

WELCOME TO THE NETHERLANDS

Cultural highlights 2013



2013 promises to be a very special year for Amsterdam. Several of the city's iconic institutions celebrate remarkable milestones and a range of unique events are in store throughout the year. 2013 will be a very special year for Amsterdam. Several of the city's iconic institutions celebrate remarkable milestones and a range of events are in store throughout the year. Here are just 10 great reasons why Amsterdam is the place to be in 2013!

400 years of the Amsterdam canals

One of the city's most iconic sights, 2013 marks the 400th year of the Canal Ring. The Amsterdam canals are unique: a work of art attesting to outstanding city planning and architecture that aptly expresses the growth and success of Amsterdam in the Dutch Golden Age. The Canal Ring was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status in 2010 and to this day, the city's biggest celebrations such as Queen's Day and Gay Pride take place on the canals. During 2013, the canals will be a hotspot for concerts, art and festivals and the subject of several special exhibitions.

175 years of Artis Zoo

The oldest and best-known zoo in the Netherlands, Amsterdam's Artis Royal Zoo joins in the 2013 celebrations to mark 175 years of nature, culture and heritage. Far more than just a zoo, Artis is a cultural meeting place, a city park and a peaceful oasis in the centre of Amsterdam. Founded in 1838, the zoo is currently home to in the region of 6,100 animals from about 900 different species.

Reopening of the Rijksmuseum

After extensive renovations, the Rijksmuseum will reopen its doors in spring 2013 to reveal an astounding 1.5 kilometres of art with exhibits dating from the present back to the Middle Ages. Designed by architect Pierre Cuypers, the museum has been fully restored by Spanish architects agency Cruz y Ortis, respectfully bringing the museum up to date for 21st-century visitors. The Rijksmuseum will open in April, revealing 80 restored halls in which 8,000 items narrate the story of 800 years of Dutch art and history. The museum has been given a completely new look: only Rembrandt's Nightwatch still hangs in its original place.

125 years of the Concertgebouw

The Amsterdam concert hall welcomed its first visitors in April 1888. 125 years later, the Concertgebouw is a world leader in the field, famed for its unique acoustics. More than 700 concerts are held at the Concertgebouw every year, with internationally-acclaimed soloists, orchestras and conductors regularly gracing the stage. Home to the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the concert hall will celebrate its 125th anniversary with an enormous range of special concerts and events. The Digital Concertgebouw project will be launched in 2013, bringing productions to an even wider audience by broadcasting live concerts in new locations around the city.

125 years of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

With chief conductor Mariss Jansons at the helm, the renowned orchestra celebrates its 125th anniversary with a world tour taking in six continents. Comprising 120 extremely talented and dedicated musicians, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra never fails to put on a spellbinding performance. The orchestra will also perform at the Prinsengracht Concert in August.

Felix Meritis: 225 years of enlightenment

Amsterdam's Felix Meritis was founded in 1788 as a centre for international art, culture, trade and science. The 'temple of enlightenment' will celebrate its 225th anniversary with a series of special readings, exhibitions, educational programmes and guided tours. The Felix Meritis Observatory will also be opened to the public for the first time in 200 years.

150 years since the abolition of slavery

On 1 July 2013, it will be exactly 150 years since Dutch slavery was abolished in the former colonies of Suriname and the Dutch Antilles. Due to the important role that Amsterdam played in the history of slavery, the city is keen to bring broad attention to the anniversary and the significance of the abolition. The Stichting Herdenking Slavernijverleden 2013 (Foundation for the Commemoration of Slavery 2013) has been set up to start preparing a commemorative programme of events.

40 years of the Van Gogh Museum

The Van Gogh Museum will reopen following internal renovations in 2013, 160 years after the birth of Van Gogh and 40 years since the museum opened. The museum houses the world's largest collection of drawings, paintings and letters by the artist alongside works by Van Gogh's contemporaries and is dedicated to exhibiting the works to as broad an audience as possible. Welcoming 1.6 million visitors every year, the museum is one of the 25 most-visited museums in the world. Due to the renovations, an extensive collection of Van Gogh's works will be on display at the Hermitage Amsterdam until April 2013.

The Netherlands and Russia in 2013

A major exhibition entitled *The Czar and the Canals* will run at the Hermitage Amsterdam from February to August 2013, focusing on the Czar's visits to the Netherlands in 1697 and 1717. Russia is important for the Netherlands when it comes to economic, cultural and socio-political concerns. Strong ties have been forged between the two countries, dating back to Czar Peter's visit to the Netherlands in 1697 – a visit that kicked off fruitful trade relations and the exchange of expertise. Zaandam is also celebrating Dutch links with Russia in 2013: the Czar Peter House will be put into the limelight and numerous Russian-related activities will be organised in the region.

100 years of the Frans Hals Museum

Haarlem's Frans Hals Museum celebrates its centenary with an anniversary exhibition featuring key works by the Dutch painter alongside paintings by artists including Titiaan, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Jordaens and Rubens. The exhibition runs from 23 March to 28 July 2013. The museum is home to the largest collection of paintings by Fran Hals in the world. Haarlem's most renowned Golden Age artist, Hals specialised in portraits and was acclaimed for his accurate, expressive style.

Amsterdam

Undoubtedly one of the jewels of Europe, and not just because of the stunning 17th century canals. Incredible examples of modern architecture are omnipresent, and did you know that Amsterdam boasts more museums per m² than any other European capital? Go find out for yourself!

Van Gogh Museum



A visit to the Van Gogh Museum is a unique experience. There is no other place in the world where you can see so many of Vincent van Gogh's paintings under one roof. The Museum is situated on the Museumplein in Amsterdam, between the Rijksmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum. The Museum's collection is divided into three sections. The Van Gogh collection, work from other artists and the collection concerning the Van Gogh Museum's history. Due to the renovations, an extensive collection of Van Gogh's works will be on display at the Hermitage Amsterdam until April 2013.

Hermitage Amsterdam



In the Hermitage Amsterdam the rich Russian past is within easy reach. This museum in Amsterdam organizes changing exhibitions, featuring objects from the collections of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg and from other Russian museums.

The surface area of the Hermitage Amsterdam is approximately 9.000 m², with two main galleries, cabinets, an old church hall, trustees' rooms and a courtyard garden.

Amsterdam Museum



The rich collection of works of art, objects and archaeological finds brings to life the fortunes of Amsterdammers of days gone by and today. From a mediaeval child's shoe and the map of Cornelis Antonisz from 1538, giving a bird's-eye view of the city, to the impressive Civic Guard paintings from the Golden Age. Photos and film material show the happy times as well as the drama of the modern city's inhabitants. You'll witness the poverty in the Jordaan area he 19th century but also the idealism of the sixties and Ajax's success at football.

Anne Frank House



The Anne Frank House is a museum with a story. It's situated in the center of Amsterdam and holds the hiding place where Anne Frank wrote her famous diary during World War II. Anne Frank was a normal girl in exceptional circumstances. For more than two years she described the events of her daily life in hiding in her diary. The original version of the diary is on display as part of the Anne Frank House's permanent exhibition. The collection and temporary exhibitions focus on the wartime persecution of Jews, contemporary fascism, racism and anti-Semitism.

Royal Palace



The Royal Palace is located on the Dam in Amsterdam. It is not Queen Beatrix's place of residence but she occasionally receives important guests there. Then the red carpet is rolled out and the

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Dutch flag flies above the Palace. When the important guests have departed, then everyone can take a glimpse of the Palace.

Diamond Museum



The Diamond Museum Amsterdam takes you on a journey that began 3 billion years ago, 200 kilometres under the surface of the earth, and which ends in the ring on your finger or in the pendant around your neck. A fascinating story that should not be missed. After your journey in the museum you are more than welcome to have a drink in our coffee corner, or to have a look in the museum shop or to visit the diamond factory.

Amsterdam Citysightseeing Hop on Hop off



The fun way to get around Amsterdam.

Daily from 10.00 am till 19.00 pm 9 stops.

CitySightseeing Amsterdam is the perfect way of getting around Amsterdam with its wealth of historical buildings. Our comfortable Hop on Hop off bus offer a regular service along the major sights. Routes with 9 stops located near the major museums, shopping areas and attractions. On board there are interesting multi-lingual commentaries on Amsterdam. Your day pass is valid for 24 hours.

Hop on, hop off all day long!

Floating flower market

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The Singel flower market is one of the most colorful and fragrant places of interest of Amsterdam in all four seasons. It is unique in that the merchandise is displayed on floating barges. This is a relic from the days when the flowers and plants sold at this market were shipped in from the horticultural areas around the city by barges. Fresh flowers are still brought in every day; by vans, however, and no longer by boat.

Jordaan



One of the reasons for the growing fame of this area were the sentimental songs by a number of local singers. These songs contributed to the attractive image of the area. Various local pubs still feature live singers like Johnny Jordaan, Tante Leen en Willy Alberti, who sing about the area. The Jordaan district is a maze of alleyways and narrow canals. Most of the canals have been filled up. The district was established in the 17th century, as Amsterdam sorely needed to expand. The district was constructed along the pattern of the paths and ditches already there.

Rotterdam

The city that is so unlike Holland's other cities. Located on the mighty Maas River. One of the world's biggest ports. A city with outstanding architecture and delightful culture and an abundance of attractions, festivals and museums. A swinging young city culture and excellent shopping facilities, restaurants and cafes.

Euromast



Architect Maaskant designed the Euromast in 1960 on the occasion of the Floriade. The tower was 'only' one 100 meters high at the time.

Eight years later the medical faculty topped it by 14 meters. It was decided to increase the height of the Euromast by 85 meters by building the Space Tower. This was finished in 1970.

Cube-shaped houses



Rotterdam's famous cube-shaped houses, designed by Piet Blom, are situated just outside Blaak railway station. Most of these houses are occupied. However, one of the houses is open to visitors. It allows you to experience what it is like to live in such an unusual house.

Spido harbour tours



Spido will show you the port of Rotterdam, the largest in the world. It is quite an experience to see the warfs, quays, docks and silos at such close quarters and to participate in the busy sea and river traffic which has brought Rotterdam its fame. The surroundings of Rotterdam may also be explored by Spido. A fascinating trip on the numerous rivers and streams which pass through this area makes this possible.

Keukenhof



Keukenhof is the most famous garden in Holland. The combination of acres of flowers, floral exhibitions, art and various activities have drawn millions of visitors over the years.

The 80-acre park is situated just outside the town of Lisse, south of Haarlem and features beds of tulips, crocuses, daffodils and other flowers. Strategically laid out paths weave their way through

different sections of the park, guiding the visitor through spectacular flower displays, themed gardens, shady tree-lined lanes and hothouses. Even the children are catered for, the Bollenbozen route, a fun filled treasure trail takes the children on a voyage of discovery through the park.

The Hague

Het Binnenhof



Throughout the ages, 'Het Binnenhof' in The Hague has always been the centre of politics in the Netherlands, the place where affairs of state were discussed. Not only are the buildings themselves well worth seeing, but it was here that the most important events in Dutch history took place. Parliament still meets here, and thus the Binnenhof remains the centre of Dutch political life today.

Madurodam



The world-famous miniature city Madurodam presents everything Holland is famous for, replicated to the smallest detail on a scale of 1:25. It's an excellent way to familiarise yourself with all the surprising features Holland has to offer.

Keytours/Via Travel



Keytours/Via Travel is a tour company with its own bus fleet.

We are an Inbound Tour Operator. We organize group travel, incentives and conferences for our international travel industry relations and for companies at home and abroad. Keytours/Via Travel is a subsidiary of Coster Diamonds and the Oostenrijk Group. This ensures our quality and enables us to provide our relations the best product at the best possible price. Keytours has been in business for over 40 years and has taken over Via Travel since 2012! We distribute excursions and tourist product for both individuals and groups via our website www.keytours.nl (B2C) and a network of over 100 foreign tour operators (B2B).

A selection of the excursion program:

- Ultimate Amsterdam Tour (duration 2,5 hours) :
Coach tour through Amsterdam including a picture stop at a windmill. You can combine this tour with a visit to the Rijksmuseum or the Van Gogh museum and a canal cruise.
- Windmills/Edam (duration 4 hours):
Coach tour to the Zaanse Schans where you can see the interior of a windmill. We visit a wooden shoe factory and the medieval town of Edam.
- Grand Holland Tour (duration 8 hours):
We visit the flower auction in Aalsmeer, followed by a visit to Delft (Delft blue pottery) and a city tour through Rotterdam and the Hague.

Other excursions:

- bulb fields and Keukenhof (March – May)
- Enclosing dike (August)
- Antwerp & Brussels
- Bruges

Would you like to find out more about the possibilities? Please do not hesitate to contact us:

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