

**DriveAway  
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# The Netherlands

## Self-Drive Guide



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**DriveAway  
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# Take a Self-Drive Holiday in Netherlands

With over 25 years experience and award-winning service, let DriveAway Holidays plan your next self-drive adventure. We offer an extensive range of vehicles to suit everyone's need and budget at over 8000 locations in 130 countries worldwide. Enjoy the freedom of having your own rental car and discover the world at your own pace.

The Netherlands is a beautiful country with plenty of options for every traveller. Famous for windmills, clogs, cheese, canals, heritage historic sites, unspoilt waterways, gorgeous countryside to quaint villages and cosmopolitan cities and the perfect way to see all of it is by road.

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# Renting a Car in Netherlands

When selecting a rental vehicle, take into consideration where you will be travelling, how many people will be travelling in the vehicle, luggage size and the kind of driving you intend to do. DriveAway Holidays offers a vast range of vehicles from small economy sizes to larger full-sized cars, 4WDs, convertibles and luxury vehicles. The ACRISS system will help you find a car that suits your needs. This is internationally recognised code which will ensure you get the same standard of vehicle wherever you rent.

## Automatic and Manual Transmissions

Both automatic and manual vehicles are available in Netherlands. Automatic vehicles are generally more expensive than manual cars and may be scarcer at smaller depots.

## Do I need a Credit card?

Yes. A credit card will be needed when collecting, which will be used for a security bond. The deposit is generally the insurance excess of the rental car which depends on the category of vehicle you have booked and the rate type.

## Collecting at an Airport in Netherlands

At most airports in Netherlands you will find your rental company has a desk in the arrivals hall, with the rental cars being located within walking distance. However, at smaller airports you may be required to collect your vehicle from a downtown depot. A courtesy transfer will be provided from the airport to the depot in this instance. DriveAway Holidays offer all-inclusive prices which generally include any location / airport fees and charges that may otherwise apply. Remember to check at time of booking to ensure your rental will include all airport fees.

## Can I collect and return my car hire at different Netherlands cities?

Yes, this is certainly possible. In some cases there may be a one-way fee charged by our suppliers when you collect your rental. DriveAway Holidays will advise you of any additional fees before you travel.

## Motorhome Rental

Enjoy the convenience of accommodation and transport in one. DriveAway Holidays offers 2 - 6 berth vehicles, with collection point at Amsterdam. Explore some of the most scenic camping grounds Netherlands has to offer.



Amsterdam Forest

# Rental Vehicle Insurance


The law in The Netherlands requires all vehicles to have compulsory third party (CTP) injury insurance, although your car rental supplier should already have comprehensive insurance covering their cars. In the case of an accident it must be reported to the insurance provider immediately and an excess will be due.

Car hire companies in Netherlands will normally include:

- **Third Party Insurance:** Compulsory insurance and will be included in your car hire price. This covers you for other people's injury and damage to their vehicle.
- **Collision Damage Waiver (CDW):** This limits your financial liability for damage to the rented vehicle and is normally included in prepaid car hire prices. Rentals are normally subject to liability excess, which can be reduced at the time you collect your rental car or by taking out **DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance**.
- **Theft and Loss Cover:** This limits your financial liability for the loss or theft of the rented vehicle and is generally included in the prepaid car rental price.
- **Fire and Liability:** Limits your financial liability for bodily injury or death, and is normally included in the prepaid car hire price.
- **Personal Accident Insurance:** This covers the driver for personal injuries and is generally not included in your car rental rate. It is considered an optional extra that you can take out upon collection of the car.

## DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance

When renting a vehicle, the rental rates include basic insurance, however, in the event that the vehicle is stolen or accidentally damaged, there is usually an Insurance excess amount which the driver is liable to pay to the rental company. To avoid any unexpected costs opt for DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance which will offer a reimbursement for the supplier's damage and theft excess to a maximum for AU\$5,000. Simply add this onto your car rental booking prior to departure and you could save thousands of dollars in the long run! To find out more, simply call DriveAway Holidays on 1300 723 972 or visit the DriveAway website.

Class	Fuel Capacity	Type	Transmission	Fuel/Air Cond.
M = Mini	0.8 - 1.0	B = 2 Door	M = Manual	R = Yes
E = Economy	1.0 - 1.4	D = 4 Door	A = Automatic	N = No
C = Compact	1.2 - 1.6	C = 2/4 door	N = Manual 4WD	D = Diesel Air
F = Full size	2.0 - 3.2	L = Limousine	C = Manual AWD	Q = Diesel No Air
P = Premium	2.0 - 4.2	S = Sports Car	B = Auto 4WD	H = Hybrid Air
L = Luxury	2.0 - 4.2	T = Convertible	D = Auto AWD	I = Hybrid No Air
X = Special	1.2 - 3.0	J = All Terrain	<b>Examples:</b> <b>ECMN:</b> E = Economy C = 2 or 4 door M = Manual N = No Aircon <b>FDAR:</b> F = Full Size D = 4 Door A = Automatic R = Aircon	E = Electric Air
	R= Recreational	C = Electric No Air		
	F = 4 Wheel Drive			
	X = Special			
	K = Commercial Van/Truck			
	P = Ute			
	X = Special			
	E = Executive			

The DriveAway Hire Car Excess Insurance is managed by Accident & Health International Underwriting Pty Limited, ABN 26 053 335 952, AFSL 238261 and underwritten by CGU Insurance Limited, ABN 27 004 478 371, AFSL 238291.

# Take a Self-Drive Holiday in Netherlands

- Cars are driven on the right and overtake on the left. Cars coming in from the right have the right-of-way.
- Bicycles, trams, and mopeds have priority on all roadways in The Netherlands. Trams have the right-of-way and their passage should not be blocked.
- Trams should be passed on the right unless it is safer to pass on the left, and trams mustn't be passed when passengers are boarding or alighting.
- Under Dutch law, everyone over the age of 14 is required to carry identification such as a passport, international driver's permit or ID card at all times. You may be fined immediately if you cannot produce identification when requested.
- Road Signs:
  - E symbols denote the main routes on international highways
  - A symbols denote national highways
  - N symbols denote main roads
  - Blue road signs indicate that something is allowed
  - Red circles on road signs mean that something is forbidden
  - Red triangles notify of particular road conditions
  - Yellow or orange diamond signs show that you have the right of way
  - Sharks teeth symbols indicate that you have to give way to the vehicles on the road that you are entering

## Driving Laws in Netherlands

- Drive with your headlights on, especially when visibility is poor during the day. Front and rear fog lights can be used in rain, fog or snow when the visibility is less than 50 metres.
- Unless signposted otherwise, drivers entering intersections from the right hand side have right of way, buses and trams always have right of way.
- At roundabouts, traffic from the left has right of way.
- In general, cyclists also have right of way.
- It is illegal to use a mobile phone whilst driving, instead use a vehicle phone attachment or a hands free kit when you want to use your mobile while driving.
- Wearing a seat belt is compulsory, in both the front and back seats, and children aged under 12 must sit in the rear seat. Children shorter than 1.35m in height must also sit in an approved car seat.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol is illegal in The Netherlands, the limits are 0.05% or 0.02% for drivers who have held a license for less than five years.

# Driving in Netherlands

## Parking

Parking within major cities in The Netherlands is rarely free and parking is limited in main cities, especially in Amsterdam, with policies enforced to deter motorists from bringing their cars into the cities. Metered parking areas exist and are known as a "P-Zone". Parking is not permitted along curbs with black & white, or yellow markings. Some parking areas are known as "Blue Zones" where a parking disc is needed. You can purchase one of these at most tobacconists, police stations, and motor club

## Licence Requirements

A full driving licence is required to drive in The Netherlands. All drivers must have held a full valid driving licence for a minimum of two years. Australian residents are not required by law to have an international drivers licence, although it is recommended since an international licence holds more credibility with the local

## Min & Max Age Requirements

Min Driving Age: Minimum driving age varies between 21-23 depending on the supplier and vehicle type. Drivers aged 21-23 years may be charged a young drivers surcharge. Majority of locations in Netherlands do not have a maximum driving age, however there may be restrictions for drivers aged 70-75 in some regions. In some cases, aged drivers may be required to hold a letter from their GP stating they are healthy and fit to drive. Check with DriveAway Holidays for further details.

## Cross Border Fees and One Way Rentals

**Can I collect my rental car in Netherlands and drop it off in another European city?**

International one ways are definitely possible however, as with any international one way, this will incur a one way fee. Prices vary depending on the supplier, the length of the rental and the drop off destination.

**Can I collect my car in Netherlands, visit another European city, then return it to Netherlands?**

Travel is certainly possible to surrounding mainland European countries, as well as the United Kingdom. There will be restrictions on travel to Northern European countries in winter so advise DriveAway when you make your car hire booking if you are considering travel to these countries. Most suppliers will not permit travel to Eastern European countries.



### Should I take out additional insurance on my car rental?

Rental rates will include basic insurance: Collision Damage Waiver (CDW), Third Party Liability and Theft Protection. In the event that your rental vehicle is accidentally damaged, regardless of who is at fault, or stolen, the Insurance excess is the maximum amount you are liable for. See page 4 for more details.

### Should I hire a GPS for driving in Netherlands?

GPS hire is available from DriveAway Holidays. Our rates include the GPS unit, travel guides and entertainer. The GPS is delivered direct to your home or travel agent before you depart. GPS units can also be requested direct with some suppliers, however this will be at their own rates. If time is short, or you would simply prefer to collect your GPS unit together with your rental, then this may be an option for you.

### What do I do if I want to extend my car rental whilst I'm in Netherlands?

Once the car rental has commenced you will have to call the depot where you initially collected the vehicle, and if the car is available to be extended, you will be offered additional days at the local rate.

## Exploring Netherlands

### Western Region

Utrecht – Utrecht, Amersfoort, Zeist

North Holland – Amsterdam, Haarlem, Den Helder

South Holland – Rotterdam, The Hague

### Southern Region

Limburg – Geleen, Maastricht, Heerlen

North Brabant - Breda, Eindhoven, Helmond

Zeeland – Teneuzen, Middelburg, Vlissingen

### Eastern Region

Flevoland – Dronten, Almere, Overijssel

Gelderland – Arnhem, Nijmegen, Apeldoorn

### Northern Region

Friesland - Leeuwarden, Sneek, Drachten

Drenthe – Assen, Emmen, Hoogeveen

Groningen – Groningen, Delfzijl



# Western Netherlands

By far the most visited part of Netherlands, the west contains the provinces of Utrecht, North Holland and South Holland, and includes the cities of Amersfoort, Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam. Filled with places to visit and things to see and do, the Western Netherlands greets visitors throughout the year, coming to see all manner of attractions from classic, historic buildings dating as far back as the 1300s, to very liberal areas such as the famous red light district.

## Regions/Cities:

**Utrecht** – Utrecht, Amersfoort, Zeist

**North Holland** – Amsterdam, Haarlem, Den Helder

**South Holland** – Rotterdam, The Hague

## Events

### January

**Realisme Art Fair** – Artworks from 30 galleries in The Netherlands and Belgium are displayed throughout Amsterdam.

### March

**5 days off** – A 5 day electronic music, technology and art festival held across Amsterdam.

### April

**Queensday** – The biggest celebrations of this holiday are held in Amsterdam with over 700,000 travellers heading into the city.

**Rotterdam Marathon** – The biggest marathon in The Netherlands.

### May

**Art Amsterdam** – A 5 day modern art fair.

### June

**Holland Festival** – The largest festival in The Netherlands, including music, theatre, dance, art and film.

### November

**Crossing Borders Festival** – Held in The Hague, this festival focuses on music, art and literature.

## Attractions

**Domtoren** – The tallest church tower in The Netherlands, with amazing views from 100m up.

**Amersfoort** – The remarkably well preserved medieval city centre is highly recommended.

**Teylers Museum** – The oldest public museum in The Netherlands with great displays including natural history, science and art.

**Muiderslot** – An impressive medieval castle near Amsterdam.

**Zaanse Schans** – A historic district near the town of Zaandam, featuring traditional houses and Windmills.

**Kinderdijk** – A village near Rotterdam with a large number of 18<sup>th</sup> century windmills and great scenery.

**Rijksmuseum** – The largest museum in the Netherlands, located in Amsterdam, with collections including arts and history.

Amsterdam



# Self-Drive Tours in Western Netherlands

## Rotterdam to De Biesbosch National Park

Drive southeast from Rotterdam, which will lead you to the A16 Highway. Roughly 25 minutes from Rotterdam take the turnoff to Dordrecht, a historic city through which you will drive to reach De Biesbosch. Being one of the oldest cities in The



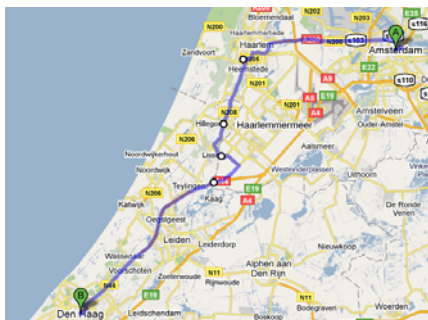
Netherlands, Dordrecht itself is also definitely worth a visit, and a must for anyone travelling here is De Grote Kerk, literally meaning “The Big Church”, one of the largest churches in The Netherlands. Continue southeast from Dordrecht, along the Provincialeweg Road, which will lead to a dead end when it reaches water. From here you can catch the ferry across to De Biesbosch, and see one of The Netherlands’ most valued natural areas. This is one of the largest national parks in the country, and also one of the last few tidal freshwater areas in Europe.



## Amsterdam to The Hague

For this daytrip, you can either head directly southwest from Amsterdam, along the A4 highway which passes Schipol Airport, or depending on how much time you have, begin by heading west and going via Haarlem. Continuing southwest, you’ll pass through some charming Dutch towns, as well as areas including Kagerplassen, a picturesque network of lakes surrounded by green fields. Further along you can visit the town of Leiden, a town with a wonderful historic centre, which is much more laid back than that of Amsterdam. Leiden is well known for its many museums, including the museums of History, Art, and Antiquities, plenty to see and do if you’d like to spend some time here.

From Leiden drive south until you reach the A4 highway, which will take you to the A12, which leads to The Hague. An impressive city featuring lots of great historic architecture, as well as museums, art galleries, and the Dutch Parliament, The Hague is a great place to explore. If you are here during summer, be sure to check out Scheveningen, the best known beach in The Netherlands.



# Southern Netherlands

The Southern region of The Netherlands is predominantly a land of agriculture and industry, and is often reflected in the fine food and produce found in the towns and villages that dot the landscape. Bordered on the south by Belgium and Germany to the west, this region has cultural and historical sites that are unique to the area, with great carnivals and festivals that rival larger European cities.

## Regions/Cities:

Limburg – Geleen, Maastricht, Heerlen

North Brabant – Breda, Eindhoven, Helmond

Zeeland – Teneuzen, Middelburg, Vlissingen

## Events

### February

**Carnaval, Maastricht** – Decorated floats and brilliant street parades running through till Easter.

### March

**TEFAF, Maastricht** – Annual exhibition of art and antiques.

**The Jazz Maastricht Masters Festival** – Great jazz festival.

### April

**Koninginnedag, Eindhoven** – Queen's Day National Celebrations.

### June

**Fiesta del Sol, Eindhoven** – Summer festival with music and theatre events.

### August

**Preuenemint Tasting Event, Maastricht** – Food and wine festival.

**Jazz in Lighttown Festival** – Annual music festival.

### September

**The Lichtjesroute Festival, Eindhoven** – Magnificent light festival.

## Attractions

**Roermond, Limburg** – Home to the Cathedral of St Christoffel with beautiful architecture and outstanding stained glass windows, and the Musterkerk church that was built in 1224.

**Vaals, Limburg** – This natural area is home to the Drielandenpunt Maze, which is laid out where Germany, Belgium and The Netherlands meet.

**Maastricht, Limburg** – Enjoy the elegant atmosphere, fine dining, cosy cafes straddling the banks of the Maas River.

**'De Meinweg' National Park** – Great wetlands that are the perfect spot for bird watching.

**Breda, North Brabant** – Rich in history as well as cosmopolitan options, Breda is a must see medieval town.

**Islands and peninsulas of Zeeland** – See the dams and bridges that connect the islands of the Delta Works.

**Zierikzee, Zeeland** – See the beaches and fantastic yacht harbour and lovely old town centre.

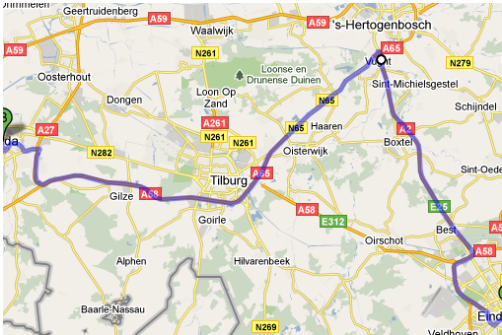
**Veere, Zeeland** – Wander the streets of this ancient town that is today the haunt of artists.

Oosterschelde (The Eastern Schelde)

# Self-Drive Tours in Southern Netherlands

## Eindhoven to Breda via Den Bosch

This is a relatively short drive that can take just over an hour, however it is a tour that's worth taking your time to soak up the sights. Begin in Eindhoven, and head north along the A2 to the beautiful town of Den Bosch. Enjoy the sites of one of the oldest cities in The Netherlands, where you can see some of the remaining fortifications, as well as the Saint Jans Cathedral, the magnificent Town Hall and the Moorian.



From the town of Den Bosch, head south west on the N65 to the University town of Tilburg, where you'll be able to see the Statue of Willem 11 and the Paleis Raadhuis (the City Hall). You can indulge in the local lifestyle of great pubs and cafes. Head west along the E312 to the town of Breda. This lovely medieval town has plenty to see and do, including a spectacular main square and 18<sup>th</sup> century architecture, the beautiful Church of Our Lady, or take in some retail therapy in the city centre.

## The Island Loop

Explore the beauty and diversity of the Zeeland Islands and the west of North-Brabant, with medieval towns, great waterways, sun, sea and beach resorts. You can begin this route from any point, and this guide begins in the fortified town of Bergen op Zoom. See the Gevangenpoort which are the remains of the fortifications, Margrave's Palace and the beautiful town square. Head south from Bergen op Zoom on the A58, which will turn south at Woensdrecht and to the town of Middelburg. This is one of the oldest towns in The Netherlands, with historic sites including Abbey of Our Lady and the impressive Middelburg Town Hall.



Drive back east on the A58, and head north on the N258 towards the town of Goes, where you will come across the Oosterschelde. This estuary is a designated national park that, at 370 km<sup>2</sup>, is the largest National Park in The Netherlands. You can cross the estuary on the 4km long Zeeland bridge, which is a barrier, dam and road that connects the islands of Schoewen-Duiveland and Noord Beveland. Follow the N256 northeast until you turnoff to Krammer and the Phillip Dam. Continue further south to the town of Tholen, returning to Bergen op Zoom.



# Eastern Netherlands

The Eastern Netherlands is an often underrated travel destination, with most travellers sticking to the better known holiday hot spots in the country's west. Made up of the provinces of Flevoland, Overijssel and Gelderland, the east offers many great attractions, lots of picturesque scenery, and plenty of charming towns and cities without the big crowds found elsewhere.

## Regions/Cities:

**Flevoland** – Dronten, Almere

**Overijssel** – Enschede

**Gelderland** – Arnhem, Nijmegen, Apeldoorn

## Events

### April

**Nijmeegse Kermis** – A spring carnival with lots of shows, rides and games.

### May

**Dag van het Levenslied** – A free cultural festival with music, theatre and food.

**National Windmill Day** - Free access to over 900 historic windmills.

### June

**Day of the Castles** – Over 70 Castles will open their doors for visitors.

### July

**Nijmeegse Vierdaagse** – A four day walking event.

**Zomerfeesten** – Literally meaning “Summer festival”, this is a week of music, celebrations and fireworks.

## Attractions

**The village of Giethoorn** – Known as “Venice of the Netherlands”, a remarkable nickname considering the number of canals and rivers in The Netherlands. Giethoorn is a village which features a historic centre of canals and lakes dug up centuries ago. Explore the scenic area by boat or you can also cycle along the shores.

**Openluchtmuseum** – An outdoor museum near the city of Arnhem. Containing over 80 historic houses and buildings, the museum is a great example of traditional Dutch life over the centuries.

**Oostvaardersplassen** – A nature reserve created on the shores of Markermeer. Mainly made up of wetlands, the reserve is home to lots of Waterbirds, Wild Horses, Bison, Deer, Elk and other European animals.

**Walibi World** – A theme park located near Dronten in Flevoland. With over 40 rides and differently themed areas, there's something here for the whole family.

**Schokland** – A unique historical site which was once an island struggling with rising sea levels until land reclamation in the 1940s which lead to it being surrounded by dry land.

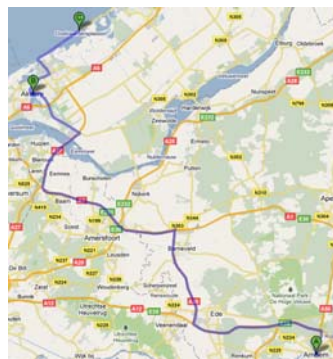


Veluwe National Park, Gelderland

# Self-Drive Tours around Eastern Netherlands

## Arnhem to Almere and Oostvaardersplassen

Head north of Arnhem city centre until you reach the A12 motorway, which you can then follow to the west. This highway leads to the city of Utrecht, and along the way you'll have the opportunity to stop and explore the



picturesque Utrecht Heuvelrug National Park as well.

From the city of Utrecht itself, drive north along the A27 which will take you across to the island and province of Flevoland. You can visit the exciting city of Almere, the fastest growing city in the

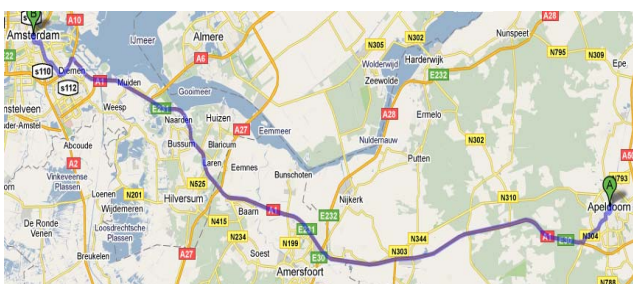
Netherlands which features loads of great architecture and a great contemporary art museum. Drive a short distance northeast of Almere and you will find Oostvaardersplassen, a huge nature reserve which was created roughly 40 years ago and features loads of scenery and wildlife.



## Apeldoorn to Amsterdam

This drive will take you between two opposite styles of cities in The Netherlands. You can drive from the quiet Apeldoorn, with its small city centre and surrounding forests, to mighty Amsterdam, which is roughly 10 times the size, has a large city centre and features the many famous canals.

In the outskirts of Apeldoorn you will find the Palace T'Loo with its magnificent 17th century gardens. Drive southwest from Apeldoorn and just outside the city take the A1 highway west. This highway will lead you all the way to Amsterdam, and you'll have a chance to stop by the charming village of Hoogland and historic towns of Bussum and Naarden along the way. This area is known for it's wealth, so you will see lots of massive mansions, expensive cars and some great restaurants as well. As you travel along the A1, the scenery around you will change and evolve as you near your destination. Colourful



forests make up much of the first section of the drive, as well as areas of green fields and farms, and towards the end you will notice more and more lakes and canals. This is a great daytrip to see and explore the superb scenery found throughout The Netherlands.

# Northern Netherlands

The northern Netherlands is a wonderful area, completely different from the rest of the country, with vast outdoor areas between cities and the lowest population density in the nation. Unlike the parts of the country which are highly popular and well known to travellers, the north offers a unique alternative with traditional landscapes and attractions without the bustling crowds.

## Regions/Cities:

**Friesland** - Leeuwarden, Sneek, Drachten

**Drenthe** - Assen, Emmen, Hoogeveen

**Groningen** - Groningen, Delfzijl

## Events

### January

**Noorderslag Pop Festival** - A one day music festival held in Groningen.

### June

**Oerol Festival** - 10 days of theatre, music and art, held on Terschelling Island.

**Dutch TT** - Held in Assen, this race sees MotoGP, motorbike riders from around the world competing to be the champions.

### August

**Skûtsjesilen** - A huge sailing competition in Friesland.

**Noorderzon** - An art, music and dance festival in Groningen held over 11 days.

## Attractions

**De Oldehove** - A medieval church tower in Leeuwarden, famous for leaning on an angle more than the Tower of Pisa.

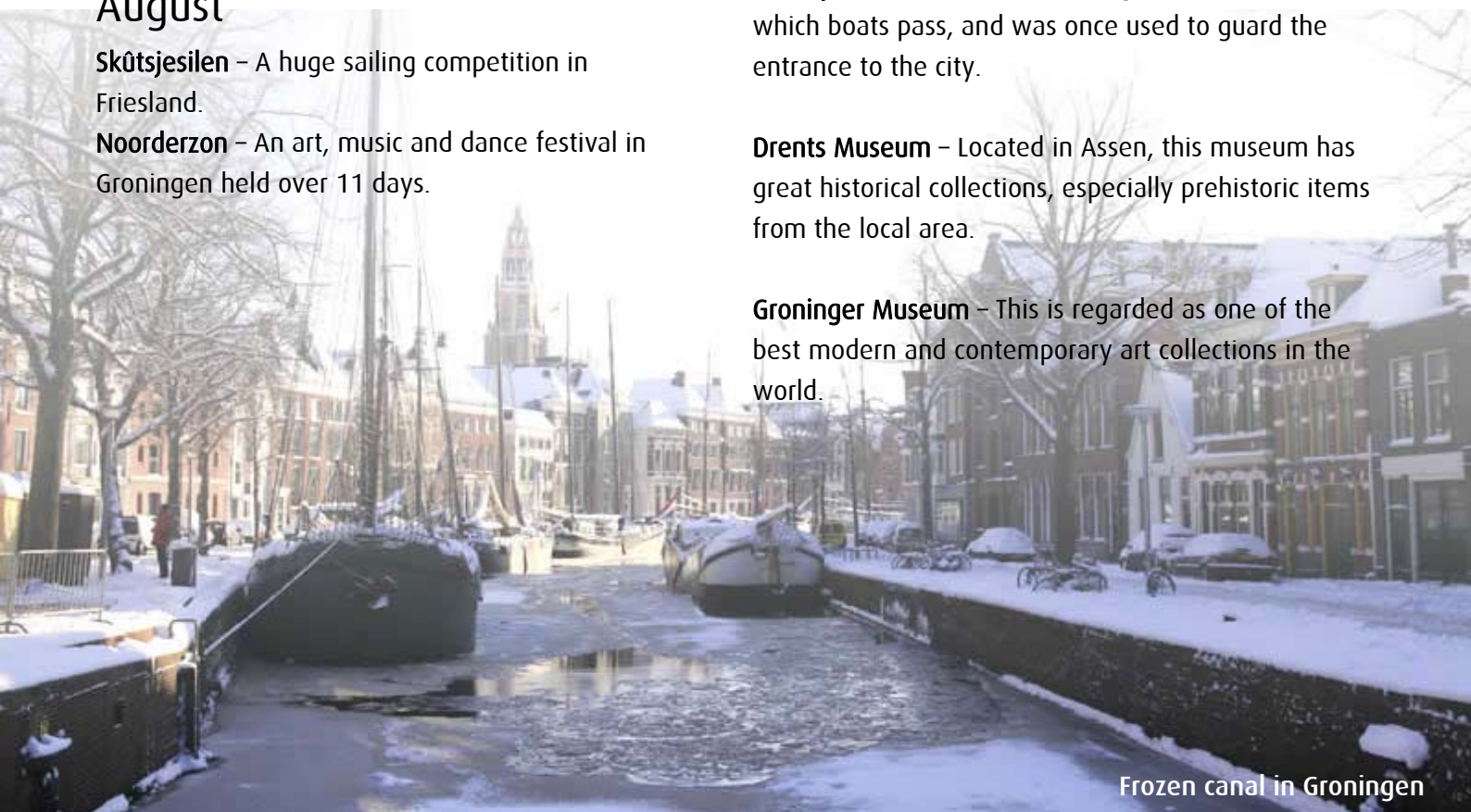
**Bourtrange** - This star shaped fortress near Emmen dates back to the 1500s and now contains a village.

**Dierenpark** - This zoo in Emmen is regarded as one of the best in Europe.

**Waterpoort** - A medieval building in Sneek under which boats pass, and was once used to guard the entrance to the city.

**Drents Museum** - Located in Assen, this museum has great historical collections, especially prehistoric items from the local area.

**Groninger Museum** - This is regarded as one of the best modern and contemporary art collections in the world.



Frozen canal in Groningen

# Self-Drive Tours in Northern Netherlands

## Leeuwarden to Amsterdam

From Leeuwarden, you can head west on either the A31 or N359 highways, which will both lead to the A7. Along this route you'll pass picturesque farming areas featuring lots of creeks and rivers.



Continue west, and as you pass the village of Zurich you will drive onto a truly impressive sight indeed, the Afsluitdijk, a huge causeway and dam built in the 1920s. Covering a distance of 32km, you'll have nothing but water as far as you can see on either side of you.

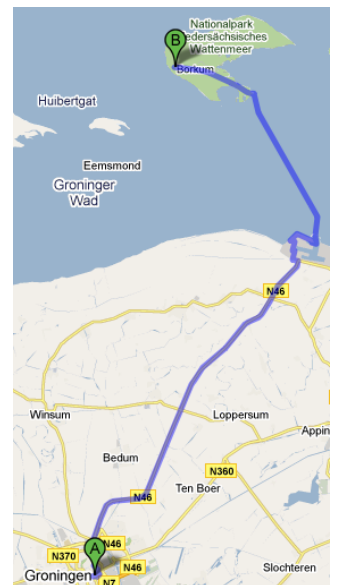


Once across to the other side, head south continuing on the A7, which will lead you through more areas of lovely farmland. The main difference in scenery here will be the many straight canals as opposed to the creeks on the other side of the Afsluitdijk. As the number of canals increases, you will soon find yourself arriving in Amsterdam.

## Groningen to the West Frisian Islands

From Groningen, drive west along the A7 highway which you will find running just south of the city centre and alongside the City Park. The A7 will lead you through the scenic countryside of the north, and past lots of charming towns and cities such as Leek, Marium and Drachten.

At Drachten you'll have the option of heading northwest and passing through Leeuwarden, or continue west along the A7 and driving through the stunning lakes district around Sneek. When you reach Harlingen, it's time to leave the rental car behind and head out to the West Frisian Islands by ferry. You can choose from several islands, including Vlieland, Terschelling and Ameland, all of which are quiet scenic destinations, with few people and lots of green fields and sand dunes.



## Climate & Weather

Weather in The Netherlands is temperate and quite pleasant throughout the year. During the warmer months of summer (July, August) average temperatures are usually around 20-25°C and during the coldest months of winter (December, January) temperatures drop to around 0-10°C. Being famous for its colourful fields of flowers, many tourists choose to visit The Netherlands when particular flowers are in bloom. April is daffodil season, and the tulips usually bloom in May. April and May are also generally the driest months with least rainfall.



## Language & Useful Phrases

The main language of The Netherlands is Dutch, with many different dialects spoken in spite of the country's small size, with Fries spoken by the majority of people in the northern province of Friesland. English, German and French are also widely spoken.



Hello:	<i>Hallo</i>
My name is:	Mijn naam is...
How are you?:	Hoe gaat het?
Nice to meet you:	Leuk je te ontmoeten
Please:	Alstublieft
Yes:	Ja
No:	Geen
Goodbye:	Afscheid
Thankyou:	Thank You
I am lost. Where is the bathroom:	Ik ben verloren. waar is de badkamer?
the hotel:	<i>lhet hotel</i>
the restaurant:	Het restaurant
the airport	De luchthaven



## Stay Healthy

There are relatively few health risks for travel in The Netherlands. Tap water is safe to drink, and is considered as good as natural spring water. Vaccinations are not required for travel to The Netherlands. The Australian Government has a reciprocal health care agreement with the Government of The Netherlands that gives Australians access to free emergency medical services but does not provide for any ongoing treatment of existing health conditions. However this does not replace the need for your own travel insurance. Your comprehensive travel insurance will cover any medical costs including medical evacuation. Make sure that your insurance covers you for the whole time you'll be away and be clear on what is not included. In case of an emergency, go to your nearest hospital for treatment.

## Stay Safe

Travelling in The Netherlands is not dangerous, but a level of caution should always be taken when touring in any foreign country. The majority of crimes tend to occur in the larger cities, such as Amsterdam, where tourists can be targeted by crimes such as bag snatching and pick pocketing. The best advice is to keep your valuables close to your body and out of reach from potential thieves, avoid lonely streets out of hours and don't flash your wealth and make yourself an obvious target. Car break-ins, theft, smash and grab and vandalism on tourists vehicles can occur, but can be prevented by keeping valuables or bags out of sight, securely locking cars or using off-street supervised parking. As a precaution lock your doors when driving in the larger towns, especially after dark. In the unlikely event of theft or loss, be sure to inform all your credit card companies as soon as you discover your wallet has been lost or stolen. Most credit card companies have toll free numbers to call if your cards are lost or stolen, and they may be able to issue an emergency replacement card or wire you an immediate cash advance.

## Money Matters

### Currency

The Euro is the local currency of Netherlands.

1 EURO (€) = 100 cents.

Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and €1, and 50, 20, 10 & 5 cents.

### Currency Exchange

Currency can be exchanged in The Netherlands in a number of places, including banks, post offices, and Bureaux de Change offices also.

### Banking Hours:

Business hours differ between banks; however most will follow this general rule of thumb:

Monday: 1.00pm to 5pm

Tuesday – Friday: 9.00am – 5pm

Saturday – Sunday: 12pm - 5 pm

### Credit Cards

Most major credit cards are accepted in The Netherlands, such as Visa, American Express and Mastercard.

### ATMs

You will find ATMs in all major cities and larger towns. In some areas ATMs are not as common as in other European cities, so planning ahead can be useful.

### Tax

There are two levels of tax in The Netherlands, one for food and other essentials which are taxed at 6%, and another for non-essential and luxury items which are at 19%.

### Tipping

While not always expected, tipping is quite common in The Netherlands particularly in restaurants etc. Rounding up a bill to the nearest amount in full Euros is frequently done by diners etc, and a tip of 10% is common if the service is great.

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