

➔ **Felix Merits House** Get cultured with the neighbourhood intelligentsia at this community gathering place.

➔ **Happy hour** Want to hobnob (or network) with the local young professionals? Come early evening – they congregate at stylish Werck (p104).

## Getting There & Away

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