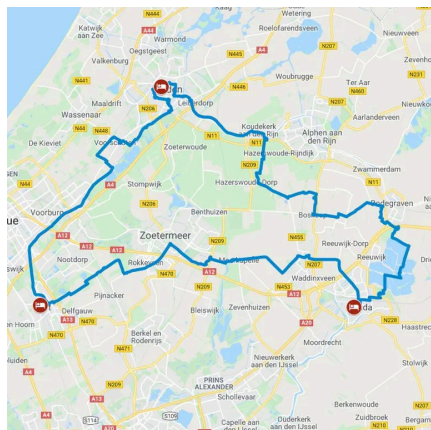


Waterscapes of Holland

5 days, € 534



Introduction



South Holland overflows with real-life waterscapes as well as painted ones! If you feel irresistibly drawn to water, if you adore its calming effect, what could be more relaxing than a leisurely ride along the coast, the river or the lakeside? For the painted version, you'll find gold at the fine art museums of Prinsenhof Delft and Museum De Lakenhal and revel in Gouda's many art galleries. This tour strikes a balance between fresh country air and a cultural quest of the Old Dutch towns. Gouda takes you back in time, with its re-enacted cheese market, quaint rituals and traditional costumes. Beautiful Delft exhibits the town's blue and white pottery. The old university town of Leiden boasts boats cruising the picturesque canals. Hear the wind rustle the reeds on the shores of small lakes and be treated to birdsong in the 'Green Heart' region.

Day to Day

Day 1 Arrival in Delft

Your cycling holiday begins in Delft, forever associated with its delicate blue pottery. The glory years of 1650 to 1750 saw some 100 ceramics factories operating here. Scenic canals adorn the Old Town and you really feel you've gone back in time, as you wonder at age-old lopsided canal houses, cobblestones underfoot. Visit the Vermeer Centrum just off the main square for background on this well-loved painter (1632-1675) known for his tranquil domestic scenes.

Day 2 Delft - Gouda

34 km

After a hearty breakfast, off you go into the Green Heart, riding through open countryside dotted with small villages. Take in the fresh air, sunshine and light. What's that on the horizon up ahead, Gouda? Yes, the delightful town famous for its cheese market and home to one of the Netherlands' most important exports, Gouda cheese. Other popular products manufactured here include Dutch waffles (since the 1840's), candles (1853-1980), clay pipes (17th-18th century) and colourful Gouda pottery (1920s and 30s). The stained-glass windows at St. John's church provide another vivid note. If you plan to visit the cheese market, arrange to stay in Gouda on a Wednesday night and be there early Thursday morning. Just like in the olden days, dairy farmers and merchants settle each sale with a handshake. Other local delicacies can be sampled and purchased at the market too.



Day 3 **Gouda/Bodegraven - Leiden**

45 km

Don't forget to visit the Cheese Experience Museum before you leave Gouda. The rustic surroundings of today's route may look natural, but many aspects of this 'cultural landscape' were actually man-made. Centuries ago, dikes and windmills drained soggy marshes to create pastures and farmed fields. Peat harvesting dates back to the 13th century here, a process that left deep holes in the landscape which later filled with water and threatened to flood the area. Some were therefore drained and turned into polder land, lying well below sea level. Other holes were left as lakes, a modern-day summertime attraction. This afternoon, glide into the picturesque town of Leiden. The country's first university was founded here in 1575 and later became one of the most prominent in Europe. Breathe history in at the 1590 botanical garden and stretch your legs on an inner-city canal tour.

Day 4 **Leiden - Delft**

29 km

After taking your leave of lively Leiden, peace and quiet will reign once more in today's typically Dutch scenery. Note all the orderly rectangles in this man-made polder landscape (mostly peatland reclamations). Let shining waterways and green pastures, old windmills and farmhouses pass you by whilst pedalling on to the famous city of Delft. The melancholy charm of historical Delft is breathtaking. Most will associate Delft with its blue and white hand-painted pottery: Delftware. But did you know that painter Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675) lived in Delft all his life? The Vermeer Centre gives illuminating insights into his life, works and city (no original paintings on show here).

Day 5 **Return home**

After breakfast, your cycling holiday comes to an end and it is time to make your way home.



Prices, Data, Booking

Starting dates:

Daily from April 1 to September 26

Price pp		€
Double room, breakfast		529.00
Single room, breakfast		799.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only		80.00
Rental bike		€
Child bike		44.00
Hybrid		52.00
E-bike		108.00
Extra services		€
Bike Breakdown pass	€ 4.00 x 4	16.00
Child seat	€ 5.00 x 4	20.00
Bike theft insurance	€ 3.00 x 4	12.00
E-bike theft insurance	€ 6.00 x 4	24.00
Extra luggage	€ 5.00 x 4	20.00
Tag-along bike	€ 6.00 x 4	24.00
Child trailer	€ 17.50 x 4	70.00
Bike helmet	per piece	10.00
SGR	per piece	5.00

Starting point:

Delft



Accommodation

The hotels and the B&B on this trip have been carefully selected for their location, atmosphere and/or unique services. All rooms are en-suite. A list of the accommodation we work with appears below. If a certain accommodation is unable to confirm due to lack of availability, we will try to request a comparable alternative if possible. When selecting the accommodation, we try to take into account as much as possible a safe and closed bicycle shed. However, we cannot do this with all of them guarantee and this partly depends on the number of bicycles of other guests.



Westcord Hotel Delft **
(Delft)**

www.westcordhotels.nl/hotel-delft



Best Western Hotel Gouda **
(Gouda)**

www.bestwesterngouda.nl



Tulip Inn Leiden Centre *
(Leiden)**

www.goldengreenhotels.nl/golden-tulip-en-tulip-inn-leiden/



Practical Info



4 nights included



3/4 star hotels



Breakfast included



Detailed roadbooks with maps and tourist information



The possibility of renting our bikes



7-days a week service-hotline



Luggage transport to your next hotel



Delft



Parking available at the hotel



GPS tracks available



Ferry crossings are not included

Arrival info



The nearest airports are Rotterdam The Hague Airport (RTM) or Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)



From Rotterdam The Hague Airport take the metro to Rotterdam central station. Then get the train to Delft. It runs 8 times an hour and costs about € 3.60 per person, bicycle excluded.

For timetables and tickets: www.9292.nl/en.

The train from Schiphol to Delft departs 4 times an hour. Travel time is approximately 1.5 hours.

A single ticket costs about € 11 per person, bicycle excluded.

For timetables and tickets, visit www.ns.nl/en. For bus details, how to reach the hotel, check: www.9292.nl/en.

