

Dutch Delights

Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague & Delft



Discover the delights of the Netherlands! See the traditional side as you experience a lively cheese market where traders still shout prices as they have for centuries, learn how the iconic Dutch clog is made, and witness a master painter at work creating the exquisite elegance of Delft earthenware. Marvel at the astonishing logistical ballet of the world's largest flower auction, dive into the rich Dutch culture seeing great works by Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Vermeer, and stroll the enchanting streets of sophisticated cities like Amsterdam and The Hague.

TRIP INCLUDES:

- Arrival and departure transfers with assistant
- Welcome dinner in Amsterdam
- Superior 4-star hotel accommodation
- Luggage handling at hotel (1 piece per person)
- Breakfast daily
- Walking tour of Amsterdam
- Visit to Aalsmeer Flower Auction
- Tour of Rijksmuseum
- Visit to Hortus Bulborum gardens
- Cheese factory visit & tasting
- Tour of Van Gogh Museum
- Visit to Paleis Het Loo
- Royal Delft Pottery Factory visit and tour
- Farewell dinner in The Hague

Pre- and post-stay tailor-made itineraries as well as special coach and business class air fares are available on request





DAY 1: AMSTERDAM - ARRIVAL

Meet and greet upon arrival in Amsterdam, then enjoy a tour of this lovely city. Explore the elegant Golden Age canals lined with row upon row of colorful historic houses, wander the lively 13th century Dam Square, admire the gorgeous Royal Palace, and take in the vibrant colors and heavenly fragrance of fresh flowers at the floating Flower Market. Make a stop at the impressive Westerkerk church and then enjoy a romantic evening cruise through the picturesque canals.

DAY 2: AALSMEER FLOWER AUCTION

Depart in the early morning for Aalsmeer, in the heart of the Dutch flower-growing region, to join the excitement of the world's largest flower auction. Watch the action from the gallery above as a sea of flowers from all over the world – over 20 million every day – are traded in a frenzied, lightning-fast auction. Have breakfast at a local shop in this quaint town, then return to Amsterdam.

In Amsterdam, visit the city's most famous museum, the Rijksmuseum, home to hundreds of masterpieces of the Dutch Golden Age, including Rembrandt's iconic "The Night Watch." Spend the rest of the day at leisure exploring Amsterdam's many treasures: visit the Anne Frank House, stroll the city's open-air street markets, wander the bohemian Jordaan neighborhood, or enjoy a bite to eat and a drink at a cozy traditional Dutch local pub, known as a *bruin café*.

DAY 3: ALKMAAR, VOLENDAM AND MARKEN

Depart this morning for Alkmaar, Holland's 'City of Cheese.' Visit the Kaasmarkt, or cheese market, where cheese has been traded since the 1300s. Enjoy the lively atmosphere in this picturesque Medieval town as traders inspect and sample the cheese, conducting bargaining in the traditional way by clapping hands and shouting prices.

Afterwards, proceed to the Hortus Bulborum in nearby Limmen. Wander through the dazzlingly colorful garden which houses and conserves thousands of historical spring-flowering bulbs, including a tulip dating from 1595 and narcissus from 1602. Continue to the charming Dutch villages of Volendam and Marken. Visit a traditional clog maker in Marken and enjoy a short ferry trip to Volendam to stroll the postcard-perfect streets of colorful fishermen's houses and handsome old harbor full of classic ships. Visit a cheese factory to learn more about traditional Dutch cheesemaking and taste a variety of mouthwatering samples before returning to Amsterdam.



DAY 4: AMSTERDAM AND UTRECHT

Explore Amsterdam's cultural gems today with a visit to the Van Gogh Museum. Step into Van Gogh's world with hundreds of paintings, drawings, sketchbooks, and handwritten letters that chronicle his brilliant but tragic life. Then see more of the Dutch countryside with a visit to National Park de Hoge Veuwe, one of the oldest and largest national parks in the Netherlands. Stroll or bike through this beautiful natural landscape or visit the Kröller-Müller Museum inside the park to view the world's largest private Van Gogh collection and wander the splendid sculpture gardens. Continue to the vibrant, cheerful city of Utrecht for overnight.

DAY 5: PALEIS HET LOO, KINDERDIJK AND THE HAGUE

This morning, visit Paleis Het Loo, situated in the forest near Apeldoorn in the heart of the Netherlands. Step back in time as you explore the Dutch Baroque architecture and stunning gardens of this magnificent palace which was built in the late 1600s for famed royals William and Mary. Continue to Kinderdijk, one of the most photographed spots in Holland. Enjoy a relaxing bike ride through this scenic area dotted with traditional windmills and crisscrossed with an ingenious system of waterways, dikes, and sluices that allowed the Dutch to reclaim this land from the sea. Continue to overnight in The Hague.

DAY 6: DELFT, SCHEVENINGEN AND THE HAGUE

A full day of sightseeing starts in Delft, a vibrant university town immortalized in the paintings of artist Johannes Vermeer as well as the city's signature Delft blue earthenware. Visit the Royal Delft pottery factory to learn about the history and production of these iconic pieces and see a Master painter at work as they paint the elegant designs entirely by hand according to centuries-old tradition. Before returning to The Hague, make a stop in Scheveningen, the popular seaside resort town. Feel the gentle sea breezes during a stroll along the boardwalk and take in the spirited atmosphere of the lively Pier. Back in The Hague, enjoy a walking tour of this cosmopolitan "City of Peace and Justice," then spend the rest of the day at leisure. You may want to visit one of the city's world-class museums or galleries, such as the Mauritshuis which hold famous works by Dutch Masters including Vermeer's Girl with a Pearl Earring. This evening, gather for a farewell dinner with Dutch bier at a local restaurant.

DAY 7: DEPARTURE

Say "vaarwel" to the Netherlands as you are transferred to the airport for your return flight.

