



 **LIFECYCLE
ADVENTURES**

Holland

NETHERLANDS

Planning

About the Area

Overnight Towns

On Tour FAQ



Use this Guidebook
with the On-Tour App
(see inside cover)

Inside this book

Planning Your Tour

- ➔ Where to stay before tour
- ➔ Getting there
- ➔ Things to book
- ➔ What to pack

About the Area

- ➔ Routes & highlights
- ➔ Geography & history
- ➔ Food & drink
- ➔ Essentials

Overnight Towns

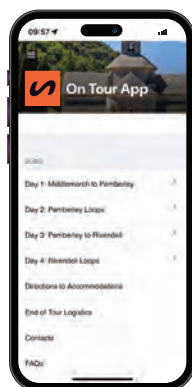
- ➔ Overviews
- ➔ Restaurants & bars
- ➔ Sights & activities
- ➔ Town plans

On Tour

- ➔ Using the On-Tour App
- ➔ Navigating the routes
- ➔ Our services
- ➔ Safety & enjoyment

On-Tour App for smartphones

You will be sent a link to download your On-Tour App a few weeks before the start of your tour.



The app includes everything you need to explore each day during your tour including:

- ➔ Ride options
- ➔ Places for lunch
- ➔ Points of interest
- ➔ Directions to accommodations
- ➔ End of tour logistics
- ➔ Contacts
- ➔ FAQs

See the *Using the On-Tour App* section of this guidebook for more details about this app.



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Written & Researched by

Victoria Craig & Gregory Craig



A Warning and a Request

We make great efforts to ensure the accuracy of our guides. However, things do change, and errors can creep in. If you have corrections for this guidebook or discover new things along the way, please drop us an email and we will incorporate your suggestions in our next edition.

You can reach us at info@lifecycleadventures.com

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Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

GETTING THERE

Tours typically start in Amsterdam. Amsterdam is an international city with much to see and do from world-class museums to laid-back cafes. With its iconic canals, golden-age townhouses, and cobblestone streets, the city makes a great starting point for your Holland bike tour.

Most people travel to Amsterdam via *Amsterdam Airport Schiphol* (AMS), the fifth busiest airport in the world with direct flights from most major European cities and from many North American cities including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington DC.

The following sites are helpful when booking travel within Holland:

- Rome to Rio: <https://www.rome2rio.com/>
- The Train Line: <https://www.thetrainline.com/en-us>
- Local train company: <https://www.ns.nl/en>

Taxis from Schiphol Airport to the center of Amsterdam cost approximately €45.00 and take around 30 minutes. There is also a regular and easy train service that costs approximately €6.00 and takes 15–20 minutes. Shuttle buses that take you directly to your hotel cost €18.00 pp. Note that taxis from the train station have been known to overcharge; agree the price in advance or use an Uber.

WHERE TO STAY BEFORE YOUR TOUR

We have had good feedback for the following Amsterdam hotels and B&Bs.

Pillows Grand Boutique Hotel



Mauritskade 61, 1092 AD Amsterdam



+31 20 802 0200



<https://www.pillowshotels.com/amsterdam-mauritskade/>

Ambassade Hotel



Herengracht 341, 1016 AZ Amsterdam



+31 20 555 0222



<https://ambassade-hotel.nl/>

Monet Garden Hotel



Valkenburgerstraat 76, 1011 LZ Amsterdam



+31 20 211 1418



<https://www.monetgardenhotellamsterdam.com/>

WHERE TO STAY AFTER YOUR TOUR

Most guests stay in Amsterdam after their tour – see hotels above. However, if you finish your tour in Haarlem and are flying out of Schiphol Airport the next day, you may prefer to spend your final night in Haarlem. Traveling from Haarlem directly to Schiphol is simple and avoids the unnecessary extra travel of returning to Amsterdam and then going back out to the airport. Good hotels in Haarlem include the following.

Boutiquehotel Staats



Ripperdastraat 13A, 2011 KG Haarlem, Netherlands



+31 23 200 1234



<https://www.hotelstaats.nl/en/>

Amrâth Grand Hotel Frans Hals



Damstraat 10, 2011 HA Haarlem, Netherlands



+31235181818



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

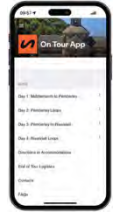
DOWNLOADS FOR YOUR PHONE

We recommend you download the following to your phone before you travel:

- On-Tour App (**essential**)
- eBook of this guidebook
- Google Maps for the area
- WhatsApp
- eSIM data plan

Downloading the On-Tour App

A few weeks before the start of your tour, we will send you an email with a link to download your On-Tour App. We recommend you download the app and familiarize yourself with its contents before you leave home. See the On Tour section of this guidebook for more details about this app.



Download an eBook of this Guidebook

We recommend downloading the eBook version of this guidebook. This will allow you to reference the guidebook from your phone or tablet as well as giving you the ability to zoom in on maps and click on website links and telephone numbers.



Scan this code with your phone/tablet's camera. Then follow the instructions below, depending on your device.

On an iPhone or an iPad

- Open the PDF using the above QR code (this can take more than a minute depending on your WiFi)
- Tap Share (there can be a few seconds delay after tapping share)
- Tap *Books*

The PDF then opens automatically and saves into the Books app. Access it via the Library section of the Books app.

On Google Smartphones or Tablets

Set Settings

- On your device, open Google Play Books
- At the top right, tap your profile picture
- Tap Play Books settings
- Check the box next to Enable PDF uploading

Download the Book

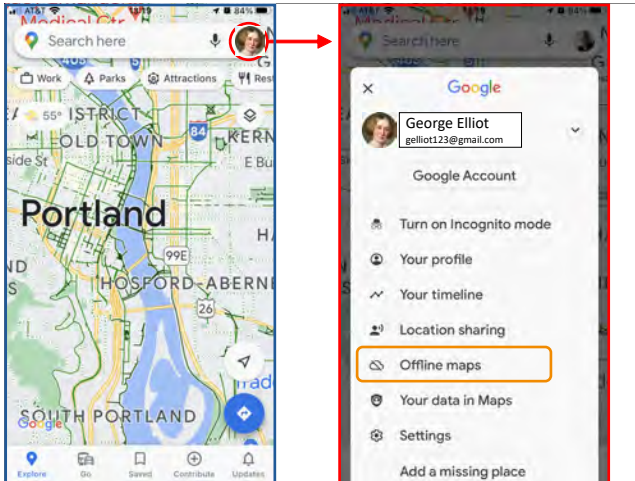
- Download the PDF file to your device using the above QR code (this can take more than a minute depending on your WiFi)
- Open your Downloads or Files app
- Find the file
- Tap More and then Open With and then Play Books or Upload to Play Books.
- To find uploaded files in the Play Books app, tap Library and then Uploads.

Downloading Google Maps

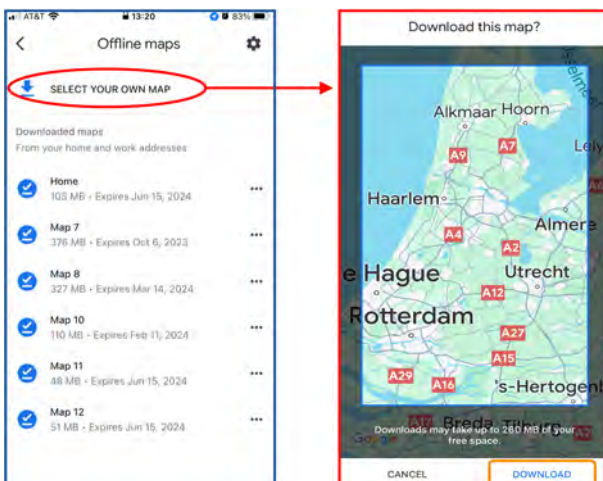
The On-Tour App includes many links to Google Maps. We recommend downloading the maps for this area in Google Maps before leaving home. You will need to be signed into your Google account to use this feature. Instructions are as follows.

In the Google Maps app:

- Tap on your profile picture (or letter) in the top right-hand corner
- Select Offline maps



In Offline maps, zoom the maps to the Netherlands to include the cities of Almere, The Hague, and Alkmaar. Then click "Download".



WhatsApp

Most of our guides like to use WhatsApp for staying in contact with you during your tour. If you have downloaded the app and set up an account, that would be helpful. If not, don't worry, we can also use texts and phone calls.

Phone Plans

Having access to cellular data while on tour will make it easier to navigate your routes and access information via our On-Tour App (though with a little forethought you can manage without).

If travelling abroad, you may need to inform your cell phone company that you are traveling and request them to activate your account for use abroad. There are typically packages available to pre-purchase that reduce the cost of using your phone abroad.

Many of our guests choose to activate an eSIM card for travelling. This will give you access to cheap data plans (e.g. \$5 for 1 GB of data for a week) and do not require you to swap out your existing SIM card. Companies providing eSIMs include Airalo and Nomad. Plans can be purchased online and downloaded onto your phone. If you plan to use an eSIM, we strongly recommend you buy and set up the plan in advance of your trip. You can then activate it when you arrive at your destination. Note that not all devices support eSIM technology so it is best to check before leaving home.

THINGS TO BOOK BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

Transfers from Schiphol Airport

Typically, we collect and drop off guests at their hotel in downtown Amsterdam. We can also collect or drop off guests at Schiphol Airport for which there is an extra charge. These transfers are only available on the first and last days of the tour and are subject to availability.

Activities

If you want to add any of the following activities to your tour, we recommend booking them in advance. This is especially true during tulip season: April through mid-May.

Tulip Tours

The best part of your tour for viewing tulips is from Leiden to Haarlem.

Keukenhof Botanical Garden

Located on the **Leiden – Haarlem** cycling route, Keukenhof Garden is the world's largest bulb-flower garden. It draws nearly 800,000 visitors during its short season (8-weeks), which is almost as short-lived as the blooms on the millions of multicolored tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths. Some seven million flower bulbs are

planted annually in the park, which covers an area of 80 acres. Every year the flower park is dedicated to a specific theme. You can download a map of the park (including restaurants) on the Keukenhof website. We strongly recommend pre-purchasing tickets online to help avoid huge lines. Open last week of March to the middle of May (exact dates change every year) from 8:00 AM – 7:30 PM every day.

 Stationsweg 166A, 2161 AM Lisse

 +31 252 465 555

 <https://keukenhof.nl/en/>

The Tulip Barn

Also located on the **Leiden – Haarlem** route, the Tulip Barn boasts over 175 different tulip varieties and over 400,000 colorful tulips. They also have a café selling drinks and cakes. Tickets can be bought online in advance, or you can try your luck on the day of. Open daily from April 1st to May 15th from 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM.

 3e Loosterweg 130, 2182 CX Hillegom

 n/a

 <https://thetulipbarn.com/>

Cheese Tours

The best areas for cheese tasting and tours are Gouda, Leiden and Alkmaar. Most cheese farms and shops have cheese tasting available but only some offer tours and these typically need to be scheduled in advance.

Kaasboerderij De Twee Hoeven

Located on the **Utrecht – Gouda** cycling route, this rustic farm store showcases a variety of locally-sourced products. Explore an extensive selection of cheeses, including options for cheese fondue and cheese soup. In addition to cheese, the shop offers an array of goods such as meat, butter, yogurt, custard, ice cream, mustard, and more. The unique feature of being able to observe the cheese factory from within the store adds to the charm. For an immersive experience, visitors can also tour the adjacent stables to see the cows. They offer 90-minute guided tours on cheese-making and cow-milking by prior arrangement only. Tours can be scheduled with details shown on their website.

 Steinsedijk 37, 2851 LB Haastrecht

 +31 182 501 244

 <https://detweehoeven.nl/>

Biologische Kaasboerderij, De Ruyge Weyde

An organic cheese farm located on the **Utrecht – Gouda** cycling route. Guided tours are €10 per person.

 Ruige Weide 43, 3421 TH Oudewater

 +31 653 447 789

 <https://ruygeweydekaas.nl/?lang=en>

Gouda Cheese Experience

In **downtown Gouda**, this interactive tour has a self-paced audio and is a mixture of history about Gouda and a detailed explanation of the cheese making process. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Agnietenstraat 21, 2801 GZ Gouda
 +31 182 787 934
 <https://www.goudacheese-experience.com/>

Booij Kaasmakers BV

This farm is located on the **Gouda Loop** cycling route. They offer a cheese-tasting masterclass, a cheese-making workshop, and a tour of the farm. Activities must be booked in advance. Closed Sunday and Monday.

 Middenpolderweg 63, 2959 LB Streefkerk
 +31 184 681 008
 <https://booijkaasmakers.nl/>

V.O.F. Melkvee- en Kaasboerderij Schep

Located on the **Gouda Loop** cycling route, this shop has a self-guided tour of their nearby farm. They also offer guided tours for groups of over 10 people but will sometimes do guided tours for fewer people.

 Zuidbroek 153, 2861 LL Bergambacht, Netherlands
 +31 182 367 880
 <https://kaasboerderijscnep.nl/>

Kaasboerderij Van Veen

Located on the **Gouda – Leiden** cycling route, this cheese farm and shop offers cheese tastings and tours of their farm. Welcoming, hospitable and happy to share their knowledge. For groups, family outings, business groups, etc., the costs are €70.00 for one hour / €100.00 for an hour and a half. Closed from Sunday to Wednesday.

 Weipoortseweg 72A, 2381 NG Zoeterwoude
 +31 715 801 154
 <https://www.kaasboerderijvanveen.nl/>

Boerderij 't Geertje

Located on the **Leiden Loop** cycling route, this organic cheese farm and shop also offers many different activities on their farm.

 Geerweg 7, 2381 LT Zoeterwoude
 +31 715 802 642
 <https://hetgeertje.nl/>

Franschman Kaasboerderij De

Located on the **Leiden Loop** cycling route, this organic cheese farm and shop has plenty of interactive activities including sheep petting. They also have a restaurant.

 Herenweg 5, 1861 PA Bergen

 +31 725 818 246
 <https://hetgeertje.nl/>

General Points of Interest

Corrie Ten Boom House

In **downtown Alkmaar**, Corrie ten Boom House, also known as 'the hiding place', is named for the matriarch of the family that lived there during World War II. Corrie used a secret compartment in her bedroom to hide hundreds of Jews and Dutch resistors until they could be spirited away to safety. In 1944 the family was betrayed and sent to concentration camps where three died. Later, Corrie toured the world preaching peace. The museum can only be visited with a guided tour and reservations must be made at least 5 days in advance. Tickets can be purchased on their website. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday.

 Barteljorisstraat 19, 2011 RA Haarlem
 +31 23 531 0823
 <https://www.corrietenboom.com/en/home>

Restaurants

In high season, you may want to book your dinners in advance – especially if you plan to eat at the higher-end establishments. Restaurants that typically require reservations include the following:

In Leiden

- Lot en de Walvis

In Haarlem

- Jopenkerk

In Alkmaar

- The Hielander

You can find details of these restaurants in the *Overnight Towns* section of this guidebook.

WHAT TO PACK

What We Provide ... so you don't need to

We provide the following equipment:

- ☐ Two LifeCycle Adventures water bottles
- ☐ Floor pump that travels with your luggage
- ☐ Phone mount to attach your phone to your handlebars
- ☐ Energy bars for each day

For guests renting one of our bikes, we also provide:

- ☐ Helmets (though we recommend you bring your own due to fit and knowledge of previous use)
- ☐ A hand pump, a spare tube, and equipment to change a flat tire
- ☐ A lightweight combination bike lock
- ☐ Rack bags or panniers are available on request¹. NOTE: some bikes, including those with carbon seat posts, cannot be fitted with rack bags or panniers. If they are not available, we recommend bringing a small backpack
- ☐ Rear lights are available on request¹
- ☐ Battery bank to recharge your phone en route is available on request¹ (subject to availability)

¹ Items available "on request" should be requested via email or the Booking Form at least two weeks before the start of your tour.

What You Should Bring

To help you prepare for the trip, below is a list of gear to consider bringing in addition to the usual clothes you would pack for any trip.

Gear For on the Bike

- ☐ Breathable brightly colored cycle jerseys or tops
- ☐ Hi-vis rain jacket and waterproof pants/trousers
- ☐ Cycling gloves. Consider long-fingered gloves for colder temperatures.
- ☐ Cycling shoes or stiff-soled, closed-toed shoes
- ☐ Helmet (see *What We Provide*, above)
- ☐ Fleece or warm sweater
- ☐ Padded cycling shorts (and possibly some chamois cream)
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Bandana (optional but good for protecting head or back of neck from the sun)
- ☐ Leg warmers and arm warmers (handy for changing temperatures)

Other Essentials

- ☐ Emergency contact details and first aid kit
- ☐ Cell phone and charger
- ☐ Battery bank to recharge your phone en route (if you have one)
- ☐ Favorite or needed medication
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Medical & travel insurance

Good Things to Have

- ☐ Sandals or flip flops to pack in your day bag if wearing cycling shoes
- ☐ Rear light for daytime use
- ☐ Small backpack (see *What We Provide*, above)

If You are Renting One of Our Bikes

If you are renting one of our bikes, we would strongly suggest you consider bringing the following.

- ☐ Your own pedals if you typically ride with clipless pedals
- ☐ Your own saddle. The rental bikes have generic saddles and many riders prefer to use a saddle with which they are familiar. This is particularly true if you normally ride with a female specific saddle

If You are Bringing Your Own Bike

- ☐ Bar bag or seat-post bag
- ☐ Bike lock
- ☐ Spare inner tube and puncture repair key
- ☐ Hand pump

- ☐ Tools & spares for your make of bike
- ☐ Lubricant & solvent for maintaining chain

If you are bringing your own bike we would also recommend that you have your bike tuned by a bike store before you travel. If something about your bike's set-up has been bothering you, your trip is a great excuse for sorting it out.

If shipping your bike to us before your tour, please be sure the bike is cleaned before being packed.



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Bike Path Through Tulip Fields

INTRODUCTION

The Netherlands

Cycling in the Netherlands is a revelation. It is simply the most bicycle-friendly country on the planet: a haven for cyclists with more than 20,000 miles of traffic-free bike paths. The scenery is equally impressive: acres of tulip fields, dense forests, tranquil waterways, and working, historic windmills. The towns and cities are also delightful: medieval gems crammed with cafés, historic sites, and exceptionally good museums.

Cycling in enchanting cities like Utrecht, Gouda, Leiden, Haarlem, and Alkmaar is a journey through time and culture. In Utrecht, iconic landmarks such as the Dom Tower and picturesque canals line the cycling routes. Gouda captivates with its historic cheese market and medieval architecture. Leiden, a city of cobblestone streets, offers botanical gardens and the birthplace of Rembrandt. Haarlem, known for its tulip fields, boasts the Frans Hals Museum and lively markets. Smaller Alkmaar, famed for its cheese, welcomes cyclists to its charming old town.

What's in a Name?

Many people use The Netherlands and Holland interchangeably – even sometimes inside of the country. But North Holland and South Holland are just two of the 12 provinces of The Netherlands, which is formally called *Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (literally: “Kingdom of the Low Countries”). The Netherlands also includes the islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten in the Caribbean. We chose to use the name Holland for our bike tours for its ease and name recognition. And our tours are (almost) only in North and South Holland (except for Utrecht which is in the province of Utrecht).



Another common question is, “Why are people from The Netherlands (or even Holland) called Dutch.” Blame the English. The English word Dutch is derived from Deutsch: the German word for German. Initially, the English didn’t make a big distinction between the Germanic peoples of the region. However, after the Netherlands became an independent state, the word Dutch tended to be used only for people from The Netherlands and other Germanic people – who would later form Germany – became known as Germans.

ROUTES & HIGHLIGHTS

The map on the following page shows the *intermediate* routes between the overnight towns (marked ) . Easier and harder routes are also available. The map also shows some of the highlights in the area.

Each tour is customized to you and your tour may not include all these routes and overnight towns. Typically, Utrecht and Alkmaar are only included on longer tours. Your customized routes are provided in the *On-Tour App* that accompanies this guidebook. The app includes:

- Detailed maps
- Leisure, intermediate, and Challenge route options¹
- Places to have lunch along the routes
- Points of interest along the routes

¹ Not all days have all levels of riding.





1 Utrecht

One of the Netherlands' oldest cities, this University town is lively and vibrant. The "Old Canal" (Oude Gracht) is, perhaps, the most scenic canal in the country.

2 Gouda

Known for its namesake cheese and cheese market in the medieval Markt square. The square is also home to the 15th-century town hall with iconic red and white shutters.

3 Leiden

One of the Netherlands' great cities; laced with canals lined by 17th-century buildings. The home of Rembrandt and the country's most prestigious university.

4 Haarlem

A city characterized by grand churches, cobblestone streets, intimate bars, and fine cafes. It is also home to some impressive museums.

5 Alkmaar

Known as the city of cheese, but with much more to offer: a beautiful old center, great shopping, and countless terraced cafes ... and a cheese museum.

6 Delft

Best known for its blue and white pottery, the old town in this Golden-Age wonder is straight out of a Vermeer painting – the grand master was born and lived here.

7 Tulips and Keukenhof Botanical Gardens

The Dutch are the world leaders in tulip cultivation. You will see the most tulips when riding from Leiden to Haarlem. In season, Keukenhof Botanical Gardens are a must for flower lovers.

8 The North Sea Coast

Long stretches of unspoiled beaches framed by sand dunes. The bike paths take you across the dunes and through seaside resorts such as bustling Zandvoort.

9 Windmills

There is nothing more emblematic of the Netherlands than its windmills. There are more than 1,200 surviving originals, with some of the most historic at Zaanse Schans.

- Museums

A world leader in the field of art and culture, there are hundreds of museums to visit. Favorites include the Van Gogh Museum, the Anne Frank House, and Molenmuseum de Valk.

Cycle-Friendly Infrastructure

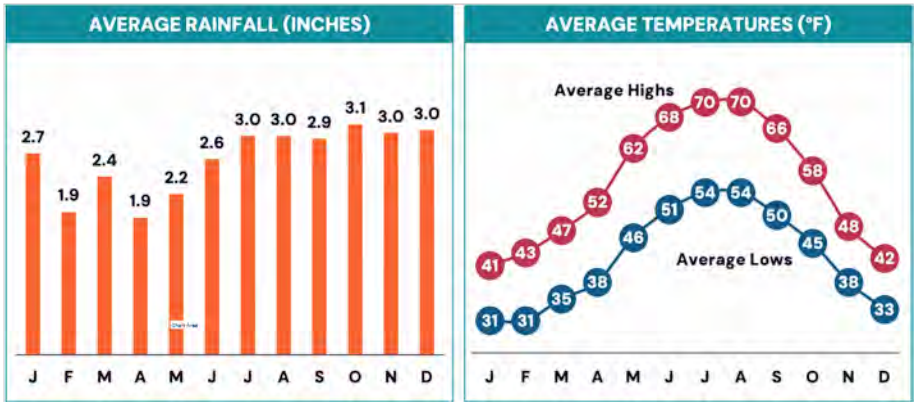
With over 20,000 miles of traffic-free cycling paths, trains that welcome bikes, and roads where cyclists have the right-of way, cycling is the perfect way to explore Holland’s historic towns and scenic countryside.

CLIMATE & GEOGRAPHY

The climate in Holland is a Marine West Coast climate, similar to England and Northern France. The proximity to the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean result in relatively cool summers and mild winters. Being a small and flat country, Holland has a quite uniform climate, though the coast is a little cooler and windier than further inland.

The best time to visit Holland is from mid-May to mid-September, when the temperatures are typically mild or pleasantly warm. From mid-April to mid-May, the country is in bloom with the fields full of tulips and other flowers. June, July and August are the warmest months. Whenever you choose to travel, you should pack waterproofs and some warm clothing as most weeks will have a mixture of sunshine and some rain.

The charts below show the monthly average temperatures (in Fahrenheit) and rainfall (in inches) for Utrecht.



Data Source: www.intellicast.com

HISTORY



Rokin Canal, Amsterdam

In Three Sentences

It is complicated. Greed, lust, war, pirates, and high-seas adventures. But it all works out in the end with a society based on a belief in human rights, consensus, and tolerance (for now).

Key Dates

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 3000 – 2000 BCE | People living in what is now the Drenthe province. Long before Stonehenge, these people are moving enormous rocks to create structures. |
| 59 BCE | The Romans arrive. They build towns and roads that can still be seen today. |
| 800 CE | Christianity arrives and kills those that don't convert from various Celtic beliefs. |
| 1150 – 1300 | Dams are built in the first efforts of an ongoing tug of war against the sea. |
| 1200 | The age of city states is in full bloom with lords ruling riverside towns. Trading between towns results in massive wealth and power for these lords. |
| 1275 | Amsterdam is founded and gains its first direct access to the sea via the Zuiderzee. |
| 1287 | The Zuiderzee floods and over 80,000 people die. |
| 1419 | The start of the end of powerful city states. Dukes consolidate. Freedom suffers. |
| 1452 | Fire devastates wooden Amsterdam. Only brick and tile to be used in future. |
| 1506 | Habsburg Charles (born in Flanders) becomes Lord of the Netherlands and subsequently King of Spain (1516) and Holy Roman Emperor (1519). The Netherlands are effectively ruled from Spain and Catholicism becomes the official religion. |

1555 – 1566	Philip II of Spain cracks down on protestants, religious war ensues.
1568–1648	Low Countries revolt against lack of religious freedom, launching the Eighty Years' War. Eventually, the Netherlands win its freedom from Spain.
1596	The Dutch East India Company is formed.
1600s	The Golden Age places Amsterdam securely on the map: the grand inner ring of canals constructed, and the population surges to 200,000.
1602	Amsterdam becomes the site of the world's first stock exchange.
1620	Pilgrims arrive in the New World aboard the leaky Mayflower. Their voyage began in Leiden.
1636–1637	Tulipmania – see Fun Facts, below.
1667	The big swap: After various wranglings with England, the Dutch swap New Amsterdam for Surinam. New Amsterdam then became New York.
1795	French troops arrive. Provinces unite with Amsterdam as their capital.
1813–1814	The French are overthrown, and Willem VI of Orange is crowned as Dutch King Willem I. The Protestant north and Catholic south combine as the United Kingdom of the Netherlands.
1830	With help from the French, the southern provinces secede to form the Kingdom of Belgium.
1865–76	A period of rapid economic and social change. The North Sea Canal is dug, the Dutch railway system is expanded, and socialist government established.
1914–20	The Netherlands remains neutral in WWI while trading with both sides.
1919	KLM takes to the skies, now the world's oldest airline.
1932	After centuries of schemes, dyke-building, and floods, the Zuiderzee reclamation begins, spurred on by a deadly 1916 storm surge. The Afsluitdijk (dyke) is completed, beginning the land-reclamation process.
1939	The Dutch government launches Westerbork as an internment camp to house Jewish refugees. The Nazis later use it as a transportation point for 107,000 Jews sent to death camps.
1940	Germany invades, Rotterdam is destroyed by the Luftwaffe. There is a Dutch government in exile in London led by Queen Wilhemina.

1944–45	The Allies liberate the southern Netherlands, but the north and west are cut off from supplies leading to thousands perishing in the 'Winter of Hunger'.
1946	The UN-chartered International Court of Justice sets up shop in Den Haag.
1958	The Delta Project is launched following the great floods of Zeeland in 1953 (more death and destruction). Vast construction continues for four decades.
1980	The investiture of Queen Beatrix is disrupted by a smoke bomb and riots on the Dam.
2001	Same sex marriage is legalized in the Netherlands, the first country in the world to do so.
2002	Leading politician Pim Fortuyn is assassinated. He took an aggressive stance on immigration and integration.
2004	Activist film maker Theo van Gogh, a critic of Islam, is assassinated, sparking debate over the limits of Dutch multiculturalism.
2013	After a 33-year reign, Queen Beatrix abdicates in favor of her eldest son, Willem-Alexander, who becomes the first king in 123 years.
2023	One of the biggest political upsets in Dutch politics since World War II. The right-wing Party for Freedom wins 37 of the 150 seats in parliament. The party is led by right-wing populist Geert Wilders.

FOOD & DRINK

Dutch Food

Overview

Traditional Dutch food reflects the country's rich culinary heritage with hearty and comforting dishes. One iconic dish is "Stroopwafels," thin waffle cookies filled with sweet syrup. "Bitterballen" are popular Dutch snacks, featuring deep-fried, crispy meat-filled balls served with mustard. Herring, often enjoyed raw with onions and pickles, showcases the Netherlands' maritime influence. "Erwtensoup" is a thick pea soup, perfect for chilly days. Cheese plays a starring role, with varieties like Gouda and Edam renowned globally. Lastly, "Poffertjes," mini fluffy pancakes topped with powdered sugar and butter, capture the essence of Dutch indulgence, making the cuisine a delightful blend of flavors and traditions.

Gouda Cheese

Named after the city of Gouda, it boasts a distinctive, smooth texture and a mild, nutty flavor. Made from cow's milk, Gouda undergoes a traditional cheese-making process, including curdling, pressing, and aging for varying durations. Its pale yellow hue and characteristic round shape contribute to its visual appeal. Gouda comes in diverse styles, from young and creamy to aged and crumbly, with the latter exhibiting pronounced caramel notes. A versatile cheese, Gouda can be enjoyed on its own, melted in dishes, or paired with fruits and wines, securing its status as a culinary favorite.



Stroopwafels

A Dutch delight, these are thin, sweet waffle cookies with a caramel-like syrup filling. Originating from the Netherlands, these treats gained worldwide popularity. Best enjoyed warm atop a cup of coffee, they offer a delightful combination of chewiness and crispiness, making stroopwafels a beloved indulgence for those with a sweet tooth.



Bitterballen

Popular Dutch pub snacks, Bitterballen are savory delights with a crispy exterior and a creamy, meat-based filling. Deep-fried to perfection, these bite-sized spheres are often enjoyed with mustard.



FUN FACTS (AND OTHER THINGS OF INTEREST)

Tulipmania

When it comes to investment frenzy, the Dutch tulip craze of 1636 to 1637 ranks alongside the greatest economic booms and busts in history. The cautionary story of the Dutch tulip craze is considered the first example of an economic bubble.



Before 1633, Holland's tulip trade had been restricted to professional growers and experts, but the steadily rising prices lured many ordinary middle-class and poor families to speculate in the tulip market. Homes, estates, and industries were mortgaged so that bulbs could be bought for resale at higher prices. Sales and resales were made many times over without the bulbs ever leaving the ground, and rare varieties of bulbs sold for the equivalent of hundreds of dollars each.

The market crashed in early 1637 when doubts surfaced as to whether prices would continue to increase. Seemingly overnight the price structure for tulips collapsed, stealing fortunes and leaving financial ruin for many including ordinary Dutch families.

Dutch Defenses

Naarden – the starting town for longer tours – is found in the Het Gooi area and is famous thanks to the extraordinary fortress, Naarden-Vesting, on its northwest boarder. This military work of art has the shape of a 12-pointed star, with arrowheads at each tip. The idea behind the shape of the fort is defense. Naarden-Vesting is one of the best preserved in the country but unfortunately came a little too late – it was built only after the Spanish massacred the inhabitants in the 16th century. The bastions were staffed until the 1920s by the Dutch army, long after its tactical significance had become moot.



The Dutch National Anthem

The Netherlands' national anthem, the Wilhelmus, is the oldest in the world. Both the words and music date from the 16th century, and in it the Dutch king speaks of "Dietse Bloed" which is an old word for Nederlands (Dutch).



Height (of people)

Dutch men are the tallest in the world with an average height of 182.5 cm, while Dutch women rank as the second tallest in the world (after Latvia) with an average height of 169 cm. Although Europeans and Americans towered over the average

Dutch in the mid-18th century, Dutch males have grown some 20 cm over the last 200 years compared to the 6 cm that Americans grew. Research shows it is not only due to Dutch DNA but also environmental influences such as universal healthcare and nutrition, low social inequality, and their substantial intake of dairy products.

Height (of country)

The Netherlands is the lowest country in Europe with 26 percent of the Netherlands sitting below sea level and some 60 percent of the population living five meters below sea level. Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, where most visitors land, is three meters below sea level. As you travel, you will see a lot of sea defenses as well as windmills (historically used to pump the water out).

Witchery

Although often remembered with a sense of lightheartedness, the horrific witch-hunts of the 16th century caused nearly a million women all over Europe to be executed – they were burnt, drowned, or otherwise tortured to death – on suspicion of being witches.

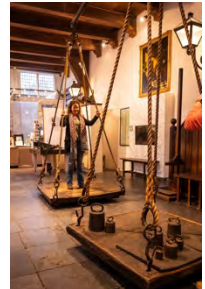
Weighing was one of the more common methods of determining witchery, as popular belief held that any woman who was too light for the size of her frame was obviously a witch. A woman who weighed the 'proper' amount was too heavy to ride a broom and thus not a witch. Women who passed the test were given a certificate, good for life, proclaiming them to be human.

Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (reign 1519–1556) was convinced that the Oudewater weighing scales were the only "fair equipment" in his European empire to determine whether or not someone was a witch.

The town of Oudewater (on the Utrecht to Gouda route) emerges with some honor as no woman weighed there was ever proved to be a witch and this is held up as a symbol of the honesty of the locals, as they refused to take bribes to rig the weights. It is also seen as the first stirrings of people power and a turn against the church, which was behind the witch-hunts.

Clogs

The Netherlands produces around six million souvenir clogs each year. The exact origin of the wooden footwear is unknown – and not thought to be Dutch – although the oldest surviving clog in Europe was found in Nieuwendijk, Amsterdam 800 years ago and resembles Dutch clogs today.



Clogs are rarely worn although they are ingrained in Dutch culture, for example, there are many clog-related idiomatic expressions. Traditionally, klompen (clogs) were used as protective footwear for workers as they are sturdy, waterproof and easy to clean. In rural Netherlands, they are still sometimes worn in the fields.

Delft Pottery

Since the 17th century, Delft has been home to the production of the world-famous 'Delft Blue'. Between 1600 and 1800, rich families liked to show off their Delft Blue collections to one another.

Delftware potters prefer to call their pottery "porcelain"; however, it turns out it was only a cheaper variety of real Chinese porcelain. Typically, porcelain is made from a specific clay but Delft Blue is actually made from clay that was coated with a tin glaze after it was fired. Delft Blue achieved unrivalled fame, and at the peak of its popularity, there were 33 factories in Delft.



Delft Blue China is ever-present throughout the town of Delft but the manufacturing process was first created in China. Ironically, there are now large amounts of fake Delftware sold in tourist shops courtesy of factories in China.

The genuine Delft Blue pottery is produced at four factories in and around Delft, and in surprisingly small quantities. There are two places where you can see the artists at work (details in the Leiden Loop section of the On Tour App).

Bikes, Bikes, Bikes

There are around 18 million bikes in the country, including the clever (if not so elegant) bakfiets which combine a bike and a wheelbarrow. Ideal for taking the kids to school!

Cycling Safety

Cycling in the Netherlands is the safest in the world. A study from Rutgers University reported the Netherlands has the lowest rates of serious injuries per million kilometers cycled. This is thanks to 35,000 km of excellent bike lanes and bikes receiving the same respect as cars.

Cheese Heads

The people of Alkmaar are called cheese heads and wear this name with pride. This derives from the fact that during a siege of the city, the people of Alkmaar wore 'helmets' on their heads to defend themselves. These helmets were the cheese molds in which cheeses were pressed, thus the name "cheese heads" was born.

Tulips are not Native to Holland

Tulips are not native to Holland but rather they are native to the Himalayas where they are a small, delicate-looking-yet-hardy mountain flower. They were first brought to Europe by the Ottomans in the 15th century. Here they were bred to be taller and different colors. They arrived in Holland at the end of the 16th century, and the rest, as they say, is history.

ESSENTIALS

Hotel Services

Will hotels do laundry?

Yes, most hotels will do your laundry. Generally, it is better if you can put your clothes in on a day when you are spending two nights at an accommodation.

Please ask us if there is a question you have about a particular place you are staying.

Can I use my charger and hair dryer in Holland?

Standard sockets, as in the rest of Europe, supply electricity at 220 volts alternating at a 50 cycles per second (vs. the US where 110 volts, alternating at 60 cycles per second is standard).

The sockets are also different from the US sockets: Type F (also known as *Schuko*). This socket also works with Plugs C and E.

To use your North American appliances you will need to check they are rated for use with 220 volts and you will need a plug adapter.

Many phone charges and laptop chargers are rated for use at 220 volts however most North American hairdryers are not.



Internet Access

Wi-Fi is common in hotels and restaurants (you might need to ask for the code) and is often free in tourist offices and other public places.

Money

The currency of The Netherlands is the Euro (€).

Are credit cards widely accepted?

Surprisingly, no! All the major international credit cards are recognized, and most hotels and large stores accept them. But a fair number of shops, restaurants and other businesses (including Dutch Railways and supermarket chains) do not accept credit cards or accept only European cards with security chips.

Some establishments levy a 5% surcharge (or more) on credit cards to offset the commissions charged by card providers. Always check first.

PIN cards: In the Netherlands you'll notice people gleefully using 'PIN' cards everywhere, and you'll see the signs in shops as well as 'PIN only' queues in supermarkets. These direct-debit cards look like credit or bank cards but with little circuit chips on them, but they won't be of much use to visitors without a Dutch bank account.

Ask your credit card company about foreign transaction fees before you travel. These can vary from zero to over 3%. NOTE: Credit card companies may decline your card if you have not notified them that you are travelling abroad.

Are there ATMs in all the overnight towns?

Yes, there is a good network of ATMs in the region, usually called “cash machines”. The coverage is similar to the United States and Canada with several ATM machine in each of the overnight towns we use as well as in many of the towns en route.

Typically, your bank will charge a fixed fee per transaction (around \$2) plus a variable fee of around 3%.

How many Euros should I bring/carry?

Cash is commonly used for everyday purchases throughout Holland. You will want to keep €200 to €300 on hand in case your lunch or dinner restaurant does not accept credit cards and people tend to use cash for small transactions (cups of coffee, etc.) and at smaller food stores. Taxis also prefer cash.

Communications

Is English widely spoken?

The short answer is, “Yes,” English is spoken almost everywhere in Holland.

The longer answer is that both Nederlands (Dutch) and Fryslân (Frisian) are official languages in the Netherlands, although English is also spoken by the majority of the population. Estimates suggest that less than 400,000 people speak Frisian, so far more Dutch people speak English. Limburgish, Dutch Low Saxon and Gronings are also recognized minority languages.

The Netherlands has the highest English-proficiency in the world, narrowly beating Denmark and Sweden, according to the English Proficiency Index (EPI). Some 9 in 10 Dutch people speak English as a second language. According to the EU language report (2012), 94% of Dutch people could speak two languages, well above the EU average of 54%. Considering more than half of the population also speak German, many speak at least three languages.

Will my cell phone work in Holland?

If travelling from the United States or Canada, you may need to inform your cell phone company that you are traveling and request them to activate your account for use abroad. There are typically packages available to pre-purchase that reduce the cost of using your phone abroad.

Should I buy a Dutch SIM card?

For longer trips – or if you need to make a lot of calls while abroad – this can be worthwhile. For shorter trips, where you will not be using the phone very much, it makes less sense – just go with an international package offered by your US or Canadian operator. If you are planning to buy a Dutch SIM card, make sure your

phone is unlocked before you travel, or you will also need to purchase a local phone (around \$30 for a basic model).

Many of our guests choose to activate an eSIM card for travelling. This will give you access to cheap data plans (e.g. \$5 for 1 GB of data for a week) and do not require you to swap out your existing SIM card. Companies providing eSIMs include Airalo and Nomad. Plans can be purchased online and downloaded onto your phone. If you plan to use an eSIM, we strongly recommend you buy and set up the plan in advance of your trip. You can then activate it when you arrive at your destination. Note that not all devices support eSIM technology so it is best to check before leaving home.

How will you communicate with me during my trip?

At the start of your trip, your guide will ask you how you want us to keep in touch. For most people this is by phone. Due to inconsistent coverage in the countryside and smaller towns, SMS texts or WhatsApp messages are often the most secure way for guide and guest to stay in touch. For this reason, we strongly recommend you have a cellphone plan that allows you to communicate via phone. See *Will My cellphone work in Holland*, above.

Exploring

How is the traffic on the roads in Holland?

Many roads have specific "cycleways" that are separate from the road itself, with their own traffic lights and controls. Tunnels and bridges usually segregate cyclists from the rush of traffic in highly congested areas to help ensure safe and speedy travel (and minimal exhaust inhalation). Signposts and road signs are available on cycleways and roundabouts, and sometimes list alternative routes. While cycle lanes and cycle routes have the same type of traffic signals as the motor vehicle lanes, Dutch cyclists tend to adopt an assertive riding style, and many will ignore traffic signals. This may be encouraged by the "automobile is always responsible" types of laws—being surrounded by two tons of metal makes it hard to point a finger of blame in a collision with a defenseless person on a bike. We encourage you to follow all traffic signals, they are there for a reason.

The Dutch motorists are, generally, very respectful of cyclists – chances are high they ride a bike too! The roads going in and out of towns can be quite busy, but the good news is you'll almost always be on a designated bike path and the traffic that you'll be dealing with most often is other cyclists!

Which routes can I ride with an eBike?

Typically, you can ride all routes on an eBike but your eBike range may be insufficient for some harder routes. A lot depends on your riding style, the model of bike, and the topography of the route and in Holland... the wind or weather in general! Your guide will help you calibrate which routes are practical for you to ride on your eBike.

Is the guidebook in miles or kilometers?

Our guidebooks use kilometers. Kilometers are what the locals use and what are on the road signs. If you are bringing your own bike, we strongly recommend that you set your computer to measure in kilometers.

The good news is that there are 1.6 kilometers to the mile so what would be a 30-mile ride in the United States is a much more impressive 50-kilometer ride in Holland!

What general guidebook would you recommend?

This guidebook (with accompanying On-Tour App) is designed to help you navigate and enjoy your tour. Our objective is to tell you what you will see en route and help you understand your route options. As such, our guide does not have a detailed description of every potential sight you might visit en route – though we do try to list the major ones.

For a more general guidebook to the area, we would suggest the *Rough Guide to The Netherlands*. For more on architecture, history, and the arts, we would suggest the *Michelin Green Guide: The Netherlands*.

What map would you recommend?

The best road maps of the Netherlands are those produced by Michelin and the Dutch automobile association ANWB. The ANWB also publishes provincial maps detailing cycling paths and picturesque road routes. You'll find a wide variety of maps for sale at any tourist office, as well as at book stores and news-stands.

Local Customs

What are local dress codes?

Dutch people tend to be relaxed and dress relatively casually. They are also used to having tourists from all parts of the world visit their towns and cities.

In the more upscale restaurants, people tend to dress a little more formally for dinner. This does not need to mean a jacket and tie but you will probably feel more comfortable if you avoid shorts and T-shirts at the dinner table.

During the day, you will see plenty of people in shorts, T-shirts, and summery tops. However, it is considered respectful to be a little more modest if visiting a church, for example, by covering shoulders and men removing hats.

What are typical opening hours?

As a very general rule, you can expect to see the following opening times:

- Museums, & monuments: 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Some are closed on Mondays.
- Churches: 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM
- Shops: 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Saturdays. 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Sundays (bigger towns only).

- Restaurants for lunch: 10:00 AM or 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, with an afternoon break from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM
- Bars and cafés: 11:00 AM to 1:00 AM; some open longer at weekends and others won't open till late afternoon.
- Other businesses: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday to Friday

Many restaurants have at least one day a week when they are closed. This is noted, where relevant, in this guidebook.

Some tourist attractions are only open from Easter through to September or October.

When should I leave a tip?

Tipping in Holland is far less pervasive than in the United States; the Dutch do tip, but modestly. Typically, a service charge is included in the price of the meal so a significant tip is not required – though a few Euros would be appreciated.

In the larger hotels, if someone has helped you with your bags it is common to tip a couple of Euros. In restaurants round up, or 5% to 10%. Taxi drivers are usually tipped 5% or 10%.

Safety and Annoyances

What number do I call in an emergency?

If you need emergency assistance, call 112. The operator will speak English.

The operator can often detect the location of the caller, but you should also be prepared to use your Ride with GPS app to help identify where you are.

Do we need to worry about theft or other crimes?

The Netherlands is one of the safest countries in Europe, but you should still use big-city street sense in larger cities. That said, it is good practice to be discreet with your valuables – leave them in the hotel safe where possible – and **always lock up your bike if you cannot see it** as bicycle theft is very common; if possible, use two locks.

Legal Matters

The Netherlands Politie (police) are fairly relaxed and helpful unless you do something clearly wrong such as littering or smoking a joint right under their noses.

Drugs: technically, cannabis is illegal although possession of up to 5g is tolerated. Larger amounts are subject to prosecution. Don't light up in an establishment other than a coffeeshop (café authorized to sell cannabis) without checking that it's OK to do so. Hard drugs are treated as a serious crime. Hopefully it is obvious but one should never purchase drugs of any kind on the street; fatalities can and do occur.

Prostitution: prostitution is legal in the Netherlands. The industry is protected by the law and prostitutes pay tax. Much of this open policy stems from a desire to undermine the role of pimps and the underworld of the sex industry. In the Red Light

District in Amsterdam's you should feel safe as the streets are well policed, but the back alleys are more dubious.

Medical Services and Pharmacies

Your hotel's front desk is the best source of information about medical services and pharmacies. However, please call us if we can be of any help. There are pharmacies in all the overnight towns.

How do I contact my embassy?

Amsterdam is the country's capital, but Den Haag is the seat of the government. Many embassies are in Den Haag, but Amsterdam has several consulates, the U.S. included.

United States Consulate General

 Museumplein 19, 1071 DJ Amsterdam, Netherlands

 Telephone: +31 205 755 309

 <https://nl.usembassy.gov/>

Embassy of the United States of America

 John Adams Park 1, 2244 BZ Wassenaar, Netherlands

 Telephone: +31 703 102 209

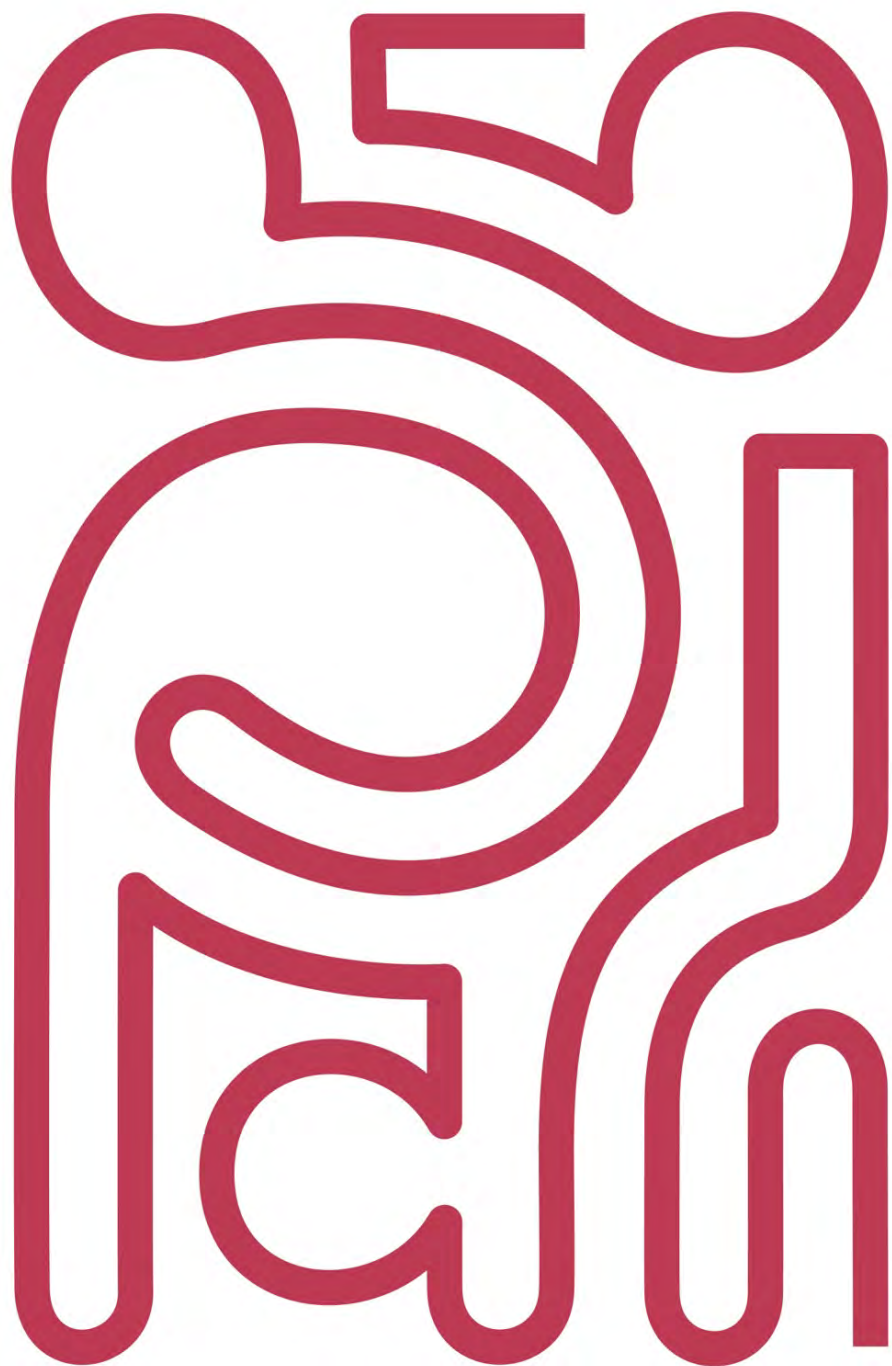
 <https://nl.usembassy.gov/>

Embassy of Canada

 Sophialaan 5-7, 2514 JP Den Haag, Netherlands

 Telephone: +31 703 111 600

 https://www.international.gc.ca/country-pays/netherlands-pays_bas/index.aspx?lang=eng



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ker Square, Utrecht University

UTRECHT

Overview

Utrecht is one of the Netherlands' oldest cities and the country's fourth largest. The central focus of the city is Old Canal (Oudegracht), perhaps the most scenic canal in the country. The canal is located on the historic course of the River Vecht and was created by damming the river at the city boundaries. This made it possible to lower the water level by approximately four meters, creating an inner-city harbor wharf system with storage cellars below street level. Most cellars have now been converted into restaurants, art galleries, and offices.

The 40,000 strong student population, the largest in the country, creates a vibrant atmosphere in the subterranean music cellars, movie-house-pubs, and beer cafés.

Utrecht is also home to many high-quality museums and a fine Gothic cathedral.

Restaurants and Bars

Utrecht has many fantastic restaurants and pubs to choose from. The wharf-side restaurants on the Oudegracht are an obvious place to explore for dining options but you will, generally, find better restaurants elsewhere.

Gys

Everything is organic, plant-based and gluten-free at this bright and airy bistro, from the burgers and sandwiches to the salads and desserts. They recently opened a second restaurant slightly further out of central Utrecht. Open Thursday to Sunday from 10:00 AM – 10:30 PM and from 12:00 PM Monday to Wednesday. Reservations can be made online.

 Voorstraat 77, 3512 AL Utrecht

 +31 30 259 1788

 <https://www.gysutrecht.nl/en>

ANNA Pancakes Voor Clarenburg

A great brunch spot for some delicious pancakes. Service can be slow but if you can grab an outside table and people-watch while you wait you won't notice. Open Thursday to Sunday from 9:00 AM, with closing times varying between 5:30 PM and 9:00 PM, and Monday to Wednesday from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Reservations can be made online.

 Voor Clarenburg 10-12, 3511 JE Utrecht

 +31 64 104 0929

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

De Goedheyd

A good choice for a fancier meal. The menu is French-international oriented with a classic modern twist. Under the leadership of chef Dustin Pardoën, their aim is to "surprise, pamper in this warm atmosphere". Open Wednesday to Saturday 6:00 PM to 12:00 AM. Closed Sunday and Monday. Dress code is smart/casual. Reservations recommended and can be made online.

 Hamburgerstraat 17, 3512 NP Utrecht

 +31 30 246 8472

 <http://www.degoedheyd.nl/>

San Siro

A great Italian option, with a fantastic atmosphere to match. There is an outside terrace if the weather allows for it. Open: Tuesday to Sunday 12:00 PM to 12:00 AM (restaurant closes at 9:30 PM). Closed on Monday.

 Oudkerkhof 9, 3512 GH Utrecht

 +31 30 232 1683

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

Blauw

The place for Indonesian food in Utrecht. Young and old alike enjoy superb rijsttafels (an array of spicy dishes served with rice) amid the reddish décor that mixes vintage art with hip minimalism. Open daily from 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Reservations can be made online.

 Springweg 64, 3511 VT Utrecht
 +31 30 234 2463
 <https://restaurantblauw.nl/indonesisch-restaurant-in-utrecht/>

Stadskasteel Oudaen

An old city castle, built in 1276 for the Zoudenbalch family. It is a unique structure as it was one of the first stone buildings in Utrecht. Now a heritage building and restaurant and has its own brewery. Open daily from 10:00 AM – late (open from 11:00 AM on Sunday and Monday). Reservations can be made online.

 Oudegracht 99, 3511 AE Utrecht
 +31 30 231 1864
 <https://www.oudaen.nl/>

't Oude Pothuys

Great place for a drink, in this dark, barrel-vaulted medieval cellar. This cozy pub often has music including funk, blues, and electro. Open from Wednesday to Sunday from 12:30 PM till late, Monday to Tuesday from 3:00 PM. Reservations can be made online.

 Oudegracht 279, 3511 PA Utrecht
 +31 30 231 8970
 <https://www.pothuys.nl/>

Vegitalian

A friendly neighborhood restaurant, serving Italian food with a vegetarian twist. Their philosophy is that great food experience can be a green one too, serving vegetarian and plant-based options. Open daily from 8.30 AM – 10:00 PM. Reservations can be made online.

 Schoutenstraat 17, 3512 GA Utrecht
 + 31 6 3449 4052
 <https://vegitalian.com/locations/utrecht-schoutenstraat/>

Tijm

A cozy, small and trendy restaurant. The dishes are very diverse, trendy and inclusive, with something for everyone. Open daily from 8:00 AM – 11:00 PM, payments just by card. Reservations can be made online.

 Donkere Gaard 3, 3511 KV Utrecht
 +31 3 0889 7698
 <https://tijmutrecht.nl/>

Sights and Activities

Dom Tower

The Dom Tower (Domtoren) is a remnant of Utrecht's original 14th-century cathedral. At 112 meters, it is Europe's second highest cathedral tower (the highest being Cologne's in Germany) and has 50 bells. Climb the 465 steps for unbeatable city views; on a clear day you can see Amsterdam. In 1674, the nave connecting the tower to the cathedral (see below) was destroyed by hurricane-force winds leaving the tower isolated. A pavement pattern on the square in front of the tower shows the outline of the original cathedral. Visit is by guided tour only, departing on the hour. Tickets are purchased at the tourist office across the square (details below) or on their website. Open daily from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

 Domplein 21, 3512 JC Utrecht

 +31 30 236 0010

 <https://www.domtoren.nl/en>

Flora's Garden

Flora's Hof is a small garden, immediately to the right of the entrance to the Dom Tower. It's a peaceful retreat from which to observe the tower.

 Domplein 0, 3512 JC Utrecht

 +31 65 202 2306

 <http://www.florashof.nl/>

St Martin's Cathedral

Known locally as Domkerk, this Gothic cathedral was once connected to the Dom Tower before the nave connecting the two was destroyed in the 1647 storm. Behind the church is a charming monastic garden and peaceful refuge. There is also a café and a gift shop. Open May to September from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM every day, April and October from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and slightly different hours on weekends and during the winter.

 Achter de Dom 1, 3512 JN Utrecht

 +31 30 231 0403

 <http://www.domkerk.nl/>

Schuttevaer Boat Cruise

Hour-long canal tours are a fine way to see the old town and the old water-level warehouses. The landing of Schuttevaer Boat Cruise is on Oudegracht just south of Lange Viestraat. Price for adults from €17.50 and tickets can be purchased online. Open daily from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

 Oudegracht 85, 3511 AD Utrecht

 +31 30 231 9377

 <http://www.schuttevaer.com/>

Centraal Museum

The Centraal Museum is an eclectic collection of art, design, fashion, and local history. The museum also has the world's most extensive Gerrit Rietveld collection, a dream for all minimalists. There's even a Viking longboat that was excavated from the local mud, plus a sumptuous 17th century dollhouse. Price for adults from €16.50 and tickets can be purchased online. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Monday.

 Agnietenstraat 1, 3512 XA Utrecht
 +31 30 236 2353
 <https://www.centraalmuseum.nl/nl>

Museum Catharijneconvent

This is the pick of Utrecht's museums, with the finest collection of medieval religious art in the Netherlands – virtually the history of Christianity, in fact – precisely laid out in a Gothic former convent and an 18th-century canal-side house. Price for adults from €16.50 and tickets can be purchased online. Open Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and Saturday to Sunday from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Mondays.

 Lange Nieuwstraat 38, 3512 PH Utrecht
 +31 30 231 3835
 <https://www.catharijneconvent.nl/>

Pieterskerk

Walk down Voetiusstraat from behind the Domkerk to Pieterskerk. Completed in 1048 it is the oldest Romanesque church in the Netherlands. Often features concerts by amateur and professional choirs. Check website for details. During the summer months, the church is open 5 days a week from Tuesday to Saturday between 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Closed on Sunday and Monday.

 Pieterskerkhof 5, 3512 JR Utrecht
 +31 682 38 9538
 <https://www.pieterskerk-utrecht.nl/>

Museum voor het Kruideniersbedrijf

A quaint museum in an old grocery store from 1873. Tucked into a narrow lane, women in aprons dole out sweets and tea from decorative containers. Pick up a block of white licorice candy to add to hot milk – an old Dutch tradition. Free admission. Open: Tuesday to Thursday from 12.30 PM – 4.30 PM, and Friday to Saturday from 11:30 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed Sunday to Monday.

 Hoogt 10, 3512 GW Utrecht
 +31 30 200 6955
 <https://www.kruideniersmuseum.nl/>

The Railway Museum

The Railway Museum (the Spoorwegmuseum) is where you can discover the story behind 175 years of railways in The Netherlands. There are magnificent historical trains to explore, and a mine-lift takes you back to the time before the invention of the steam engine. Entrance: €19.50 and tickets can be purchased online. There is also a restaurant. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10.00 AM – 5.00 PM. Closed on Mondays during school term-time.

 Het Spoorwegmuseum, Maliebaanstation 16, 3581 XW Utrecht

 +31 30 230 6206

 <https://www.spoorwegmuseum.nl/en/>

Rietveld Schröder House Museum

The UNESCO World Heritage site of Rietveld Schröder House was designed in 1924 and was a private residence until 1985. It is an architectural highlight of the De Stijl movement and an iconic landmark in Utrecht. (De Stijl – Dutch for "The Style" – was a minimalist Dutch art movement founded in 1917). Tickets available from €19 and must be bought in advance which can be done online. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11.00 AM – 4:00 PM. Open until 9:00 PM on Friday. Closed on Mondays.

 Rietveld Schröder House, Prins Hendriklaan 50, 3583 EP, Utrecht

 +31 30 236 2310

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

Festivals

Festival of Ancient Music

The Holland Festival Oude Muziek (Festival of Ancient Music) celebrates music from the Middle Ages to the baroque period. It takes place in late August.

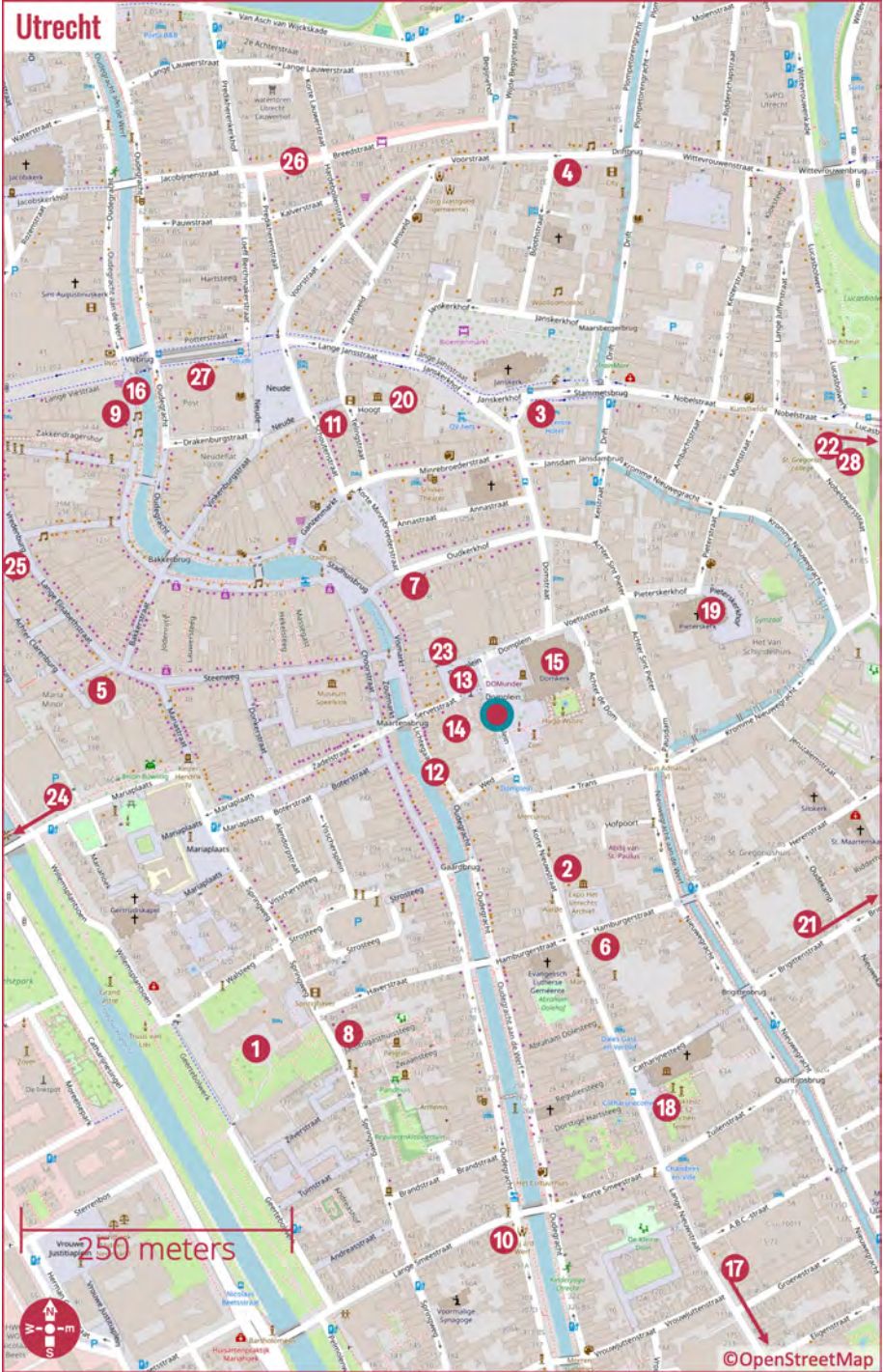
 <https://oudemuziek.nl/>

Nederland's Film Festival

The Dutch film industry may be tiny, but its output is generally very good. See for yourself at the Nederland's Film Festival in late September.

 <http://www.filmfestival.nl/>

Town Plan



Key

Hotels

1. Grand Karel V Hotel
2. Court Hotel
3. NH Utrecht

Restaurants & Bars

4. Gys
5. ANNA Pancakes
6. De Goedheyd
7. San Siro
8. Blauw
9. Stadskasteel Oudaen
10. 't Oude Pothuys
11. Vegetalian
12. Tijm

Points of Interest

13. Dom Tower
14. Flora's Garden
15. St Martin's Cathedral

16. Schuttevaer Boat Cruise
17. Centraal Museum
18. Museum Catharijneconvent
19. Pieterskerk
20. Museum voor het Kruideniersbedrijf
21. The Railway Museum
22. Rietveld Schröder House Museum

Other Locations

23. Tourist Information Office
24. Hoog Catherijne
25. Vredenburg Markets
26. Breedstraat Fabric Market
27. AH (Albert Heijn) Markt
28. Ekoplaza



Route Start / End

Other Useful Information

Tourist Information

VVV Utrecht is the tourist information office and also sells tickets for the Dom Tower. Open daily from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM.



Domplein 9, 3512 JC Utrecht



+31 30 236 0004



<https://www.ontdek-utrecht.nl/vvv-winkel-domplein>

Taxi

Utrecht has many taxi services such as Taxi Utrecht which can be useful to get to restaurants slightly further afield. Book by phone or online. We recommend getting a quote on booking.



+31 30 444 4044



<https://taxiutrecht.org/>

Grocery Stores

Hoog Catherijne Shopping Center

The Hoog Catherijne shopping center is a modern shopping mall located between the train station and the center of town. There are also more mainstream stores on the pedestrian streets between the shopping center and the town hall.

For more interesting shopping choices, stroll down Voorstraat and Twijnstraat (the southern extension of Oudegracht's east bank).

Vredenburg Markets

Huge markets take place on Vredenburg on Wednesdays and Fridays (10:00 AM to 5:00 PM) and Saturdays (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM). These are typical Dutch markets with bread, meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, and cheese.

Breedstraat Fabric Market

The oldest and largest fabric market in the Netherlands. Since 1597 this has been a colorful, bustling place to buy everything from fine linens to buttons and zippers. Saturdays only (8:00 AM to 1:00 PM).

There are many little supermarkets dotted across the town including the following:

AH (Albert Heijn) Markt

A popular chain of supermarkets that you will find in every town you stay. There are at least 3 in Utrecht. Open from 7:00 AM / 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM, depending on which one you find. Opening hours on Sunday are later. One of them is located:

 Potterstraat 1, 3512 TA Utrecht

 +31 303 074 315

 No website

Biowinkel

A chain of organic supermarkets. Open Monday to Saturday 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM, and Sunday 10:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

 Nachtegaalstraat 51A, 3581 AD Utrecht

 +31 30 231 7885

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



Shopping Street in Gouda

GOUDA

Overview

Gouda is known worldwide for its namesake cheese and has a seasonal cheese market on the medieval Markt square. As is common for Dutch cities, Gouda has a town center surrounded by canals with a square, or 'markt' in the center. Gouda's 15th-century town hall is located on the Markt. This Gothic building has iconic red and white shutters. Also on the square is the 17th-century Goudse Waag, once a cheese-weighing station and now home to the Gouda Cheese Museum.

In the Middle Ages, Gouda was known as the Dutch city of beer and in 1470, Gouda's breweries produced as much as 15 million liters per year. See below for the best places to try the local brews.

Restaurants and Bars

Restaurant LIZZ*

If you are staying at the Relais & Châteaux Weeshuis (or even if you're not), there is a great restaurant option which has been awarded one Michelin star. Set in one of the most beautiful buildings in Gouda. Fine dining. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM – 11:00 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday. Reservations can be made on their website and are essential.

 Spieringstraat 1, 2801 ZH Gouda
 +31 18 223 1253
 <https://wshs.nl/en/eat-drink/lizz/>

Lunchcafé curcuma

A delightful organic restaurant serving delicious, healthy food such as sweet-potato waffles, cauliflower and chickpea curry, and tomato soup with hummus. There can be a wait for your food but if you get a window seat you can watch passersby while you wait. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 5:30 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday.

 Korte Groenendaal 21, Gouda
 +31 648 117 954
 <https://www.curcumagouda.nl/>

Cantina van Jongkind

This large, covered hofje has been transformed into a great spot for lunch. Gouda has many hofjes (enclosed courtyards) but many are still inhabited and not open to the public. This is a chance to see inside an authentic hofje and enjoy some good food. Lunch is served Thursday to Saturday from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, on Sunday from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM, and Tuesday to Wednesday from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM (closed for lunch on Monday). Dinner is served daily from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

 Zeugstraat 28, Gouda
 +31 651 131 036
 <https://www.cantinavanjongkind.nl/>

Brownies & downies

A sweet café (part of a chain) in the center of Gouda conceived by a chef and a special needs school teacher, their aim is to generate employment opportunities in the hospitality sector for individuals with disabilities. Since its establishment in 2010, the chain has expanded to encompass 30 stores across the Netherlands. Their menu includes home-made soup, fresh salads, and delicious hot and cold sandwiches. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM, and Monday 11:30 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Sunday.

 Korte Tiendeweg 15, Gouda
 +31 182 605 695
 <https://browniesanddowniesgouda.nl/>

Museumcafé Gouda

Another option for lunch is the museum café. A cozy place in a quiet location tucked away in the cellar vault of the museum (but also with outdoor terrace seating). Beautifully presented lunch options such as sandwiches, soup & salads, warm sandwiches, pastries, and a great cake selection. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM (from 11:00 AM on Sundays). Closed on Monday.

 Achter de Kerk 14, 2801 JX Gouda
 +31 182 820 225
 <https://www.museumcafégouda.nl/>

Kruim

A superb café for a great lunch or a simple dinner. Food is good, service is generally fast, and the atmosphere is relaxed. Their hot chocolate is excellent on a cold day. Located in Chocolate Factory Library Gouda. Open from 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM every day.

 Klein Amerika 20, 2806 CA Gouda
 +31 182 590 160
 <https://kruimgouda.nl/>

Curries and Candles

An intimate vegetarian Indian dining experience with authentic flavors and a cozy, welcoming vibe. Known for its exceptional curries and vegan options, it's a hidden gem. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 12:00 PM – 7:00 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday.

 Wijdstraat 6, 2801 KC Gouda
 +31 617 475 203
 No website

Restaurant Bij Ons

A modern and inviting restaurant with friendly servers at a reasonable cost. Its menu features French-inspired cuisine with global influences. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Closed Monday. Reservations can be made online.

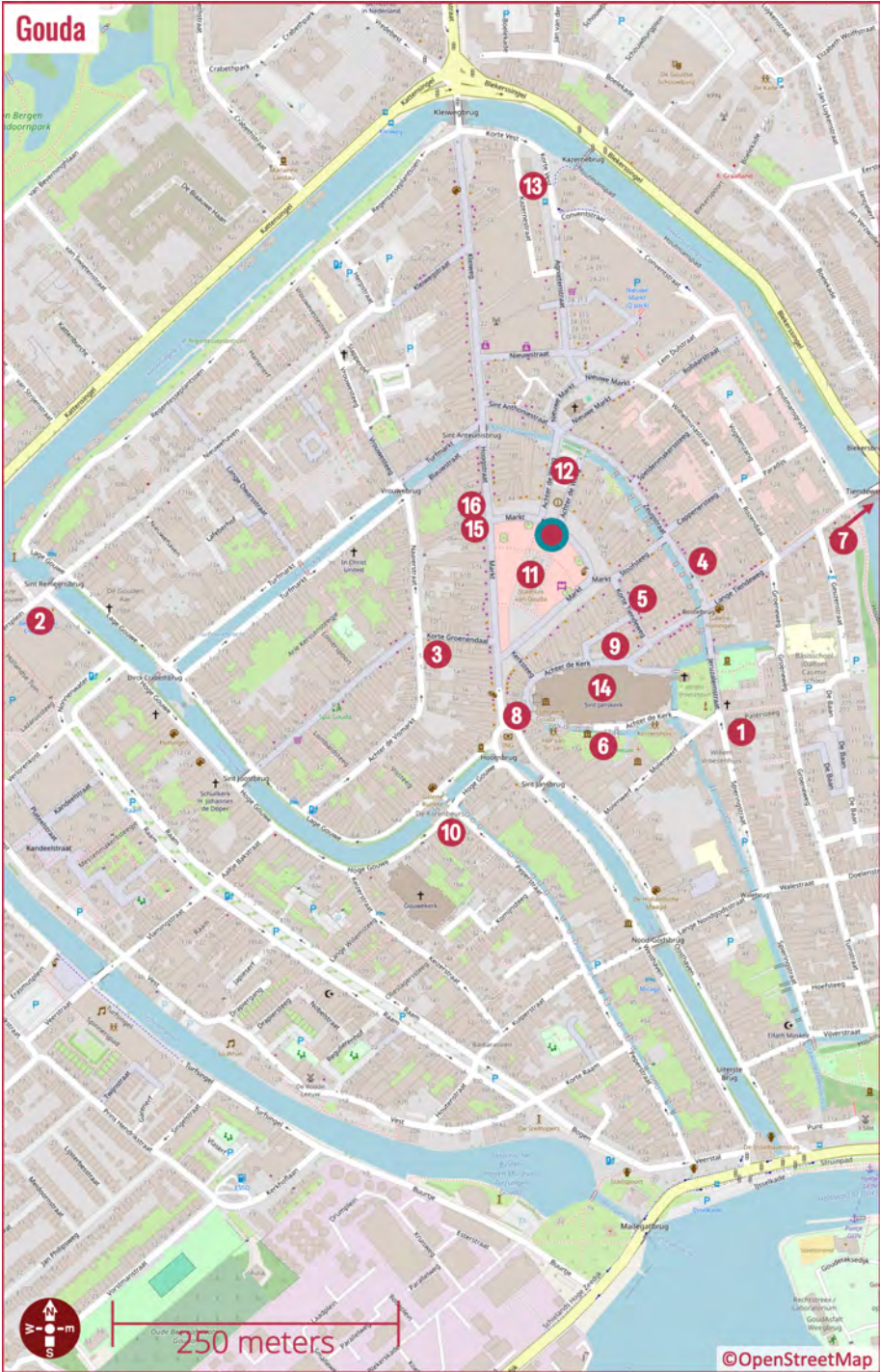
 Koster Gijzensteeg 5, 2801 JV Gouda
 +31 182 528 007
 <https://restaurantbijons.nl/>

Taverne Kamphuisen

Cozy restaurant with a beautiful outdoor terrace on both sides of the canal. This is one of the iconic taverns in Gouda having great drinks and delicious dishes for a reasonable price. Open Sunday to Thursday from 5:00 PM – 12:00 PM and Friday and Saturday from 4:00 PM – 12:00 PM. Reservations can be made online.

 Hoge Gouwe 19, 2801 LA Gouda
 + 31 182 514163
 <https://www.kamphuisen.com/>

Town Plan



Key

Hotels

1. Relais & Châteaux Weeshuis
2. Plus City Hotel

Restaurants & Bars

1. LIZZ* (at the Relais)
3. Lunchcafé curcuma
4. Cantina van Jongkind
5. Brownies & downieS
6. Museumcafe Gouda
7. Kruim
8. Curries and Candles
9. Restaurant Bij Ons
10. Taverne Kamphuisen

Points of Interest

11. Gouda Town Hall & Weekly Cheese Market
12. Goudse Waag Cheese Museum
13. The Cheese Experience
14. Sint Jans Church

Other Locations

15. Tourist Office
16. AH (Albert Heijn) Markt
17. Gouds Kaashuis



Route Start / End

Sights and Activities

Gouda Town Hall

The regal Gothic town hall (Stadhuis van Gouda) stands proudly in the center of the town square. It was constructed from shimmering sandstone in the middle of the 15th century. The elaborate construction is a testament to the wealth Gouda enjoyed at the time – primarily from the cloth trade. The red and white shutters provide a fine counterpoint to the carefully maintained stonework and the ceremonial rooms inside are worth a look. The town hall is open Tuesday to Thursday and Saturday to Sunday from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Closed Monday and Friday. Ticket sales are only possible at the town hall.



Markt 1, Gouda



+31 18 223 1250



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

Weekly Cheese Market

Gouda is, of course, world famous for cheese. A traditional cheese market is held on its large triangular market square on Thursdays from the beginning of April to the end of August, from 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM. It really is quite a show, and a few locals dress up in costume and pose for endless photos. In addition to the cheese trade and cheese making, there is also a crafts market.



Markt 1, Gouda



+31 18 258 9110



<https://welcometogouda.com/cheese/gouda-kaasmarkt>

De Goudse Waag Cheese Museum

The museum is based in the historic weigh house, built in 1668. Check out the reliefs carved into the side showing the cheese being weighed. There is a museum shop with delicious Dutch cheeses and a variety of traditional Dutch souvenirs. Open daily from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. €9 per person and includes an audio tour. They also have the option for cheese tastings. Tickets can be purchased online.

 Markt 35, 2801 JK Gouda

 +31 182 529 996

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

Gouda Cheese Experience

This is a relatively new destination, opened in 2020. The interactive walk-through tour has a self-paced audio and is a mixture of Gouda history and an explanation of the cheese making process. Some guests have loved it, but others have found it a little tacky (dare we say cheesy?). Open daily from 9:30 AM – 6:00 PM (9:00 AM on Saturdays). Tickets can be purchased online.

 Agnietenstraat 21, 2801 GZ Gouda

 +31 182 787 934

 <https://www.goudacheese-experience.com/>

Sint Jans Church

Renowned for its stained-glass windows displaying scenes from the Bible and has been placed on the UNESCO list of Dutch monuments. Open Monday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Closed on Sunday. €11 per person.

 Achter de Kerk 2, 2801 JW Gouda

 +31 182-512 684

 <https://sintjan.com/>

Other Useful Information

Tourist Information

VVV Gouda (Tourist Information Office). Open daily from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

 Markt 35, 2801 JK Gouda

 +31 182 589 110

 <https://welkomingouda.nl/>

Taxi – Cheap Taxi Gouda

Gouda has multiple taxi services which can be useful to get to restaurants slightly further afield. Book by phone or email. We recommend getting a quote on booking.

 +31 6 18218757

 <https://cheaptaxigouda.nl/> / info@cheaptaxigouda.nl

Grocery Stores

There are a number of supermarkets including the following.

AH (Albert Heijn) Markt

A small supermarket which sells a wide range of products despite being a small shop. Open Monday to Saturday from 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM, and Sunday 9:00 – 6:00 PM.



Markt 50, 2801 JK Gouda



+31 182 512 855



No website

Gouds Kaashuis

There are more than 50 types of local cheese on display in this knowledgeable cheese shop, with plenty of free samples to help you choose what to buy. It also sells locally milled oils, as well as vinegar. Open Monday to Saturday from 9:30 AM – 5:30 PM, and Sunday from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM.



Hoogstraat 1, 2801 HG Gouda



+31 182 507 418



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



Morpoort City Gate in Leiden

LEIDEN

Overview

Leiden is one of the Netherlands' great cities. Laced with canals that are attractively lined by 17th-century buildings, it is renowned for being the artist Rembrandt's birthplace, the home of the Netherlands' oldest and most prestigious university (Einstein was a regular professor), and the place that the Mayflower left from for the New World in 1620.

Leiden's cache of museums, all within walking distance of each other, is a major draw, as is wandering along the picturesque canals. There is also a lively night-life scene, fueled by a 23,000-strong student population.

Wealth from the linen industry buttressed Leiden's growing prosperity, and during the 17th century the town produced several brilliant artists, most famously Rembrandt van Rijn, better known by his first name alone. He was born in Leiden in 1606 and remained here for 26 years before achieving fame in Amsterdam.

Restaurants and Bars

Leiden boasts a mix of historic charm and diverse culinary offerings. From canal-side bistros serving Dutch delicacies to international eateries, there are an array of options to choose from.

Brasserie de Engelenbak

An elegant bistro right next to the 17th-century Marekerk. It has a wonderful menu that changes with the seasons and is local and organic wherever possible. It does have some outside seating to enjoy views of the passing crowds. Open Tuesday to Thursday from 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM, and Friday to Saturday from 12:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Closed on Sunday and Monday. Reservations can be made online.

 Lange Mare 38, 2312 GS Leiden

 +31 71 512 5440

 <http://deengelenbak.nl/>

Porto Pino Ristorante

Porto Pino Ristorante in Leiden is a cozy Italian restaurant known for its warm atmosphere and classic Southern Italian dishes. It's a popular spot for relaxed dinners, offering generous portions and friendly service. Open Wednesday to Sunday and Wednesday from 5:00 PM – 12:00 AM (closed Monday and Tuesday).

 Haven 40, 2312 MK Leiden

 +31 63 083 9743

 <https://portopinoleiden.nl/>

In den Doofpot (Restaurant IDD)

If you are wanting to splurge then we highly recommend In den Doofpot restaurant. Chef Patrick Brugman's food is assured and his creative cooking is as good to look at as it is to eat. Vegetarian menus are available on request, as are wine pairings by the glass. Open Tuesday and Wednesday from 5:30 PM – 10:00 PM, and Thursday to Saturday from 12:30 PM – 10:00 PM. Closed on Sunday and Monday. Dress code is smart/casual. Reservations strongly advised and can be made online.

 Turfmarkt 9, 2312 CE, Leiden

 +31 71 512 2434

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

Bistro La Cloche

On one of the town's major food strips, you'll notice a large klok (clock) and a quirky black-and-white awning signaling this restaurant. The menu is resolutely European, drawing on the cuisines of countries including Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, and Sweden to devise a small but very tasty seasonal menu. Diners can order à la carte or opt for the well-priced set menu. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 6:00 PM – 1:00 AM. Closed Sunday and Monday. Reservations can be made online.

 Kloksteeg 3, 2311 SK Leiden

 +31 71 512 3053

 <https://bistrolacloche.nl/>

De Twee Spiegheles

For a lively night out, De Twee Spiegheles is an intimate wine café/bar where there is live jazz at least four nights a week. Open Monday to Friday from 3:00 PM, Saturday from 12:00 PM, and Sunday from 2:00 PM.



Nieuwstraat 11, 2312 KA Leiden



+31 71 887 3943



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

Bar Lokaal

With a view of the Hooglandse Kerk and located in the heart of Leiden's city center, Bar Lokaal is a place to visit at any time of the day. For an early coffee, a long lunch, drinks, or a dinner that naturally extends into the evening. They also serve lovely pancakes at lunch time. The bar is open daily from 10:00 AM until late. The kitchen is open from 10:00 AM – 8:30 PM (9:30 PM Thursday to Saturday). Reservations can be made online.



Hartesteeg 13, 2312 JW Leiden



+ 31 71 888 4949



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

Bistro Noroc by Jarko

An intimate, cozy bistro that has become a household name in Leiden. The menu is classic European with a nod to Asia. They cook relatively simple dishes using high-quality ingredients. Open Wednesday to Sunday from 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Closed Monday and Tuesday. You can make a reservation via (whatsapp).



Pieterskerk–Choorsteeg 4, 2311 TR Leiden



+ 31 6 1259 3760



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

Brasserie Rumour

Recommended more for its stunning location than its offering. Situated at one the most beautiful spots in Leiden at the foot of the historic 'Burcht' (castle). Have a drink with 'bitterballen' at the terrace after your arrival in Leiden. Open daily from 11:00 AM and on the weekend from 10:00 AM. Reservations aren't required for drinks, reservations for a meal can be made online.



Burgsteeg 13, 2312 JR Leiden



+31 7 1512 1688



<https://brassierumour.nl/>

Sights and Activities

The Wall Poems of Leiden

Over 120 poems can be found on the walls of Leiden, in a wide range of languages and scripts. Explanatory brochures (called *Dicht op de Muur*) can be found in most bookshops in Leiden. There is also a good website (see below) with information on the movement and includes tours of the different poems e.g. nature, innovators, liberty.

 <https://muurgedichten.nl/en>

Museum De Lakenhal

As the birthplace of the artist Rembrandt, it would seem wrong to stay in Leiden and not visit this visual arts, history, and crafts museum. The town's foremost museum, it displays works by native son Rembrandt (among others). It recently underwent major renovations and an expansion and reopened in June 2019. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Monday. Tickets can be purchased online.

 Oude Singel 32, 2312 RA Leiden

 +31 71 516 5360

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

National Museum of Antiquities

This museum (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden) has world-class collections of Greek, Roman and Egyptian artifacts, the pride of which is the extraordinary Temple of Taffeh, a gift from a previous Egyptian president to the Netherlands for helping to save ancient Egyptian monuments from flood. Open daily from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased online.

 Rapenburg 28, 2311 EW Leiden

 +31 71 516 3163

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

Hortus Botanicus Leiden

Dating from 1590, this is one of Europe's oldest botanical gardens (the oldest was created in Padua, Italy, in 1545). It is home to the Netherlands' oldest descendants of the original Dutch tulips. It's a wonderful place to relax, with explosions of tropical color and a fascinating (and steamy) greenhouse. Open daily from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased online.

 Rapenburg 73, 2311 GJ Leiden

 +31 71 527 5144

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

Molen De Valk

Leiden's landmark windmill museum. It receives loving care, with constant renovation, and many consider it the best example of its kind. When wind conditions are right its arms are free to turn, and it can still grind grain. Entrance fee is €6 for adults. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Sunday from 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Monday.

 2e Binnenvestgracht 1, 2312 BZ Leiden

 +31 71 516 5353

 <https://molenmuseumdevalk.nl/>

Museum Boerhaave

The Netherlands has a great history in the development of the sciences and medicine. Museum Boerhaave shows over five centuries of inventions and discoveries in several sciences. Open daily from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Lange Sint Agnietenstraat 10, 2312 WC Leiden

 +31 71 751 9999

 <https://rijksmuseumboerhaave.nl/>

Naturalis

The Netherlands Center for Biodiversity is one of the top five natural history museums in the world. Open daily from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Darwinweg 2, 2333 CR Leiden

 +31 71 751 9600

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

De Burcht

An 11th-century citadel on an artificial hill. It lost its protective functions as the city grew around it. It's now a park with lovely places to view the city's steeples and rooftops, with a café at its base. Open daily from 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM.

 Van der Sterrepad 5, 2312 EK Leiden

 <https://www.visitleiden.nl/nl/locaties/2380897422/de-burcht>

City Gates

Leiden had several city gates in the Middle Ages, but only Morspoort (built 1669), Zijlpoort (built 1667), and Doelenpoort (1645) have survived the centuries. The Morspoort is where the bodies of hanged criminals were displayed. Fortunately, they no longer do this and the Morspoort (as well as the other gates) are now beautiful national monuments.

 Morspoort: Morsstraat 66, 2312 BN Leiden

 Zijlpoort: Haven 100A, 2312 ML Leiden

 Doelenpoort: Groenhazengracht, 2311 VT Leiden

Festivals

Leiden grinds to a halt on October 3rd for Leidens Ontzet, commemorating the day the Spanish-caused starvation ended in 1574. The revelry is undiminished more than four centuries later, and there is much eating of the ceremonial hutspot, herring, and white bread. Beer-fueled celebrations kick off the night before.

Other Useful Information

Tourist Information

VVV Leiden (Tourist Information Office). Open Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Saturday from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, and Sunday from 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM.

 Stationsweg 26, 2312 AV Leiden

 +31 71 516 6000

 <https://www.visitleiden.nl/nl/plan/vvv-leiden>

Taxi – Taxi Centrale Roomburg

Leiden has a taxi service which can be useful to get to restaurants slightly further afield. Book by phone or email. We recommend getting a quote on booking.

 +31 71 820 0256

 No website

info@taxi-roomburg.nl

Grocery Stores

There are several supermarkets including the following.

AH (Albert Heijn) Markt

Open daily from 8:00 AM – 10:00 PM.

 Hooigracht 85, 2312 KP Leiden

 +31 71 514 9964

 No website

Fromagerie Bon

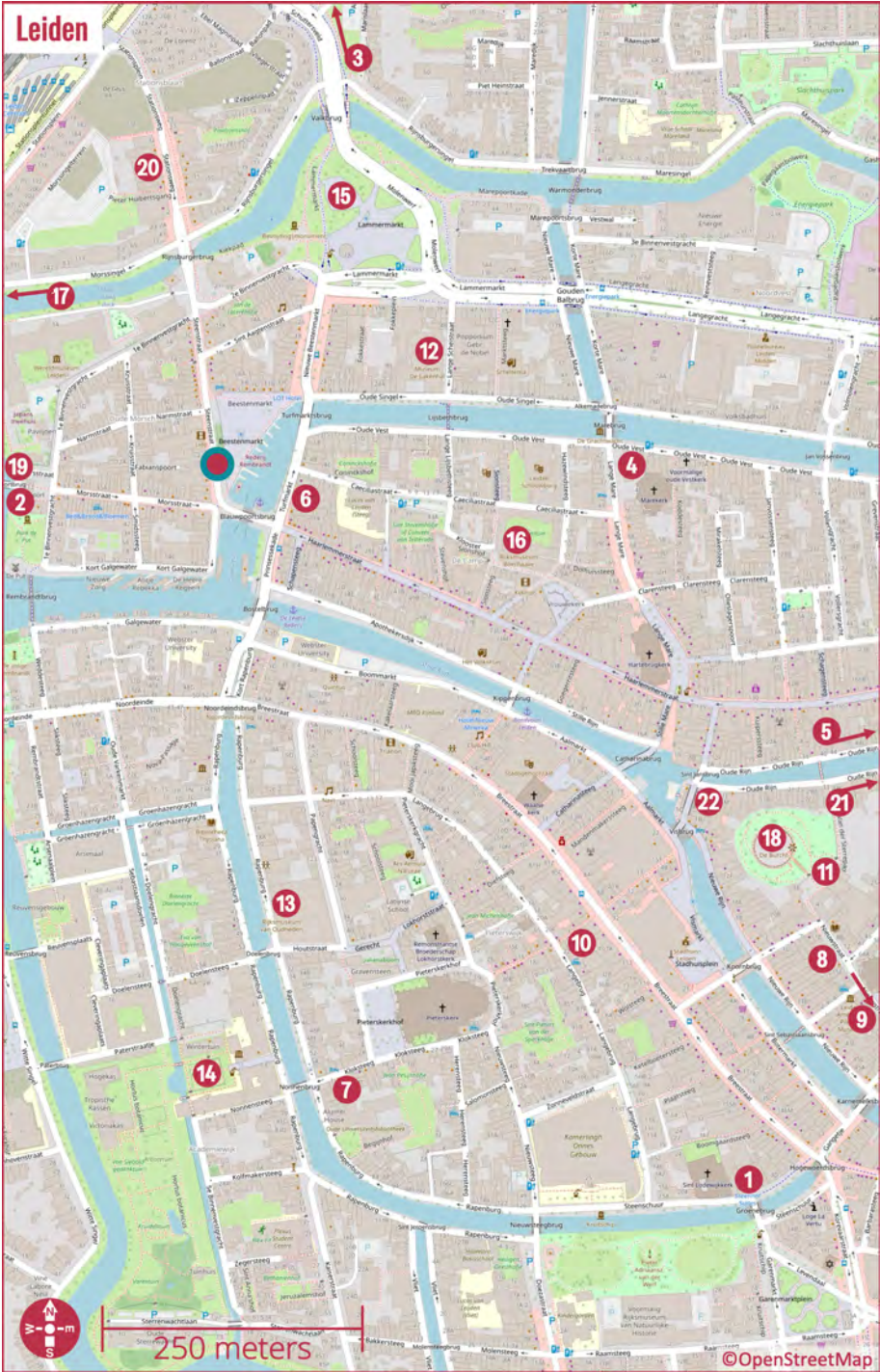
A cozy cheese shop with cheeses from all over the world. They also have great home-made pâtés and terrines and advise you on matching drinks and other delicious products. They offer tastings of different cheeses. Reservations recommended and can be made online. Open Wednesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM, and Sunday from 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Monday and Tuesday.

 Oude Rijn 1, 2312 HB Leiden

 +31 64 616 0173

 <http://www.fromageriebon.nl/>

Town Plan



Key

Hotels

1. Steenhof Suites
2. Hotel d'Oude Morsch
3. The Tulip Inn

Restaurants & Bars

4. Brasserie de Engelenbak
5. Porto Pino Ristorante
6. In den Doofpot
7. Bistro La Cloche
8. De Twee Spiegheles
9. Bar Lokaal
10. Bistro Noroc by Jarko
11. Brasserie Rumour

Points of Interest

12. Museum De Lakenhal
13. National Museum of Antiques
14. Hortus Botanicus Leiden
15. Molen De Valk
16. Museum Boerhaave
17. Naturalis
18. De Burcht
19. Morspoort City Gate

Other Locations

20. Tourist Information
21. AH (Albert Heijn) Markt
22. Fromagerie Bon



Route Start / End



Botermarkt square in old town of Haarlem

HAARLEM

Overview

Haarlem is a city characterized by its historic architecture including grand churches, Golden-Age townhouses, and cobblestone streets. There are also many intimate bars, fine cafés, and unique canals. If you have a rest day here, you could also choose to take the 15-minute train journey into the capital, Amsterdam.

The name Haarlem derives from Haarloheim, meaning a wooded place on high, sandy soil. Its origins date back to the 10th century when the counts of Holland set up a toll post on the Spaarne River. Haarlem quickly became the most important port after Amsterdam, until the Spanish invaded the city in 1572. The city surrendered after a seven-month siege, but the worse was yet to come: upon capitulation, virtually the entire population was slaughtered. After the Spanish were finally repelled by Willem van Oranje, Haarlem soared into the prosperity of the Golden Age, attracting painters and artists from all over Europe.

The 1658-founded Dutch town of Harlem in New York is named after this quaint Dutch town.

Restaurants and Bars

Haarlem is well known as a foodie town and there are diverse eateries, from cozy cafés on the Grote Markt serving Dutch pancakes to fine dining establishments showcasing innovative cuisine.

Jetties

An organic food and ice cream café. The food is simple but very good, with options of burgers, high tea, salads, pasta and of course ice cream! Open every day 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM.

 Kruisweg 57, 2011 LB Haarlem

 +31 23 524 2876

 <https://www.jetties.eu/>

Toujours

A delightfully urbane bistro that has honed its menu to perfection and uses modest, simple ingredients to create outstanding meals that are inspired by French cuisine. Open daily from 12:00 PM – 12:00 AM.

 Oude Groenmarkt 10-12, 2011 HL Haarlem

 +31 23 532 1699

 <http://www.restauranttoujours.nl/>

Café Colette

A lovely evening restaurant with a limited but delicious menu and a great wine menu. Good fish and meat selection but with only one or two vegetarian choices. Has a fun and buzzing terrace. Open Monday to Saturday from 5:00 PM – 11:00 PM, and Sunday from 4:00 PM – 10:00 PM.

 Oude Groenmarkt 22, 2011 HL Haarlem

 +31 23 532 9357

 <https://cafécolette.nl/>

Nolita Pizzabar

Head here for a top pizza and people-watching spot. They also do “pizzattas” which are slightly smaller pizzas with the idea to order a few and share. Open daily from 5:00 PM – 11:00 PM, (from 4:00 PM on the weekends).

 Lange Veerstraat 17, 2011 DA Haarlem

 +31 23 583 5128

 <https://nolita.nl/haarlem/>

Jopenkerk

Known as Haarlem’s most atmospheric place to drink. The independent brewery is inside a stained-glass-windowed church from 1910. They sell brews such as citrusy Hopen, fruity Lente Bier or chocolatey Koyt along with classic Dutch bar snacks (bitterballen or croquettes, cheese) beneath the gleaming copper vats. Open daily from 10:00 AM – late.

 Gedempte Voldersgracht 2, 2011 WD Haarlem

 +31 23 533 4114

 <http://www.jopenkerk.nl/haarlem>

Restaurant PRAKM

This quaint yet lively restaurant beckons guests with the promise of a true Dutch culinary adventure, one that celebrates the authentic flavors of the region and pays homage to the rich Dutch heritage. Or maybe just very good and nostalgic food just from grandma's kitchen! Open Wednesday to Sunday from 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM (10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday). Closed Monday and Tuesday. Reservations can be made online.

 Kleine Houtstraat 105, 2011 DK Haarlem

 + 31 6 4777 1734

 <https://prakm.nl/>

BastiJan

Imagine yourself in a romantic setting with a mix of art deco, Jugendstil and beautiful sculptures. BastiJan is a super little restaurant serving tasty food. The prices are good and the portions are not huge. Open Thursday to Sunday from 5:30 PM – 10:00 PM. Due to high demand, they operate two shifts on Fridays and Saturdays. The first shift is from 5:30 PM – 7:45 PM, and the second from 8:00 PM to close. Reservations can be requested online.

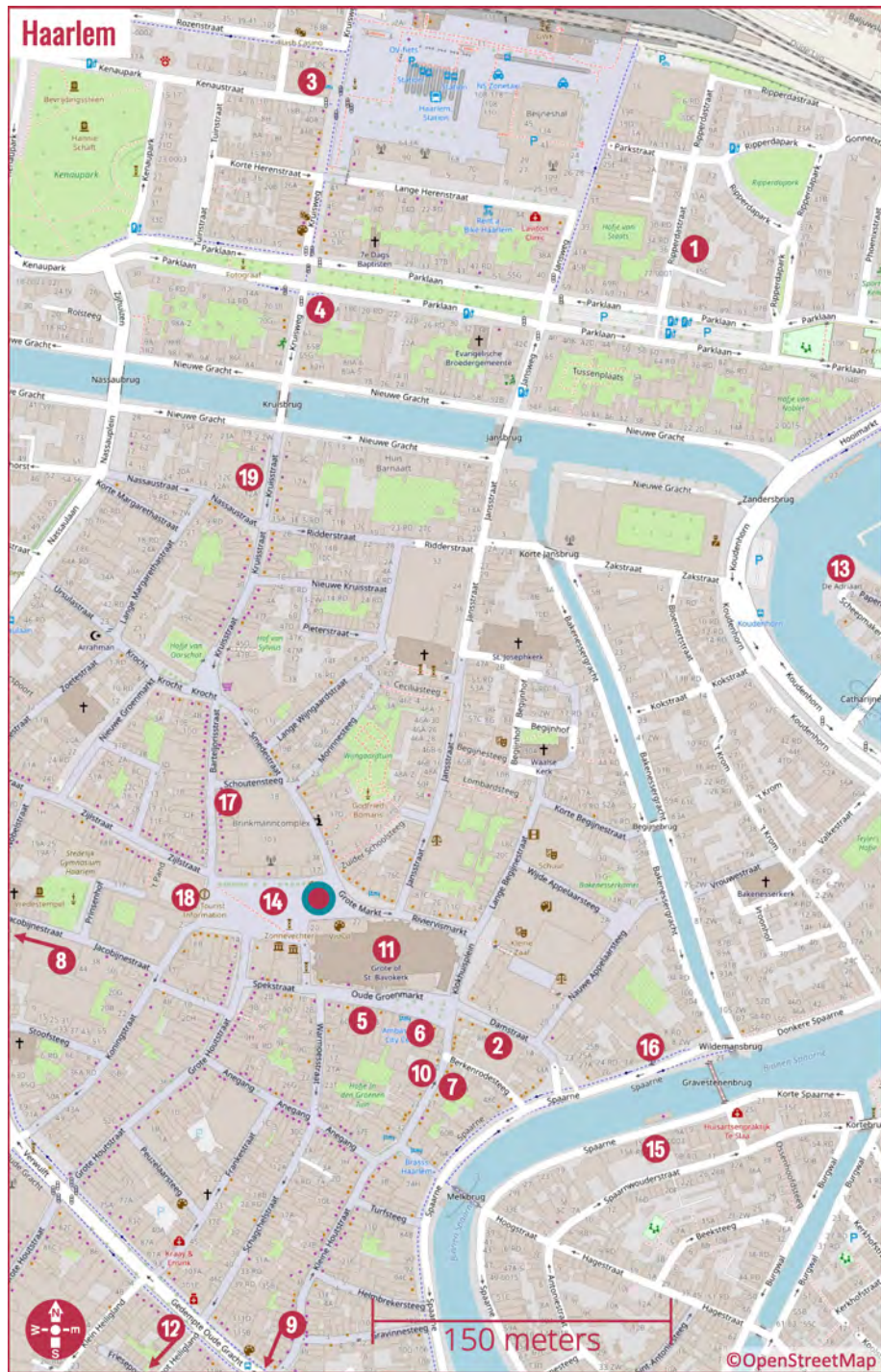
 Lange Veerstraat 8, 2011 DB Haarlem

 + 31 23 532 6006

 <https://bastijan.nl/>

Intentionally Blank

Town Plan



Key

Hotels

1. Boutiquehotel Staats
2. Amrâth Grand Hotel Frans Hals
3. Hotel Lion d'Or

Restaurants & Bars

4. Jetties
5. Toujours
6. Café Colette
7. Nolita Pizzabar
8. Jopenkerk
9. Restaurant PRAKM
10. BastiJan

Points of Interest

11. St. Bavo Church
12. Frans Hals Museum
13. Windmill De Adriaan
14. Teylers Museum
15. Corrie ten Boom House
16. Haarlem Town Square
17. Smidtje Canal Cruises

Other Locations

18. Tourist Information Office
19. AH (Albert Heijn) Markt



Route Start / End

Sights and Activities

St. Bavo Church

This Gothic church (Grote Kerk van St Bavo) is topped by a towering 50-meter-high steeple and contains some fine Renaissance artworks. The “main event” is the incredible Müller organ – one of the most magnificent in the world – standing at 30 meters high with about 5,000 pipes. And to add to the hype, it was played by Handel and a 10-year-old Mozart. Every Saturday there is a guided tour starting at 2:00 PM. From May 15th until October 1st there is an extra guided tour starting at 2:30 PM. The tours take about an hour. No reservation required. Open Monday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Sunday. Admission €4 per adult and tickets can be purchased on their website.



Grote Markt 22, 2011 RD Haarlem



+31 23 553 2040

<https://www.bavo.nl/en/visit-the-bavo/>**Frans Hals Museum**

A short stroll south of Grote Markt is the Frans Hals Museum, a beautiful 17th-century building. It displays works by many of the greatest old masters of Holland. Almost all the pieces found in the museum date back to the Dutch Golden Age. Visitors in the museum can easily spend an entire day viewing the landscapes created by Jacob van Ruisdael, sea battles by Hendrik Cornelisz Vroom, and portraits by Frans Hals. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Monday. Tickets can be purchased on their website.



Groot Heiligland 62, 2011 ES Haarlem

 +31 23 511 5775

 <http://www.franshalsmuseum.nl/nl/>

Windmill De Adriaan

In 1779, De Adriaan windmill was built on the foundations of an ancient defensive tower near the center of the town. It is a “smock mill”, a wooden towered mill. Due to its picturesque site on the Spaarne river and additionally owing to its great height, De Adriaan was one of the most striking features of Haarlem until its dramatic demise in 1932 when the windmill burnt to the ground. Thankfully, through the efforts of many local citizens, De Adriaan has now been rebuilt. Open daily from 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Papentorenvest 1A, 2011 AV Haarlem

 +31 23 545 0259

 <http://www.molenadriaan.nl/en/>

Teylers Museum

The Netherlands first and oldest museum, open to the public since 1784. A visit to Teylers Museum is like a voyage through time, a voyage of discovery in the world of art and science. It boasts an extensive collection of paintings by the old masters as well as a large collection of fossils, minerals and scientific instruments. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem

 +31 23 516 0960

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

Corrie ten Boom House

Corrie ten Boom House, also known as ‘the hiding place’, is named for the matriarch of the family that lived in the house during World War II. Corrie used a secret compartment in her bedroom to hide hundreds of Jews and Dutch resistors until they could be spirited away to safety. In 1944 the family was betrayed and sent to concentration camps where three died. Later, Corrie toured the world preaching peace. The museum can only be visited with a guided tour and reservations must be made at least 5 days in advance. Tickets can be purchased on their website. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday.

 Barteljorisstraat 19, 2011 RA Haarlem

 +31 23 531 0823

 <https://www.corrietenboom.com/en/home>

Haarlem Town Square

The great Grote Markt is the stunning town square, lined with historic buildings, cafés, and restaurants. Markets are held here twice a week, with mouthwatering fresh bread and delicious vegetables enticing you to taste the goods. There are

other markets around Haarlem, but the largest market is on the Grote Markt square, under St. Bavo Cathedral, and is held on Mondays and Saturdays. Markets have been held on this square since the middle-ages.

Canal Tours

Smidtje Canal Cruises

This company offers canal tours that take around 50-minutes in vintage open-top boats departing every 90 minutes. Cost is around €20 per adult, and they operate Wednesday to Sunday in the afternoon. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Spaarne 11A, Haarlem (across from Teylers Museum)

 +31 23 535 7723

 <https://smidtjecanalcruises.nl/>

Other Useful Information

Tourist Information

Visit Haarlem (Tourist Information Office). Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday.

 Grote Markt 2, 2011 RD Haarlem

 +31 23 531 7325

 <https://www.visithaarlem.com/>

Taxi Haarlem Service

Haarlem has a taxi service which can be useful to get to restaurants slightly further afield. Book by phone or email. We recommend getting a quote on booking.

 +31 23 800 0000

 <https://www.taxihaarlemservice.nl/> // info@taxihaarlemservice.nl

Grocery Stores

There are a number of supermarkets including the following.

AH (Albert Heijn) Markt

Open daily from 8:00 AM – 10:00 PM.

 Kruisstraat 10, 2011 PX Haarlem

 +31 23 532 3555

 No website



Alkmaar Cheese Market

ALKMAAR

Overview

Alkmaar is known as the city of cheese in Holland, but that title covers only part of what the town has to offer. It has a beautiful old center with many historic monuments, great shopping districts, and countless welcoming terraces, cafés, and restaurants. Alkmaar also has a range of interesting museums, including the Stedelijk Museum, Beer Museum, Beatles Museum, and, naturally, the Cheese Museum.

Alkmaar holds a special place in Dutch hearts as the first town, in 1573, to repel occupying Spanish troops. Locals opened the locks and flooded the area with seawater, forcing the perplexed invaders to retreat. The victory won the town weighing rights, which laid the foundation for its cheese market.

Restaurants and Bars

Alkmaar is a relatively small town but still offers some great food options.

Restaurant 't Stokpaardje

One of Alkmaar's best eateries. They do not have a menu as such, diners choose from two-, three-, four-, five-, or 6-course menus. Options of fresh fish, free-range meat and seasonal specialties with each course as well as vegetarian adaptations. Recommend booking in advance and is one of the more expensive options in town.

Open Thursday to Monday from 6:00 PM – 12:00 AM. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday. Dress code is smart/casual. Reservations can be made online.



Vrouwenstraat 1, 1811 GA Alkmaar



+31 72 512 8870



<http://www.stokpaardjealkmaar.nl/>

The Hielerander

Since 1989, this Scottish restaurant has hosted whisky themed evenings. Owners Wullie Macmorland and Gerie have won many industry awards over the years, and the website claims more than 100 articles have been written about the restaurant. Wullie also organizes the Hielerander Whisky Festival every February. Open Wednesday to Sunday from 6:00 PM – 11:30 PM. Closed Monday and Tuesday. Reservations on weekends are important.



Ridderstraat 15, 1811 EX Alkmaar



+31 72 512 0015



<http://www.schotsrestauranthielerander.nl/>

Restaurant Abby's

Located in the shadow of an old windmill, Abby's has a modern, relaxed feel. There is a terrace outside that is lovely if the weather is warm enough. The menu is varied with quality, fresh options of soups, breads, meats, and salads. The staff are professional and knowledgeable, although they have a tendency towards "coolness". Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM – 12:00 AM, and Sunday from 11:00 AM – 10:00 PM. Closed on Monday. Reservations can be made online.



Ritsevoort 60, 1811 DP Alkmaar



+31 72 511 1111



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

De Vlaminck

For a very casual, touristy meal, de Vlaminck serve superb chips/fries/French fries from their storefront counter ... and they have 17 different types of sauce! Open Tuesday to Saturday from 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM. Closed Sunday and Monday.



Voordam 2, 1811 MA Alkmaar



+31 72 512 2284



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

Darjeeling Restaurant Alkmaar

Step into a world where every flavor tells a story. "At Darjeeling Restaurant, we blend authentic Indian and Nepalese traditions with fresh ingredients and heartfelt hospitality. From the bustling streets of Delhi to the foothills of the Himalayas, our kitchen brings you a vibrant fusion of tradition, spice, and soul." Open Tuesday and Wednesday from 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM and Thursday to Sunday from 4:30 PM – 10:30 PM. Closed on Monday. Reservations can be made online.

 Mient 8, 1811 NC Alkmaar
 + 31 6 2499 0932
 <https://www.darjeelings.nl/>

Bistro Heerlijk Nel

Located on the first floor above Café De Pilaren. Situated on one of the most beautiful canals, it offers a magnificent view of the fish stalls and the Platte Stenenbrug bridge. You can enjoy a meal in a warm, homely atmosphere with a focus on organic and sustainable ingredients. Open Wednesday to Monday from 5:00 PM until late. Closed on Tuesdays. Reservations can be made online.

 Verdrunkenoord 131, 1811 BD Alkmaar
 + 31 72 511 1868
 <https://www.heerlijknel.nl/>

Sights and Activities

Grote Kerk

Alkmaar's Grote Sint-Laurenskerk is celebrated for its organs. The most renowned is the smaller 'Swallow organ' (1511) in the north ambulatory. Concerts take place on Wednesday evenings and at noon on days when the church is open. The pristine stained-glass windows bathe the inside of the church in soft color. Open to the public during the spring and summer. Check opening hours on their website.

 Koorstraat 2, 1811 GP Alkmaar
 +31 72 - 514 07 07
 <https://grotekerk-alkmaar.nl/>

Dutch Cheese Museum

Overlooking the world famous Waagplein square in Alkmaar, the Kaas Museum (cheese museum) is the must-see place for cheese. The museum focuses on the two most famous cheeses of the Netherlands: Edammer and Gouda cheese. Open: Monday to Friday from 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM, Saturday from 10:00 AM, and from 12:00 PM on Sunday. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Waagplein 2, 1811 JP Alkmaar
 +31 72 515 5516
 <https://www.kaasmuseum.nl/>

Stedelijk Museum

Showcasing superb collections of old and early modern paintings and decorative art. 'The Golden Age', 'Victory!' and 'Portrait of Alkmaar' shed light on the city's glorious history. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Closed on Monday. Tickets can be purchased on their website.

 Canadaplein 1, 1811 KE Alkmaar
 +31 72 548 9789
 <https://stedelijkmuseumalkmaar.nl/>

The Beer Museum

Nationaal Biermuseum De Boom is located in the historic building of the former De Boom brewery, near the cheese market. It opened in April 1987 and has tools, equipment, and machines that have been used to brew “the golden wet” for the past two hundred year. Open Thursday to Saturday from 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM. Closed Sunday to Wednesday. Tickets can be purchased on site in the museum.

 Houttil 1, 1811 JL Alkmaar

 +31 72 511 3801

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

De Molen van Piet Windmill

The only remaining windmill in Alkmaar old town (there used to be ten on the town walls alone). Although you can no longer enter the mill, it is still a fascinating structure to admire, and the photo opportunities are many.

 Clarissenbuurt 4, 1811 GC Alkmaar

 No website

The Beatles Museum

If you are a Beatles fan, check out the Beatles Museum. The museum is a private project and stocks the combined work of two die-hard Beatles fans. The fact that John Lennon’s first guitar was made in Alkmaar adds a little poignancy to the location. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 11:00 AM – 4:30 PM, and Sunday from 12:00 PM – 4:30 PM. Closed on Monday.

 Pettemerstraat 12A, 1823 CW Alkmaar

 +31 63 830 5895

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

Alkmaar Canal Tours

Grachtenrondvaart Alkmaar

These canal tours are a fun 45-minute boat tour through Alkmaar’s center. Your captain and guide show you some of Alkmaar’s most beautiful places while you relax and enjoy the scenery, including 22 very low bridges where everyone needs to duck down! Open Monday to Saturday from 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM from April to October. The last departure is dependent on the weather and the number of passengers. Adults €8.50. The boat departs from De Mient near the Waaggebouw. Follow signs for the VVV or Cheese Market. You will see flags and a sign for ‘Grachtenrondvaart Alkmaar’.

 Mient, 1811 NB Alkmaar

 +31 65 371 4608

 <https://rondvaartalkmaar.nl/>

Cheese Market

Kaasmarkt – Alkmaar's famous Cheese Market where waxed rounds of cheese (kaas) are ceremoniously stacked on the town's main square. Soon, dealers appear in white smocks and insert a hollow rod to extract a cheese sample, and sniff and crumble to check fat and moisture content. Once deals are struck, the porters (in colorful hats that denote their cheese guild) whisk the cheeses away on wooden sledges to the old cheese scale. It is now primarily for show, but as living relics go it is both fascinating and entertaining. From April to early September on Fridays from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.



Waagplein, Alkmaar.

The Noordhollandsch Kanaal

The Noordhollandsch Kanaal was designed as a transport link. Although it might be hard to imagine today, when the canal was opened in 1824 it was the largest canal in the world, giving the port of Amsterdam a direct connection with the North Sea.

The canal was essential to the viability Amsterdam as a port as, over the years, the waters at Pampus (east of Amsterdam) had become so shallow that large ships were beginning to avoid the passage to the city.

But why dig an 80 km-long canal from Amsterdam, via Alkmaar all the way up north to Den Helder, when as the crow flies, the North Sea is only 20 km away? Taking the direct route would have meant digging a huge gap through the dunes, Holland's main flood barrier. Engineers at the time considered this too risky. However, by the second half of the 19th century sea ships had become too large to use the Noordzeekanaal and a new one was built, this time cutting straight through the dunes.

The Noordzeekanaal is still in use today and you can see it running through the center of the town.

Other Useful Information

Tourist Information

Alkmaar Store / VVV Alkmaar (Tourist Information Office). Open Monday to Saturday from 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM and Sunday from 11:30 PM – 4:30 PM.



Waagplein 2, 1811 JP Alkmaar



+31 72 511 4284



<https://www.visitalkmaar.com/visitorcentre-alkmaar>

Grocery Stores

There are a number of supermarkets including the following.

Jumbo

Open Monday to Saturday from 8:00 AM – 10:00 PM and Sunday from 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM.



Paardenmarkt 2, 1811 KH Alkmaar

 +31 72 576 3210

 No website

Kaan's Kaashandel

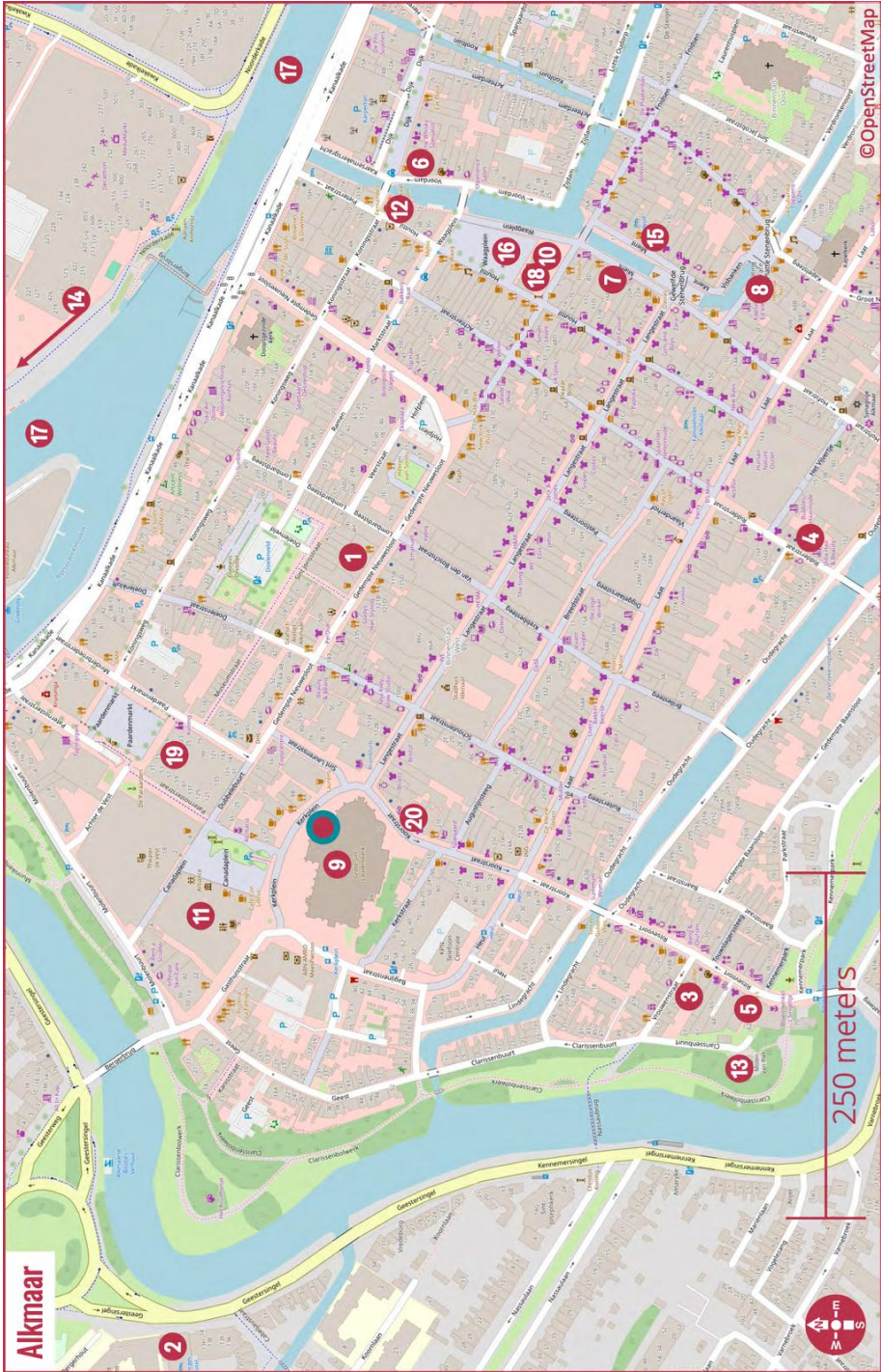
Alkmaar also boasts "Holland's smallest cheese shop". Kaan's Kaashandel matures their cheese in their own storehouse and have 70 varieties of Dutch cheese in their tiny shop. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM (closes at 5:00 PM on Saturdays), Mondays from 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM. Closed on Sundays.

 Koorstraat 11, 1811 GM Alkmaar

 +31 72 511 3455

 <https://kaanskaas.nl/>

Town Plan



Key

Hotels

1. Grand Hotel Alkmaar
2. Amrâth Hotel Alkmaar

Restaurants & Bars

3. Restaurant 't Stokpaardje
4. The Hielander
5. Restaurant Abby's
6. De Vlaminck
7. Darjeeling Restaurant Alkmaar
8. Bistro Heerlijk Nel

Points of Interest

9. Grote Kerk
10. Dutch Cheese Museum

11. Stedelijk Museum
12. The Beer Museum
13. De Molen van Piet Windmill
14. The Beatles Museum
15. Grachtenrondvaart
16. Cheese Market
17. The Noordhollandsch Kanaal

Other Locations

18. Tourist Information
19. Jumbo
20. Kaan's Kaashandel



Route Start / End



ON TOUR

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LIFECYCLE ADVENTURES SERVICES

Self-Guided Tours

If I need help, how fast will you get to me?

Once we receive your call, our target is to get to you within 90 minutes. However, if our route to you is on slow roads or our guides are completing another job it may take us longer to reach you. When you call, we will give you an estimated time of arrival.

If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 112 (Europe) or 911 (North America) – or ask a passerby to do so.

How do I arrange to shorten my day's riding?

If you are riding from hotel to hotel, we would be pleased to transfer you partway along the route to reduce the number of miles you need to travel. The more notice you give us the better able we are to meet your schedule. We need at least 24 hours' notice to accommodate these transfers.

As our guides are supporting a number of guests at any one time, we ask that you be flexible about this transfer time, but we will accommodate you as close to your ideal time as practical.

In Holland and the Engadin Valley our support services are managed slightly differently. In these areas, if you choose to not ride on any day, or want to shorten your route, we will advise on how to do this using local trains and then refund you the cost of your tickets.

What time do I need to leave my luggage on transfer days?

We ask that you leave your luggage with the front desk by 9:30 AM; making sure that a LifeCycle Adventures luggage label is attached to each bag. If this is not going to be possible, please let us know.

What time will my luggage arrive at the next hotel?

We plan to have your luggage at the next hotel by 4:00 PM. We will alert you if this will not be the case.

When can I check into my room?

As a rule, check-in time at hotels is between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM. If you expect to arrive outside of these hours, please call ahead to the hotel, or call us, to make special arrangements. You will find contact details for your accommodation in the *Directions to Accommodations* section of the On Tour App.

What are the arrangements for the final day?

If you are riding on your final day, please leave your luggage with the front desk of your hotel. We will collect your bags before meeting you at the end of your ride (or at your hotel depending on your route choice).

Your guide will be waiting for you with your luggage as detailed in the *End of Tour Logistics* section of the On Tour App.

Please talk to your guide 24 hours in advance if you wish to make changes to these arrangements. Note that your guide is balancing multiple commitments in any one day so it is typically not possible to change your pickup location or collection time on the final day.

Can you help us with reservations?

This Guidebook has activity and eating suggestions for your overnight towns. The On Tour App has lunch suggestions and points of interest along your route. See these listings for details as to how to make reservations.

In non-English-speaking areas, we are very happy to help with restaurant or activity reservations – both before you arrive and while you are on your tour. Any reservations we have made on your behalf will be detailed in the *Meal & Activity Reservations* section of the On Tour App under the relevant day.

Where we make activity or meal reservations on your behalf, you will be responsible for payment for those services and any cancellation fees that may be incurred should you choose not to use those services. See the *Terms and Conditions* in your Itinerary for further details of these charges.

What do you suggest by way of gratuities?

Your guides take pride in going the extra mile to ensure you have an exceptional experience. Should you wish to recognize their above-and-beyond efforts, a gratuity to your guide would be most welcome. \$15 to \$30 per person per day is common in the industry.

Private Guided Tours

Service Levels

For Private Guided tours, you have a guide(s) and a van(s) dedicated to your group. Typically, the guide and van are available from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. The guide will communicate with you during the tour about rider support, luggage arrangements, check-in times, and end-of-tour transfers.

What do you suggest by way of gratuities?

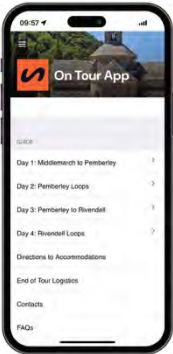
For Private Guided tours, a gratuity of \$25 to \$35 per person per day is common in the industry.

USING THE ON-TOUR APP

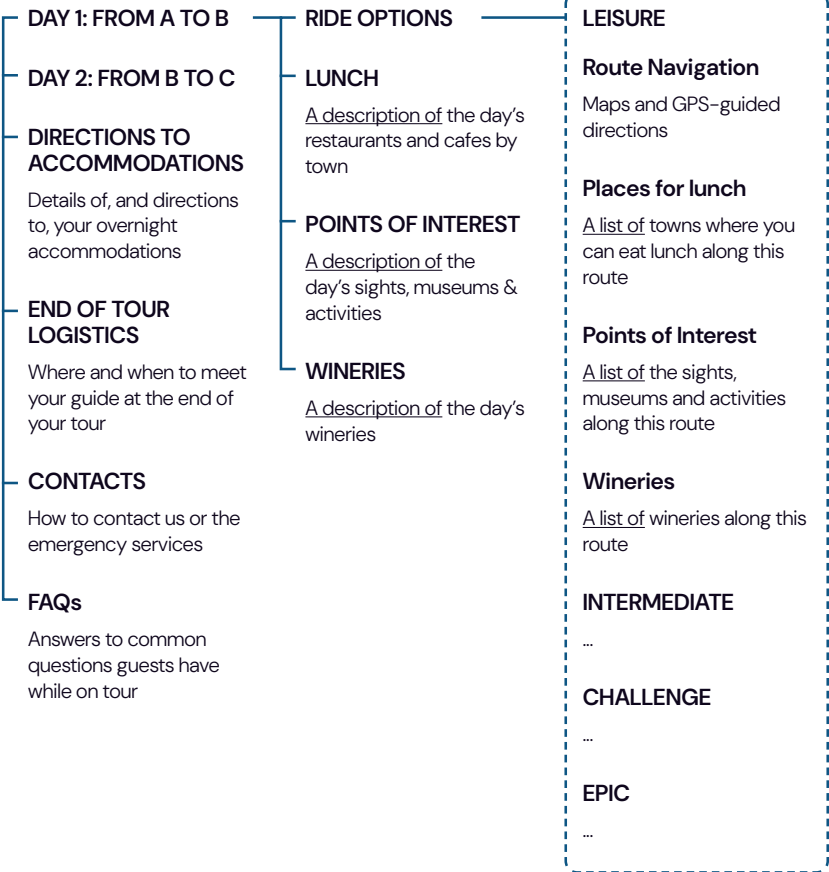
We have partnered with Ride with GPS (RWGPS) to create an app that has details about your routes, directions to your accommodations, and other useful information for your tour.

A link to download the app will be sent to you about thirty days before the start of your tour. We would encourage **all people on the tour to download the app before you travel** and familiarize yourself with the contents.

The app downloads to your phone and can be used with your data plan turned off. The diagram below is a quick reference for how the app is organized.



App Contents



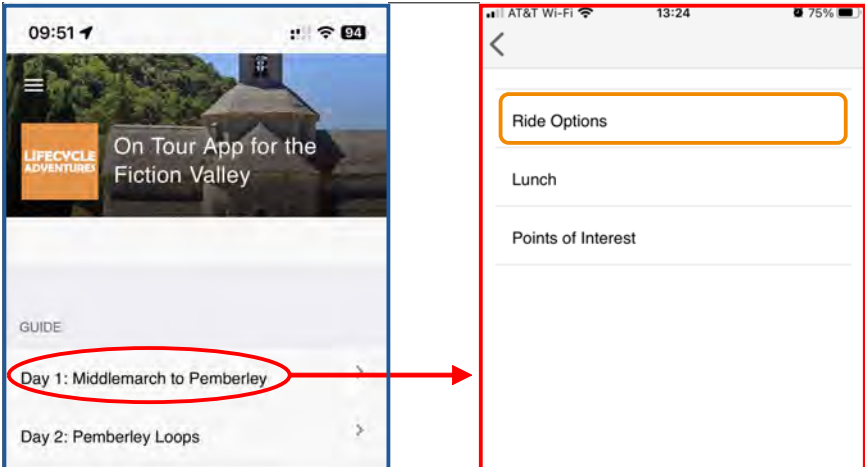
If you are taking a tablet with you on tour, **download the app to both your phone and your tablet**. The phone is great while out riding and the tablet is easier to use when back at your hotel.

The app helps you answer the following question while on tour.

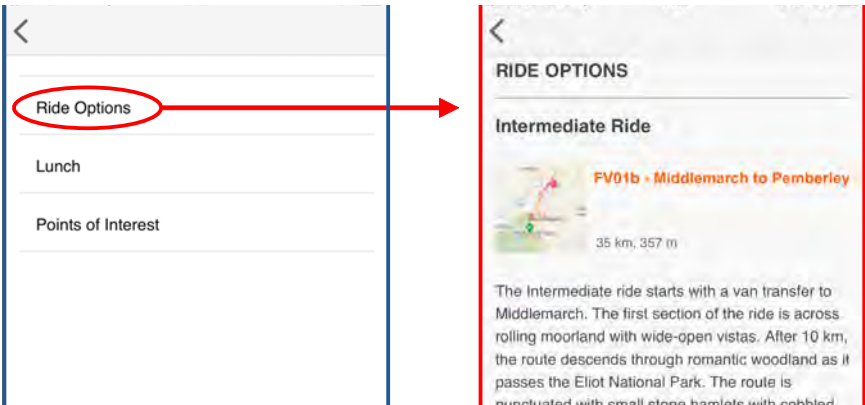
- For each day:
 - o **Which route** is best for me (leisure, intermediate, challenge or epic)?
 - o For my route, where is the **best place for lunch**?
 - o What **points of interest** are there along my chosen route?
 - o How do I **navigate my chosen route**?
- How do I navigate to my **overnight accommodation**?
- Where and when will I meet my guide at the **end of my tour**?
- How do I **contact my guide**, emergency services, and other key support?
- Answers to other **frequently asked questions** while on tour.

The On Tour App is designed to be intuitive to use and requires little learning. However, **as a backup**, the following section explains in detail how to use the app to answer the questions listed above.

For each day, which route is best for me?



Select the relevant day on the main menu and then choose ride options. Clicking on the ride options will bring you to a description for each of the ride options. Typically these are Leisure, Intermediate, Challenge, and Epic.

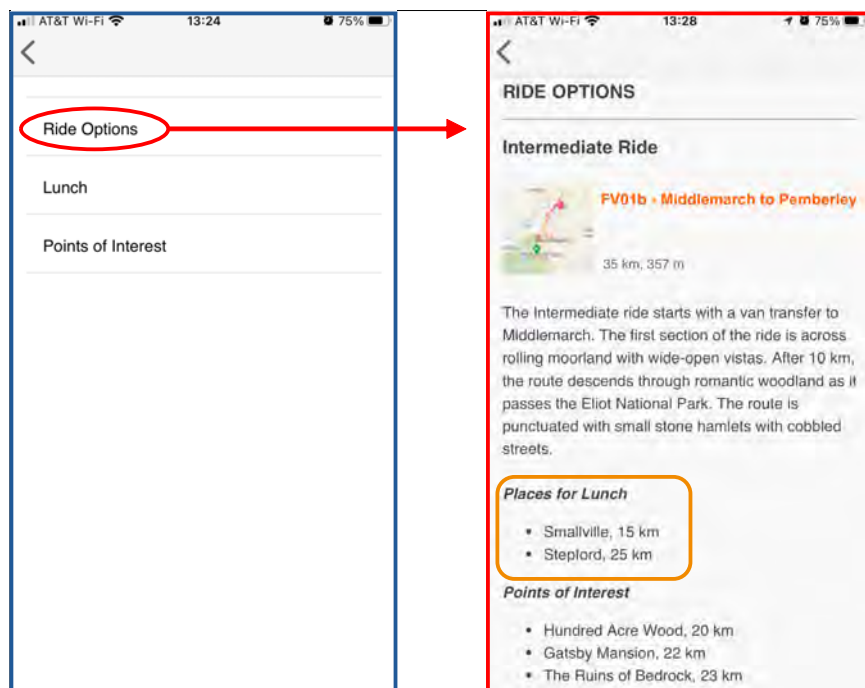


You can then choose your ride based on the description:

- Key stats – distance and climbing
- A brief overview
- A list of towns or villages where you can find lunch
- A list of places of interest along the route
- Wineries along the route (not all areas)

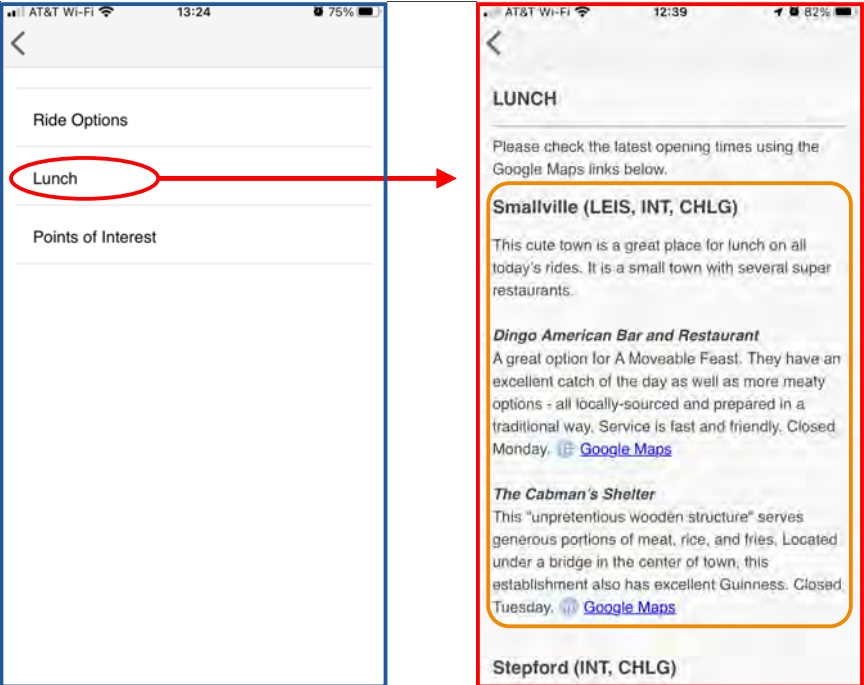
For my route, where is the best place for lunch?

This is a two-step process. First go to Ride Options for the relevant day.



For your chosen ride (here you have chosen the Intermediate ride), choose which town you want to eat in. Here you are going to choose Smallville, which is 15 km into your route.

Then GO BACK to the previous menu and select *Lunch*.



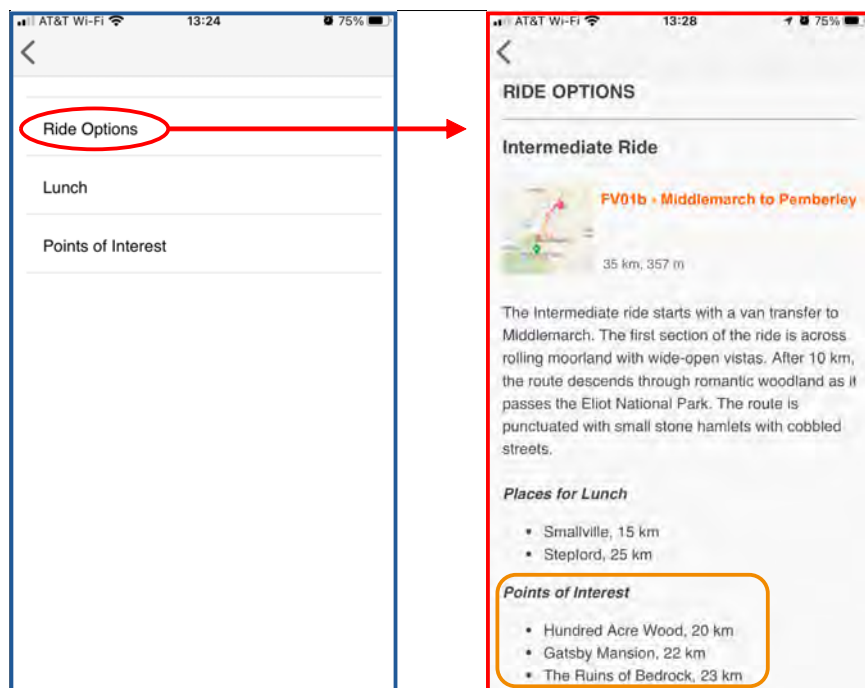
Having selected *Lunch*, you will see a list of all the places on today's routes organized by town. In this example, you are choosing to stop in Smallville and the Cabman's Shelter sounds perfect! (The abbreviations in parentheses tell you that Smallville is on the Leisure, Intermediate and Challenge rides.)

Restaurants are shown as a  icon when you are navigating the routes. See the *Navigating the Routes* section below.

You can use the *Google Maps* link to check opening times and to confirm the location of the restaurant.

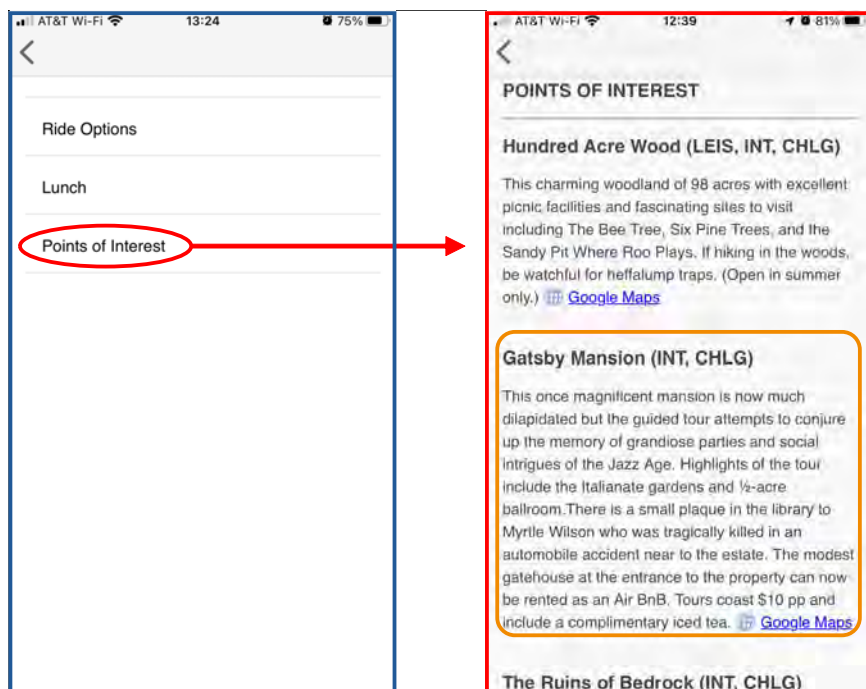
What points of interest are there along my chosen route?

This is a two-step process. First, go the Ride Options for the relevant day.



For your chosen ride (here you have chosen the Intermediate ride), see the list of Points of Interest that are on this route. In this example, The Gatsby Mansion, at 22 km) has caught your attention.

Then GO BACK to the previous menu and select Points of Interest.



Having selected *Points of Interest*, you can then read about the places you might want to visit along this route. In this example, you can learn all about the Gatsby Mansion. (The abbreviations in parentheses tell you that the Gatsby Mansion is on the Intermediate and Challenge rides.)

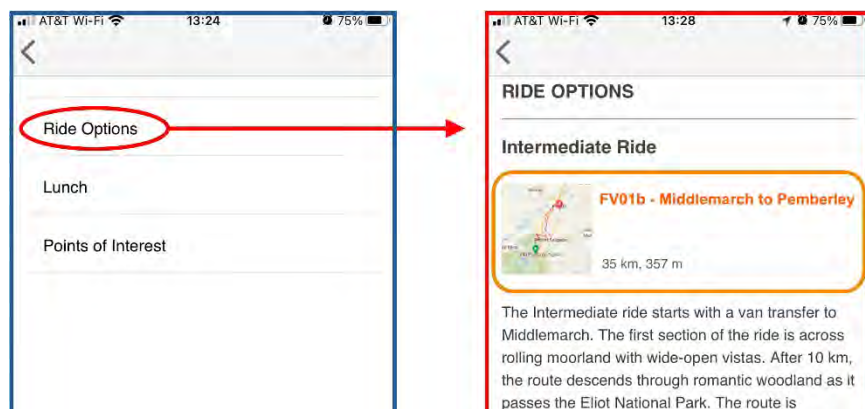
Points of Interest are shown as a  icon when you are navigating the routes. See the *Navigating the Routes* section below. We also list Viewpoints here. Viewpoints

are marked with a  on your routes.

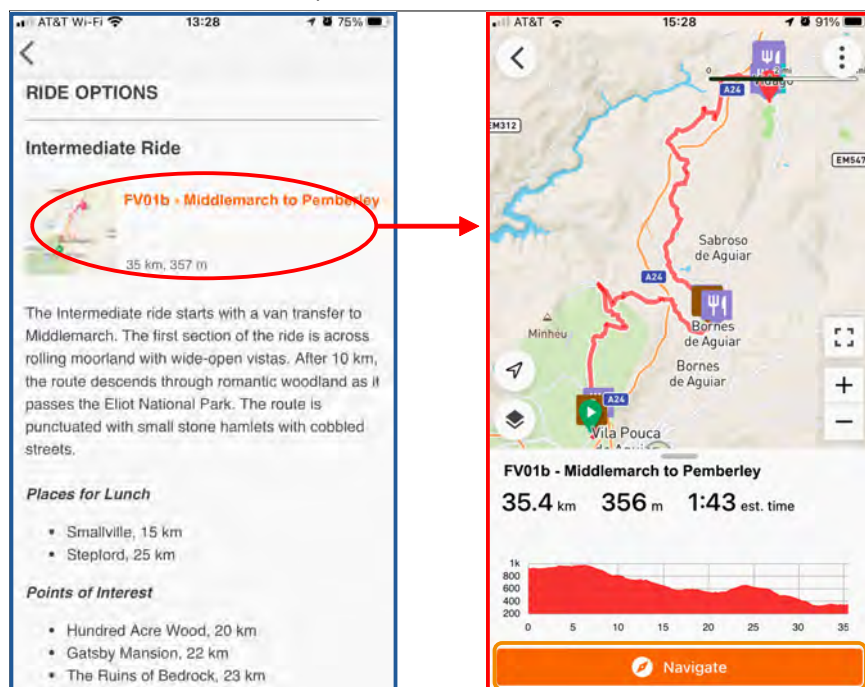
You can use the *Google Maps* link to check opening times and to confirm the location of the sites.

How do I navigate my chosen route?

Within *Ride Options* for your chosen day.



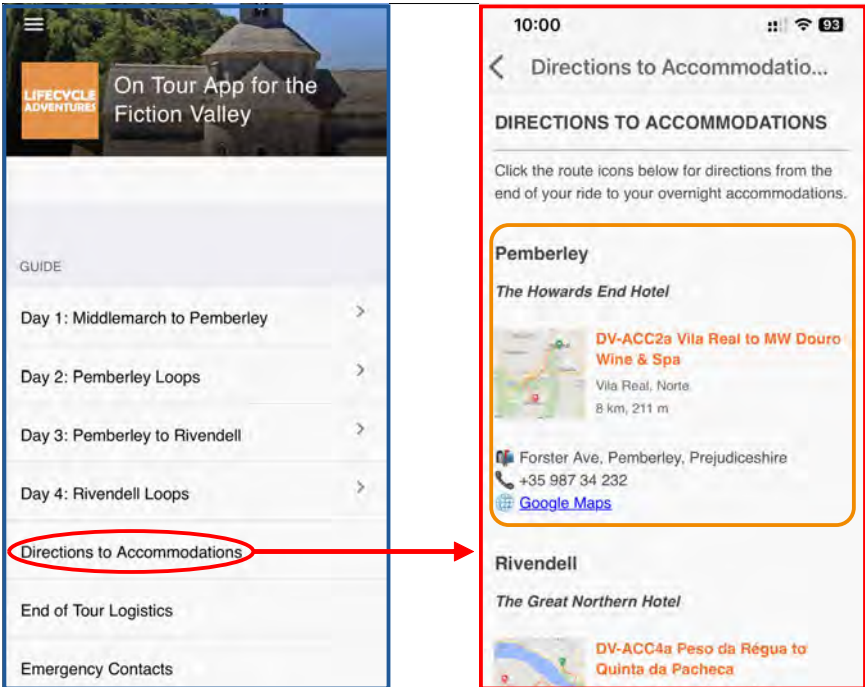
Tap on the map for the ride you have chosen. This takes you to route navigation within Ride with GPS. (Here you have chosen the Intermediate ride to Pemberley.)



Tap on *Navigate* to start directions for the route. See the *Navigating the Routes* section below for more details about the features available when navigating in Ride with GPS.

How do I navigate to my overnight accommodation?

Select *Directions to Accommodations* on the main menu.



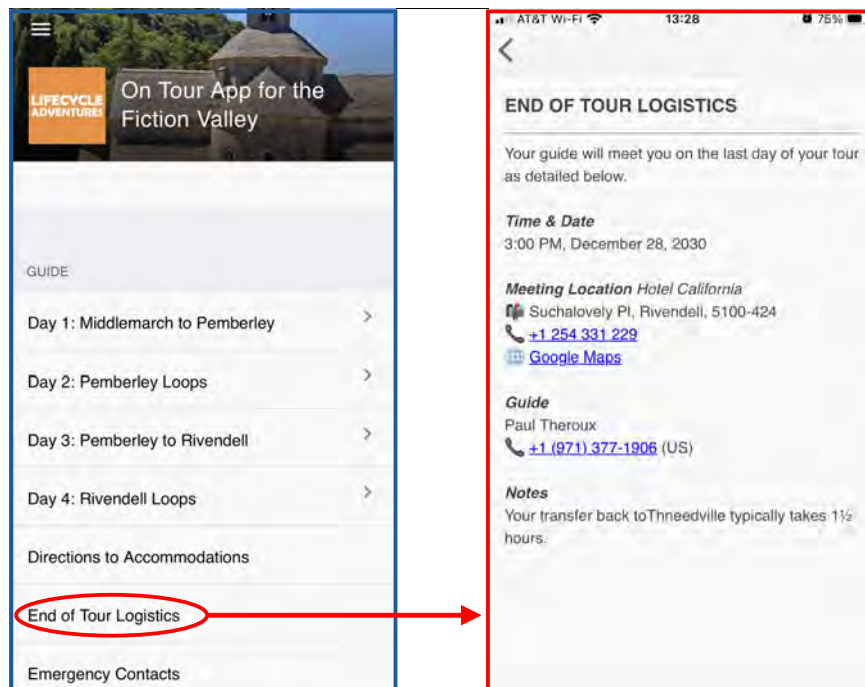
For the relevant overnight town (in this case you have just arrived in Pemberley), click on the map and this will take you into RWGPS navigation that will direct you to your hotel.

Accommodations are shown on your route with the following icon 

You can also find the hotel using the *Google Maps* link.

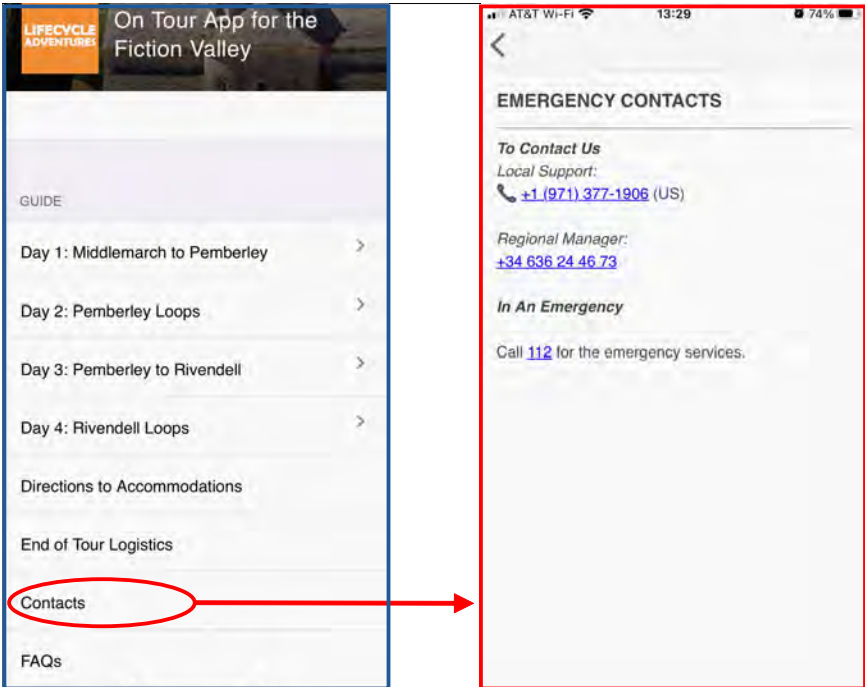
Where and when will I meet my guide at the end of my tour?

Select *End of Tour Logistics* from the main menu.



How do I contact my guide or the emergency services?

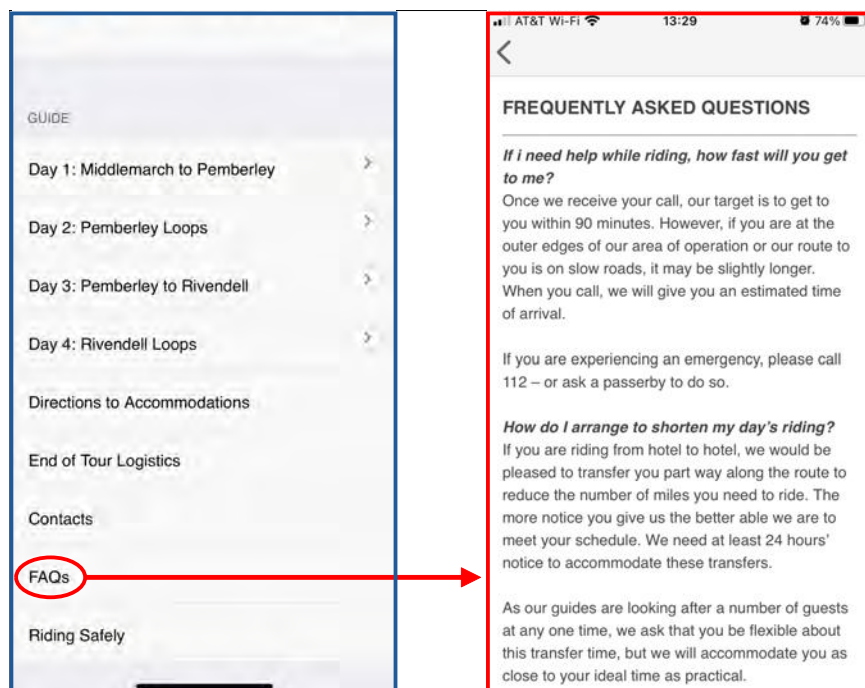
Select *Contacts* on the main menu.



You will see how to contact your guide, our regional manager, and the emergency services.

Answers to other frequently asked questions while on tour

Select *FAQs* on the main menu.

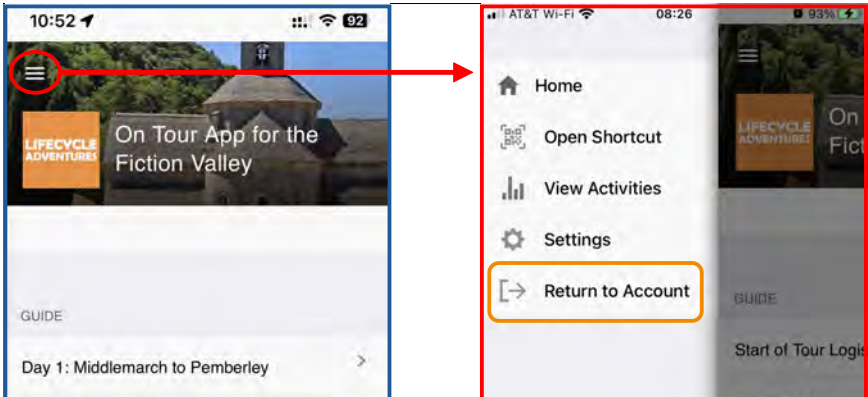


You will then see a list of questions with answers for some of the more common questions guests have while on tour.

There are also tips for *Riding Safely* on the main menu.

How do I get to the main RWGPS menu?

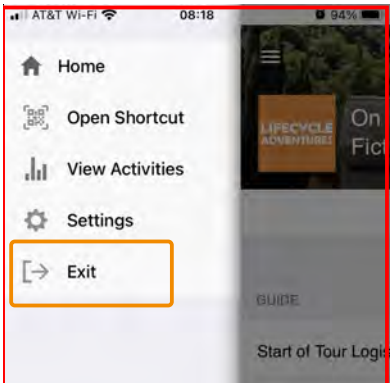
Tap the three horizontal lines at the top left-hand corner of the app.



You will then see options to:

- Open another RWGPS experience (Open Shortcut),
- View your rides (View Activities),
- Change your settings, or
- Exit the On Tour App and go to the main RWGPS page.

Note that if you do not have a RWGPS account, the last option will be to *Exit* to the main RWGPS home page rather than Returning to Account.



We do not recommend selecting *Exit* as you will need to reload the app by rescanning the QR code we sent you.

NAVIGATING THE ROUTES

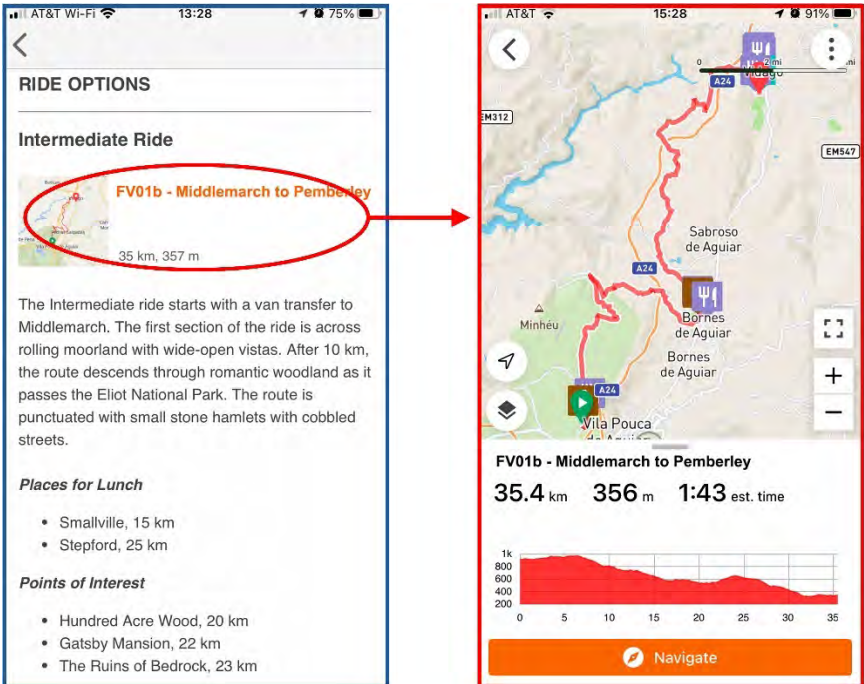
This section describes how to get the most of the RWGPS navigation. Specifically, it answers the questions:

- How do I start directions for my route?
- How do I get to the start of the route?
- How do I find restaurants and points of interest?
- How do I pause my route (e.g. when I go to lunch)?
- What do I do if I go off course?
- What do I do when I get to my destination?
- Where can I see my ride?
- Other top tips
- What settings do you recommend / can I change?

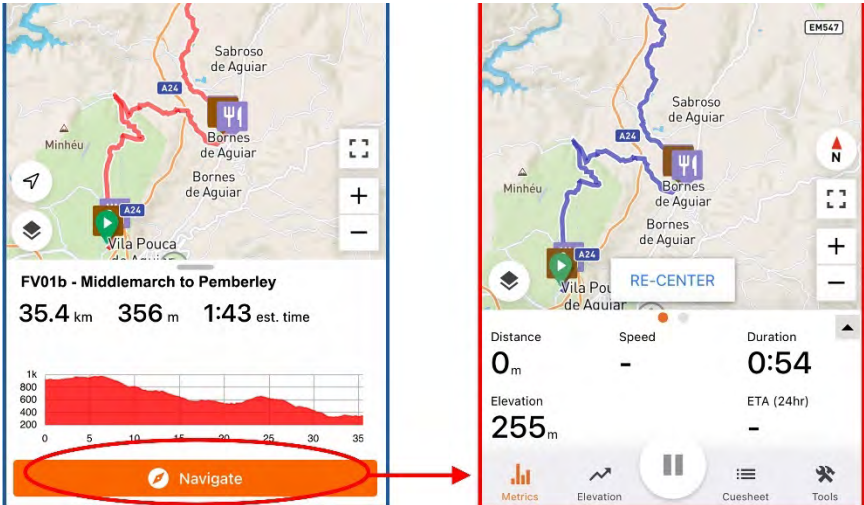
Ride with GPS navigation is intuitive to use and requires little learning. However, **as a backup**, the following section explains in detail how to answer the questions listed above.

How do I start directions for my route?

In Ride Options for the relevant day, tap on the route map of your chosen ride (here you have chosen the Intermediate route).



You then tap navigate to start your turn-by-turn directions.



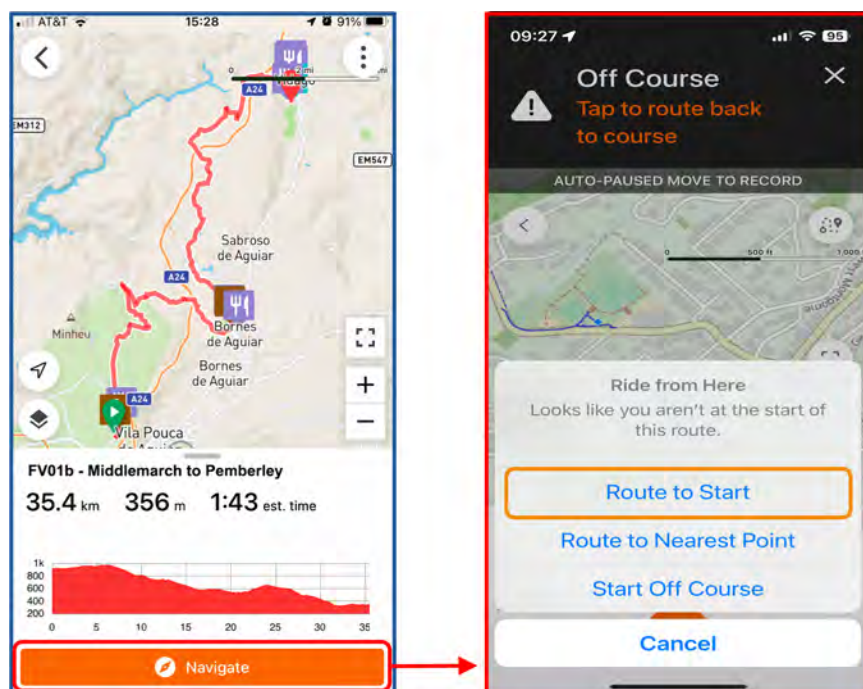
You will get both audible and screen-prompt cues for your ride.

How do I get to the start of the route?

Typically, your route starts close to where your ride ended the night before. Open your selected route and tap **Navigate**. If you are not at the start of the ride, you will be presented with three options:

- **Route to Start** (RWGPS will calculate a route to the start of your ride)
- **Route to Nearest Point** (RWGPS will calculate a route to intercept your ride, sometimes cutting off the start of the ride)
- **Start Off Course** (you navigate yourself to the start of the ride)

Be careful when using *Route to Nearest Point* on a loop ride as the nearest point may be towards the end of the ride!



If you are not presented with the options above, exit navigation and tap the three-dot menu circle and select *Directions to Start*. Your phone will then launch your mapping app (e.g. Google Maps or Apple Maps) and load a route to the start point. You can typically select *Cycle* as a mode of transport (not available in all areas).



We recommend you load the directions in your hotel while on Wi-Fi if you want to avoid using your phone's data plan.

How do I find restaurants and other things of interest?

Restaurants, points of interest, viewpoints, wineries, and accommodations are shown on your route with the following icons.



... Accommodation



... Restaurant



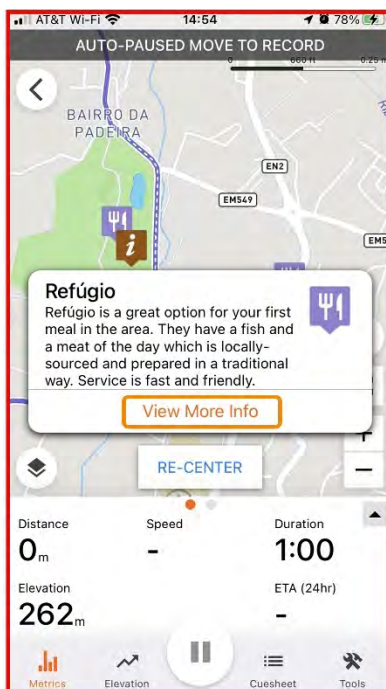
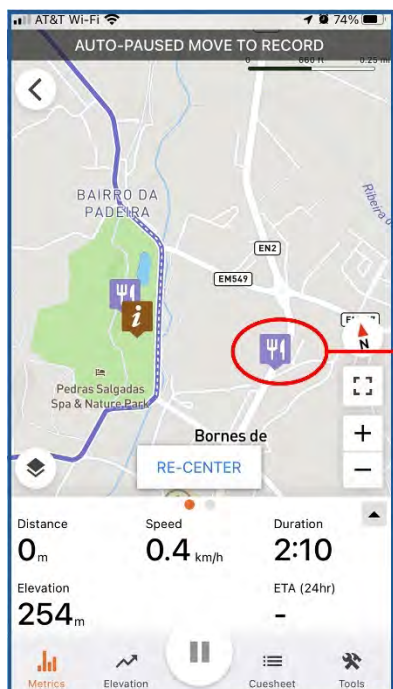
... Point of interest



... Viewpoint



... Winery (not all areas)

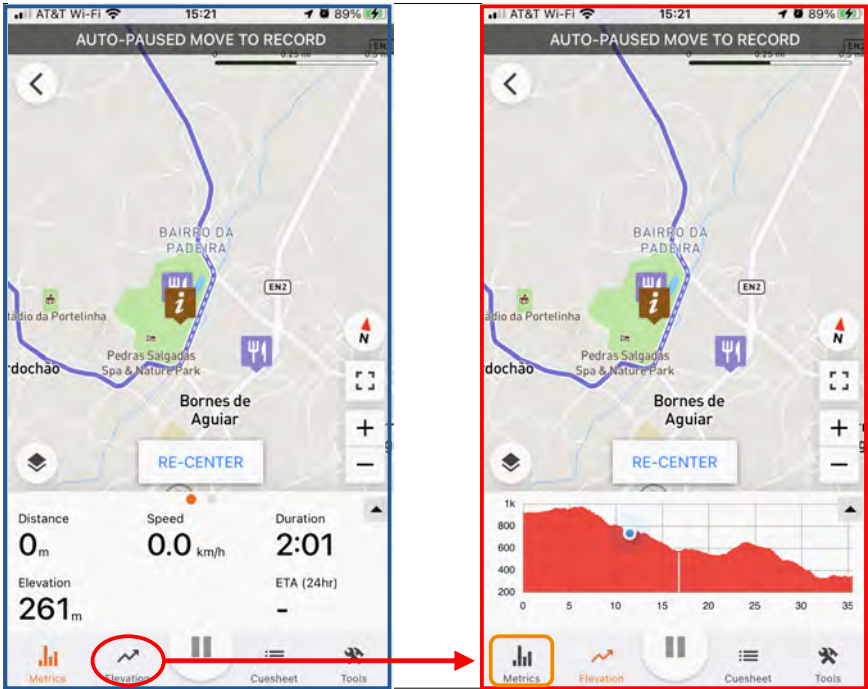


To learn more, tap the icon. This will bring up a short description. Tapping *View More Info* will expand the text and show a link to Google Maps.

You can also learn more about these places in the main On Tour App under the Lunch, Points of Interest, and Wineries sections for each day.

How do I see how much I have left to climb?

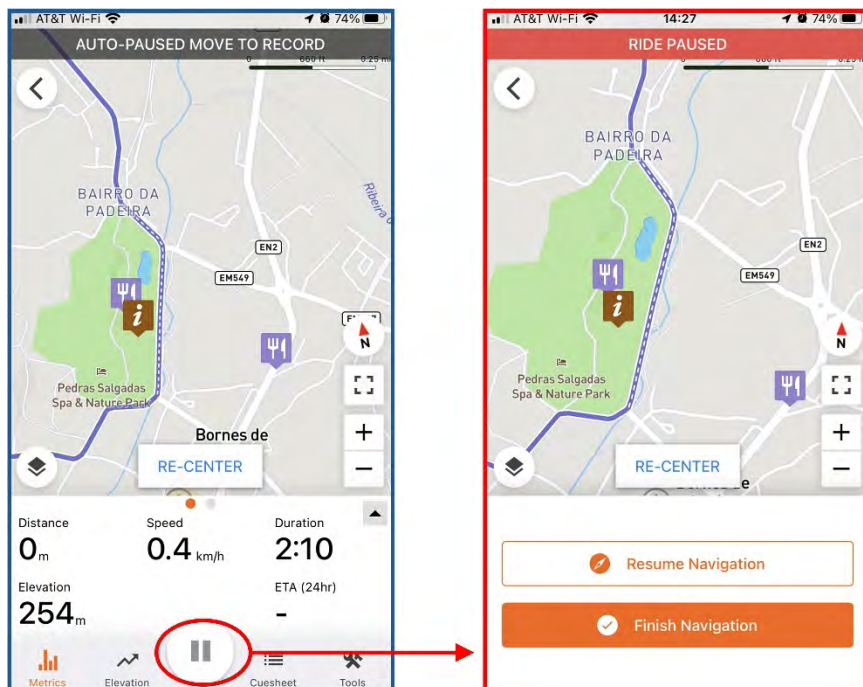
To see where you are on a hill, tap the *Elevation* icon.



To return to the key statistics view, tap the *Metrics* icon.

How do I pause my route (e.g., when I go to lunch)?

Press and hold the *Pause* button.

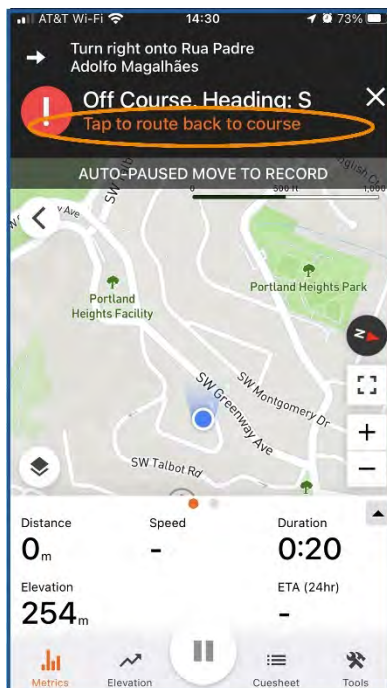


When you are ready to restart your ride, just return to the app and press *Resume Navigation*.

What do I do if I go off course?

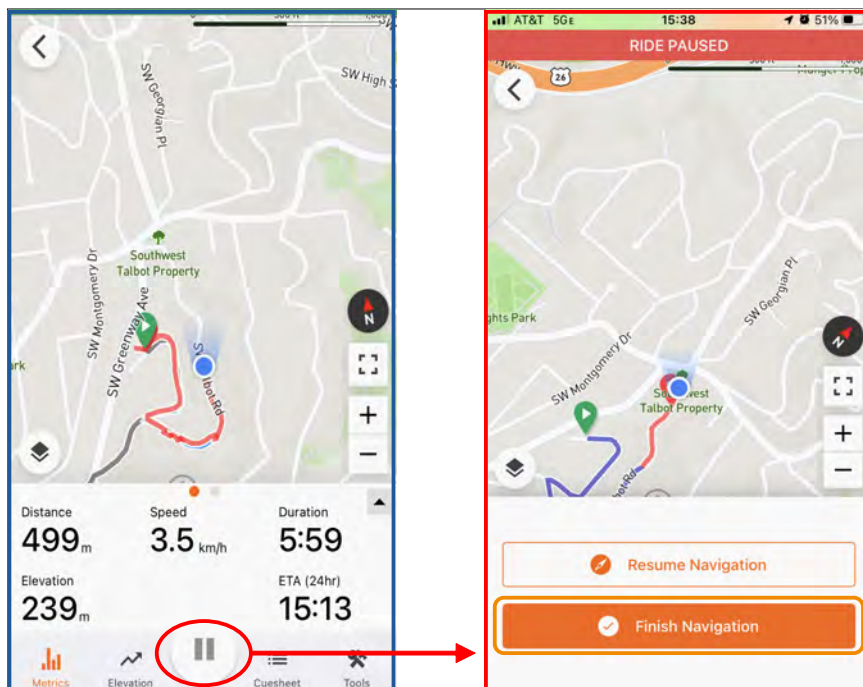
If you find yourself off the main route (e.g. if you have taken a wrong turn or visited a restaurant for lunch), the app will alert you with an audible alert and a cue card stating that you are *Off Course*. To get back to the course, press *Tap to route back to course*. RWGPS will then direct you back to the route. Note that this feature can have complications:

- This feature does not work reliably without cellular data (i.e.. does not always work if you are in Airplane Mode). In these circumstances, use the map to guide yourself back to the route.
- Typically, you are directed to the closest point of your route. If you are a long way off course, the app may direct you to backtrack the way that you went off course rather than further along the route. We suggest you zoom out on the map to check you are being guided along a route you want to follow.
- If you are on an in-and-out ride, double check that you are being directed in the direction you want along the route.
- If you choose not to receive directions back to your route, the app will continue to notify you every two minutes that you are off course. If you intentionally go off course and no longer want these alerts, you can stop them by tapping the X in the corner of the cue card. You could also tap and hold the pause button to temporarily pause your ride.

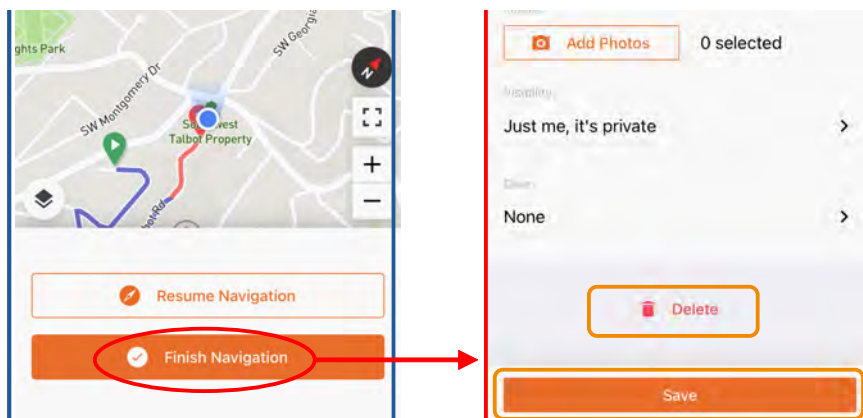


What do I do when I get to my destination?

When you finish a route, you'll get one final chime notification and you will see on the map that you have reached the end of the ride (shown by a red icon). Then tap-and-hold the pause button.

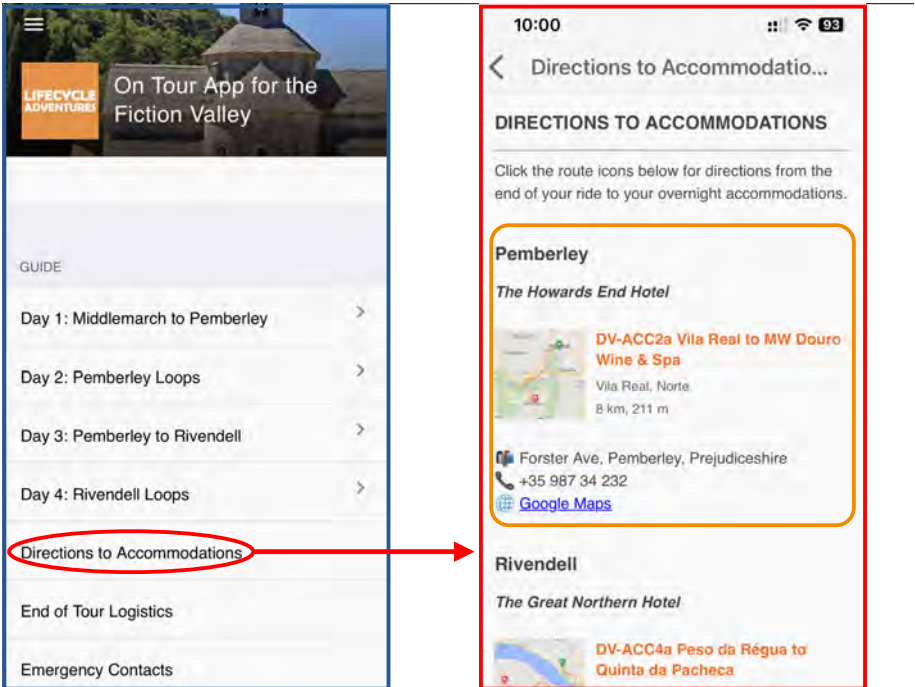


Follow the prompt to either save or delete the ride.



Tap *Save* if you want to be able to review your statistics for the ride at a later date. Tap *Delete* (and then *OK*) if you do not want to save your ride. Note that you may need to scroll down to find the *Delete* button.

After saving (or deleting) the ride, you will be returned to the main menu of the app. Scroll down and tap *Directions to Accommodations*.



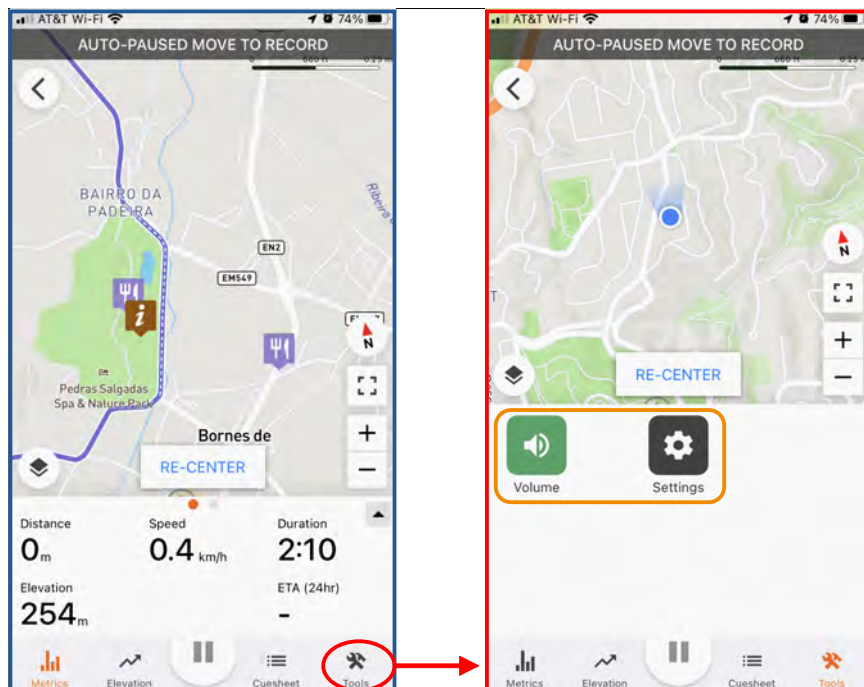
Select the map under the hotel for the town you are in (in this case you have just arrived in Pemberley and are staying in the Howards End Hotel). You will then be taken to RWGPS directions to get you from the end of the ride to your hotel.

Accommodations are shown on your route with the following icon 

You can also find the hotel using the *Google Maps* link.

Tools when navigating

Tapping the Tools when navigating will allow you to select Volume or Settings.



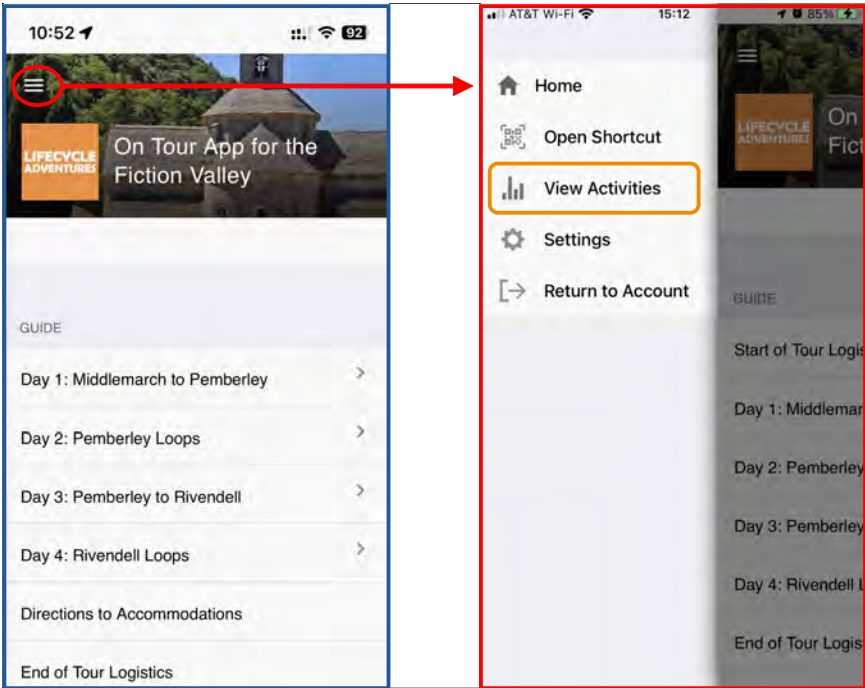
Volume allows you to turn off audible alerts or adjust the volume.

Settings allows you to change various settings. Examples of what can be changed includes:

- Get alerts earlier.
- Under Handlebar Mode: keep the screen on while navigating. Note, this will rundown your battery faster.
- Under Handlebar Mode: lock the navigation view in your preferred orientation.

Where can I see my rides?

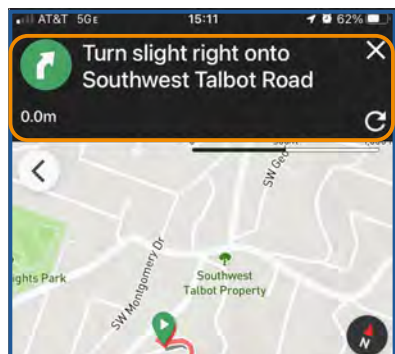
Select menu (three lines in top lefthand corner) then *View Activities* to see your saved rides.



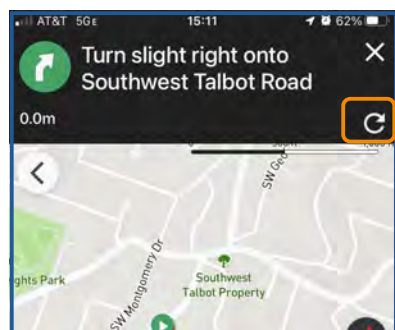
You can select a ride and review the route you took as well as the ride data such as ride time and average speed.

Other top tips

- You must be recording a ride to use navigation. After you are finished riding you may opt to delete the ride or save it.
- The app may take a moment to find your exact position. Once your location is found, your location will show on the map as a blue dot, and navigation will begin.
- When you are within 10–15 seconds from your first turn, you'll get your first turn notification at the top of your screen.



- If you missed the voice announcement, you can replay it by pressing the replay icon in the bottom right corner of the notification.



- The cue can be dismissed by swiping it, or it will go away automatically after you have passed the cue.
- While navigating a route with the screen locked, the app can flash the cues over the lock screen with text and voice for upcoming cue. For this function to work, you need to allow Ride with GPS to send push notifications to your phone. This means that for the most part you can ride with your phone screen locked (preserving battery life). You will still have voice and on-screen navigation prompts.



- Adjusting your locked screen time on your phone (settings) to around 5 minutes means that you can have map displayed for tricky sections or towns along the route without it being permanently on.
- If you want to conserve your battery or avoid data roaming charges, set your phone to flight mode before you leave your hotel.
- Further battery saving tips can be found at <https://ridewithgps.com/help/battery-saving-tips>
- Ride with GPS mobile application help and advice can be found at <https://ridewithgps.com/help/mobile/>
- We strongly recommend bringing a battery bank with you on your tour so that in the event your phone runs out of battery you are able to charge it and continue using it for navigation.
- For the same reason, if you are riding as a couple, we strongly recommend that both riders have the On Tour App downloaded to their phone.

TROUBLESHOOTING THE APP

This section describes how to get resolve the following issues and questions:

- The App Will Not Download to My Phone or Tablet
- How do I get to the On Tour App from the main RWGPS menu?
- The On Tour App is freezing
- The app is causing me to exceed my data plan (or drain my battery)

The App Will Not Download to My Phone or Tablet

About thirty days before the start of your tour, we will send you a QR code and instructions to download the app. Simply scan that QR code with your camera and follow the instructions.

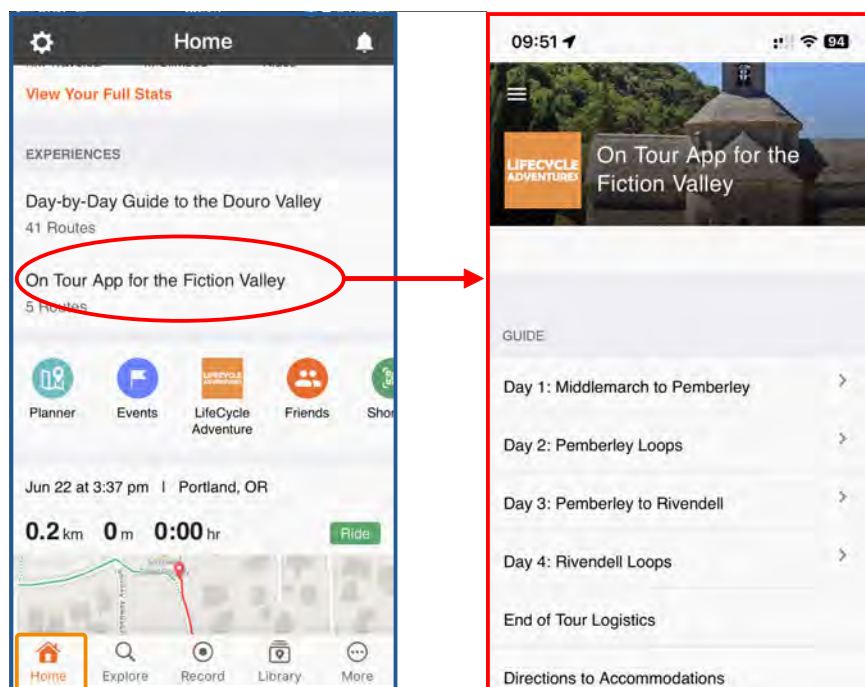
If this does not work, contact us and we can send you a *Use Code* as an alternative way to download the app. This sometimes works better if you are already a RWGPS user.

How do I get to the On Tour App from the main RWGPS menu?

If you have exited the app, and want to get back to the On Tour App.

If you have a RWGPS account

You will see the On Tour App listed under you *Experiences* on your home menu.



If you do not have a RWGPS account

If you select *Exit* after tapping the three menu lines at the top right-hand corner of the app, you will be returned to a generic RWGPS home screen. To get back into the app from here, you will need to tap *Open Shortcut* from the home menu and type in the Shortcut Code we sent you (or scan the QR image we sent you).

The On Tour App is freezing

If the On Tour App has frozen or become unpredictable, try turning your device off and on. If this does not work, reload the app by scanning the QR code we sent you. Note that the On Tour App is relatively large and requires a lot of bandwidth. Ideally, it is best downloaded when you have access to Wi-Fi.

The app is causing me to exceed my data plan (or drain my battery)

The app downloads to your phone and can be used with your data plan turned off.

- If you want to conserve your battery or avoid data roaming charges, set your phone to flight mode before you leave your hotel.
- Adjusting your locked screen time on your phone (settings) to around 5 minutes means that you can have map displayed for tricky sections or towns along the route without it being permanently on and draining your battery.
- Further battery saving tips can be found at <https://ridewithgps.com/help/battery-saving-tips>
- General Ride with GPS mobile application help and advice can be found at <https://ridewithgps.com/help/mobile/>
- We recommend bringing a battery bank with you on your tour so that in the event your phone runs out of battery you are able to charge it and continue using it for navigation.
- For the same reason, if you are riding as a couple, we strongly recommend that both riders have the On Tour App downloaded to their phone. If only one of the phones is used to navigate, and you then have problems with that phone (or you run out of battery), you have a backup phone ready to go.

SAFETY & ENJOYMENT

Riding Safely

Rules of the Road

We have a few simple rules we ask you to follow:

1. Always wear a cycle helmet fastened securely while cycling.
2. Wear highly-visibility clothing and/or a fluorescent safety triangle.
3. Do not ride at night or in the dim light of dawn or dusk.
4. Ride in single file and with the direction of traffic.
5. When riding, stay as close as is safe to the right-hand side (left in Ireland) of the road while avoiding grit or broken pavement.
6. Carry identification, emergency contact, and your medical/travel insurance.

Daily Bike Checks

Your rental bikes are checked and tuned before every trip. However, it is useful to do some regular checks just to keep things running smoothly. If you're in any doubt or have any concerns, give us a call and we'll have a guide come out to you.

1. Brakes. Do both brake levers engage the brakes smoothly?
2. Handlebars & stem. Check alignment. If there is lateral movement or rocking when the front brake is engaged, the headset may need adjusting.
3. Gear changing. Do all gears engage/change smoothly?
4. Chain. If you've been riding in rain or on wet roads, you may want to wipe off your chain and apply a little lube the night before. In the morning, run a clean rag over the chain to remove any excess oil.
5. Wheels & tires. Inflate front & back tires to the correct tire pressure (written on the side of the tire). Check wheels for wobbles, spokes for breakages and tires for wear. Ensure the quick-release mechanisms are secure.
6. Frame. Check for cracks and alignment in the frame especially if you accidentally dropped the bike.

Riding Efficiently

Tips for When Riding

As well as having a safe tour, we are keen for you to enjoy cycling and leave with a real sense of accomplishment. This is likely to include riding within your limits and not exhausting yourself before lunch. Here are some thoughts on how to stay happy on your bike.

1. *Eat before you are hungry.* Even moderate cycling burns around 300 calories per hour so eat snacks such as power bars as needed – giving

your body enough time to process the food before the fuel gauge reaches empty.

2. *Drink before you are thirsty.* As you sweat, you will lose both water and essential salts. You will not notice the effects until it is too late. Drink plenty of water before you start to ride and then take regular sips while riding. A good target is to drink either water or sports drink every 30 minutes.
3. *Ride at a pace that feels comfortable.* Even when climbing hills, ride at a pace that allows you to keep a conversation going without being out of breath. This means changing down to a low gear, keeping your cadence high and taking things easy.
4. The sun can get very intense, especially in the middle of the day so *keep your shirt on and use a high factor sunscreen.* Be aware of being burned through the gaps in your cycle helmet. A bandana under the helmet can make all the difference.
5. *Relax and change your hand position regularly.* This helps avoid shoulder cricks or back aches. Drop handlebars are better for being able to do this than straight handlebars.
6. *Check your bike.* A sticking brake or skipping gear stops you relaxing and can be dangerous. If you are unsure, talk to your guide, who will be happy to help you check things out if you have a concern.
7. *Smile, you are on vacation!*

Seat Height Adjustment

Seat height adjustment is more craft than science. The most important thing is that you feel safe and confident on the bike. However, getting your saddle to the right height will also help you stay comfortable on longer rides, avoid saddle sores, and conserve your energy while you pedal.

Bike fitters can spend hours getting your fit just right, but here are some simple rules of thumb.

- While seated on your bike, prop yourself up against a wall.
- Position the pedals so the pedal cranks are vertical (one pedal at 12 o'clock and one pedal at 6 o'clock).
- Place your feet on the pedals and move your foot so that your heel is on the pedal at 6 o'clock.
- When your seat is at the correct height, your leg (of the foot at 6 o'clock) should be straight but your knee shouldn't be locked.

If your seat is too low, it will make it harder to pedal and you may get knee pain at the front of the knee. Too high and your hips will go from side to side which will make you tend to ride in too high a gear and you may develop pain at the back of your knees.

Avoiding Saddle Sores

Saddle sores are the great unmentioned subject of cycling. However, if you have not been riding much recently and start doing a lot of miles on a bike, you may well become just a little too familiar with them.

To prevent sores, it's helpful to know what they are. A saddle sore is a skin ailment on the buttocks due to, or exacerbated by, riding on a bicycle saddle. It often develops in three stages: skin abrasion, folliculitis (inflammation of the hair follicles) and, finally, abscess. If it's not obvious from the definition, it is better to stop the sores in the early stages than try and treat it in the final stage.

The best cure of all is to not get them in the first place. Gradually build up your riding mileage and get used to your bike seat. Some training rides before you go on tour will help. Other good preventative measures include:

- Reducing the friction due to bobbing or swinging motion while pedaling, by setting the appropriate saddle height – see above.
- If you have a favorite saddle, bring it along and we will fit it to your rental bike.
- Wear good-quality cycling shorts, with a high-quality chamois insert.
- Use petroleum jelly, chamois cream, or lubricating gel on the chamois to further reduce friction.
- Do not sit around in damp bike shorts after your ride and thoroughly wash and dry the affected area.

There are pharmacies in all the main towns you'll stay in if you need medical treatment. Our primary message would be, if you think you have them, don't ignore them.

FIXING A FLAT

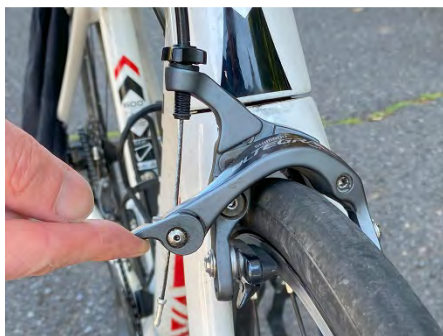
To make this basic repair, you will need tire levers, a pump (or CO₂ canister), and a spare tube (or patch kit). If you have a thru axle (see below) you will also need a hex wrench (Allen key). Before working on your bike, ensure you are well away from the road and in no danger from the traffic.

There are five basic steps to fixing a flat.

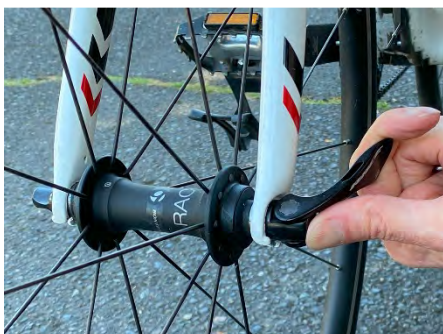
1. Remove the wheel
2. Deflate and remove the tube
3. Remove what caused the flat
4. Replace tube and inflate
5. Refit the wheel

Remove the Wheel

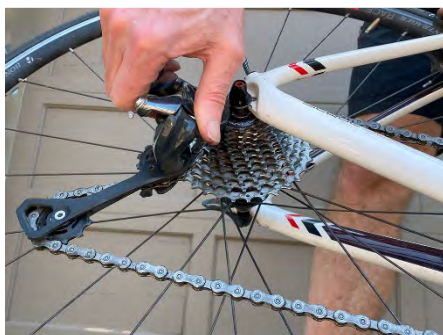
If you have rim brakes, release the brakes. How you do this depends on the type of brakes. Two examples are shown below.



If you are **removing the front wheel**, open the quick-release lever and unscrew the nut on the other side of the skewer. The wheel should then drop out of the fork.



If you are **removing the rear wheel**, put the chain on the smallest cog of the rear cassette. Open the quick release lever. You will then need to push the derailleur back to allow space for the wheel to get past the chain as you pull the wheel out.



If you have disc brakes, avoid touching the rotors or the disc pads. The rotors can be hot and grease or other contaminants on these parts will make the brakes ineffective. Also avoid squeezing the brake levers when the wheel is removed as this will close the pads and make it very difficult to reinsert the disk when refitting the wheel.



If you have a thru axle (pictured above on RHS) on either a front or rear wheel, you will need to unscrew and remove the axle using a hex wrench before you can remove the wheel. Avoid getting any dirt on the axle after it is removed.

Deflate and Remove the Tube

Having removed the wheel, fully deflate the tube. If you have a thick Schrader valve, press down on the small pin at the center of the valve. If you have a thin Presta valve, loosen the small valve at the top of the valve stem and press down.



Unseat the tire from the rim. Place a tire lever under the bead of the tire and lever it over the edge of the wheel (avoid doing this near to the valve). Repeat this procedure with a second tire lever. Slide the second tire lever around the rim to free the tire. Pull the valve stem out of the wheel and remove the rest of the tube.



Remove What Caused the Flat

Inspect the tire for the cause of the flat. Remove any thorns or pieces of glass that could puncture the new tube. *Carefully*, run your fingers around the inside of the tire to check for sharp debris.

Replace and Inflate the Tube

Put a little air into the replacement tube – just enough to give it some shape – and insert the valve into the wheel.



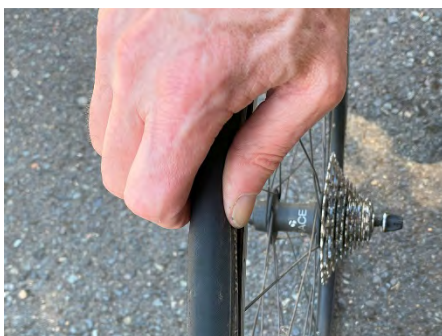
Carefully put the rest of the tube inside the tire. Beginning at the valve, push the tire bead back inside the rim of the wheel. Continue around the rim in both directions.



If the tire is tight, pinch both sides of the tire bead into the center of the rim – this will make it easier for the tire to clear the rim. If necessary, use tire levers to force the final part of the tire bead over the wheel rim – being careful not to pinch the tube and cause another flat.



Inflate the tube. As you inflate the tube, check regularly that the tube isn't caught in the rim and that there is no bulging. When the tube is a little inflated, go around the wheel pinching the tire to the center of the rim to help release where the tube might be trapped. Inflate the tube to the recommended pressure printed on the tire.



If you don't have a pump with a pressure gauge, inflate until the tire is hard to depress with your fingers and check your tire pressure as soon as you have access to a pump with a gauge.

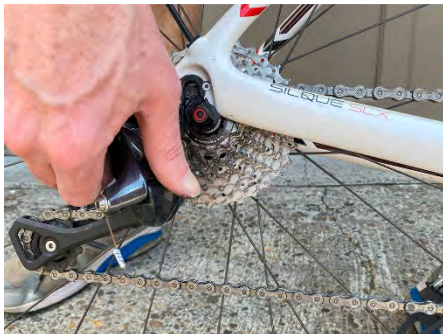
Refit the Wheel

Refitting the wheel is the reverse of removing it.

If you are **refitting the front wheel**, open the quick-release lever and place the wheel in the dropouts. Tighten the nut opposite the lever and close the lever to tighten onto the frame. If you have overtightened the nut, it will not be possible to close the lever. If the lever closes too easily, tighten the nut more and try again.

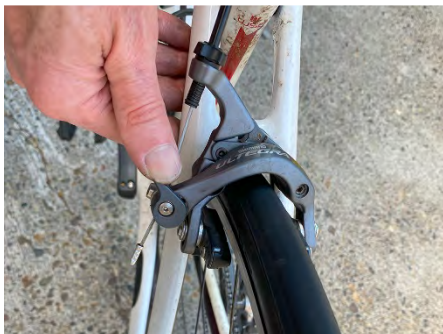


If you are **refitting the rear wheel**, align the wheel so the chain is on the smallest cog of the cassette. Pull back the derailleur to allow space for the wheel to drop into the dropouts. Close the lever and check it is tight and not touching the frame. If the lever closes too easily, tighten the nut and try again.



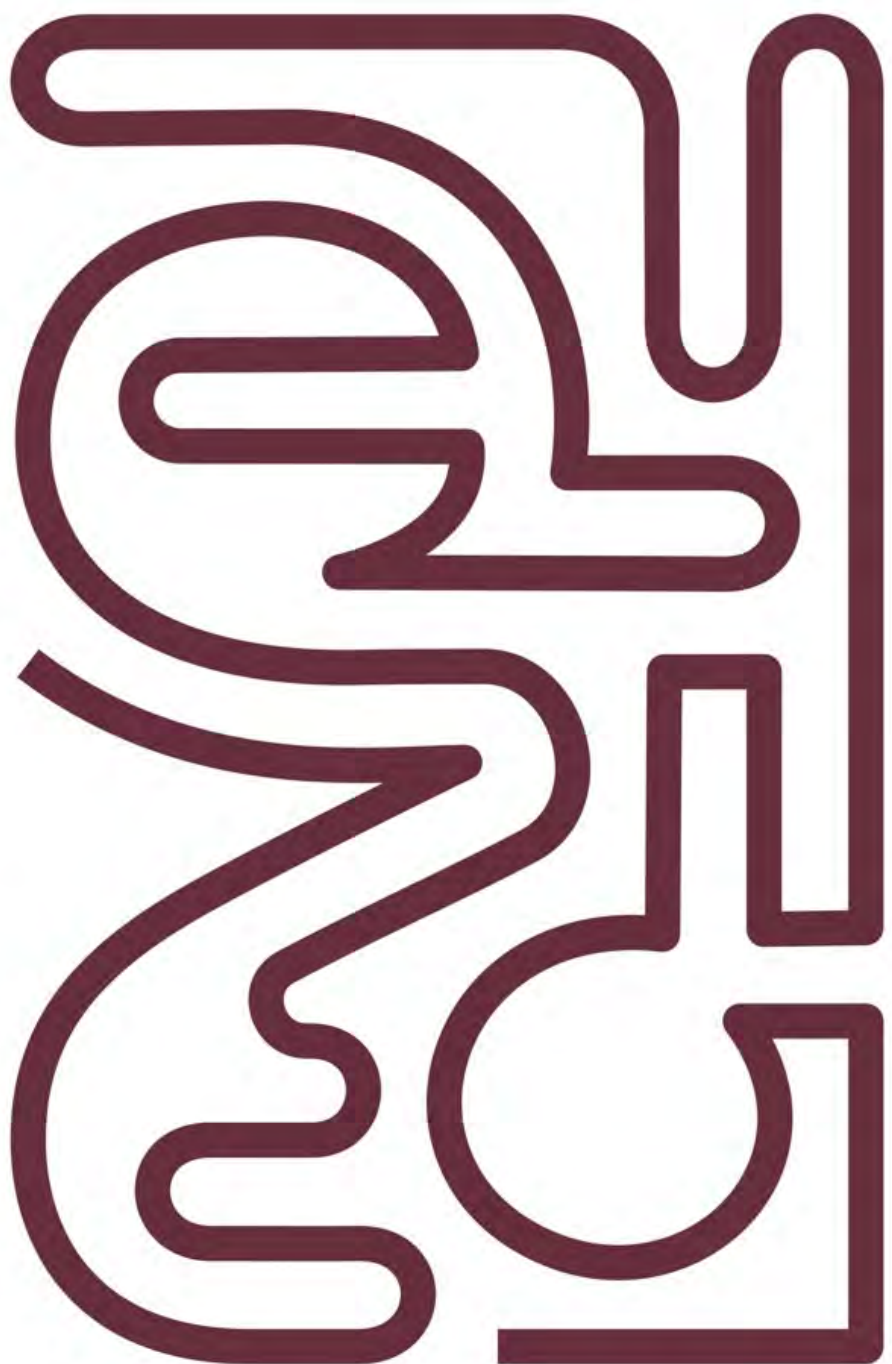
If you have a thru axle (pictured above on RHS) on either a front or a rear wheel, place the wheel in the dropouts, as described above. Then reinsert the axle. If you cannot insert the axle or it fails to engage on the thread smoothly as you turn it clockwise, remove the wheel and reinsert it, checking the alignment. Tighten the axle using a hex wrench.

If you have rim brakes, reconnect the brakes and check they are functioning OK.



Video

For a more dynamic description of fixing a flat, check out the following video:
https://youtu.be/qLO_HOOKEjs.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Quiz Questions	126
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APPENDIX 1 – QUIZ QUESTIONS

For a little fun, here is a quiz to test what you have learned in this guidebook. For those who just want to relax on vacation or who want to test their riding partners, skip ahead to the answers at the end of the section.

Planning Your Tour

1. What is the most useful tool to help you navigate your tour?

- ☐ A piece of string and a loadstone
- ☐ LifeCycle Adventures On-Tour App
- ☐ Garmin GMR xHD2 Open Array Radar
- ☐ All of the above

2. The LifeCycle Adventures On-Tour App can be downloaded to:

- ☐ Your smartphone
- ☐ Your tablet
- ☐ All of the above

3. It can be helpful to download Google Maps for the area for use offline:

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

4. Companies that provide cheap data plans via eSIMs are:

- ☐ Snowman and Pharaoh
- ☐ Nomad and Airalo
- ☐ Roman and Hairglo
- ☐ None of the above

5. Things to consider booking before you travel include:

- ☐ Cheese tours
- ☐ Museum visits
- ☐ Airport transfers
- ☐ Hard-to-book restaurants
- ☐ All of the above

6. Useful things to pack include:

- ☐ Floor pump
- ☐ Your bike helmet
- ☐ Kitchen sink
- ☐ DeWalt 20V brushless cordless 2-inch magnetic drill press
- ☐ All of the above

7. We provide the following equipment:

- ☐ Two LifeCycle Adventures water bottles
- ☐ Floor pump that travels with your luggage
- ☐ Phone mount for your phone
- ☐ All of the above

About the Area

8. The Netherlands has approximately how many miles of traffic-free bike paths?

- ☐ 20 miles
- ☐ 200 miles
- ☐ 2,000 miles
- ☐ 20,000 miles
- ☐ There are no bike paths in The Netherlands

9. Are Holland and The Netherlands the same country?

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

10. Bitterballen are:

- ☐ The Dutch name for the World Cup – that they have never won
- ☐ Popular Dutch pub snacks enjoyed with mustard
- ☐ A Dutchman's private parts after skating too long on frozen canals
- ☐ A Friesland greeting (to which the traditional response is Dankeballen).

11. In 1667 the Dutch swapped New Amsterdam for:

- ☐ New York
- ☐ Threescore and ten of bails of Peter Stuyvesant tabaco
- ☐ Surinam
- ☐ A pint of Grolsch and a plate of bitterballen
- ☐ The seventh Earl of Shaftsbury

12. Tulipmania is:

- ☐ Considered the first example of an economic bubble
- ☐ The phenomena of tourists demanding to see fields of tulips in September
- ☐ A country to the south of Romania
- ☐ Another name of Valentines day in Holland

13. The people of Alkmaar are colloquially known as:

- ☐ Meat Heads
- ☐ Dairy Heads
- ☐ Cow Heads
- ☐ Cheese Heads
- ☐ None of the above

14. How many souvenir clogs does the Netherlands produce each year?

- ☐ 6,000
- ☐ 60,000
- ☐ 600,000
- ☐ 6,000,000
- ☐ 60,000,000
- ☐ There are no souvenir clogs produced in The Netherlands

15. On average, The Netherlands has the tallest women in the world.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Overnight Towns

16. The Oudegracht is:

- ☐ A cheese-eating old man made famous by Dr Seuss
- ☐ A famous Dutch climate campaigner
- ☐ The town where bitterballen were invented
- ☐ The "old canal" that runs through the center of Utrecht
- ☐ All of the above

17. The Dom Tower is not connected to the nearby cathedral because:

- ☐ Antoni Gaudí never got around to finishing the project
- ☐ The original nave was destroyed by winds and never rebuilt
- ☐ It made the tower seem taller
- ☐ It allowed the local tourist board to charge two separate entry fees

18. In the Middle Ages the town of Gouda was known as:

- ☐ The Seville of the North
- ☐ Cheeseville
- ☐ Waarkaaswordtgemaaktstad
- ☐ The Dutch City of Beer
- ☐ New Amsterdam

19. A hofje is:

- ☐ A bawdy drinking song popular in the bars of Gouda
- ☐ An enclosed courtyard common in the town of Gouda
- ☐ One of the new craft beers being brewed in the town of Gouda
- ☐ The name by which Gouda was known in the Middle Ages
- ☐ A meat-free version of the bitterballen

20. What were hung at the Morspoort Gate in Leiden?:

- ☐ Local cheeses that were for sale that day
- ☐ Bitterballen on strings as a Halloween game for poor street children
- ☐ Bicycles unclaimed for more than 1,000 days in the local bike parks
- ☐ The bodies of hanged criminals
- ☐ All of the above

21. The name of the city of Haarlem derives from:

- ☐ The name of a town near Dutch New Amsterdam
- ☐ A Norwegian and Manchester City center forward
- ☐ Haarloheim, meaning a wooded place on high, sandy soil
- ☐ The foggy conditions which often shroud the town

22. The cheese market in Alkmaar is:

- ☐ A celebration of cheese trading traditions dating back centuries
- ☐ A kitschy tourist show
- ☐ Fascinating and entertaining
- ☐ All of the above

On Tour

23. List all the works of fiction mentioned or alluded to in the section *Using the On-Tour App*

APPENDIX 2 – QUIZ ANSWERS

Planning Your Tour

1. LifeCycle Adventures On-Tour App
2. All of the above
3. True
4. Nomad and Airalo
5. All of the above
6. Your bike helmet (we provide a floor pump, so you can leave that at home with the kitchen sink and the magnetic drill press)
7. All of the above

About the Area

8. 20,000 miles
9. False. North and south Holland are just two of the 12 provinces in The Netherlands.
10. A popular Dutch pub snacks enjoyed with mustard
11. Surinam (the deal officially also included Run Island in modern-day Indonesia)
12. Considered the first example of an economic bubble
13. Cheese Heads
14. 6,000,000
15. False, the tallest women are in Latvia (though the Dutch are the tallest men)

Overnight Towns

16. The “old canal” that runs through the center of Utrecht
17. The original nave was destroyed by winds and never rebuilt
18. The Dutch City of Beer
19. An enclosed courtyards common in the town of Gouda
20. The bodies of hanged criminals
21. Haarloheim, meaning a wooded place on high, sandy soil
22. All of the above

On Tour (Qu. 23)

- Middlemarch by George Eliot
- Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (Pemberley)
- Smallville (Superman), TV series
- Stepford Wives, movie
- Winnie-the-Pooh, by A.A. Milne (Hundred Acre Wood)
- The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald (Gatsby Mansion)
- The Flintstones, TV series (The Ruins of Bedrock)
- A Moveable Feast, by Ernest Hemingway (Dingo American Bar)
- Ulysses by James Joyce (the Cabman’s Shelter)

- Hotel California by The Eagles
- Lord of the Rings by J. R. R. Tolkien (Rivendell)
- Twin Peaks, TV series (The Great Northern Hotel)

Your Score

There were 23 questions in total. How did you do?

- 10 well done.
- 15 brilliant!
- 20 genius!!
- 23 really!?

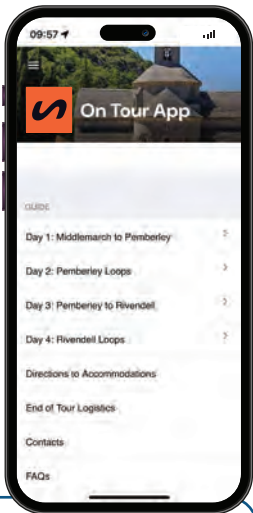
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On-Tour App

We have partnered with *Ride with GPS* to create an app that has all the details you need to explore each day.

You will receive a link to the app a few weeks before the start of your tour. Please download the app before you travel and familiarize yourself with the contents.

Here is a quick overview of how the app is organized.



App Contents

DAY 1: FROM A TO B	RIDE OPTIONS	LEISURE
DAY 2: FROM B TO C	LUNCH A description of the day's restaurants and cafes by town	Route Navigation Maps and GPS-guided directions
DIRECTIONS TO ACCOMMODATIONS Details of, and directions to, your overnight accommodations	POINTS OF INTEREST A description of the day's sights, museums & activities	Places for lunch A list of towns where you can eat lunch along this route
END OF TOUR LOGISTICS Where and when to meet your guide at the end of your tour	WINERIES A description of the day's wineries	Points of Interest A list of the sights, museums and activities along this route
CONTACTS How to contact us or the emergency services		Wineries A list of wineries along this route
FAQs Answers to common questions guests have while on tour		INTERMEDIATE ...
		CHALLENGE ...
		EPIC ...

Explore the world by bike, on your own terms.

NORTH AMERICA

Santa Barbara, California

Big Island, Hawaii

Mount Hood, Oregon

Willamette Valley,
Oregon

San Juan Islands,
Washington

EUROPE

Istrian Peninsula, Croatia

Denmark Islands

Loire Valley, France

Provence, France

Pyrenees, France

Southwest Ireland

Puglia, Italy

Tuscany, Italy

Holland, Netherlands

Douro Valley, Portugal

Catalonia, Spain

Engadin Valley, Switzerland



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