



## **Netherlands – Northern Holland Tour by Bike and Barge (2025)**

**Individual Self-guided**

**8 days / 7 nights**



During this fascinating cycling cruise on board the ships De Willemstad or De Holland you will discover the best of what the beautiful Provinces of North-Holland and Friesland offer. Explore flat “polder” landscapes – a polder is a low-lying tract of land enclosed by embankments – the North Sea coast, towering sand dunes, long sandy beaches, historic windmills, the island of Texel and the many picturesque harbor towns along the coast of IJsselmeer Lake. It is without doubt a tour not to be missed!

Nowhere else in the world will you find an area as fascinating as the Dutch Provinces of North Holland and Friesland, two areas rich in tradition. Over the course of your week, you will be able to discover typical Dutch culture and cycle through a flat “polder land”, extensively reclaimed over the centuries from the North Sea and the former Southern Sea (now IJsselmeer). What you will soon realize is the truth behind the proverb “God created the earth but the Dutch made Holland”, such has been the extent of land reclamation in the region you will be cycling through. Since the 17th century in an effort to save disappearing land from encroaching water, protective dikes have been built, low lying land has been pumped dry and tidal dams have been created in creeks to prevent flooding, with the result that today’s green flat polder landscape is full of agricultural enterprise. Given the Dutch love for cycling, the

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region is crisscrossed with many quiet cycle tracks that stretch from one end of the region to the other. You will be amazed by the beauty of the North Sea beaches, the towering sand dunes – who said there were no hills in Holland! – the extremely bicycle friendly island of Texel, the beautiful flat landscapes, small dreamlike farm villages and romantic picturesque harbor villages. During the second part of the tour you will cross the large lake IJsselmeer to Stavoren in the Province of Friesland. Other highlights during your week tour include the open air museum “Zaanse Schans”, the historic city center of Alkmaar and the old harbor cities of Medemblik, Enkhuizen, Hoorn and Volendam, the islands of Texel and Marken and – of course – Amsterdam with its beautiful canals.

### **A varied landscape**

In this short tour, you'll travel by barge and bike through stunning North Holland landscapes. Pedaling flat bicycle paths across polders (reclaimed land), dikes, canals, and the dunes of the coast, past nature areas and farmland, you'll be able to see how the Dutch have shaped the landscape, preventing flooding while respecting nature and allowing space for agriculture. The changing landscape will charm you.

### **What makes Holland Holland**

When you think of Holland, you probably imagine windmills, dikes, cheese, and clogs. That history comes alive at Zaanse Schans, an open-air museum where you can explore a range of historical windmills, traditional Dutch houses and shops, and you can observe how cheese and clogs are made. And speaking of cheese, you'll also visit Alkmaar, home to a traditional cheese market.

Another highlight of this tour is Marken, once an island of fishermen and still picture-perfect with its small wooden houses and boat harbor. Amsterdam, the start and end point of the tour, offers endless opportunities for exploring museums and shops, or just admiring the graceful elegance of the canal houses in the UNESCO-listed canal zone.

### **On board the ship**

When you're not pedaling through the countryside or exploring Holland's historical towns, you'll enjoy the facilities on the ship. On-board chefs prepare a varied and delicious dinner menu fresh daily. Raise a toast at the bar with other guests, watch the scenery from a deck chair outside or from the salon inside. You'll get a good night's rest in one of our well-appointed cabins, all with en-suite bathrooms.

### **The ship – Your sailing hotel**

In between cycling excursions, you cruise along with the ship, which travels to a new destination every day. You dine, sleep and eat breakfast on board. You can make a packed lunch every day, and you can usually choose between a longer or shorter bike ride. It's also possible to spend a day on board if you like. There are rental bikes on board, but you can also bring your own if you mention it when booking.

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### **You cycle independently**

During this trip there is an expert and experienced tour leader on board. He or she will discuss the next day's cycling routes on a daily basis and provide you with tips and information about the route. You will cycle the tours independently and at your own pace using a detailed cycling map, GPS directions via the free Ride With GPS app and printed route descriptions (available on board). The tour leader will also cycle the routes, so they will be riding nearby and can be reached by phone in case of emergencies, problems or questions.

### **Itinerary Day to Day**

#### **Day 1: Amsterdam | Amsterdam – Zaandam**

Embarkation and check-in between 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. in Amsterdam. Take the opportunity to go shopping, to explore downtown Amsterdam, to make a canal cruise or to visit a museum. At 5 p.m. welcome drink and safety instructions, dinner and first briefing on board. During dinner short cruise to Zaandam.



#### **Day 2: Zaandam – Zaanse Schans - Alkmaar 44 km**

The first cycling trip of this tour takes you via small villages through the beautiful flat and green polder landscape. The first stop is at the Zaanse Schans open air museum (free entry) with its traditional Old Dutch wooden houses, windmills and the cheese- and clog factory. After this visit you will cycle through the "Land of Leeghwater", a green polder area between Amsterdam, Alkmaar and Hoorn. Stroll through the former whaler's village De Rijp and pass by the windmills of Schermerhorn.

Your ship will be waiting for you near the historical city center of Alkmaar.

#### **Day 3: Dune tour: round trip from/to Alkmaar / Alkmaar – Den Helder 33 or 40 km**

Today you can discover the beautiful north Holland Dune reserve. This is a 5,300 hectare large forest and dune area with its unique landscapes. In these dunes the drinking water for almost the whole province of north Holland is gained. After a visit to the beach and artists village of Bergen you will return to Alkmaar where you can visit the wonderful city center. In the afternoon De Holland will sail over the north Holland Canal to the navy harbour of Den Helder.

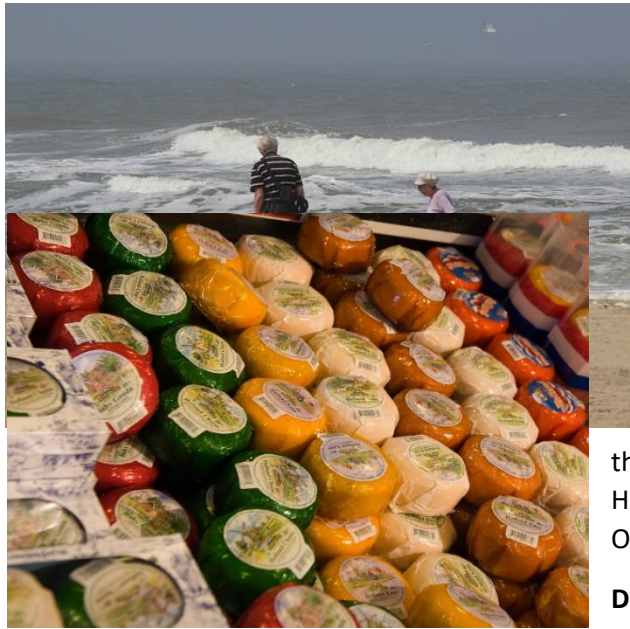
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**Day 4: Ferry to North Sea island of Texel: cycling round trips from 't Horntje | Den Helder – Den Oever (34 km to 65 km )**

After breakfast you'll take a 20-minute ferry ride (ticket included) from Den Helder to the isle of Texel, where you can make beautiful cycling tours on the largest of the Dutch North Sea Isles. Ride through meadows, nature parks and dunes to small villages and have the opportunity for a stop and some bathing at the sandy North Sea beach, or visit the "Ecomare" seal sanctuary. In the late afternoon you will return by ferry to Den Helder. During dinner your ship will sail to Den Oever.

**Day 5: Den Oever – Stavoren / Southwest Friesland: round trip from/to Stavoren 43 - 55 km**

The vessel will cross the large inland lake IJsselmeer to sail to Stavoren in the province of Friesland. You can opt for a shorter or longer cycling tour: discover the nature area of Gaasterland or explore a part of the wide lake district, that Friesland is well-known for. You can also combine both options. Night in the small harbor of Stavoren, one of the famous traditional eleven cities of Friesland.

**Day 6: Stavoren – Medemblik / Medemblik – Hoorn - Enkhuizen 39 or 51 km**

The ship will cross the IJsselmeer again during breakfast. Take the short cycling trip from Medemblik along the IJsselmeer coast directly to Enkhuizen, where you can spend the afternoon. Enkhuizen is an old city with many centuries of maritime tradition. The "herring city" boasts a beautiful old harbor, a historical old town center and the very interesting Zuiderzeemuseum. If you prefer a longer cycling tour, ride from Medemblik to the former Dutch East India Company town of Hoorn, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century one of the world's leading harbours. Enjoy your lunch break and take a short stroll in the city center. Continue by bicycle to Enkhuizen via some picturesque rural villages. In the evening you can join a short city walk.

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**Day 7: Enkhuizen – Volendam / Volendam – Waterland - Amsterdam 28 - 50 km**

During breakfast the ship will sail to Volendam. Your final day of cycling will lead you through the beautiful area of Waterland, with its hundreds of small lakes and tiny canals. Near Volendam you will have the opportunity to visit a cheese farm. Recommended (extra cycling distance) is a tour to the former island of Marken, to continue through the water shaped region of Waterland back to the Dutch capital city of Amsterdam. The afternoon and evening are yours to enjoy everything Amsterdam has to offer. If you didn't go for a canal cruise on the first day, you can do so today.

**Day 8: Amsterdam**

End of your tour: Disembarkation  
after breakfast until 9:30 a.m.



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### Route



### Technical Characteristics:

**Tour Profile:** Cycling during this tour can be rated easy to moderate, with daily cycling distances up to 50 km. Most of the cycle routes are classified as 'easy', because most of the way is over flat paths, so nearly all our trips are suitable for all cyclists, from very experienced to beginners and recreational cyclists with a basic level of fitness.

**Distance:** 200 - 304 km

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## Tour dates 2025

### De Willemstad (DWI), departures on Saturday

Season A: March 29; April 5; Oct. 4

Season B: April 12; Sept. 27

Season C: April 19; Sept. 20

Season D: April 26; July 5, 12, 19 and 26; August 2,9 and 16; Sept 13

Season E: May 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31; June 7, 14, 21 and 28; August 23 and 30; Sept 6

### Arkona (ARK): departures on Sunday

Season A: March 30

Season B: April 13

Season D: April 27

Season E: May 11 and 25; June 8 and 22

**Price per Person Double Occupancy in euros - 2025** *all prices subject to confirmation on booking*

Cabin Type	A	B	C	D	E
Twin Cabin Lower Deck	€ 799	€ 899	€ 1049	€ 1199	€1299
Twin Cabin Lower Deck for Single Use	€ 1199	€ 1349	€ 1574	€ 1799	€1949
Twin Cabin Upper Deck -DWI	€ 1049	€ 1149	€ 1299	€ 1449	€1549
Cabin Upper Deck Single - DWI	€ 1364	€ 1494	€ 1649	€ 1884	€2014
Twin Cabin Upper Deck Single use - DWI	€ 1574	€ 1724	€ 1949	€ 2174	€2324
Suite Upper Deck- DWI	€ 1299	€ 1399	€ 1599	€ 1749	€1849
Twin cabin Upper Deck-ARK	€ 1199	€ 1299	NA	€ 1599	€1699
Single cabin Upper Deck-ARK	€ 1559	€ 1689	NA	€ 2079	€2209

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#### **Other optional Charges**

- Bike Rental € 91 per week
- E-Bike Rental € 245 per week
- Helmet € 10 per week
- Liability insurance for Bike € 14 per week
- Liability insurance for E-Bike € 28 per week
- Parking your own Bike € 14 per week
- Parking & Charging your own E-Bike € 28 per week
- Canal Cruise Amsterdam € 18

#### **Included:**

- 8 days/7 nights from/to Amsterdam, cabin in the booked category
- Full board 7x breakfast, 6x packed lunches, 7x three course dinner, coffee and tea on board until 4 p.m.
- Use of bed linen and towels and daily cleaning of the cabin
- Welcome drink
- Daily briefings
- Semi-guided cycling tours (guests cycle independently, tour lead also cycles with tour)
- Some short walking tours
- Maps and notes for cycling tours, 1 set per cabin
- GPS tracks
- live music night on board
- Use of free Wi-Fi in the lounge of the ship data use not included

#### **Not Included:**

- Coffee and tea on board after 4 p.m.
- Rental of bicycle or e-bike
- Rental bike helmet (optional)
- Other transfers
- Parking fees
- Entrance fees & excursions
- Fees for ferries/waterbus
- Drinks on board
- Personal insurances
- Gratuities (at your discretion)
- Dietary requirements on request/surcharges may be calculated

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### **De Willemstad**

The comfortable ship was completely renovated and converted in 2017/2018. In the salon / bar with large panoramic windows on the upper deck, you can review the day's experiences in a pleasant way while enjoying a beer or a glass of wine. All cabins are 'outside cabins' that are equipped with two single beds, TV, mini safe and individually controlled air conditioning. Each cabin has a bathroom with shower, toilet and hairdryer. Look forward to meeting nice people, riding beautiful bike tours and spending pleasant hours on board.

### **Arkona**

During the winter of 2017-2018 the Arkona is being completely renovated. She has a modern and elegant atmosphere with on the upper deck a tastefully furnished lounge area with a bar, and a pleasant restaurant. The spacious sun deck is partly covered and the comfortable deck chairs invite to enjoy the passing scenery. Both the upper and the lower deck have nicely furnished cabins; all with 2 single low beds, en-suite facilities with shower and all necessary equipment and on the upper deck there are also 2 more single cabins with the same facilities.



### Touring bikes

Our bicycles have a lightweight aluminum frame and are furnished with highly-responsive handbrakes, at least seven speeds and a gel seat whose height can be adjusted. Attached to the frame is an easy-to-use lock and the wheels carry puncture-resistant tires.

### E-bikes

Our e-bikes also have highly-responsive handbrakes and a minimum of seven speeds. The motor runs on a 400Wh battery and offers three levels of power-assistance. The e-bikes include comfortable gel seats that can be adjusted for height, have a lock attached to the frame and special anti-puncture tires.

### Taking your own bicycle

It is possible to take your own bike or e-bike with you, as long as it doesn't have mirrors or other elements that stick out. There's only limited space available on board for guests' bikes. You can reserve a place for your bike for a small fee. Boat Bike tours is not responsible for damage to your bike or for theft.

***Assisting people in realizing their touring dreams worldwide is our passion.***

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**THIS IS A PARTNER TOUR FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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