



GROUX GUIDE

AMSTERDAM

N PAAR TIPS VIR N LEKKER TRIP



INTRO

Some tips and recommendations for your trip to Amsterdam

Howzit!



Since moving to the Netherlands from South Africa back in 2016 we are often asked by friends and family about where to stay, what to bring or what to do when they come and visit. And so over the years we have been updating and sharing a very clunky google document with all our tips.

Today it is raining in Amsterdam again, so it is the perfect time to make our guide a bit more "mooi".

We hope some of the tips in our updated version will help you to have an even more lekker trip!

Cheers!
Stevie and Belinda

p.s we only added places we have been to ourselves or have it on good advice. There are probably many more great places out there!

SECTION 1

THE BORING BUT IMPORTANT STUFF

RAIN COAT

Pak daai k-way reenjas in! Look it rains a lot. So be prepared. Like the Dutch says "You are not made of sugar" If you forgot yours splurge on a raincoat at Rains or America Today.

DOCTOR

Hopefully you don't need to see a doctor but incase you need one, we recommend that you visit the **Expat Doctor** at Amsterdam Centraal Station. You don't need an appointment and they also offer an option for home visits.

CARS

You can rent a small car with **Green Wheels** if you feel brave enough to drive. However be warned parking is hell of expensive!

MAPS

Free wifi is available in most cafes and restaurants. As a precaution we recommend downloading offline maps.

CREDIT CARDS

Pinnen? In Amsterdam, many places are cashless, accepting only card payments. Some stores, like Albert Heijn, do not accept VISA or American Express cards. Maestro and Mastercard are commonly used in the Netherlands.

TRAMS BUSSES

Either purchase a ticket on the tram or bus, or use your credit card to check in and check out.

TIP When exiting trams, press the green button to open the door. Enter at the front or larger doors at the back to avoid getting stuck or reprimanded by the conductor

But if you do get stuck - just go with it.

BICYCLE

We would recommend you cycle everywhere. Yes! Even if it is raining! There are many places where you can rent a bicycle if you plan to stay for a longer timeframe consider **Swapfiets** (18 euros for a month!)

TIP Right hand is the slowlane

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SECTION 1

COMFY SHOES

The city is small compared to what we are used to in South Africa. From east to west is 10km. (Don't quote me on that!)

What this means is you will probably walk a lot more than what you think.

Forget 10.000 steps a day - you can easily crack 20.000 steps. So bring comfortable shoes! The cobblestones will make you regret wearing a boot with a heel. No one really dresses up here.

Think jeans and tekkies. Jeanekkies.

Tip: If you are reading this guide in advance - and live in SA. Try to exercise a little bit before coming here - it will make the walking a bit more bearable.

LOST AND FOUND

Everywhere is relatively safe in Amsterdam. Of course still look after your valuables. The occasional pick pocket does happen. However I have lost my wallet twice and found it both times with everything in it. If you find yourself in the same situation go on iLost you may just find it.

LANGUAGE

In Amsterdam almost everyone switches over to English. You can say "Morgen" for good morning. "Fijne dag" for have a good day. "Prima" for ok.

But English will do.

TIPPING

Tipping isn't really a thing here. Because the waiters get paid a wage / decent rate. However I still do it, and stick to the 10%.

p.s There aren't a lot of waiters on staff at restaurants so be ready to be on European time and wait longer than you would in SA for food and drinks... Patience baby...

Tip: For many of the restaurant's in this guide - try to make a reservation online!



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SECTION 2

ACCOMODATION

Make peace with the fact that very basic accommodation is going to cost you a penny

TIP: Buildings are old. If you need access to a lift or an aircon. Check before booking with your accommodation if they have these things!



- Conscious Hotel Amsterdam City (The Tire Station)
- XO Hotels Couture
- Leonardo Hotel Amsterdam Rembrandtpark
- Leonardo Boutique Museumhotel Amsterdam City Center
- Leonardo Hotel
- The Alfred Hotel Amsterdam
- Hotel Mercure Amsterdam Sloterdijk Station
- Hoxton Hotel
- Dylan Amsterdam
- Conscious Hotel Museum Square
- Apple Inn Hotel
- Dutch Design Hotel Vondelpark
- Park Plaza Vondelpark, Amsterdam
- Conscious Hotel Amsterdam City (The Tire Station)
- Vondelpark House Bed & Breakfast
- Hotel Casa Amsterdam
- Volkshotel
- It is further out but there are also hotels at Sloterdijk which is more affordable

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SECTION 3

One fun fact we heard about Amsterdam Noord is that there are 2 kids for every adult. The area used to be largely industrial and is busy undergoing a lot of gentrification. It is lately considered one of the hippest places to go to.

ACTIVITIES



NXT Museum

If you would like to take some Instagrammable pictures consider the NXT Museum. It is some distance out so you will need to bike there or take a ferry

EYE Film Museum

Catch a coffee or go to an exhibition or watch the latest film here

Amsterdam Swing

Very touristy but nonetheless a fun activity. This is Stevie and his mom on the swing!

CRAFT BEER TASTING

Craft Beer Tastings

Go to Wahalla Brewery or pop in by Oedipus for a beer tasting (would also recommend the burgers!)

Go to Amsterdam Noord Station and take the Buiksloter ferry. It is free.



DINNER

COBA

If you like Mexican cuisine. Bit expensive but great vibes and tasty food. Alternatively try Bacalar



Bunk

Situated in an old church We had the gnocci!



Skate Cafe

Very trendy place to go to Watch people skate while you enjoy your Bisque



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SECTION 4

Just on the other side of the IJ - the below recommendations are all close to one another therefore you don't need to bring your bike. Enjoy a very chilled day out.

ACTIVITIES



Graffiti Workshop

Feeling creative? Want to leave your mark in Amsterdam - sign up for the graffiti workshop in Noord.



STRAAT Museum

Check out Straat the Museum for graffiti and street art



Noordemarkt

It has existed for 400 years. It is very big. You have to pay entrance to go in. We aren't really into second hand stuff (gasp!) but if you LOVE thrifting this could be your jam.

DINNER

PILLEK

If the weather is great - go to Pillek. Kick off your shoes and watch the IJ. DJs start to play at some point during the mid afternoon as well. We have had bday parties here so it can also host big groups



Ijver

Right across the Market check out Ijver. Again typical Dutch Restaurant level of food, soup and burgers



TIP: The Ferry can get windy! So make sure you take something warm for the ride!

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SECTION 5

Museumplein - nothing beats cycling through the Rijksmuseum while someone is playing guitar or sax. Nice green grass to chill and take a beat while admiring the Rijksmuseum in the distance.

ACTIVITIES



Stedelike Museum

Generally have great exhibitions - interactive or with movement which is just different from classical art.

Rijksmuseum

Stevie and I aren't culture vultures. But even we can appreciate how magnificent The Nachtwacht is to see it in person is quite something. Have a coffee afterwards and drink in the museums architecture.

Van Gogh

Has its own museum in the same area as the Rijksmuseum.

Concertgebouw

If you love classical music book a show at the beautiful Concertgebouw. One of the best shows I saw was a choir combined with an orchestra. Goosebumps!

TIP: Bols cocktail workshop is GREAT!

We have yet to hear from anyone who didn't like it and some have gone back twice or thrice times. If you are a group or couple of friends go try it!

FOOD



Loetje

Nearby Museumplein is Loetje. A very popular chain restaurant in Amsterdam. People will say it is overrated - but what is wrong with going to a place where you are guaranteed of receiving a good portion and great meal?



Food Trucks

If you happen to be here over the Xmas period grab a bite at one of the food trucks and ice skate on the rink!



BYOB on the lawns in front of the Museum

In general we would recommend you have lunch elsewhere but if the weather is good consider popping in at the Albert Heijn get some snacks and drinks and sit on the lawn and enjoy the sun and view of the Rijksmuseum.

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SECTION 6

A stones throw from Museumplein. If I were you - I'd skip lunch or breakfast at the Museumarea and hop over to De Pijp instead.

4 THINGS TO DO

DE PIJP

This neighborhood is less about activities and more about eating, and drinking and eating and drinking... And did we mention eating?

BEER & WINE



Heineken Experience (HEX)

Hardcore beer fans will tell you not to go. We disagree - you can't come to Amsterdam and not go to Heineken. In the same way you can't go to Ireland and not go to Guinness. After the experience go to Berkhouw bar and enjoy a fluitjie!

Brouwerij Troost

If still not convinced but still thirsty for a tasting consider Brouwerij Troost. Fun fact we ended up here at 11am after we won the Rugby WorldCup and I think their burgers saved many lives that day! What a jo! (Or alternatively Gollem Proeflokaal!)

Glou Glou

Natural wines. This place has a cosy vibe. In the winter you will have to squish in there or if the suns out enjoy the terrace.

Raleigh & Ramsey

A winebar where you tap your card and try out different types of wines or champagnes. Afterwards head to the Albert Cuypmarkt and have a delicious taco from one of the foodtrucks!

FOOD



MANA MANA

Israeli goodness! Order all the plates & share

Amstelkerk

In an old church, Tasty Indian cuisine

Le Salonard

Fresh cheeses, wines and sandwiches and soups to go

Bar Mash

Thai Food - with a decent portion size and super tasty!

Cabron

10/10. Do reserve!

Patisserie Holtkamp

They make pastries for the royal family. Treat yourself to a slice of lemon meringue. After you had lunch at Bar Do nearby.

TIP: De Goude Tent

Yes it looks a bit dodge because it is situated inside the Dirk (shopping center) but if you are looking for value for money and the best Lebanese falafel wrap of your LIFE - there is no better place

TIP: Oeuf for breakfast is ALWAYS a good idea!

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SECTION 7

Now we are getting closer to the center where you are likely to spend most of your time...

ACTIVITIES



Melkweg or Paradiso

BANDS BANDS BANDS! Now is your chance to catch your favourite band while they are still relevant...



Mokumboot

Rent a boat and commandeer it yourself (its easy and cheaper option) get snacks and drinks. Seeing Amsterdam from the canals hits different. Alternatively book with Those Damn Boat Guys - they are hilarious with facts about Amsterdam.



Tuschinski or The Movies

Oh no it is raining! Book a movie - just for the pure fact that you can take wine in and see a film in a gorgeous old timey theater!

Nine Streets

So fun strolling through the nine streets, coffee in hand and window shopping. Vintage clothing stores, boutiques you name it.

Nemo

If you have kids go here - so entertaining. If you dont have kids don't go in but climb the stairs (or take the lift) to the top and have a view over the whole of Amsterdam!

Dam Square & Kalverstraat

Obviously shopping

Torpedo Theater

Tiny theater with max 30 people - impromptu singing and feels very local and unique! Imagine spontaneous singing and dancing...

BEER AND SNACKS



Freddy's

Located in the De L'Europe hotel. (Which if you have money to splurge - stay there for one night!) is Freddy's. Named after Freddy Heineken who loved the bar so much he bought the hotel. We love coming here - the snacks are great and the waiters make you feel like you are an honorary guest!



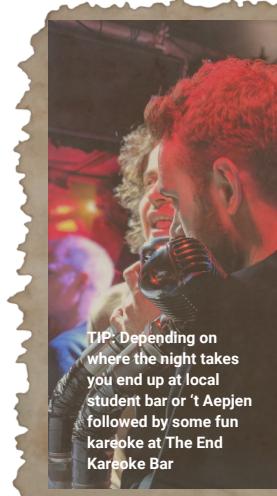
Frens Haringhandel

It doesn't matter where - you need to try haring with "zuur en ui". It looks worse than it taste (don't order it with bread just eat it like that!)



Hoppe

We almost don't want to add it because this is our place! It is as old as when it started 100 of years ago we imagine - head on over and order a biertte and gehaktballen ... or bitterballen. Sometimes if we are feeling adventurous we order a Dutch Brandy with coke.



TIP: Depending on where the night takes you end up at local student bar or 't Aepjen followed by some fun karaoke at The End Karaoke Bar

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SECTION 7

Lets continue into the city center shall we?

5 THINGS TO DO CITY CENTER

Now for food and more drinks and food and sights

FOOD AND DRINK

Mappa

Pasta Pasta Pasta

Van Kerkwijk

You can't book so have to take a chance. This is as Dutch as it is going to get in terms of service. We love love going there.

De Zotte

100s of Belgium Beers

Winkel 43

We see that it has become very touristy - with long queues which is a pity but if you don't mind waiting go for a slice of appeltaart met slagroom

Proeflokaal A van Wees

On the terrace in the sun - nothing can beat it

Greenwoods

The name always makes me think of Greenwoods in PTA. Go here for breakfast

Cafe Aent Water

On the water as it says, beers and rock and roll music playing inside

De Bekeerde Suster

Sit outside on the church benches and enjoy their amazing nachos and beers from the Monks. Personal favourite is the white beer "Witte Antonia"

Cafe de Prins

Lovely to sit outside or indoors at this old Dutch Brown Bar

Bar Bistro

The best French bistro - you have to reserve.

Cafe Parlote

Recommended to us by a chef we weren't disappointed!

Bier Fabriek

Peanuts and Beers

Lotti's

For Lunch or for cocktails (they always have dj's) is always a good idea!

Bussia

Hands down the best pasta place in town. Multiple courses paired with wine

Oriental City

Chinese cuisine - cheap beer and such good food!

The Seafood Bar

Seafood to hearts content!

Tokyo Ramen

Great tasting Miso Ramen or alternatively go to Fou Fou Ramen

Lebanese Sajera

Grab a tasty wrap and walk around the city

Ashoka

Great Indian cuisine - we live for the cheese naan

Pata Negra

It looks so cool inside like you have been transported to Spain

Lotti's



Van Kerkwijk



Cafe Parlote



Oriental City



Tokyo Ramen



Pata Negra



A van Wees



Cafe de Prins



Cafe Aent Water



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SECTION 8

This section covers the Vondelpark - Singel and Overtoom area.
Get your bicycle and cycle around the park - there is no better way

6 THINGS TO DO

VONDELPARK AREA

Amsterdam has many beautiful parks here are a couple of places nearby you can go to for dining while you explore the parks

VONDELPARK



GRAB A PASTRY

At klopper and stolk or the famous Linnick. Before getting a coffee at one of the food trucks / Sticky Fingers / Wakuli down the road



Vondeltuin / Blouwe Theehuis

Perfect for a drink in the sun

If you are going to venture into the park and want to picnic bring something for your bum! The water tends to seep through



Go for a run

One lap in Vondelpark is 3km - if you combine it with a lap in Rembrandtpark that will be 8km total



Toasti

Grab a toasty at TOASTI!

Night Kitchen

Shared plates concept - great interior around corner of the Vondelpark



Gebrouwen door Vrouwen

Mangia

Voted the Best pizza in town

Toko Kokita

Value for Money and always a (fast moving) queue
Indonesian food



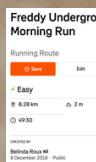
Louman straat

Famous trees for a famous picture

Starting at Jacob

BRUNCH!!!

Tip: Check out our public Freddy Underground Route on Strava for a route in Vondelpark!



SECTION 9

now lets head south to Amsterdamse bos - AGAIN recommend you do this by bicycle



AMSTERDAMSE BOS



PARKRUN

At the time of writing this there has been a pause on the Parkrun at the bos. Check the website for updates - otherwise go run yourself in the park (many routes) or cycle



SUPPING

Hire a supboard and go supping on the meer



Kinderboederij

Perfect place to go and take kids - think bokkie park and pancakes



TIP: In the summer many of us go to the Bos to braai and swim in the meer. The best feeling is running there early on a warm summers morning and then taking a dip!

TIP: If you are here over March/April you may be lucky enough to catch the 400 cherry blossoms in bloom!

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SECTION 10

So it is section 10 and by now you have given in and gotten the bicycle.
Lets head East and Amstel area



8 THINGS TO DO

EAST & AMSTEL

Beautiful Part of Amsterdam - which includes cycling all along the Amstel. Which is what Amstel beer is named after!

EAST & AMSTEL



Buurtcafe de Tros

Great place (very local and typical Dutch) to have lunch and wine.



CYCLE OR RUN

All along the Amstel River...



Walk around and explore

... And make your way to Amstelpark. It is like our version of Kirstenbosch (on a smaller scale!) but so beautiful in Summer



De Kas

For Michelin star experience - all food served is what is in season from their garden



De Ysbreeker

Another great place to stop and have lunch, dinner or even just drinks



Oudekerk

If you made it to Oudekerk - YOU MUST eat at Ron Indonesian restaurant the best food ever. And then hop over the water to the Vrije Handel and drink n fluitje with the locals



More East

First start your day with breakfast at Box Sociaal before taking a stroll to Artis. Enjoy a glass of champagne on the terrace at De Plantage.



Mooie Boules

Fancy a game of Petanque after tasting some local beer at Brouwerij IJ?

MEZRAB

For local comedy or BIMHUIS for Jazz

Lotti's

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HONOURABLE MENTIONS

- **Food Hallen**

Think Maboneng or Neighbourhoods of JHB and eat to your hearts content. Or level up and take the train to Rotterdam and visit the Markthal - which is Food Hallen XL

- **Zaanse Schans**

Not my personal favourite but if you came all this way and wanted to see the Windmills, make your own Clog shoes head to Zaanse Schans. (It ended up being a hit with our parents)

- **Train to Paris**

If you book in advance you can for relatively cheap take the 3 hour train to Paris. What is great about this train is that you stop right in the center of Paris. No need to arrange a taxi from the airport or rush to one

- **Train to Maastricht**

Beautiful little town in the south of Netherlands also worth exploring. About 2 hour ride on the train

- **Train to Brugge**

Also super easy to get there - personally we prefer Antwerp over Brugge (some will come for us about that!)

- **Train to Delft**

Go and see where Delft Blauw comes from

- **Westergasfabriek**

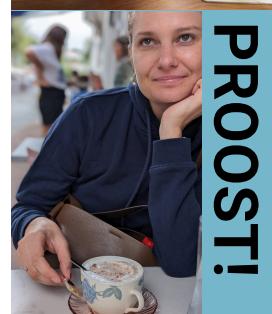
Also a nice area to explore as is Houthavens

- **Piano Bar (if it is VERY LATE)**

We are sure there are many more things that we have left out, but hope this has helped you a little bit.



If you have any feedback about this guide let us know on info@grouxs.com



PROOST!