

Cycling Safaris

Amsterdam ~ Gouda ~ Ghent ~ Bruges Group tour 2024

Guide cycles with group | 275 - 295 km | 8 days / 7 nights
Thursday to Thursday



Two countries, Holland and Belgium, united in one route. Combining the highlights of Holland's Golden Age and the heydays of the Flemish trade cities in the Middle Ages. And of course Holland's own worlds wonder: the Delta Works.

The Dutch 17th century Golden Age and the heyday of the Flemish trading cities of the Middle Ages are united in this route. Notice the big difference between the green polder landscape abounding in water, with its tranquil roads and villages and the old world of islands in Zeeland with its pastures, creeks, winding dikes and dams. On top of that the often so picturesque Flemish countryside between the Belgian cities of Ghent and Bruges. The great rivers are a prominent feature in this part of the Netherlands and Belgium. Of course you will get to know our own, Dutch Wonder of the World: the Delta Works, evidence of the eternal battle against the waters of the sea.

Highlights

- ▶ Gouda, city of cheese
- ▶ Windmills Kinderdijk
- ▶ Delta Works
- ▶ Ghent / Bruges

Itinerary

1. Thursday Arrival between 12.30pm - 1.30 pm - sailing to Oude Wetering. Cycling roundtrip, 10 km
2. Friday Oude Wetering - Gouda, 45 km
3. Saturday Gouda - Alblasterdam and ferry to Dordrecht, 40 km
4. Sunday Dordrecht, sailing to Willemstad, cycling to Zierikzee, 54km
5. Monday Zierikzee - Delta Works - Middelburg, 51 km
6. Tuesday Middelburg, ferry to Breskens, cycling to Sas van Gent, sailing to Ghent, 45 km
7. Wednesday Ghent - Bruges, 45 km
8. Thursday Bruges, disembarkation before 10.00 am near Central Station

All distances are approximate. The above planned itinerary is subject to change due to changing wind and weather conditions and other unforeseen circumstances having to do with mooring requirements, etc.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 Thursday: Amsterdam Arrival

Embarking between 12.30pm - 1.30pm the latest - sailing to Oude Wetering; loop cycle, 10km

When you arrive on board the ship, you can put your luggage away in your cabin and then enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. During this coffee break there is plenty of opportunity to get to know your guide, the crew and your fellow passengers. At 2 pm the barge will leave the dock. You will first cruise through Amsterdam before reaching the wetlands south of the city and the mooring place of today, the village of Oude Wetering. A relaxed way of starting your trip and get used to life on the barge.

During dinner aboard the ship, the program for the next day and the global planning of the week are discussed.

Day 2 Friday: Oude Wetering - Gouda, 45 km

From Oude Wetering you will continue your tour over country roads along river banks and channels through the Green Heart to the city known for its cheese: Gouda, famous not only of course for its cheese, but also its 'stroopwafels' (treacle-waffle) and pottery, its stained-glass windows, a fairy-like town hall and atmospheric canals. Gouda is a beautiful Old-Dutch city with a mostly intact city centre. As on most days, after dinner you can take a walk through the city.

Day 3 Saturday: Gouda - Dordrecht, 40 km

Today you will cycle over quiet country roads and narrow cycling paths to Dordrecht. You ride past scenic polders and through the deepest lying polder of the Netherlands, Krimpenwaard. After arriving on the dyke of the river "Lek", you cross a river by ferry to Kinderdijk, a unique and renowned monument with the largest number of historical windmills in Holland's. From the embankments of the river Lek, we have an amazing view of the 19 windmills, which are now listed as a UNESCO's World Heritage site. We visit the interior of a windmill and after a beautiful tour through the Alblasserwaardpolder you will arrive at Alblisserdam. A fast ferry will take us over to Dordrecht, one of the oldest cities of the country, situated at a busy crossing of waterways.

Day 4 Sunday: Dordrecht, sailing to Willemstad and cycling to Zierikzee, 54km

During breakfast we sail from Dordrecht to the Rhine-Meuse-Scheldt delta area where the greater Dutch rivers meet the sea. Years ago, an open connection existed with the sea due to the many tributaries in this area. After the disastrous flooding in 1953, the Deltaplan was developed and most tidal outlets were closed from the sea by dams. Most parts of Zeeland were, and still are, under sea level and in 1953 the embankments were too weak and too low, causing this area to be at risk for floodings once in every 80 years. Now, because of the flood barriers, that chance is reduced to less than once every 4000 years. Depending on the tide we can choose a shorter version by sailing to Bruinisse from where we can cycle to Zierikzee. Zierikzee is a beautiful town and the centre of the 'mussel culture'. The 'Zeeuwse mosselen' (blue mussels) are a renowned delicacy. Along the shores of the Oosterschelde you find the Watersnoodmuseum (Flooding museum) where you can discover what happened on that disastrous day in 1953.

Day 5 Monday: Zierikzee - Delta works - Middelburg, 51 km

This morning we cycle along the Oosterschelde towards the North Sea, to cross the Oosterschelddam. Enormous locks are built in this embankment and can be closed during storms and high tides protecting the south-west of the Netherlands against the sea.

This embankment was one of the last in a series of barriers against the sea. When cycling along the embankment, you will realize why this has been one of the most difficult and costly challenges to protect the country now and in the future and to let seawater into the widespread Delta area. It is precisely why the Deltaworks are referred to as the one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

After this dam we head to Middelburg, via the picturesque port town of Veere. Middelburg is the lively principal town of Zeeland with many old houses, churches, a beautiful town hall and interesting shops.

Day 6 Tuesday: Middelburg - ferry to Breskens, cycling to Sas van Gent, sailing to Ghent, 45 km

Today we cross the 'Westerschelde', the only estuary which isn't closed by a dam as it's the gateway to the port of Antwerp. A short ferry trip brings us from Vlissingen to Breskens in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen (Dutch-Flanders)! We are getting close to Belgium. Today we cross the Dutch - Belgium border back and forth before you definitely cross the Dutch - Belgium border by boat to sail to Ghent, one of the gems of Belgium.

Day 7 Wednesday: Ghent-Bruges, 45 km

This morning we cycle through Ghent to the scenic countryside of Oost-Vlaanderen (East-Flanders). Characteristic for this area are the woods, fields, small villages and castles. From the Aalterbrug (also for the shorter route) the last part of this route takes us over the former tow path along the canal of Oostende-Gent, the oldest canal of Belgium, to Bruges.

The impressive city of Bruges is the end destination of this bike and barge trip. This evening you can enjoy the medieval city of Bruges and many of you are likely to stay another day in this beautiful city.

Day 8 Thursday: Departure

Bruges, end of the tour after breakfast (debarkation before 10am)

DATES AND PRICE 2024

Barge	Dates	Low Season pps	Standard Season pps	High Season pps	Single Supp
Sailing Home	May 9, 23 June 20 July 4, 18 Aug 1, 15, 29 Sept 12, 26 Oct 10	€1380 (twin cabin)	€1535 (twin cabin)	€1685 (twin cabin)	€1995 low season €2220 (standard) €2420 (high)
Liza Marleen	June 13 Sep 19		€1470 (twin cabin) €1700 (superior cabin) €1350 (triple cabin)	€1610 (twin) €1840 (superior) €1350 (triple)	€2110 standard €2325 high
Wending	May 16 June 6 July 11 Aug 8, 22 Sep 5, 19	€1210 (twin cabin) €1130 (triple cabin)	€1335 (twin cabin) €1250 (triple cabin)	€1460 (twin cabin) €1370 (triple cabin)	€1530 low season €1695 standard €1840 high season

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights on board (incl. bed linen and 2 towels)
- Route information/road book (1 set per cabin)
- Breakfast & Dinner on board
- Picnic Lunch packages when on the road
- Coffee and tea on board
- Ferry fares on route
- Tour guide who cycles with the group
- Minimum of 3 city walks with tour guide
- Free Wi-Fi (limited availability in lounge and on deck)
- GPS tracks (on request)

Please note that all charges on the boat must be settled in cash (euro) at the end of the tour.

Not included/optional extras

Note that for 2024 bike hire is separated out / not included in the tour price

€110.00	21 speed touring bike with water bottle cage, lock and a small pannier bag
€220.00	Electric - bike with water bottle cage, lock and a small pannier bag

- Bike insurance is included in bike hire price
- Entrance fees to museums; approx €25 per tour
- Gluten free or Vegan meals : €75 supplement (to be ordered in advance. When ordered upon arrival the charge is €100)

WHAT TO BRING

Specialized cycle clothing may be handy but not strictly necessary. What you do need (among other things) is the following:

- shorts/ long trousers/ track suit/ legging
- shirts/ sweater/ rain clothing
- gloves (only when you book a tour in April. It can be chilly in the morning that time of year!)
- good shoes
- sunglasses/ cap/ swimming costume
- extra towel
- soap/ insect repellent

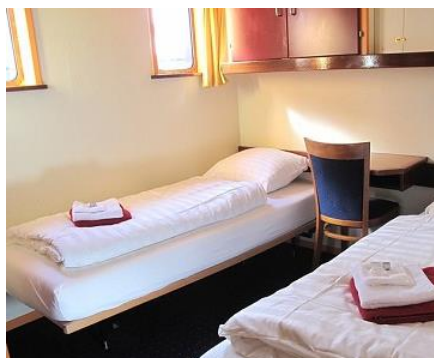
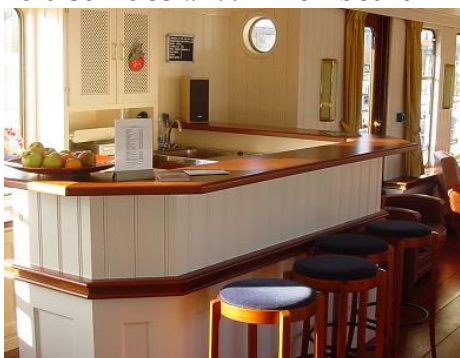
ACCOMMODATION / BARGES

Our motorised passenger vessels are about 35 - 45 metres in length and are former river vessels especially converted for this kind of holiday. The barges all comply with the strict safety regulations laid down by the Dutch Shipping Inspection Authorities. On board you find a cosy dining room, a sun deck/a deck for the bicycles. All cabins are provided with running water (hot and cold), private shower and toilet, 220 voltage and central heating. There is limited storage space in the cabin. We recommend 1 suitcase per person which you can slide under the bed.

Do not expect a cruise ship with its passive luxury. The Bike & Barge Holidays are for people who really enjoy the physical activity of cycling and who value sociability more than wholesale luxury.

Comfort de Luxe: The "Sailing Home" started cruising in 2001. This beautiful passenger ship can accommodate 26 overnight passengers. The interior of the salon and bar is decorated in a modern Victorian style and offers a lot of comfort. Wifi on board (free up to 100Mb) The "Sailing Home" has capacity for 26 pax in 13 spacious and comfortable guest cabins for two (lower beds), twin beds which can be placed together, and each cabin has a private bathroom. All cabins have central heating and air-conditioning. Windows can open.

The "Sailing Home" has two floors. On the top floor there is the salon, a roomy lounge with cozy bar and a sun deck. Wi-Fi on board



Category Comfort Plus: The “Liza Marleen” is a luxury motor passenger barge, built in 1997-98 on the completely dismantled shell of a seafaring freight logger. Cabins were fully renovated for the 2016 season.

The “Liza Marleen” has 8 double cabins and 2 triple cabins (Capacity: max 22 people)

All cabins come with a private bathroom and central heating. The triple cabins have one double bed on top and one single bed underneath. The double cabins have two separate beds on top of each other.

The “Liza Marleen” has a beautiful, spacious and tastefully decorated salon and plenty of room on deck. The dayroom has audio-equipment and TV. There is air conditioning and windows cannot open, Wi-Fi on board



Wending - Category StandardPlus/Comfort

The Wending has a roomy and cosy saloon, equipped with a complete music installation. After a strenuous bike ride it is a great place to relax. An extensive range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks is available for the "après de velo". Outside there is a sun deck/a deck for the bicycles. The crew consists of a skipper, a cook and a sailor/hostess. There is limited WiFi on board.

Cabin plan

- 10 Twin cabins, beds can be placed together
- 2 Triple cabins (with upper bunk)

All cabins are provided with:

- private bathroom,
- central heating,
- 220 voltage,
- soap,
- windows that open.

Hair dryers are available on board. There is limited storage space in the cabin. We recommend 1 suitcase per person. You can slide the suitcase under the bed.



BIKES AND CYCLING

On these tours you cycle together as a group with the guide.

Bikes are available to rent on the tour:

€110 Hybrid Bike rental includes helmet, pannier bags, lock, water bottle, bike insurance

€220 E-Bike rental includes helmet, pannier bags, lock, water bottle, bike insurance

After arrival on board you will be allocated a bicycle suitable to your height. This bicycle (a Hybrid bike), is at your disposal during your trip until Wednesday at 4pm.

Hybrid Bikes

There is a good bicycle available for all participants from ages nine and up with 24 gears and handbrakes. All bikes are comfortable lightweight touring bikes.



The bikes are equipped with:

- Pannier bags, Helmet, Odometer, Good lock, Water bottle
- You will get a repair kit when biking on your own.

E- bikes

It is also possible to book an E-bike. Your bike has 24 gears, a detachable lithium-Ion battery, hand brakes, pannier bags, a good lock, water bottle and you can get a repair kit. We draw your attention to the fact that you will be held responsible for damage to or theft of the bike, as long as the bike is not on board. (the E-bike has a value of more than € 2000,-). Never leave it unattended. Always lock it and fasten it to a fixed object, and don't forget to remove the information panel from your steering wheel.

We do not allow private e-bikes on board (due to safety regulations)



Bike Insurance:

Bicycle insurance is included with the bike hire.

The participant is liable for damage or theft as long as the bike is not on board. The bicycle insurance covers the cost of the repair or replacement of bicycle parts in case of an accident. It also protects against theft of the bike while it was locked.

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

You are expected on our barge on **Saturday at between 12.30pm – 1.30pm**. You can recognise the barge by the banner with Cycletours written on it. After arrival there's coffee and tea on board. Other drinks are also available on cash payment. If you want you can bring your luggage in advance, from 10 Noon onwards.

The mooring place of the barge in Amsterdam is **Oosterdok**
Zip-code 1011 VX (near the Science Center: 'Nemo', Oosterdok 2).



On foot

At Central Station take exit "centrum", and then turn left, walk straight on 1,2 km/0.75 miles. Cross the bridge (only for cyclists and pedestrians). It takes about 10 to 15 minutes. Follow the red line on this map.

Train

There is a direct train that leaves 6 times per hour from Schiphol Airport to Amsterdam Central Station. It takes about 16 minutes. The price for a train ticket Schiphol-Amsterdam is € 4,00 per person for a single journey.

Taxi

A taxi from Schiphol Amsterdam Airport to the barge in Amsterdam takes about 30 minutes. It costs about € 50 you can call the following company: Taxi Direct 0031 (0) 20 6333333 www.taxidirect.nl a taxi from the Central Train Station in Amsterdam to the barge takes about 5 minutes: Costs about € 10,-.

Car

If you arrive by car, we recommend you to arrive earlier to unload your luggage. You can find more information about parking possibilities at www.iamsterdam.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Group

On board you will meet an international party of all age groups, men and women, singles, couples and families together with their children.

Travel Guidance

The crew on board your ship consists of: the skipper and his mate who are responsible for the smooth running of things on board and the cook who is in charge of the catering. A tour leader, who can assist in case of breakdowns, and who can be your guide to point out to you the things of interest along the way, accompanies the participants. He or she is multi-lingual.

Meals

In the morning a substantial cyclist's breakfast is on offer, and the evening meal consists of a dinner with tea and coffee to follow. The midday meal comprises sandwiches/ fruit/ snack/ drink, which you take with you from the boat after you have prepared this package yourself after breakfast. When you arrive back at the boat after the day's cycling a cup of tea or coffee with a biscuit will be waiting for you. The three-course dinner is different every day. There is a first course, main course and dessert (on the Comfort deluxe there is also an extra intermediate course). The meals on board are included in the price, as are coffee and tea. There is a bar on the boat with beer, soft drinks and wine at reasonable prices.

Gluten free or Vegan meals : €75 supplement (to be ordered in advance. When ordered upon arrival the charge is €100)

Hotels

If you are booking additional hotel accommodation 3* in Amsterdam and/or Bruges, herewith some suggestions:-

Amsterdam -

Hotel Avenue -

www.hotels.nl/amsterdam/avenue/

Prinsengracht Hotel

www.prinsengrachthotel.nl/index.php

Bruges -

Hotel Martins -

www.splendia.com/pagehotel.php?hotelid=30399&lang=EN

Hotel Maraboe -

www.maraboe.be/

Hans Memling Hotel -

www.hansmemlinghotel.com/