

ITBholland presents..

ITB Originals



Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, is one of the **most popular cities** for international tourists. Every year, Amsterdam attracts some 4,6 million visitors, who stay a total of some 8,6 million nights. Visitors in Amsterdam are especially captivated by the atmosphere of **Amsterdam's 17th century inner-city**, the same historic and lively. Many of Amsterdam's visitors return for longer visits and become better acquainted with the hospitable Dutch who are happy to show off their, sometimes, remarkable linguistic abilities.



Amsterdam is compactly built: its **historical and cultural attractions** are conveniently close to each other. Per square kilometre the canalised capital offers more interesting things to do and see than any other city. It is especially famous for the sparkling crescent of canals where wealthy merchants built elegant homes and sturdy warehouses during **Holland's Golden Age**, the 17th century, when Amsterdam was the richest city in the world. Among the favourite tourist attractions in Amsterdam are its 40 **museums**. At least three of them are world-renowned.

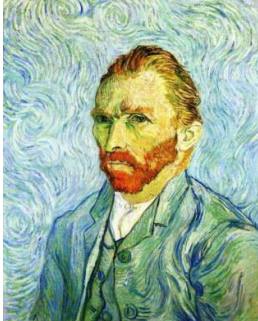
People who enjoy **shopping** find endless opportunities in Amsterdam. The city has earned its reputation as an important trade centre for art that offers high quality for agreeable prices. This also applies to the numerous **diamond-cutting** establishments in the city. After shopping in the centre of the city, it is pleasant to sit and relax on a terrace overlooking a canal or in one of the tree-shaded "pleinen" (squares) and have some refreshments. During the colder months many of the roofed terraces are heated and visitors are welcomed in Amsterdam's "brown cafes" at any time of year.

While making Amsterdam their home base, tourists can take very **interesting excursions** throughout Holland. For instance they can visit the centuries-old fishing villages of Marken and Volendam or photograph the various types of windmills in the Zaanse Schans. One of the most memorable sightseeing tours includes the fabulous Keukenhof flower show in spring.

Amsterdam City Tour including Van Gogh Museum or Rijksmuseum (4 hours)

One of the most beautiful cities in the world, Amsterdam, knew its greatest days of glory during the 17th century. Far from being an open air museum, it has developed since, being one of the most lively and charming cities of The Netherlands. The city will be introduced to you during an extensive panoramic city tour through the centre and the modern suburbs. A visit will be made to a **diamond factory** and to one of the museums below:

The **Rijksmuseum** is one of the most prestigious museums in the world. The collection – which includes major works by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Jan Steen, Frans Hals and other masters from the Golden Age – annually attracts more than a million visitors from all over the world. Now that the main building is closed until 2012/13 while it undergoes a radical renovation, the Rijksmuseum is concentrated in the completely new layout of the Philips Wing.



A visit to the **Van Gogh museum** is a unique experience. The museum contains the largest collection of paintings by Vincent van Gogh in the world. It provides the opportunity to keep track of the artist's development, or compare his paintings to works by other artists from the 19th century in the collection. The museum also holds an extensive offer of exhibitors on various subjects from 19th century art history.



Dreams of nature. Symbolism from Van Gogh to Kandinsky (February 24th until June 17th 2012)

This is the first exhibition dedicated to the symbolist landscape in Europe. Some 70 poetical and evocative paintings of nature from the period 1880–1910 will offer a new perspective on this intriguing movement. Artists used their landscapes to represent their vision of death, dreams, infinity and the cosmos, feelings of nationalism or ideas about science and the modern age.

The Van Gogh Museum is closed from October 2012 until March 2013. The Hermitage Amsterdam will exhibit approximately 75 paintings and several works on paper by Van Gogh.



Amsterdam City Tour by bike (4 hours)

Our guide will meet you at your hotel in the center of Amsterdam. Short walk (depending of location of the hotel) to a bike rental company. (on request we can have the bikes delivered at the hotel against a supplement). With the bicycle you can reach places, which remain inaccessible to others.



This is a safely **guided tour**, which gives a fascinating picture of Amsterdam. You will pass the harbor, charming Jordaan quarter, the Anne Frank House, the Vondel Park and the Red Light district. See **undiscovered Amsterdam** with its idyllic small canals; quiet hidden courtyards and photogenic views. End of the bike tour again at the bike rental.

Amsterdam City Tour including Canal Cruise (4 hours)

A mostly **panoramic drive** through the historic center of Amsterdam, passing along the Amstel River with the wooden skinny bridge, the Munt tower and floating flower market, Dam Square with the Royal Palace and the New Church, central station and the museum and antique quarters. Pass through the oldest part of Amsterdam called the Jordaan with quaint little streets and where we will see the house in which Anne Frank hid during the Second World War. Also drive through the new Hot spots of Amsterdam “the KNSM Island” where in the former docklands warehouses have been renovated to design apartments and where you will see some interesting architecture.

While feasting their eyes on our glorious city, your guests can relax and chat as they take in Amsterdam’s spectacular sights during a **canal cruise**. We take you past magnificent buildings with picturesque gables, churches, the Magere Brug - the famous skinny bridge spanning the river Amstel - colourful houseboats, the Anne Frank House and the dynamic Jordaan district.



Bulbfields and Keukenhof (4 hours)

This tour starts with a beautiful ride through the **bulb area**. The bulb area lies behind the row of dunes running from Leiden to Haarlem, where as far as the eye can see, the fields are like a magic carpet of daffodils, narcissi, hyacinths and tulips, all ablaze with the richest and most delightful colourings.

After this stunning ride there’s a visit the flower exhibition the **Keukenhof**. A feast for the eye, and so are the unique flower shows in the different pavilions. And in the midst of this magnificent spectacle of colour you will also find exquisite works of art. At Keukenhof you can gain inspiration and relax in the beautiful surroundings. The 32-hectare park has 15 kilometres of footpaths. Keukenhof has surprises in store for visitors of all ages.



The theme for 2012 is “Poland - Heart of Europe”. Classical music and romance form an excellent combination with flowers. Besides, Poland is becoming an increasingly important market for Dutch cut flowers and bulbs and the number of tourists visiting from Poland is growing.

In 2012 Keukenhof will be open from March 22nd up until May 20th.

Volendam and Marken (4 hours)

In the surrounding of Amsterdam there are many beautiful and **typical Dutch villages** which are definitely worth a visit. During this tour you will first visit **Volendam**, an old picturesque village on the shore of the former Zuiderzee.

We than will continue to **Marken** (also possible by boat), this small town is situated on a former island and is located near the IJsselmeer. It is a lovely place to visit and has many special features like its houses on pillars, the traditional green painted houses and folkloristic customs and clothing's. Walk along the small bridges and little alleys and admire the historic houses.



Special item to add to your excursion : make a picture in original costumes !

De Zaanse Schans and Edam (4 hours)

We will start this tour with a small drive to the windmill village of the **Zaanse schans**, a characteristic living and working area on the River Zaan, with **wooden houses** and **windmills** dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In museums, workshops and windmills you can experience something of how the Zaan-siders lived and worked. The Zaanse Schans is a fully inhabited, open-air conservation area and museum located 9 miles north of Amsterdam. Original buildings vividly depict Dutch life in the 17th and 18th centuries. The authentic houses, the historic shipyard, the clog-making demonstrations and, above all, the windmills, attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Before returning to Amsterdam, visit to the medieval town of **Edam**.



Possible to combine above excursions to have a full day program on the Dutch countryside!

Royal The Hague and Delft (8 hours)

During this tour you will visit two cities which have both played a crucial role in the history of the Netherlands: **The Hague** and **Delft**.

The Hague is one of the cities which have played a crucial role in the history of the Netherlands and is now our **governmental city**. You drive through the historic centre with the government buildings and you will see some of the highlights of this city like **The Mauritshuis museum**. This museum, which rises out of the water like a Venetian palace, houses an outstanding collection of paintings from the Golden Age. You will see paintings from the famous painters Rembrandt van Rijn, Frans Hals en Johannes Vermeer. We continue our drive to the fishermen harbor of **Scheveningen** and could visit **Madurodam**, miniature village that shows the best of Holland in a nutshell.



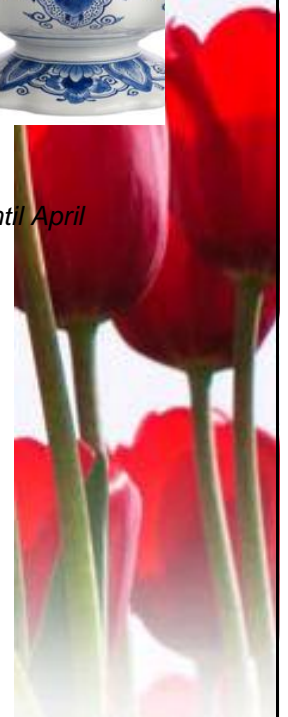
Delft is the city where **Vermeer** lived and painted. Walk at leisure through the beautiful old centre of the town along the canals and many almshouses and optional visit of **The Royal Dutch Delftware Manufactory De Porceleyne Fles**. The manufactory was established in 1653 and is the last remaining Delftware factory from the 17th century. The world famous Royal Delftware is still entirely hand-painted according to centuries old tradition. During the tour you will get an insight in the process of making Delftware by the old techniques and you will see the talented artists paint the Royal Delftware



The Mauritshuis Museum will be closed for renovation from April 1st 2012.

From 24 April 2012 until mid 2014, around **70 highlights** from the Mauritshuis collection will go on display in a separate wing of the **Gemeentemuseum in The Hague**. These will include Vermeer's View of Delft, Potter's The Bull and Rembrandt's Anatomical Lesson.

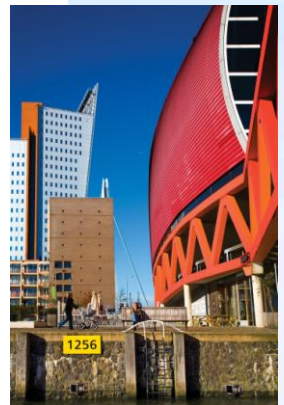
Madurodam miniature village will be closed for renovation until April 2012.



Rotterdam and Kinderdijk (8 hours)

Rotterdam is a prime example of a city permanently under construction. The docklands area on the left bank of the Maas, the heart of Kop van Zuid, has developed into a lively new district that is connected to city centre by the Erasmus Bridge. This tour is an excellent introduction to the wealth of modern, architecturally interesting buildings in Rotterdam.

The **boat trip** through the harbour of Rotterdam is a special voyage through the 2nd largest harbour in the world. You can see Rotterdam's impressive skyline with its imposing buildings glide by, and then get a unique view of the harbour's shipyards, docks and the hypermodern transshipping of thousands of containers.



Proceed to the **Kinderdijk** windmill area. Nowhere in the world you will find as many **windmills** as neat the Kinderdijk. Around 1740 no less than 19 sturdy mills were built here. They have been well preserved to the present day. The mills drain the excess of water from the polders (farmersland situated below sea level) after which the water is sluiced into the river Lek. The Powerful mills sails serve to transmit the force of the wind on to large paddlewheels which scoop up the water. Nowadays power driven pumping engines do the job. Visit the kinderdijk village, and of course the inside of a windmill.



Splendid item to add to your excursion : a journey in the Splashbus, a unique amphibious bus!

It's possible to include a lunch in all above excursions. We can send you several restaurant suggestions in different price ranges. Please note that the duration of the 4 hour excursion will be extended, so will be the costs of the guide and coach.