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PLAN YOUR TRIP

YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT

Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions to help you put together your perfect trip

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UNDERSTAND THE NETHERLANDS

GET MORE FROM YOUR TRIP

Learn about the big picture, so you can make sense of what you see

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THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Ryan Ver Berkmoes, Karla Zimmerman



Texel
Food, dunes
and fun (p123)

Amsterdam
World-famous canals
good for exploring (p40)

The perfect little canal town (p163)

Hoge Veluwe National Park
Discover masterpieces
of nature and art (p234)

A city-sized gallery
of architecture (p168)

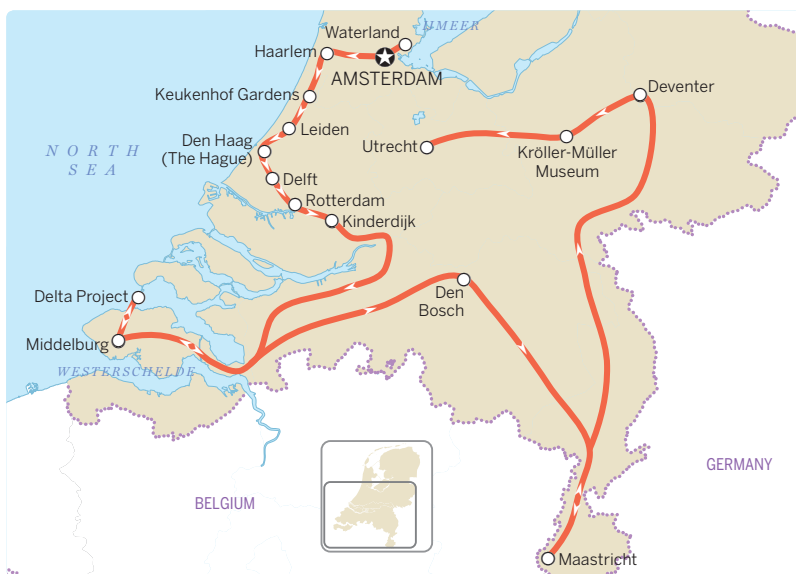
Cafes crowd ancient wonders (p237)

BELGIUM

GERMANY

itineraries

Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat with other travellers.



Three Weeks Southern Sojourn

Start in **Amsterdam**, stay three days, visit the city's big museums and relax in **Vondelpark**. Discover the **Jordaan** and the **Southern Canal Belt**, then take a load off in Hoppe, a grand cafe on the Spui. Plunge into the city's celebrated **nightlife**. Escape the city by bicycle to enjoy the classic beauty of the **Waterland** region.

Continue on as in the one-week tour to **Haarlem**, **Leiden** (and **Keukenhof Gardens**, in season), **Den Haag (The Hague)** and **Rotterdam**, but add a day for **Delft** and its Vermeer splendour. Take the ferry to see the windmills at **Kinderdijk**, then head for **Middelburg**, Zeeland's prosperous capital, and the nearby **Delta Project**. Take trains through the Netherlands' southern provinces, stopping for the hidden canals of lovely **Den Bosch**, before continuing to **Maastricht**, a city with more panache than most; two days should be enough to sample some great cuisine and meander through the medieval centre. Head north to visit Hanseatic **Deventer** and then head east to the excellent **Kröller-Müller Museum**. Polish off your trip in the cosmopolitan yet deeply historic city of **Utrecht**.



Two Weeks The IJsselmeer

A practical place to start this tour is **Amsterdam**; three days will whiz by in a blur of museums, parks, canal tours and nightlife. Head north along the IJsselmeer coast through the **Watterland region** to the tiny fishing village of **Marken**. Cycle the dykes to cute-as-a-button **Edam**. Stay overnight before reaching **Alkmaar** early to experience its kitsch but fun cheese market, then wander through **Enkhuisen's** enthralling **Zuiderzeemuseum**.

Next, catch a bus to **Den Helder**, and a ferry to **Texel**. Spend two days (or two weeks...) dividing your time between beach and bike exploration, then take another ferry to **Vlieland** to appreciate the wilder side of the Frisian Islands. From Vlieland, get a ferry to charming **Harlingen**, from where **Leeuwarden** is only a short train ride away. Friesland's capital is an entertaining place, as is the nearby chain of coastal towns highlighted by **Hindeloopen** on the IJsselmeer.

Break the train trip at Hanseatic **Zwolle** and add more stops in **Naarden** and **Muiden**, two historical fortress towns.

One to Two Weeks Island Escapes

The necklace of low-lying Wadden Islands (Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, Ameland and Schiermonnikoog) is recognised by Unesco and makes for good island-hopping. Some ferry links require advance planning; you might be able to link all five by boat but for most there will be connections via the mainland. From Amsterdam, head to **Texel**. Bike along the island's western coast from sleepy **Den Hoorn** through dark copses to the **Ecomare** seal and bird refuge. Comb the eastern side of the island, visiting the superb **Maritime & Beachcombers Museum** in **Oudeschild**.

From **De Cocksdorp** at the northern end of Texel, board the morning ferry to car-free **Vlieland** to explore its nature and hiking trails before catching the boat to **Terschelling**, Friesland's main tourist island. Hole up in peaceful **Oosterend** and cycle the untouched dunes, then hightail it by ferry to **Harlingen**, a pretty little port on the Frisian coast, and on to **Holwerd**, to ferry across to somnolent **Ameland**. Stay in the whaling port of **Nes**. Return via the ports of **Holwerd** and **Lauwersoog** and back on a ferry to **Schiermonnikoog**, the smallest of the Frisian Islands and featuring a windswept, evocative national park.



One Week Eastern Experience

The Netherlands' eastern expanse is largely ignored by tourists, but there is myriad highlights to discover.

Begin your trip in **Groningen**, a vibrant city filled with students, bars, cafes and a couple of fine museums. Cycle south-east to **Bourtange**, a perfectly preserved 17th-century fortified town, before moving on to **Borger** and its prehistoric **hunebedden**, stone arrangements once used as burial chambers. Cycle through the woods to **Kamp Westerbork** and encounter its moving, horrible heritage. Catch a train to **Zwolle**, an unhurried Hanseatic town that's ideal for backstreet meanders. A trip through nearby **Weerribben-Wieden National Park** should include renting a canoe.

From Zwolle it's only a short train ride to **Deventer**, one of the most appealing small towns in the Netherlands. Next, explore the **Hoge Veluwe National Park**, a natural oasis that's home to a renowned art museum. Then head for **Den Bosch**, which has a dynamite museum dedicated to its namesake artist. **Breda** is your next stop, where you can enjoy the city's cafe-filled centre. Go back to nature at **Biesbosch National Park** before finishing up on the lovely old streets and canals of **Dordrecht**.

One Week The Lay of the Lowlands

Begin in **Amsterdam**. Visit the **Van Gogh Museum** and the **Rijksmuseum** and rent a bicycle to explore the pretty neighbourhood of **Jordaan**. On the second day board a **canal boat tour** and walk the **Red Light District** before hitting a brown cafe or coffeeshop. Or both.

Head west to the town of **Haarlem** – stroll the compact old quarter, and view the masterpieces at the **Frans Hals Museum** and the stained glass of the **Grote Kerk van St Bavo**. In tulip season (mid-March to mid-May) witness the unbelievable colours of the **Keukenhof Gardens**, north of Leiden. Then spend a day among **Leiden's** old-world splendour. Next, take a day in **Den Haag (The Hague)**, being sure not to miss the **Mauritshuis** collection, with five-star works from everyone from Vermeer to Warhol.

In the remaining time take a harbour boat tour in **Rotterdam** and visit the **Museum Boijmans van Beuningen** and the **Maritiem Museum Rotterdam**. The next morning, do a walking tour of the city's **modern architecture** before departing for **Kinderdijk** and its gaggle of Unesco-recognised windmills.

➤ Every listing is recommended by our authors, and their favourite places are listed first

➤ Look out for these icons:



Our author's top recommendation



A green or sustainable option



No payment required

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how to use this book

These symbols will help you find the listings you want:

Sights	Tours	Drinking
Beaches	Festivals & Events	Entertainment
Activities	Sleeping	Shopping
Courses	Eating	Information/Transport

These symbols give you the vital information for each listing:

Telephone Numbers	Wi-Fi Access	Bus
Opening Hours	Swimming Pool	Ferry
Parking	Vegetarian Selection	Metro
Nonsmoking	English-Language Menu	Subway
Air-Conditioning	Family-Friendly	London Tube
Internet Access	Pet-Friendly	Tram
		Train

Reviews are organised by author preference.

Look out for these icons:

	Our author's recommendation
	No payment required
	A green or sustainable option

Our authors have nominated these places as demonstrating a strong commitment to sustainability – for example by supporting local communities and producers, operating in an environmentally friendly way, or supporting conservation projects.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Buddhist
- Castle
- Christian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery
- Ruin
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Diving/Snorkelling
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Skiing
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity/Course/Tour

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking

- Drinking
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Post Office
- Tourist Information

Transport

- Airport
- Border Crossing
- Bus
- Cable Car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Monorail
- Parking
- S-Bahn
- Taxi
- Train/Railway
- Tram
- Tube Station
- U-Bahn
- Underground Train Station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed Road
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian Overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour Detour
- Path

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Geographic

- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Hydrography

- River/Creek
- Intermittent River
- Swamp/Mangrove
- Reef
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Glacier

Areas

- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Park/Forest
- Sportsground
- Sight (Building)
- Top Sight (Building)



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Ryan Ver Berkmoes

Coordinating Author; all chapters except Amsterdam

Ryan worked on the first edition of Lonely Planet's *The Netherlands*, a country where they pronounce his name better than he can, possibly because his ancestors are lurking about there somewhere. Ryan is thrilled to see it continues to be the same charming, amusing, idiosyncratic place. He travels the world writing about great places to visit. Learn more at ryanverberkmoes.com or on

Twitter: @ryanvb.

Read more about Ryan at:

lonelyplanet.com/members/ryanverberkmoes



Karla Zimmerman

Amsterdam

During her Amsterdam travels, Karla admired art, bicycled crash-free, ate an embarrassing quantity of *frites* and bent over to take her jenever like a local. She has been visiting Amsterdam since 1989, decades that have seen her trade space cakes for *stroopwafels*, to a much more pleasant effect. She never tires of the city's bobbing houseboats, cling clinging bike bells and canal houses tilting

at impossible angles. Based in Chicago, Karla writes travel features for newspapers, books, magazines and websites. She has written several Lonely Planet guidebooks covering the USA, Canada, Caribbean and Europe.

Read more about Ryan at:

lonelyplanet.com/members/karlazimmerman.

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