

HOLLAND

Tulips, Windmills & Waterways

A Guided Walking Adventure





Table of Contents

Daily Itinerary	4
Tour Itinerary Overview	10
Tour Facts at a Glance.....	12
Traveling To and From Your Tour	14
Information & Policies	16
Holland at a Glance.....	17
Packing List	22

Travel Style

This small-group Guided Walking Adventure offers an authentic travel experience, one that takes you away from the crowds and deep in to the fabric of local life. On it, you'll enjoy 24/7 expert guides, premium accommodations, delicious meals,

effortless transportation, and local wine or beer with dinner. Rest assured that every trip detail has been anticipated so you're free to enjoy an adventure that exceeds your expectations.

And, with our **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **Amsterdam Pre-Tour Extension** to complement this destination, we take care of all the travel to simplify the journey. Refer to the attached itinerary for more details.

Overview

Visitors are drawn to Holland to celebrate its legendary windmills, myriad waterways, and brilliant spring tulips. This tour is easily accessible to all walkers and incorporates ample time to explore Holland's historic cities and world-class museums. Together, a relaxed introduction to the best of this gateway to Europe. After a walking tour of Amsterdam, the itinerary progresses to Holland's signature fields of tulips in peak bloom at the stunning Keukenhof Gardens. You continue to the trails of Holland's most famous national parks: the windswept dunes of De Kennemerduinen on the North Sea coast and De Hoge Veluwe, home to deer and boar, and also housing a sculpture garden and the renowned Kröller-Müller Museum, with its fabled collection of Van Gogh and other modern works. A tour of Holland would not be complete without a visit to the famous 18th-century Kinderdijk windmills, which powered the land-reclamation projects that quite literally made this densely populated country habitable. Your accommodations are in carefully renovated historic buildings in the heart of the cities of Haarlem and Utrecht. Haarlem is the home of the Franz Hals Museum, featuring prime examples of Holland's glorious 16th-century art, and Utrecht, originally founded as a Roman outpost, later became a Christian stronghold with its grand cathedral. Food and drink are equally satisfying—locally produced, exotic Indonesian, or bistro fare, accompanied by Holland's crisp brews.





Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Walking tour of Amsterdam; 5 miles, easy city walking

This springtime sojourn in the Netherlands begins in its capital and largest city, Amsterdam. After meeting the guides, you set out on a morning walking tour of its vibrant and historic neighborhoods, including the Old South area, known for the early 20th-century Dutch School of Architecture. Also on the route in the Zuid neighborhood is the house where Anne Frank lived before she and her family went into hiding. Lunch is at a local restaurant, overlooking the canals.

After lunch, you have a short rest on the short drive to the city of Haarlem. Your hotel is located in the historic center and upon check-in, time permitting, you can begin exploring this fascinating city directly from the hotel's central location; museums, medieval churches, monuments, and enticing shops are all a short stroll away. You gather in the evening for a short transfer to a Michelin two star restaurant surrounded by wooded dunes. This modern venue is an ideal location to toast your new friends over a welcome dinner of delicately prepared local specialties.

Stempels Hotel, Haarlem

In a perfect location in the pedestrian center of Harlem, this charming hotel occupies the former offices and type foundry of the Royal Joh Enschedé printing

press. Fully renovated in 2006, contemporary guestrooms have polished wood floors and neutral tones. On-site are a restaurant and brasserie.

DAY 2

Keukenhof Tulip Show and Tulip Fields; 3-5 miles, easy



Today is devoted to basking in the Netherlands' incomparable flowers and gardens. A short ride this morning brings you to neighboring Lisse, just south of Haarlem. Lisse is the center of the annual Keukenhof Tulip Show, where the vast displays of tulips and other bulb flowers may be blooming at their colorful peak. Here, you stroll through Keukenhof's stunning landscaped gardens and view exhibitions showcasing Holland's flower industry (accounting for \$12 billion worth of Holland's exports). Along the way you are presented with ample opportunities to photograph the glorious fields of flowers including hyacinths and tulips which begin to blossom from April to mid-May, depending on the weather. The idea of creating the world's largest flower garden was conceived by the town's mayor in 1949 and designed on the Keukenhof Estate, which literally means "kitchen garden," as it was placed on the site of the herb and vegetable garden of the 15th-century Countess of Holland, Jacoba van Beieren. Choose lunch in one of the many cafés within the gardens, before strolling farther through the tulip fields, where you may find more photo opportunities. Returning to Haarlem later in the afternoon, you set off with your guides on an easy walking tour of the city for a more in-depth exploration. You stroll through the famed main square (Grote Markt) with its 14th-century City Hall and St. Bavokerk Church.

This evening you dine at the hotel's restaurant, the place where Dutch bank notes and international stamps were once pressed. Highlights of the menu include beautifully prepared fish and seafood, a reminder of Holland's centuries of seafaring and exploration.

Stempels Hotel, Haarlem

DAY 3

Haarlem to Kennemerduinen National Park; 6 miles, easy. Haarlem city tour, 2 miles, easy



Beer brewing was a very important industry in Haarlem, and as a result of this history you are able to walk directly from the hotel this morning along the old brewers' canal, called the Brouwersgracht. Following this trail to the Kennermerduinen National Park on the North Sea Coast, you arrive at the most extensive and unspoiled dunes in Holland. Here, trails pass into quiet

mixed deciduous and coniferous forest, over fields of wild-growing shrubs, and undulating sand dunes. You pause for a delicious lunch in a restaurant overlooking the open sea.

Returning to Harlem, time permitting, you may visit the Frans Hals Museum, which houses a large selection of works by this painter, as well as other famous Dutch artists from the 15th century to the present. Another special Haarlem museum is the Teyler Museum—Holland's oldest—which is housed in the former home of a wealthy 18th-century merchant and banker and offers a fascinating collection of paintings and artifacts. Spicy and exotic, this evening's dinner takes place at one of the city center's many Indonesian restaurants, popular in Holland since the colonial period.

Stempels Hotel, Haarlem

DAY 4

De Hoge Veluwe National Park; 3 miles, easy. Kröller-Müller Museum visit

Rested and packed, you set off promptly this morning for one of Holland's oldest and largest national parks, De Hoge Veluwe, a vast landscape with a variety of ecosystems. Here, heath land dating from the Middle Ages evolved into large expanses of drifting sand as inhabitants cut peat to fertilize fields. Eventually trees were planted to stop the drifting, but the drifted sand is now being partially restored. Almost 4,000 acres of cultivated woodland—chiefly pine and red oak—remain. An extensive trail network throughout the park provides access to fascinating living ecology lessons with beautiful and rare plant species. You may even spot some of the animals who make their home in this nature reserve, species such as red deer, roe deer, a wild sheep called “Moufflon” (originally native to Corsica and Sardinia), and even wild boar.

The park is also the location of the Kröller-Müller Museum, which houses an excellent collection of nearly 300 of Van Gogh's paintings (including "The Potato Eaters") as well as works by other modern European painters. Outside the museum is Europe's largest sculpture garden, which includes works by Rodin, Moore, Luptchitz, and others. The De Hoge Veluwe Park provides a harmonious blend of nature, art, and architecture. Late in the afternoon, continue on to your second home of the week—a boutique hotel located in the heart of this vibrant city. After settling in, dinner is at the hotel's restaurant, a comfortable and relaxed brasserie.



Grand Hotel Karel V, Utrecht

Medieval charm and modern luxury come together in this unique 5-star hotel in the historic center of Utrecht. The splendid complex of buildings and magnificent courtyard gardens dates from the 14th century. On-site is the convivial Brasserie Goeie Louisa and wellness center with indoor swimming pool.

DAY 5

Historic Utrecht; 1-2 miles, easy. Utrecht to Amelisweerd; 5 miles, easy. Visit to Amelisweerd Estate. Free afternoon time permitting

This morning you explore historic Utrecht on foot, leaving directly from the hotel. You follow a path into the green Wilhelmina Park and the landmark modernist classic Rietveld-Schröder House, designed by the architect Rietveld. You continue your lovely stroll along the winding Kromme Rijn River. An exclusive lunch of local organic fare is served at the Amelisweerd Estate's charming carriage house, with its wood stove and open kitchen.

After lunch, you take a short walk through the grounds of this 17th-century estate preserved as a regional park and board your van to return to Utrecht. The late afternoon and evening are yours to design: you may spend the afternoon in the fascinating Centraal Museum, Holland's oldest municipal museum. The Centraal is located in a renovated medieval cloister and houses a wide collection divided into five categories: old masters, modern art, design, fashion, and local history. With shops open until late in the evening, there is ample time to find



unique souvenirs. Dining tonight is on your own. Due to the city's central location, dining options in Utrecht are very representative of Dutch cuisine.

Grand Hotel Karel V, Utrecht

DAY 6

Kinderdijk windmills; 5 miles, easy to moderate

A full immersion into Dutch history and culture, today you visit and experience what Holland is best known for—windmills, picturesque villages, and tidy farmhouses. Set off for the southwest and the famed and highly picturesque windmills east of Rotterdam at Kinderdijk. The 19 windmills at Kinderdijk, built during the 18th century, were the “high-tech” development of the day, harnessing the power of the coastal winds to pump water and build up land. You learn firsthand about this crucial part of Holland's history while you walk on trails along the canals and directly beneath the windmills.

Along the way you are immersed in quintessential Dutch countryside—grazing sheep and abundant wildflowers as well as a wetland nature reserve with rare birds such as black tern and marsh harrier. Finally, you cross the Lek River by ferry passing characteristically quaint Dutch villages.

Lunchtime finds you at a typical pancake restaurant, and afterward visiting a cheese farm—a glimpse into this Dutch product renowned the world over. The final dinner is a festive celebration of your exploration of the Netherlands' natural places and cultural treasures.

Grand Hotel Karel V, Utrecht

DAY 7

Departure

After breakfast your guides provide two group transfers to Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport for early morning and mid-morning departures.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance, and unforeseen circumstances that mandate change may arise. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Here's just one example that highlights our sustainable practices:

Keeping It Local: In Holland, you can't get more local than a visit to Amelisweerd Estate. Preserved as a regional park, this stunning estate features a 17th-century mansion set along the winding Rhine River—the perfect spot for an exclusive Country Walkers lunch! At the charming carriage house with its woodstove and open kitchen, enjoy local organic fare in a most authentic and tranquil setting.

Tour Itinerary Overview

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken (lobby), Amsterdam, Holland, 9:00 a.m.

Jan Luykenstraat 58,
Amsterdam Holland
Tel 011 31 20 573 0730
Email jan-luyken.reservation@bilderberg.nl
bilderberg.nl/uk/hotels/hotel-jan-luyken/

NIGHTS 1, 2 & 3

Stempels Hotel

Haarlem, Holland
Tel 011 31 23 512 3910
Email info@stempelsin haarlem.nl
stempelsin haarlem.nl
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHTS 4, 5 & 6

Grand Hotel Karel V Utrecht, Holland
Tel 011 31 30 233 7555
Email info@karelv.nl
<http://www.karelv.nl> Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIMES

Schiphol International Airport (AMS), Amsterdam, Holland, 8:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

One Call International

Email mail@oncallinternational.com

If communicating from within the US

Text 603.945.0103

Tel 800.555.9095

If calling from outside the US

Tel 603.894.4710

When calling from outside the USA, you will need to dial the access code for the country you are calling from (a complete list of access codes, provided by AT&T, can be found on the Country Walkers website under Travel Tips and Travel Resources: International Access Codes).

In the unlikely event you are unable to connect by phone with One Call, or the region you are calling from does not have an access code, you should speak with a live international operator and ask them to place a collect call to 800.555.9095 or 603.894.4710.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH (WITHOUT FLIGHT PACKAGE)

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURE DATES AND PRICE

Please refer to our website for the most current list of departure dates, scheduled group tour and private tour prices.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken (lobby), Amsterdam, Holland, 9:00 a.m.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIMES

Schiphol International Airport (AMS), Amsterdam, Holland, 8:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy, with an average of 3 to 6 miles per day. Because the terrain in Holland is relatively flat, there are no elevation gains and losses. The walking is along well-maintained hiking trails, on chalk dunes, city streets, and alongside canals and rivers. The walks along the canals may have some uneven terrain. The pace of this tour allows you to appreciate the culture and history of the areas you visit. Because this tour takes place in the spring, you can see, in full bloom, the flower fields and gardens for which Holland is known.

INCLUSIONS

- » Two expert, local guides (for groups of 8 or more), with you 24/7
- » All meals except for one lunch and one dinner; local wine or beer included with dinners
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Transportation from the meeting point to the departure point
- » Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary
- » Destination information (weather, visa requirements, etc.) and other travel assistance available 24/7 provided by One Call International

» The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Passenger Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » Luggage tags
- » List of travel companions and guide biographies

GRATUITIES

Gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers. Should you wish to tip your Country Walkers guide(s), the standard in the industry ranges from \$10 to \$15 per person, per guide, per day (or \$20 to \$30 per couple, per guide, per day), and can be paid in USD or local currency.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

If you are interested in reserving the **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **pre- or post-tour extensions**, please refer to the attached itinerary for more details.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken (lobby), Amsterdam, Holland, 9:00 a.m.

Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt. Please be dressed for easy city walking.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT

Schiphol Airport (AMS), Amsterdam, Holland
schipol.nl

GETTING TO THE MEETING POINT

The Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken is located 6 to 7 miles from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport.

- “Connexion” Schiphol hotel shuttles depart the airport every 30 minutes and stop in front of the Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken. Cost: 17 euros per person (schipholhotels Shuttle.nl).
- Taxi from Schiphol Airport: time: 20-30 minutes (depending on the traffic); cost: approximately 40 euros.

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are not reserving our optional Flight + Tour Combo, you may wish to stay at the Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken, our meeting-point hotel.

Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken

Jan Luykenstraat 58,
Amsterdam Holland
Tel 011 31 20 573 0730
Fax 011 31 20 676 3841
Email jan-luyken.reservation@bilderberg.nl
bilderberg.nl/uk/hotels/hotel-jan-luyken/
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

A charming boutique hotel in a classic mansion in the heart of Amsterdam, the Bilderberg Hotel Jan Luyken is a short walk from the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museum and the stylish shops of the P.C. Hoofstraat area. Please contact

the hotel directly for reservations. We recommend that you make your reservations as early as possible as the tulip-blossoming month of April is a busy time of year in Amsterdam! You can make a reservation on their website. Rates: single/double/twin rooms from approximately 230 euros per night (exclusive of a 5 percent city tax and breakfast).

DELAYS AND LATE ARRIVALS

If you are delayed or miss the scheduled group meeting point for any reason, we kindly request that you contact our emergency assistance provider, One Call International. This service is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to assist you with any type of travel delay. Please refer to the Emergency Contact details on your Tour Itinerary Overview page for One Call International contact details.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIMES

Schiphol International Airport (AMS), Amsterdam, Holland, 8:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.

If you plan to schedule your return flights immediately after the tour's conclusion, please contact your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

LEAVING UTRECHT

There are no walks scheduled on the final day of the tour. We offer two included group transfers to Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport: the first transfer is scheduled to arrive at 8:00 a.m. and the second to arrive at 10:30 a.m. Should you wish to depart at a different time, you may arrange a taxi for approximately 80-90 euros (45 minute transfer).

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, small-group experience (with an average of 6 or 7 guests per guide). For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. We can confirm your reservation with a deposit of \$350 per person. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

Holland at a Glance

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS



U.S. citizens: Passports are required and must be valid for at least three months beyond the dates of travel. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days. For more information, see

travel.state.gov.

CURRENCY

Holland uses the euro (EUR). For up-to-date exchange rates, see oanda.com.

Many businesses in Europe will no longer accept credit cards without PIN numbers (chip and pin cards). Always contact your bank or your credit-card company for details on fees and card use when traveling.

TIME ZONE

Holland is in the Central European Time Zone, Eastern Standard Time plus six hours. For more information on worldwide time zones, see worldtimezone.com.

PHONE & INTERNET

Holland country code: +31

Cell phone coverage throughout Holland is extensive, but cannot be guaranteed to be accessible on all American mobile carriers or to function at all times while on the trail or in remote areas. For more information regarding international phone use, please refer to countrywalkers.com/phones.

Internet access is generally very good in towns and villages; however, it is not guaranteed at all of the hotels used on the tour. For more details regarding Wi-Fi availability, please refer to the Tour Itinerary Overview.



Travel Tip

Have a variety of options to start your trip: ATM card(s), credit card(s), and some dollars to exchange.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Holland is Dutch.

While knowledge of the local language is not necessary, you may want to learn some fun and useful phrases; see bbc.co.uk/languages/other/quickfix/dutch.shtml or the enclosed Reading Guide for a suggested phrase book.

Travel Tip

- Bringing your own hair dryer or other electrical device? You'll need a travel converter, available at most hardware, travel, or consumer electronic stores.

For laptops or an electronic device with a dual voltage switch, you'll need the adapter plug but not a converter.

ELECTRICITY

Alternating current of 220V to 240V and 50Hz is used in Holland. Plugs have either two round pins and a hole, or just two round pins. For a full listing of electrical outlets worldwide, see electricaloutlet.org.

WEATHER

Holland has a maritime climate with cool winters and mild summers. March is the driest month and July and August are the wettest and warmest. During the springtime, average temperatures range from the mid-40s to mid-50s, with some rain at any time of the day.

For up-to-date forecasts, see qwikcast.com. For historical average temperatures and rainfall, see weatherbase.com.

FOOD & DRINK

Given Holland's status as a major exporter of farm produce, many dishes feature cheese, meat, and local seafood.



Traditional Dutch specialties include *hutspot*, a spicy vegetable stew that includes red cabbage or sauerkraut, pea soup with dark rye bread, fried croquettes, meat or sausage, and, of course, raw herring with onion. There are many versions of Dutch pancakes of all sizes, some with complex fillings, and other miniature versions topped with powdered sugar. *Tostis*, grilled cheese sandwiches, are a popular late-night snack.

Dining out is popular in Holland, and there is a broad choice of restaurants in all large cities and towns—from fine cuisine to simple pizza. Ethnic restaurants abound, reflecting not only the tastes of Suriname and Indonesia, where Dutch colonies were maintained in earlier days, but also tastes from America (bagels, pizza) and from other European countries, both independently and at “fusion” restaurants.

Dutch beer is, of course, well known internationally, and wine is also produced in Holland along its southernmost border with Belgium. And finally, *jenever*, also a national drink (from the word for juniper), is a colorless distilled spirit drunk ice cold in one gulp.

Travel Tip

Say “cheese”! The largest cheese exporter in the world, evidence of cheese-making in Holland dates back to as early as 200 BC. Cheese—its making, consumption, and trading—was a central part of Dutch culture by the Middle Ages, with cheese markets arising in the cities of Gouda, Edam, and Alkmaar—each with a cheese of the same name. In addition to those three cheeses, some other types of Dutch cheese are Frisian, Limburger, Bluefort, Maasdam, Old Amsterdam, Maasland, Leyden, and Leerdammer. (Please bear in mind that some Dutch cheeses may be produced from unpasteurized milk.)

LIFE IN HOLLAND



Shopping and banking hours

Shops and stores are generally open Monday to Saturday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., with one later night (usually Thursday) until 9:00 p.m. Each city has its own rules for Sunday shopping, so check locally. Supermarkets and shopping malls are generally open daily until 10:00 p.m., or until 5:30 p.m. on Sundays.

Banks are open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Mealtimes

Breakfast is served at hotels from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. In restaurants and cafés, lunch is served from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. and dinner is usually served from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Tipping

In restaurants and cafés, a 15 percent service charge is always included in the bill (indicated as *inclusief BTW en service*, meaning “service and value-added tax included;” however, an additional 10 percent or rounding up to the nearest euro is appreciated. For taxi drivers, 10 percent is also appropriate. For luggage assistance, one euro per bag is typical. And in public restrooms, there is usually a change plate on which to leave .50 euros for the attendant.

TRAVEL RESOURCES

National Dutch tourist board official site
holland.com/us/tourism.htm

Travel Tip

Holland or The Netherlands? The official name is The Netherlands, and the name Holland actually refers to two provinces in the south and north of the country. Notwithstanding, the Dutch are fine with visitors using either name.

Public holidays

To assist in travel planning, it may be helpful to be aware of Holland public holidays, festivals, or calendars of events. For a list of public holidays, see holland.com/us/tourism/Holland-information/About-Holland/public-holidays.htm.

TRAVEL IN HOLLAND

A wealth of travel information is available at holland.com/us/tourism.htm.

Airports

The majority of international flights arrive at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport (schiphol.nl), with short connecting flights to larger cities in Holland on a domestic air network, although it is generally faster to travel by train within Holland.



Trains

Dutch Railways: ns.nl/en/travellers/home, the national railway company site with schedules, fares, and pass options.

Raileurope: raileurope.com or 800.622.8600: a U.S.-based company that provides schedules, reservations, and ticketing for all European train networks (their multi-day/-week/-month passes in one country or combinations of countries may be an economical and convenient choice for European train travel.)

Other local transportation

In addition to rail and airlines, Holland also has a bus network; however, rail is usually faster and more convenient.

Most major car rental agencies are available at airports and train stations. Taxis are available at all major airports, train stations, and in smaller towns, and can be reserved in advance (your hotel can usually provide assistance). Bicycles can also be rented at all train stations, city centers, and some hotels, providing access to

Holland's extensive network of bike paths (17,980 miles of them!). For more information, contact Country Walkers, or go to holland.com/us/tourism.htm.

Packing List

PACKING TIPS

Pack light! Keep in mind there will be times you may have to carry your own luggage short distances, especially before and after your Country Walkers tour. Due to space constraints, we require you to limit your luggage to one medium piece (approximately 18x15x29 inches or 8,000 cu. in.) and one small carry-on, per person. We recommend packing any personal necessities, medications, your hotel itinerary/emergency contact information, your hiking boots (or shoes), and extra clothes in your carry-on luggage in the event that your baggage is delayed. We suggest leaving valuable jewelry at home. A copy of your passport or other important documents should be kept in a separate area of your luggage. Always be alert when carrying a purse, camera, money belt, or backpack in busy cities, airports, and train stations.

FOOTWEAR

- » Hiking shoes. There are many brands to choose from. Proper fit is crucial, so try on new shoes while wearing socks you plan to use on tour. Be sure to break in new footwear well before your tour begins. By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 3-6 miles of walking without discomfort. We require lightweight shoes with proper ankle support and good tread to ensure stability and comfort on all types of terrain. Waterproof footwear keeps feet dry in heavy rain and water resistant footwear keeps feet dry in heavy dew. Country Walkers reserves the right to deny participation to any guest not wearing appropriate footwear.
- » Comfortable shoes for city tours or evening strolls on uneven, cobblestone streets
- » Synthetic, moisture-wicking socks (cotton socks are not recommended for walking as they will quickly cause blisters)
- » Blister remedy

CLOTHING

- » Lightweight, wash-and-wear long pants
- » Long-sleeved, wash-and-wear shirt
- » T-shirts and shorts

- » Polar fleece or light wool pullover (it will keep you warm even when wet)
- » Dinner attire: dress is smart casual
- » Light jacket or sweater for evening strolls

OUTERWEAR

- » Waterproof rain gear: jacket, pants, hat, or hood
- » Windbreaker with hood (your rain gear may be suitable)

EQUIPMENT

- » Pack (minimum size of 25L): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, all of your waterproof gear, camera, sunblock, etc.
- » Waterproof cover for pack
- » Water bottle, canteen, or CamelBak-type water reservoir or hydration pack to carry your own water while walking (equivalent of one to two liters)
- » Sunblock and lip balm
- » Insect repellent
- » Sunglasses
- » Toilet kit for when facilities are not available on the walks. Include zip-lock baggies, tissues, and moist towelettes, which can be disposed of upon return to the hotel.
- » Personal first-aid kit including any medications you ordinarily take (in their original container)

OPTIONAL

- » Telescopic walking sticks. (Please note that walking sticks are not provided by Country Walkers. Therefore please plan on bringing your own should you wish to use them.)
- » Binoculars
- » Bathing suit for use in hotel pools and spas
- » Camera and charger and/or extra batteries
- » Zip-lock bags (to keep camera and valuables dry)
- » Small notebook and pen
- » Field guides (see enclosed reading list)

- » Folding umbrella
- » Bandana
- » Washcloth (many European hotels do not provide them)
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Alarm clock