AMSTERDAM

FALL & WINTER GUIDE 2011 - 2012



The best places to eat, sleep and play in Amsterdam this fall and winter

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INTRODUCTION

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- I. The weather is unpredictable so "bring clothes for two seasons."—TripAdvisor Member
- 2. "Watch for pickpockets, try and fit in, don't stare at your map on the street or carry your camera out where everyone can see. Bring good shoes—you will need them. You're in for sore legs at the end of the day."—TripAdvisor Member
- 3. "A tip for all those who want to go to The Van Gogh Museum. If you just turn up on the day, the queues are usually long. To get around this, you can buy (and print) your tickets via their web site, then just walk past the queues at the museum. Tickets bought online are open, you are not required to specify a day or time in advance."—TripAdvisor Member

Inside

AMSTERDA

Amsterdam is one of those places with a slap-yourself-onthe-forehead name: "Amsteldamme" was born from a village where the Amstel River was dammed in the late 13th-century. With all that water... but of course! Today, Amsterdam is home to some 750,000 people (many of them on bicycles) and countless tourists (many of them jumping out of the way of bicycles). The center is divided into neighborhoods—the new and old sides of the old town, surrounded by a ring of canals, and then mainly residential areas like Jordaan, considered by many to be the best place in town. Winters are typically frosty while summers are warm and temperate, but the weather is always unpredictable and rain is possible at any time of the year. Keep that umbrella handy!

In this city, you'll find captivating views from nearly every bridge, world-class art in a nearly incomprehensible number of museums and friendly locals. While cafes serving marijuana and the Red Light District are a part of Amsterdam, you'll find they are but footnotes to an overall experience of culture and (G-rated) fun.

Top VIEWS





AMSTERDAM'S BEST VIEWS

Join a canal cruise for a photo opportunity of this gorgeous scene. You can only see the seven bridges that cross the Reguliersgracht from a boat."—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

St. Nicolaas Boat Club, Boom Chicago, Leidslplein

The choice for a drink with a view is "unquestionably Twenty Third Bar on the 23rd floor of the Okura Hotel. It has a fantastic cocktail bar and the best view of the city!"—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

Twenty Third Bar, Hotel Okura, Ferdinand Bolstraat 333, 020 678 7111

"The climb to the top of **Westerkerk** (West Church) is well worth it! They only take 4-6 people at a time, so you may have to wait. But once you are up there on a clear day you can see all of Amsterdam."-TripAdvisor Member, St. Louis, Mo.

Westerkerk, Prinsengracht 281, 020 624 7766

Where to

TOP 10 Attractions

- 1. Anne Frank House (Anne Frankhuis), Prinsengracht 267, 020 556 7105
- 2. The Resistance Museum (Amsterdams Verzetsmuseum), Plantage Kerklaan 61a, 020 620 2535
- 3. Reypenaer Cheese Tasting Rooms, Singel 182-Huis, 020 320 6333
- 4. Concertgebouw, Concertgebouwplein 2-6, Museum Quarter, 020 671 8345
- 5. The Jordaan, west of Central Amsterdam

- 6. Van Gogh Museum, Paulus Potterstraat 7, 020 570 5200
- 7. Museum of Bags and Purses (Tassenmuseum Hendrikje), Herengracht 573, 020 524 6452
- 8. House of Bols Cocktail & Genever Experience, Paulus Potterstraat 14, 120 570 8575
- 9. Tropenmuseum, Linnaeusstraat 2, 020 568 8200
- 10. Heineken Experience, Stadhouderskade 78, 020 523 9222



FAMILIES

NEMO is "perfect for children. Fantastic workshops—we loved the science lab, the police workshop with your photo taken, etc. We ran out of time because we thought three hours would be enough. We should have spent more than four or five."-TripAdvisor Member, Catalonia, Spain

newMetropolis Science and Technology Center (NEMO), Oosterdok 2, 020 531 3233 "The **Botanical Garden** was by far the best attraction we visited. It's small, but at about 7 euro, it's excellent value." Be sure the kids don't miss the Butterfly Garden. "It's an oasis in the sometimes overwhelming hustle and bustle of the city."—TripAdvisor Member

Botanical Garden (Hortus Botanicus), Plantage Middenlaan 2a, 120 625 9021

For "a little slice of Holland" about 30 minutes north of the city, Zaanse Schans "is very relaxing and shows you the real way of life away from the faster pace of Amsterdam. The cheese-making shop is worth a visit, and the goats and other animals will give you some laughter. Or get your picture taken in one of the large clogs outside the clog factory."-TripAdvisor Member, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Zaanse Schans, Schandsend 7, Zandaam, 075 616 2862



ROMANCE

The Tuschinski is one of the most wellknown cinemas in Europe. Its interior is a beautiful mixture of art nouveau and art deco decoration and had a major restoration a few years ago. It's well worth a visit, even if you aren't going to see a film, as they also do guided tours of the building."-TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Tuschinski Theater, 26-34 Reguliersbreestraat, 020 428 1060 "Vondelpark is wicked! I have visited 'The 'Dam' quite a few times and can honestly say that Vondelpark is the nicest place to go. If you are there with a loved one, just lie on the grass and chill out. You could be a million miles from anywhere. Fantastic!"-TripAdvisor Member, Birmingham, England

Vondelpark, City center

"This little club off the Leidesplain is a diamond in the rough. The best jazz masters in Europe regularly cruise through and display their talents. Alto Jazz is a site you shouldn't miss."—TripAdvisor Member, Columbus, Ga.

Alto Jazz Café, Korte Leidsedwarsstraat 115, 020 626 3249

"You could be a million miles from anywhere."

Where to PLAY





BUDGET

"If you're looking for a quirky way to get into some of the lesser known canal districts, **St. Nicolaas Boat Club** is a great option. You sign up in advance for a ride, meet outside Boom Chicago and go. At the end of the ride, you can give a donation which helps to maintain the boats."—
TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

St. Nicolaas Boat Club, Leidseplein 12

"Stepping into the **Begijnhof** from the busy street of the Nieuwendijk was like going through a time machine: from the hustle and bustle of modern life into an oasis of prayerful calm from an earlier age."—
TripAdvisor Member, Mumbai, India

Begijnhof, Gedempte Begijnensloot, Begijnhof 30, 020 622 1918 "On Saturday morning, take your kids to the small biological market on the **Noordermarkt**. A nice playground on the middle of the market with lots of small children running around." Locals "have their coffee and hot chocolate with Dutch 'appeltaart' (apple pie) in the small cafés around the market square."—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

Noordermarkt, Jordaan



ADVENTURE

Feel like a true Amsterdammer and go for a spin along the Amstel River. "The staff at **Mike's Bikes** can be really funny. When they're not too busy, they'll take time out for a longer chat. They have always treated me great and given me fantastic tips on where to go."—
TripAdvisor Member, Copenhagen, Denmark

Mike's Bikes, 134 Kerkstraat, 020 622 7970

"While canoeing through protected wetlands, surrounded by birds and the famous Dutch clouds, I got a real sense of how people must have lived a thousand years ago.

Wetlands Safari was a beautiful canoe trip!"—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

Wetlands Safari, 020 686 3445

Ride horseback "through the Amsterdamse Bos on the border between Amsterdam and Amstelveen. There are multiple horse tracks for both recreation and semi-professional horse riding. Have a safe ride!"—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

Amsterdamse Bos, Amstelveenseweg



EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

"The **Van Gogh Museum** follows his life from beginning to end, and the sense of struggle with a window to hope is evident in his work. Unaware of Van Gogh's life, I was soon enveloped by the life of a man so tragic and so beautiful. I was weeping by his final piece and moved for the rest of the day."—TripAdvisor Member, United Kingdom

Van Gogh Museum, Paulus Potterstraat 7, 020 570 5200

"I would absolutely recommend a trip to the **Rembrandt House**. It really feels like a mini-museum. You not only get to see the type of house that Rembrandt owned (and then lost), but there is a significant amount of artwork from Rembrandt and the other Dutch Masters. I am not particularly an art lover, but I found this to be a nice experience."— TripAdvisor Member, Washington, D.C.

Museum Het Rembrandthuis (Rembrandt House), Jodenbreestraat 4, 020 520 0400 "I found Anne Frank House (Anne Frankhuis) very informative, and a very chilling and moving experience: emotions shared in varying degrees by virtually all of the many nationalities of all ages touring the building."—TripAdvisor Member, lerusalem, Israel

Anne Frank House (Anne Frankhuis), Prinsengracht 267, 020 556 7105

"...very informative, and a very chilling and moving experience"



RELAXATION

"Sauna Deco was not at all how I had imagined it. Upon walking through the doors, you are met by superb 1920s style deco, friendly staff and are transported to a world that only the rich usually get to enjoy. I was very anxious about baring my all, having never done it before, but after the first ten minutes I started to relax, and enjoy the peace and tranquility of the whole experience. "—
TripAdvisor Member, Essex, England

Sauna Deco, Herengracht 115, 020 623 8215

Enjoy the fantastic displays at **Bloemenmarkt**, the world's only floating flower market. "Colorful. Besides fresh flowers there were all kinds of herbs, cactuses, orchids and many other plants."—TripAdvisor Member, Berlin, Germany

Bloemenmarkt, Singel Canal

"...a world that only the rich usually get to enjoy."

"One of my favorite neighborhoods in Amsterdam, the **Jordaan** boasts a multitude of interesting shops, art galleries, markets, restaurants and national monuments. Stand on the Berenstraat Bridge that crosses the Prinsengracht for a lovely view of the canal and the Westerkerk, which has Amsterdam's highest church tower."—
TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

The Jordaan, west of Central Amsterdam

What's TOUR

How to Get Around

"I recommend that you get the

I Amsterdam Card—you get free trams
and buses and entrance into most of the
major museums and sites. You also get 2nd
free canal boat rides and discounts on a lot
of other attractions. We got the 48-hour
card for €48. Well worth it!"—TripAdvisor
Member, Cork, Ireland

"Amsterdam's canals are the best and most unique feature. Venice of the North? Forget it. Venice is the Amsterdam of the South. St. Nicolaas runs 12-person **open-air boats** and the captains know a lot about Amsterdam and aren't like the big boats where they press play on the tape and try not to fall asleep. One of the best things to do in Amsterdam!"—TripAdvisor Member, New York, N.Y.

"You can easily **walk** from one place to the other—it is a great way to discover this charming city. Get a good map of the city: with all the canals, bridges and streets (that all look alike the first time), it can get confusing. Also, make sure not to walk on bike trails and to check for bikes before crossing them."—TripAdvisor Member

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WHERE to eat



FAMILIES

For fun and good eats, visit **Boerderij**Meerzicht in Amsterdam Bos, the largest of the city's many parks. "You walk through a beautiful forest and arrive at a pancake restaurant in the woods. It feels very Hansel and Gretel."—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

Boerderij Meerzicht, Koenenkade 56, 020 679 2744



The Pancake Bakery, Prinsengracht 191, 120 625 1333

"I can think of no restaurant more appropriate for a romantic dinner than **De Belhamel**. The back dining room is art nouveau perfect and has a gorgeous nighttime view of the Brouwersgracht."—TripAdvisor Member, Austin, Texas

De Belhamel, Brouwersgracht 60, 020 622 1095

"Yes, you can get a conventional 'biefburger'

at **Burgermeester**, but you can also get a 'mini trio,' which lets you try three miniburgers, from the nine varieties they feature. The strawberry shake was also great—it tasted like real strawberries."—TripAdvisor Member. Palo Alto. Calif.

Burgermeester, Albert Cuypstraat 48, 020 670 9339 (and other locations)

"I booked a special birthday celebration for my wife at **Greetje**. After a complimentary glass of champagne, we were taken to a table overlooking the canal, the best spot for a romantic meal. Everything—starters, mains and desserts—was cooked perfectly. A truly great experience."—TripAdvisor Member, Glasgow, Scotland

Greetje, Peperstraat 23, 120 779 7450

ROMANCE

BUDGET

"Toscanini is one of the best restaurants in the world. The modern Italian cuisine, although expensive, is of the highest quality. The atmosphere is relaxed, with people enjoying themselves, but not too loudly."—TripAdvisor Member, Berlin, Germany

Toscanini, Lindengracht 75, 020 623 2813

"...art nouveau perfect"



"De Pata Negra is a small Spanish tapas restaurant. Reputed to be the best in Amsterdam and is always filled with locals. Great food, and the price is reasonable for what

you get."—TripAdvisor Member, Netherlands

De Pata Negra, Utrechtsestraat 124,
020 422 6250

"Kam Yin is cheap, cheerful and does the trick. From locals to tourists, it's constantly turning over tables. They have Chinese and Surinamese food, and it all looked great. The portions are large, so consider sharing!"—TripAdvisor Member, Las Vegas, Nev.

Kam Yin, Warmoesstraat 6, 120 625 3115

"We wanted a place that served good food fast, not fast food. The food at **Wok to Walk** was great, the quality was wonderful and the employees were friendly. You just pick a rice or noodle and then add what you want to it. It was quick and easy."—TripAdvisor Member, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Wok to Walk, Kolksteeg 8, 020 625 0721 (and other locations)

WHERE to eat





HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

Betty's "is the most amazing vegetarian restaurant! The menu changes from week to week depending on the availability of fresh produce, and the owner is very knowledgeable."—TripAdvisor Member

Betty's, Rijnstraat 75, 020 644 5896

"The extensive menu is playful."

"De Bakkerswinkel is always full. The extensive menu is playful. It lists healthy salads, soup, 'minis' (sandwiches), true Dutch 'boterhammen' and many kinds of quiches and cakes. If you don't mind the hungry cat walking around (it is better than having mice run amok), this is a wonderful place for breakfast, brunch, lunch or high tea."—TripAdvisor Member, Stourbridge, United Kingdom

De Bakkerswinkel, Warmoesstraat 69, 020 489 8000

"If you've never had Tibetan food, the **Snow Lion Restaurant** is a good choice. We opted for the 2 person menu: one vegetarian and one not. The food had a little bit of a curry taste, little bit of an Asian 'sambal' taste and a little bit of a Chinese 'tauchu' taste. It was awesome!"—TripAdvisor Member, Accra, Ghana

Snow Lion Tibetan Restaurant, Haarlemmerstraat 50, 020 422 7776

TripAdvisor members have posted more than 6,000,000 photos on the site. The good, the bad and the very candid. It's almost like being there!



HIDDEN GEMS

"The fondue and entrecote at **Café Bern** are to die for! The place is very cozy and I'd suggest making reservations in advance. Another tip: Go with a very healthy appetite so you can enjoy every last morsel!"—
TripAdvisor Member, Philadelphia, Pa.

Cafe Bern, Nieuwmarkt 9, 020 622 0034

"Visaandeschelde is the best seafood restaurant I've ever been to. It does come at a steep price, but the food is definitely worth it. The head chef prepares combos that, at first glance, seem strange and daring, but are absolutely delicious!"—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam

Visaandeschelde, Scheldeplein 4, 020 675 1583

"Kop van Jut is a cozy little restaurant very close to the Leidseplein. The food is simple, but very good. No tourists to be seen, but they do have an English menu."—TripAdvisor Member

Kop van Jut, Leidsekruisstraat 24, 020 320 7722

SPECIAL EVENTS

Who says Amsterdam is only for adults? The annual **Cinekid Festival** presents hundreds of shorts, feature films, TV movies and series, animations, new media workshops and interactive installations for kids of all ages to enjoy. (October 12 – 21)

Cinekid Festival, De Balie, 020 531 7890, http://www.cinekid.nl

See cutting edge films from emerging and established filmmakers at the **International Documentary Film Festival**, featuring long and short doc competitions as well as a debut film category. (November 16-27) **International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, Various venues, 020 627 3329, http://www.idfa.nl**

Celebrate the plant that makes Amsterdam famous at the **24th Cannabis Cup**, an annual competitive event that sees commercial businesses showing off their best hashish, marijuana and hemp wares that include clothing, food and jewelry. (November 20-24)

 ${\bf Cannabis\ Cup,\ Various\ venues,\ http://hightimes.com/public/cancup}$



Spend Christmas afternoon listening to some of the Mahler's finest symphonies at this year's **Concertgebouw Christmas Matinee** (December 25)

Concertgebouw Christmas Matinee, Concertgebouwplein 2-6, 020 305 1010, http://www.concertgebouworkest.nl/

Feel the passion of the Latin beats as masters of this Argentinean art form move across the dance floor at **Tangomagia**, Amsterdam's international tango festival. (December 26-30)

Tangomagia, Various venues, http://www.tangomagia.com

Shop until you drop or just stand back and admire the season's newest designs during **Amsterdam Fashion Week**. (January 25 – 29) **Amsterdam Fashion Week**, **Various venues**, **020 684 2878**,

http://www.amsterdamfashionweek.com

On Stille Omgang, watch in awe as a silent procession parades through the streets of Amsterdam to commemorate the "Miracle of the Host," a

Catholic tradition involving a very resilient Communion wafer. (March 17)
Stille Omgang, begins at Begijhnof Kapel, http://www.stille-omgang.nl

Where STAY





FAMILIES

"Our expectations have been surpassed" by **Hotel Fita**. "We were received with the most friendly welcome and were impeccably served. The hotel is located at a fantastic spot, just next to the Van Gogh Museum and the Rijksmuseum."—TripAdvisor Member, Zurich, Switzerland

Hotel Fita, Jan Luykenstraat 37, 020 679 0976

"My family all agreed that the **Moevenpick** was wonderful." Though it's a tram-ride away from the action, "the combination of modern design, many amenities and friendly staff makes this a great hotel. During rainy days, we looked forward to heading back to the hotel."—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto,

Moevenpick Hotel Amsterdam City Center, Piet Heinkade 11, 020 519 1200 Hotel Zandbergen is a "lovely, clean, bright and airy hotel. Location next to Vondelpark is excellent and so convenient. The surrounding posh shopping district was a real find. The cleaning staff did a great job as I don't think I have seen a bathroom sparkle like that before."—TripAdvisor Member, Midlands, U.K.

Hotel Zandbergen, Willemsparkweg 205, 020 676 9321



ROMANCE

In arguably the best location in the city on the Herengracht Canal, **Banks Mansion** offers guests a unique mix of authentic Amsterdam ambiance and contemporary luxury. "Everything about our stay was excellent, but what made it special was the caring, attentive staff that bent over backwards to help us at every turn."—TripAdvisor Member, Philadelphia, Pa.

Banks Mansion, Herengracht 519-525, 020 420 0055

Seven Bridges is a 300-year-old canal house in the historic heart of Amsterdam. "The rooms are the most beautiful examples of the long tradition of Dutch excellence in decoration using a charming eclectic style. Each room is unique. The excellent service is discreet, the rooms VERY clean. A true Amsterdam experience located two blocks from Rembrandtplein on the most beautiful canal in the city."—TripAdvisor Member, Bradenton, Fla.

Seven Bridges Hotel, Reguliersgracht 31, 020 623 1329

"If you want a hotel in Amsterdam which is clean and tidy, has friendly staff, has excellent facilities, and is in an ideal location (i.e. close enough to the action of Leidseplein and Dam Square while being far enough away to avoid the more 'undesirable' areas of the city), then **Hotel Estherea** is for you."—TripAdvisor Member, Tyne & Wear, U.K.

Hotel Estherea, Singel 303-309, 020 624 5146

A true Amsterdam experience



BUDGET

"Had an amazing stay at the **Owl Hotel**. It's a small place in a great location, really central with all amenities and transport links close by, but in a really quiet and sweet street. The staff were great, so helpful and friendly. The rooms are small but are all you need: comfortable, safe, clean and warm."—TripAdvisor Member, Wales

Owl Hotel, Roemer Visscherstraat I, 120 618 9484

"I have nothing but praise for **Hotel Brouwer**. From the tasty breakfast to the spectacular views, this hotel is the best deal in Amsterdam. We were central to everything. Yes, you are in a Red Light District, but that's easily ignorable, and you are just a couple of blocks from the main shopping area."—TripAdvisor Member, Logan, Utah

Hotel Brouwer, Singel 83, 020 624 6358

"The **Boutique Hotel View** is more than value for money! A perfect hotel with atmosphere, an excellent view in the heart of the city and big, tastefully decorated rooms."—TripAdvisor Member, Parnu,

Boutique Hotel View, Leidsekade 77, 020 528 9668



LUXURY

"We were so pleasantly surprised by **The Toren**. Situated in an old canal house, the decor is baroque and the overall effect is far more luxurious and visually satisfying than the concept-less, bare bones style of many other places we've stayed. Sumptuous, cozy and a great staff, it's the best hotel in Amsterdam."—TripAdvisor Member, Istanbul, Turkey

The Toren, Keizersgracht 164, 020 622 6352

Sofitel the Grand Amsterdam is a classic, Baroque-style hotel. The site of the 1966 wedding of Queen Beatrix, "The Grand" continues to retain its if-it's-good-enough-forroyalty style. "Every minute was an excellent experience. It's a beautiful hotel in a very central location."—TripAdvisor Member, Canada

Sofitel the Grand Amsterdam, Oudezijds Voorburgwal 197, 020 555 3111 "The **717** is a beautiful town house sitting on one of Amsterdam's unique canals. It's immaculate with lovely rooms and incredible, friendly service. They really could not have been more amenable. Such a nice touch that adds to this feeling like a very luxurious home away from home."—TripAdvisor Member, London, U.K.

Hotel 717, Prinsengracht 717, 020 427 0717

Where STAY





HIDDEN GEMS

Live like a real Amsterdammer with the keys to your own luxury apartment or canal house. Amsterdam Escape "made the Amsterdam experience 100 percent better. The apartments make you feel like you are coming home each night"—TripAdvisor Member, Scotland

Amsterdam Escape, Geldersekade Nieuwmarkt, 020 320 6402

"If you really want to feel at home, then Hotel Misc. is the one you're looking for. Rachel and Pepjin are excellent hosts. Their extreme sympathy was the best thing. The breakfast was excellent, and the rooms were clean, comfortable and nice."-TripAdvisor Member, Barcelona, Spain

Hotel Misc., Kloveniersburgwal 20, 020 330 6241

"As a rule we stay at unusual, highquality accommodation with that bit of extra personal attention. We were not disappointed at Suite 259. Its proximity to all the major museums and the Concertgebouw makes it THE Amsterdam destination for lovers of classical music and museums."-TripAdvisor Member, Bonn, Germany

Suite 259, Overtoom 259, 062 424 1031



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