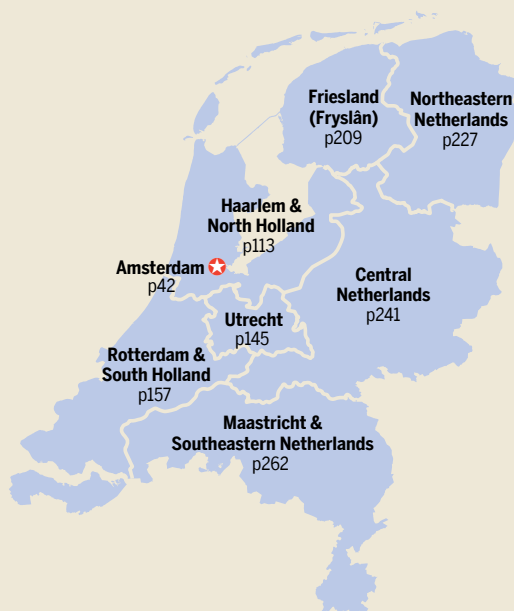




The Netherlands



Nicola Williams, Abigail Blasi, Mark Elliott,
Catherine Le Nevez, Virginia Maxwell

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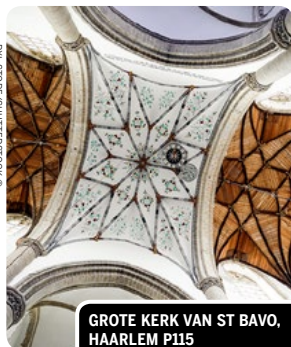
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Itineraries



3
WEEKS

Southern Sojourn

Catch the Netherlands' most iconic sights on a leisurely spin around the country's south.

Spend the first week in **Amsterdam** and surrounds; enjoy the classic beauty of the **Waterland** region by bicycle.

In the second week, visit Golden Age **Haarlem**, **Keukenhof Gardens** (in season), museum-filled **Leiden**, the Dutch seat of government **Den Haag** and charming **Delft**.

At the start of the third week, hit cutting-edge **Rotterdam**. Ride a waterbus to admire windmills at **Kinderdijk**, then head for Zeeland's restored capital **Middelburg** and the **Delta Project**. Travel through the southern provinces, breaking in **Bergen op Zoom** for the country's oldest surviving city-palace, **Breda** for *café* life and **Den Bosch** for hidden canals. Continue to **Maastricht** for medieval meanderings and great cuisine. Head north to Hanseatic **Deventer**, then west to the **Kröller-Müller Museum** in the Hoge Veluwe National Park. End in historic, cosmopolitan university city **Utrecht**.



2 WEEKS

Circumnavigating the IJsselmeer

This itinerary focuses on IJsselmeer – the central Netherlands' vast artificial lake.

Spend three days in **Amsterdam** for museums, parks, canal tours and nightlife. Head north along the IJsselmeer coast through the **Waterland** region to the tiny fishing village of **Marken**. Cycle the dykes to **Edam** with its famous, seasonal cheese market (July to August). Stay overnight, then reach **Alkmaar** early to experience its equally riveting, centuries-old cheese market (April to September). Explore the enthralling Zuiderzeemuseum in **Enkhuizen**.

Travel to **Den Helder**, and take a ferry to **Texel**. Spend two days on the island, enjoying the beach and bike exploration, then catch a ferry to **Vlieland**; a seafood lunch here at uber-fashionable *strandpaviljoen* (beach pavilion) Oost is a highlight. From Vlieland, sail aboard a ferry to charming **Harlingen**. From here Friesland's lively capital **Leeuwarden** is a short train journey away, as is the nearby chain of coastal towns, including quaint **Hindeloopen**.

Head to Hanseatic **Zwolle** and also visit the historic fortress towns of **Naarden** and **Muiden**.

1 WEEK

Island Escapes

The low-lying Wadden Islands are strung out like pearls in the Unesco-listed Waddenzee and are perfect for island-hopping. Some ferry links require advance planning.

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, visiting the superb Maritime and 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 catch the ferry across to languid **Ameland**. Stay in the whaling port of **Nes**. Return to the mainland and continue east to the port of **Lauwersoog**. From here catch the ferry to the smallest of the Frisian Islands, **Schiermonnikoog**, home to an evocative, windswept national park, before returning to the mainland.



2 WEEKS Eastern Experience

The Netherlands' eastern expanse boasts myriad highlights to be discovered.

Begin in **Groningen**, a vibrant city with students, bars, cafes and fine museums. Travel southeast to **Bourtange**, a 17th-century fortified town, then move on to **Borger** and its prehistoric *hunebedden* (stone burial chambers). Make your way to **Kamp Westerbork** to encounter its moving, horrible heritage. Head to **Zwolle**, an unhurried Hanseatic town, and then to the **Weerribben-Wieden National Park**, a unique bog-and-water scape strewn with hiking, biking and canoe-paddling trails.

From Zwolle hop to **Deventer**, one of the Netherlands' most appealing small towns. Explore **Hoge Veluwe National Park** by bike, a natural oasis with a renowned art museum at its green core. Head to **Den Bosch** and visit its terrific Jheronimus Bosch Art Center, then head west to kick back in the fabulous old-world villages of **Heusden** (fortified and moat-ringed) and **Woudrichem** (a citadel village). Get lost in nature at your penultimate stop, **Biesbosch National Park**, before exploring the picturesque streets and canals of **Dordrecht**.

1 WEEK The Lay of the Lowlands

Hit the country's best highlights.

Begin with two days in **Amsterdam**. Visit the big-hitting museums and explore the charming Jordaan neighbourhood by bike. On your second day board a canal boat tour, and stroll through the Red Light District before getting cosy in a brown cafe.

Travel west to beautiful **Haarlem** – stroll the compact historic core, and view masterpieces at the Frans Hals Museum. In tulip season witness the kaleidoscopic colours of the **Keukenhof Gardens**. Spend a day among old-world splendour in **Leiden**. Next, take a day in **Den Haag** and catch the Mauritshuis' exceptional art collection.

Head south to happening **Rotterdam** to tour the harbour and visit the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, the Maritiem Museum and the architecturally striking food hall, Markthal Rotterdam. The next morning, take a walking tour of the city's incredible contemporary architecture, then hop aboard a waterbus and sail to **Kinderdijk** to explore Unesco-recognised windmills – go local and rent wheels in Rotterdam or Kinderdijk.

Behind the Scenes

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Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

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

Population

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

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

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

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



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 Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

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