

News

We are extremely pleased to announce that The Dutch Travel advisor has been accepted as the new **Virtuoso Preferred Onsite** for the Netherlands. We look forward to hopefully an even busier future with a continued working relationship with you all. And we also look forward to working with new agents from the Virtuoso network.

In this edition of the Holland Journal we have a few important things to share, the new ticket system for the **Anne Frank House** and where to meet clients at **Amsterdam Schiphol Airport**. But we have more, like our favorite restaurants in Amsterdam and off the beaten path sights.

I am sure you already know that the famous Keukenhof flower exhibit isn't all that the Netherlands has to offer when it comes to flowers. One of the visits we always like to include in our itineraries is a visit to the amazing **Flora Holland** flower auction. Visitors are always amazed by the sheer size of the building (the size of the city of Monaco) and the number of cut flowers that are auctioned off every day (35 million).

Combining a visit to the flower auction with a visit to a **private grower** adds a touch of exclusivity to your clients' visit, since these visits are very unique and are not accessible to the general public. The private growers we like to visit are family owned businesses and often the owner himself will receive our guests and show them around the company himself.

Also, in Amsterdam we can show you some of the hidden gems of the city. The huge gardens behind some of the (private) mansions are Amsterdam's best-kept secret! We always include a visit to these mansions and their gardens in our off-the-beaten-path walking tours.

IMPORTANT: Anne Frank House Amsterdam

Since May, 2016 the **Anne Frank House** has introduced a new online ticket system. The reason for this new system; to shorten the length of the lines outside the museum, which could sometimes run up to over 4 hours.

In the last few years, the Anne Frank House has become one of the most popular sights to visit in Amsterdam.

With the new system, you can only visit the Anne Frank House with pre-purchased online tickets between 8.30am and 3.30pm. After 3.30pm, you can buy a ticket at the cashier. But experience teaches us that lines already appear way before this time and that you can still be in line for hours if you do not have an online purchased ticket.

To avoid that wholesale companies (foreign) buying up large numbers of tickets for resell (not allowed) the Anne Frank House does not say when tickets come online and how many. Not even to us, which leaves us, and others, in difficulty obtaining tickets. Some do not even include them anymore in their services.

We feel that we have to offer tickets to our clients, but in order to obtain them we need to check every day and every minute of the hour. This forces us to ask a service fee of Euro 75.-. If you need tickets in combination with touring days in the Netherlands, we will not charge this fee, only if just tickets are needed. I am sure you understand.

www.annefrank.org



IMPORTANT: Meeting Point Amsterdam Schiphol Airport

Meeting someone at an Airport can sometimes be difficult. For this reason we never meet our clients where they come out (sliding doors) in the public arrival hall, after they have been through customs and collected their luggage (secure area). Sometimes clients come out at a different arrival hall than listed on the boards.

We always meet our clients at the **Meeting Point**.

This meeting point is located in the central hall (Schiphol Plaza) where the escalators to the train platforms are also located, a two-minute walk from the point where clients arrive in the main public area.

It can be recognized by a large sculpture with red and white cubes.

The driver and/or guide will be at the meeting point 45-minutes after landing for transatlantic flights or 30-minutes after landing for European flights, and will have a sign with the name of the clients.

Those clients who do not want all the hassle with luggage and customs can always choose for the VIP service with meet and greet at the gate. From here they will be taken by luxurious private car to the VIP centre where they go privately through customs and their luggage will be delivered. Contact us for more information about the VIP service.



Our Favorite Restaurants in Amsterdam

We are often asked to recommend restaurants in Amsterdam. We therefore thought it might be a good idea to list a few of our favorites in this Holland Journal.

De Kas, located in a set of greenhouses. Unique location, organic and very popular. www.restaurantdekas.nl

The Duchess Amsterdam, unique location in an old bank building. French kitchen, great atmosphere and the new hot spot in Amsterdam. <http://the-duchess.com>

Bord'Eau at Hotel De L'Europe, French cuisine and two Michelin stars. <http://bordeau.nl>

Restaurant Greetje for traditional Dutch cooking. www.restaurantgreetje.nl/nl/

Bridges at Hotel Legend The Grand, fish restaurant with one Michelin Star. www.bridgesrestaurant.nl

Librije's Zusje, located inside the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, two Michelin Stars. www.librijeszusje.com

Taiko, an Asian-inspired restaurant in the Conservatorium Hotel. www.conservatoriumhotel.com/nl/restaurants-and-bars/taiko

Vinkeles at the Dylan, French cuisine with a Michelin Star. www.vinkeles.com/en/

Long Pura, Indonesian restaurant for the best rijsttafel (rice table) in Amsterdam. www.restaurant-longpura.com

MOMO, serves pan-Asian dishes. <http://momo-amsterdam.com>

Moeders (= Dutch for mothers), specializes in several Dutch specialities. www.moeders.com

IZAKAYA, has taken traditional Japanese dining experience to a higher level. www.izakaya-amsterdam.com



Public Transport in The Netherlands

The Netherlands has an excellent public transport system, and the swipecard payment system OV-chipkaart is the official transport payment system for the metro, bus and tram throughout the Netherlands. Paper train tickets were abolished mid-2014, and infrequent train travellers can buy a single-use chipkaart at EUR 1 extra per trip.

You pay for the distance travelled by swiping it upon entering and leaving your transport station. When boarding a bus, tram, metro or train, hold your single-use chipcard or anonymous OV-chipkaart in front of the ticket reader. The green light and beep signal indicate that your card has been read. When you get off, hold your card in front of the ticket reader once again to check out. The display shows the credit used and how much credit is left on the card. Please don't forget to check out since the meter will keep running if you don't. <http://9292.nl/en>



Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam to Display Two New Rembrandt Paintings

The Pendant portraits of Maerten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit are a pair of full-length wedding portraits by Rembrandt. Formerly owned by the Rothschild family, they became jointly owned by the Louvre Museum and the Rijksmuseum in 2015 after both museums managed to contribute half of the purchase price of €160 million, a record for works by Rembrandt.

The portraits were painted by a young Rembrandt upon the occasion of the wedding of Maerten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit in 1634. Although the subjects were painted individually, the portraits have been kept together since their inception. Unlike many 17th-century portrait pairs, these two have always hung side by side in various collections based in Amsterdam or Paris. They are also unusual in Rembrandt's oeuvre for their size and the fact that they show the subjects at full length.

Technically, the Netherlands and France each bought one painting but they have agreed to never separate the two and always display them together. They were first displayed for three months at the Louvre in Paris. Then they moved to the Rijksmuseum where they will be displayed until October 2. After this, they will undergo a restoration before the Louvre and the Rijksmuseum take turns displaying them.

www.rijksmuseum.nl



Royal Flora Holland Flower Auction

FloraHolland is a flower auction company located in Aalsmeer, Naaldwijk, Rijnsburg, Venlo, Bleiswijk and Eelde. Together, the auction houses are home to the largest flower auction in the world. Well over 35 million cut flowers and plants are sold at FloraHolland every day in over 15,000 varieties.

The figures about FloraHolland are unbelievable. 90% of Dutch flower trade takes place at FloraHolland. The auction houses have around 5000 members, 9000 suppliers, 3500 customers and 4500 employees. Dutch floricultural business creates 250,000 full time jobs for people worldwide, directly as well as indirectly.

You will have to get up early, but a visit to the auction makes it more than worthwhile. Feel the tension in the auction rooms and watch the auction of dozens of tractors with flower trolleys swarm around. You can experience the dynamics of the international flower and plant trade in Aalsmeer. The best day to visit the auction is Tuesday but Mondays and Fridays are a good alternative.

www.royalfloraholland.com



Zuiderzee Museum Enkhuizen

In 1932 the Afsluitdijk (the IJsselmeer Barrier Dam) closed off the former Zuiderzee from the North Sea, and the inland sea thus created was named IJsselmeer (in which 'meer' is the Dutch word for 'lake' and 'IJssel' the name of the river feeding it). The Zuiderzee Museum is oriented toward the history, the current situation and the future of this area, thereby focusing on the major themes of water, crafts and communities. This story is visualized in the Outdoor Museum with a great number of historical buildings, and in the Indoor Museum with various thematic exhibitions. Heritage, visual art, photography and design play an important role in this context.

The indoor Museum is the treasure chest of the Zuiderzee. Various permanent and temporary exhibitions display the rich collection of the Museum in a present-day setting. Visualized in this way, the history of the Netherlands acquires significance for today. With history, photography, traditional costumes, design and an attractive and educational family exhibition, the Indoor Museum offers something for everyone.

The open-air section covers 15 acres and accommodates a great many authentic buildings from the former Zuiderzee region, such as a church, a fish-curing shed, a watermill, a cheese warehouse, shops and dwelling houses from the surrounding fishing villages. Staff and volunteers demonstrate historical crafts from everyday life at the beginning of the twentieth century.

www.zuiderzeemuseum.nl/en/10/home/



NEW Hilton Amsterdam Airport Hotel

A new landmark Hilton hotel has been constructed at the site of the current Hilton hotel. The new hotel is a project by Schiphol Hotel Property Company, a Schiphol Real Estate business, and is being managed by Hilton Worldwide.

The new hotel has 433 rooms, 23 conference rooms, an all-day restaurant and bar, a spa and fitness centre, a large atrium with a lobby and an underground car park offering 138 parking spaces. A covered walkway connects the hotel directly to the Schiphol terminal.

The Hilton hotel dovetails with Schiphol's AirportCity concept, which sees outstanding hotel facilities as a key condition for attracting business and catering for the needs of international business travellers. The new Hilton hotel has opened in December 2015.



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