

Pearls of Holland - Relax

8 days, € 965



Introduction



After the great success of our Pearls of Holland 7-days tour, now the NEW Pearls of Holland - Relax is online.

Now this tour is 8-days and it's suitable for everyone!

Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, Delft, Gouda and Woerden are among our cyclists' all-time favourite cities - each unique and all brimming with that typical Olde Holland character. We have decided to combine them into this one route for the ultimate cultural bike holiday. Cycling distances are relatively short allowing more time for sightseeing and museums. Although you will stay within the Randstad conurbation you'll discover how rural and quiet the countryside can be, where polders, windmills, bulb flower fields (in spring!), lakes and rivers take the spotlight. In short, this route stands for seven days of enjoying cultural gems and idyllic countryside.

Day to Day

Day 1 Arrival in Amsterdam

Get here early and opt to wander around the gorgeous and surprisingly peaceful seventeenth century canal ring area (World Heritage Site). 🚲 If you like bustle, make your way to the city's famous squares: Dam, Rembrandtplein and Leidseplein. Should you prefer to roam off the beaten track, saunter up Brouwersgracht or hire a canal bike and find out what the city looks like from the water. 🚲



Day 2 **Amsterdam-Haarlem/Santpoort**

30 km

Spend the morning visiting your favourite Amsterdam museum, or sitting in the sun on Rembrandtplein watching the world go by, or go for a walk along the canals. The possibilities are endless. As you leave the capital in the early afternoon, the urban buzz will soon make way for the peace and quiet of the countryside. This region is called Zuid-Kennemerland. In the low-lying peat landscape clouds are reflected in the water and reed sways in the wind.

The steam mill Cruquius, just before you cycle into Haarlem, is itself a National Monument for the steam history of the engine within, and it has also been declared an Anchor Point of ERIH, The European Route of Industrial Heritage. It is thought to be the largest steam engine – and certainly the largest beam engine – ever built. The reclamation of Haarlemmermeer by means of steam power marked the breakthrough of the Industrial Revolution in the Netherlands.

Top off your day roaming lovely downtown Haarlem, from impressive Grote Markt square, to the white drawbridge on the River Spaarne. Idyllic courtyards, known as 'hofjes', will set your heart a-flutter. Haarlem is home to the oldest hofje dating from 1395.

It can happen that we will book a hotel in Santpoort instead of Haarlem, due to availability.

The hotel is located in a manor house with a beautiful park, surrounded by nature, about 7 km outside Haarlem.

Please check the extra price of Landgoed Duin & Kruidberg Hotel in Santpoort in the price overview below. The price includes dinner for this night.

Day 3 **Haarlem/Santpoort - Leiden**

43 km

Haarlem, one of the oldest cities in the Netherlands, deserves to be explored extensively before your bicycle tour today. In the monumental city center, with many sights, you can stroll around for hours without getting bored for a moment.

Famous photo spot is the small white drawbridge over the Spaarne with the two gabled houses in the background. On the market you will find the Grote Kerk with the organ that Mozart played on when he visited Haarlem.

Fancy a morning of soaking up art? Then visit the Frans Hals museum with unique art from the Golden Age, including works by Haarlem painters Frans Hals, Jacob van Ruisdael and Pieter Saenredam.

After Haarlem, get ready for a bike ride through the famous Dutch Bulb Region, the area where much of Holland's flower bulb cultivation takes place. Cycle through the dunes past well-known seaside resorts such as Noordwijk and Zandvoort. Noordwijk is a seaside resort of international stature with a 13 km long sandy beach. Surrounded by beautiful forest areas, rugged dunes and the flower bulb region near De Keukenhof, Noordwijk is also referred to as the flower resort of Europe. Formula 1 fans know the CM.com Circuit Zandvoort, which is known as a real "Old School" circuit, with fast, undulating and challenging corners formed by the natural dunes. With a track length of 4.3 kilometers, it is one of the shorter circuits on the F1 calendar. Almost nowhere else do drivers race past race fans so often!

In the late afternoon, you will arrive in Leiden, another beautiful historic city rich in attractions.

The city has much to offer. Beautiful are the seventeenth-century houses and characteristic canals. Also worth a visit are the oldest university in the Netherlands, the historic botanical garden and the Gothic St. Pieterskerk.



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 lakes 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 Delft - Gouda**34 km**

This stretch of the tour takes you through the Green Heart: a stronghold against urban sprawl in Randstad conurbation. Balancing atop polder dikes, delight in characteristic villages, far horizons and pleasingly strict rectangles cut by ditches in fields of vibrant green. As you wander around the city of Gouda at the end of the day, don't miss the gothic town hall (1450); the Weighing House (1667); the romantic inner city canals and the stained glass windows in St. John's Church. Gouda is also famous for making syrup waffles (try one hot!) and candles. If you're travelling in Summer, plan your trip so that you can witness the traditional Thursday morning cheese market at the start of Day 6 (early April till last Thursday in August).

Day 6 Gouda - Woerden**38 km**

The vast landscape of your route today is graced by several small rivers, unique white bridges and various crafts. Leaving Gouda, following the Hollandsche IJssel, you arrive in one of the most beautiful villages in the province of South Holland, Haastrecht. Haastrecht is one of the most beautiful villages of Zuid-Holland. Via the small river the Vlist, the silver town of Schoonhoven now comes into view. Schoonhoven is known for its silver and therefore carries the nickname: Zilverstad ("Silver City"). Since the 17th century, silver and gold smiths have been working here. Today, Schoonhoven is still known for its silver. The route along the river then takes you to Oudewater, internationally known for its atmospheric and monumental town centre including the Heksenwaag and the Rope Museum. Finally, you will arrive in the town of Woerden, the centre of the Green Heart.



Day 7 **Woerden - Amsterdam**

49 km

From Woerden, you cycle along the eight-kilometre-long Kamerikse Wetering, which was dug almost exactly in a north-south direction. Soon, Wilnis comes into view. For the first inhabitants, living in Wilnis was literally living in the wilderness. Around the 11th century, they settled in a swampy area. Those times are long gone. The area has since been reclaimed. Wilnis put itself on the map in 2003. In a dry summer, the dike broke, causing a major flood. Remarkably, there were no casualties. A monument on the -reinforced- dike commemorates this special event.

Along the Vinkeveense Plassen, Vinkeveen soon comes into view. Vinkeveen's villagescape is like a postcard. On the north side of this lake area, you get a view of part of the Defence Line of Amsterdam, Fort in the Botshol, Unesco World Heritage Site.

If you want to check out a typical 'Old Dutch' village, Ouderkerk aan de Amstel is definitely recommended. Stroll through the pretty historic streets and don't forget to visit the old Jewish cemetery 'Beth Haim' (house of life). The cemetery, with around 28,000 graves, is a national monument. The mere fact that this place in the Randstad, out of reach of the encroaching city and modernisation, makes it special and unique. It is the oldest Jewish cemetery still in use in the Western world. Finally, Amsterdam welcomes you with romantic canals.

Day 8 **Return home**

After breakfast your cycling holiday has come to an end.



Prices, Data, Booking

Starting dates:

Daily from April 1 till September 24

Please note: a minimum stay of 2 nights in a row is required in the hotel in Amsterdam on the following dates (and a higher price will be charged):

March 29th, 30th and 31st 2024

April 20th 2024

April 26th and 27th 2024

May 9, 10th and 11th 2024

May 17th, 18th and 19th 2024

Price pp		€
Double room, breakfast		960.00
Single room, breakfast		1,415.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only		80.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only Amsterdam		100.00
Upgrades pp/night		€
Landgoed Duin & Kruidberg, Santpoort		70.00
Stadshotel Woerden, Woerden		10.00
Westcord Art Hotel, Amsterdam		10.00
Surcharge per person		€
Stay in Amsterdam on Saturday		25.00
Stay in Amsterdam from: 17/05/2024 - 19/05/2024		40.00
Rental bike		€
Child bike		77.00
Hybrid		91.00
E-bike		189.00
Extra services		€
Bike Breakdown pass	€ 4.00 x 7	28.00
Child seat	€ 5.00 x 7	35.00
Bike theft insurance	€ 3.00 x 7	21.00
E-bike theft insurance	€ 6.00 x 7	42.00
Extra luggage	€ 5.00 x 7	35.00
Tag-along bike	€ 6.00 x 7	42.00
Child trailer	€ 17.50 x 7	122.50
Bike helmet	per piece	10.00
SGR	per piece	5.00



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 Art Hotel*/****
(Amsterdam)**

<https://westcordhotels.nl/hotel/art-hotel-amsterdam-3-stars/>

Hotel Lion d'Or ** (Haarlem)**

<https://www.hotelliondor.nl/>

Tulip Inn Leiden Centre *
(Leiden)**

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

**Hampshire Hotel Delft Centre
**** (Delft)**

<https://hoteldelftcentre.nl>

Best Western Hotel Gouda **
(Gouda)**

www.bestwesterngouda.nl

**Best Western Hotel Woerden
*** (Woerden)**

www.bestwesternwoerden.nl



Practical Info



7 Nights included



3/4 Star Hotels



Breakfast included, Halfboard optional



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



Amsterdam Sloterdijk / Amsterdam CS



Parking possibilities at the hotel



GPS-tracks available



Any ferry crossings are not included

Arrival info



Nearest Airport is Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)



The train from Schiphol to Amsterdam Sloterdijk departs 6 times per hour. Travel time is about 10 minutes. A single ticket costs approx €4,- per person excl. bicycle.
For timetables and tickets, go to www.ns.nl/en. For bus details, how to reach the hotel, check : www.9292.nl/en.

