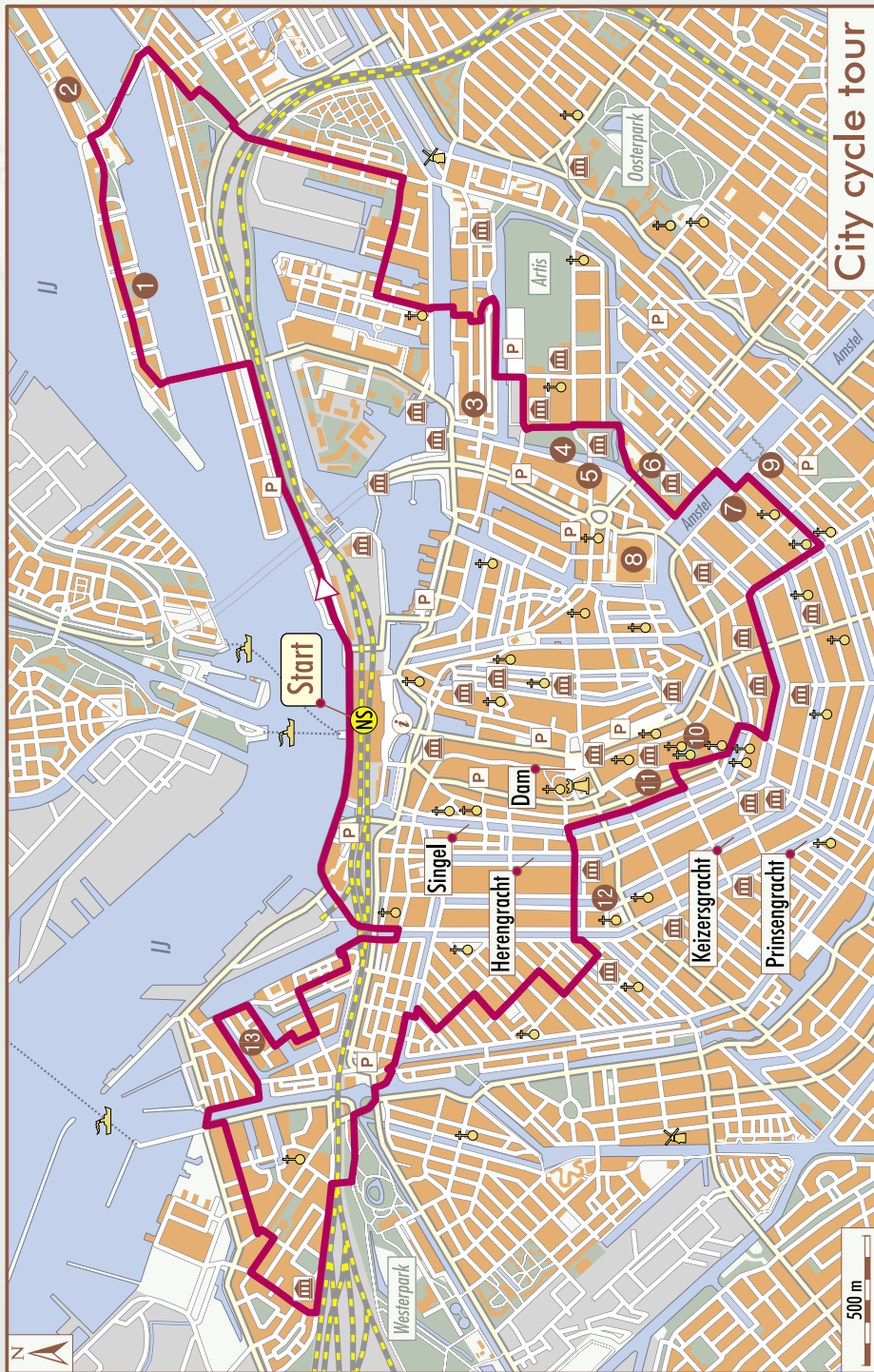


City cycle tour



17 km

10.5 miles

City cycle tour

This tour will show you many of the different faces of Amsterdam. Of course you'll see its historic centre with the famous canals where during the 17th century rich merchants built their stately homes. Next you'll cycle through the Jordaan district, which used to be a working-class area in the early 17th century. Nowadays it's a pleasant neighbourhood with narrow streets and many little shops and pubs, an area which is greatly favoured by youngsters and yuppies. In the Jordaan you may want to visit some almshouses, dating right back to the 17th century. In the Plantage district you'll find the splendid urban villa's of the early 19th century. And in the Spaar-dammer neighbourhood you'll see some beautiful examples of working class apartment-buildings, designed by architects of the Amsterdam School in the early years of the 20th century. This architectural style made use of rounded shapes and



brick ornaments to decorate the buildings. The buildings in the Spaarndammerbuurt are among the most important examples of the Amsterdam School. Last but not least you may be surprised by very modern houses on the banks of the River IJ, built in the late 20th century. Not only old warehouses have been converted into modern apartments, brand new residential areas have been built there as well, designed with a variety of architecture. On many occasions you may observe how modern buildings fit very well within the existing architecture. Perhaps that harmony is one of the most impressive and charming features of the city of Amsterdam.

At the end of the route description you'll find a little bit of explanation on some of the points of interest in this tour (📍 + number)

- The starting point is at the rear exit of the Central Station at the De Ruyterkade
- 0.0 Cross the road and turn →
Follow the cycle track to the cycle signpost (on the left)
 - 0.4 Keep ↑ <**Zeeburg**
Follow the cycle track to the 3th traffic lights for cyclists
[*Successively you pass the Bimhuis, the Amsterdam music house esp. for jazz and improvised music, and the Amsterdam Passenger Terminal, where the cruise vessels visiting Amsterdam moor.*]
 - 1.6 Turn ← and pass underneath the building
Follow the road over the bridge to the cycle track to the right
[*From the bridge you have a nice view on the Java-eiland, see ❶ 1.*]
 - 2.0 Turn → (**Tosarituin**)
Follow the cycle track until you cross the tramline
 - 3.0 After crossing the tramline turn →*
Follow the road over the bridge and go ↗ to the traffic lights
[* *In front of you is the KNSM-eiland, see ❶ 2.*]
 - 3.5 Cross the road and go ↑
Follow the cycle track (**Fred Petterbaan**) to the end
 - 3.9 Go ↑ and pass underneath the viaduct
Go ↑ (**Czaar Peterstraat**)
Follow the road to the 2nd branch for cyclists on the right
(Both branches are marked by two red and white poles.)
 - 4.6 Turn → (**Eerste Coehoornstraat**)
Follow the cycle track, further down the road, ↑ to the drawbridge
Continue ↑ to the crossing (**Poolstraat**)
 - 5.1 Turn ← (**Kleine Wittenburgerstaat**)
Follow this road, left of the square, to the traffic lights

- 5.2 Go ↑ and cross the bridge
 [*On the left a nice view on mill de Gooyer.*]
 After the bridge go ↗ and turn ← (**Overhaalsgang**)
 At the end go ↑ <**Jordaan**
 [*Now you're entering the **Entrepotdok** area, see ❶ 3.]*
- 5.5 At the end of the cycle track turn ← (*the **Laagte Kadijk***)
 At the end turn → (**Entrepotdok**)
 Follow the quay to the drawbridge on the left
 [*On the left beyond the water is the Amsterdam Zoo Artis; the drawbridge is - very appropriate - called 'Nijlpaardenbrug' or 'Hippo-bridge'.]*
- 5.9 Turn ← and at the end of the cycle track turn →
 Follow the **Plantage Doklaan** to the end 🚗
- 6.2 Turn ← 🖐️ (**Plantage Parklaan**)
 Follow the road to the traffic lights 🚗
 [*On your right is the **Wertheimpark**, see ❶ 4.]*
- 6.4 Go ↑ 🖐️ (**Plantage Parklaan**)
 Follow the road to the road at the right
 [*At km 4.6 → is to the entrance of the **Hortus Botanicus**, see ❶ 5; the entrance is on the left just before the bridge.]*








- 6.6 Turn → (**Hortusplantsoen**)
Follow the road through the tunnel to the end
[*On the right you see the hothouses of the Hortus. After the tunnel the road is named Nieuwe Herengracht; here you're passing the new **Hermitage Amsterdam Museum**, see ❶ 6.]*
- 7.0 Turn ← and follow the road to the drawbridge on the right
[*Now you're cycling along the Amstel.*]
- 7.3 Turn → and after the bridge immediately turn ←
[*The bridge is the **Magere Brug** or Skinny Bridge, see ❶ 7.]*
Before the next bridge turn → (**Prinsengracht**)
At the crossing go ↑ 🖐 and continue to the square on the right
- 7.9 At the crossing turn → (*the **Reguliersgracht***)
Follow this canal to the tree-lined square with a statue
[*You pass the Amstelveld square with the wooden Amstel church, which was built in 1670 and is still in use.*]
- 8.2 In front of the square turn ← (**Herengracht**)
Follow the **Herengracht** to the traffic lights
Keep ↑ and continue the **Herengracht** to the crossing



- 8.8 Turn → and go to the bridge 🚶
 [Just before the bridge, on your right hand, is the Floating Flower Market; which was kept for the first time in 1862.]
- 8.9 Beyond the bridge immediately turn ← 🚶 (**Singel**)
 After approx. 100 meters follow the road ↗ and ↖*
 (Follow the tram rails curving to the right and the left.)
 Follow the **Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal** to the 2nd road on the left
 [* Not far from here you'll find the beautiful and surprisingly quiet **Begijnhof**, see for a route description at 📍 10.
 At Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal nr. 357 is the **Amsterdam Historical Museum**, see 📍 11.]
- 9.3 Turn ← 🚶 (**Rosmarijnsteeg**) and at the crossing keep ↑ 🚶
 At the canal turn → (**Singel**)
 Follow the canal to the traffic lights
 [The Singel is the oldest of Amsterdam's canals.
 At the 1st crossing → is to the Dam square.]
- 9.7 Keep ↑ to the crossing
 Turn ← and follow the road ↑ to the end
 (**Oude Leliestraat**, further on **Leliegracht**)
 [From the 2nd bridge you have a nice view on the **Westertoren**, see 📍 12.]
- 9.9 Go ↑ 🚶 (**Nieuwe Leliestraat**)
 [Now you're entering the Jordaan district.]
 Follow the road to the 2nd crossing
- 10.2 Turn → (**Tweede Leliedwarsstraat**)
 At the bridge go ↑*
 Continue the road to the pedestrian area
 [* Before the bridge ← is to the small **Sint Andries almshouse**, anno 1614: Egelantiersgracht 105/141.]
- 10.7 Go ↑ and after 50 meters turn →
 Follow the road to the 2nd crossing (*the Anjeliersstraat*)

- 11.0 Turn ← **Eerste Anjeliersdwarstraat**
Follow the road to the 2nd crossing
[The 2nd road to the left ← is to the fine **Karthuizer almshouse**,
anno 1650, Karthuizerstaat 63.]
- 11.3 Turn → (**Lindengracht**)
[At Lindengracht 149/163 is the small **Pieters Jansz Suykerhoff almshouse**, anno 1667.]
At the crossing turn ← (**Tweede Goudsbloemdwarstraat**)
Follow the road to the 4th crossing
- 11.6 Turn → (**Palmgracht**) and at the end go ↑
Over the bridge turn ← (**Brouwersgracht**)
Follow the canal to the crossing with a major road
- 12.0 Go ↑ 🖐️ (**Korte Marnixkade**)
At the end turn ← and go (walking!) to the traffic lights
Turn → , cross 2 x a major road and turn ← 🖐️
Follow the lane through the park to the lane at the right



- 12.5 Turn → and after the viaduct turn ←
 Follow the **Zaanstraat** to the slight curve to the right
 Turn ← and continue the **Zaanstraat** to the road to the right
 [*Notice the Amsterdam School apartment-buildings in the Zaanstraat and further on in the Hembrugstraat.*]
- 13.1 Turn → and follow the **Hembrugstraat** to the 3rd crossing
 Turn → (**Houtrijkstraat**) and at the crossing turn ←
 At the crossing go ↑ 
 Follow the **Nova Zemblastraat** to the end
- 14.1 Turn ←  and go to the bridge on the right
 Turn → and after the bridge turn again → (**Houtmankade**)
 Follow the quay to the road at the right
 [*You are entering the **Westelijke Eilanden** district, see 13.*]
- 14.4 Go ↑ (**Zoutkeetsgracht**) and follow the quay to the end
 Go → over the bridge and follow the road to the next bridge
 Before the bridge turn → (**Realengracht**)
 Follow the road to the end
- 15.1 Turn ← and after the bridge turn → (*the **Prinseneiland***)
 Follow the road to the crossing
 Turn ← and follow the road to the 3rd crossing
 (Past the bridge.)
- 15.5 Turn → (**Grote Bickerstraat**)
 Follow the road to the 3rd road to the left
 Turn ← (**Blokmakerstraat**)
 Follow the road ↗ and turn ← to the cycle track
 Go after the viaduct ↑ to the crossing (**Korte Prinsengracht**)
- 16.0 Turn 2 x ← 
 Follow the road to the end (**Korte Prinsengracht**) 
- 16.4 Turn ↗ and follow the road to the traffic lights 
 Cross the major road and go ↑ to the left side of the road
 Follow the cycle track on the left to the Central Station
- 17.0 End of the City cycle tour at the rear exit of the Central Station

Point of interest

1. At the **Java-eiland** you'll see the newest of Amsterdam canals. The cycle track on the Java-eiland goes through the five spacious inner gardens: successively the Tosarituin (a winter garden), the Imogirituin (an autumn garden), the Taman Sapituin (a summer garden), the Kratontuin (a spring garden) and the Bogortuin, the biggest of all: the city park. Those who love modern architecture will surely enjoy the variety and boldness of the Java-eiland architecture. Each building on the island is designed by young architects. Each is different in shape.

2. Like the Java-eiland, the **KNSM-eiland** is a man-made island in the River IJ. Formerly these islands were offshore harbours and several great shipping-companies once had their premises there. Since those companies have left the harbour their offices and warehouses have been transformed in modern designed apartment buildings. Now the KNSM-eiland is, like the Java-eiland, a lively residential area with monumental buildings, broad lanes and nice squares with pubs and trendy shops. At the IJ-side you see the 'Sky dome', a 60 m high apartment building. At the other side, the Levantkade, you can see some houses of the captains of the KNSM (= Royal Dutch Steamship Company).

3. The **Entrepotdok** has been constructed between 1827 and 1840. The dock consisted of more than 50 warehouses. Initially the stored goods were meant for Amsterdam, later it changed into a transfer center. The Entrepotdok was at that time the largest complex of warehouses in Europe. In the 1980's the complex has been transformed in a residential area. The old gables and the gable stones with the names of several Dutch and Belgian cities has been preserved. They are reminding you of the former use of the Entrepotdok.





4. In the 19th and early 20th centuries the Plantage district was an area favoured by the rich & wealthy. The name 'Plantage' (= plantation/estate) points to the many gardens which at that time were surrounding the houses in this district. In the **Wertheimpark** is the Auschwitz monument, designed by the famous Dutch sculptor, painter and writer Jan Wolkers. The broken mirrors are symbolizing the sky that since Auschwitz is broken forever.

5. The **Hortus Botanicus** is one of the oldest botanical gardens in the world. In the gardens and hothouses you can admire more than 6000 exotic and indigenous plants. In the Oranjerie – with one of the nicest terraces of Amsterdam – is a café. The gardens are open for public Monday to Friday 8.00 – 16.30; the entrance is free of charge.

6. The Nursing-home Amstelhof was built in 1681-1683 as a home for the elderly in need of care (initially only for women, later for men as well) and has remained in use as a nursing home into the 20th century. Now it has been given a new destination as a Western branch of the famous Hermitage Museum in the Russian city of St. Petersburg. This new museum is called **Hermitage Amsterdam**. The museum is open daily 10.00 – 17.00.

7, 8, 9. One of the most known bridges on the River Amstel is the **Magere Brug** or Skinny Bridge (7). This picturesque drawbridge was built in 1670 and broadened in 1871. Only pedestrians and cyclists are allowed to cross the bridge. Standing on the bridge you can see on the one hand the round white building of the **Stopera** (8), which houses the City Hall and the Music Theatre (built in 1986). On the other side you see the **locks** in the River Amstel (9). Three times a week (and in summer time even five or seven times a week) at night the water in Amsterdam's canals will be refreshed by pumping in clean water from the IJsselmeer. In that case most of the 14 locks around the inner city are closed.



10. Route to the Begijnhof: after curving ↖ follow the cycle track ↑ and at the end of the square (Spui) turn ← (**Gedempte Begijnensloot**). After several metres you'll have the entrance at your left.

The **Begijnhof** dates back to the 14th century and was a kind of cloister. However, the women in the community had less restrictions than nuns. Although they promised to keep their chastity, they were allowed to leave the community any time, for example if they wanted to get married. Also the beguines were allowed to keep their possessions. So many of the houses in the Begijnhof are splendid and costly. The main task of the beguines was taking care of diseased people. In the middle of the Begijnhof you'll find the so called Scottish Church, one of the oldest churches of Amsterdam (approx. 1400). Right across the church is a Roman Catholic chapel, which was for some time a secret church (1671). Across the Scottish Church also is Amsterdam's oldest house. This wooden house was built in 1460.

11. The **Amsterdams Historisch Museum** (Amsterdam Historical Museum) tells the story of the growth and heyday of Amsterdam. Archeological finds (like a medieval child's shoe), maps and paintings show how the city got to be what it is nowadays. Photo's and films show the ups and downs like the poverty of the Jordaan district and Ajax' football successes. The museum is housed in the former Civic Orphanage, where Amsterdam's orphans once lived. The Museum Bookshop (entrance free of charge) offers you many books and guides on Amsterdam, and a wide range of souvenirs.

12. The **Westertoren** (Tower of the Westerkerk) is 85 metres high (about 279 ft.) and is the highest church tower of Amsterdam. In 1620 the building of the Westerkerk took a start, in 1631 the church officially opened its gates. The tower was completed in 1638. On top of the tower you'll see a blue crown. In 1489 Maximilian the king and later on the emperor of Austria, awarded Amsterdam the right to bear his crown out of gratitude for rendering services and as a token of his protection. Somewhat lower you see Amsterdam's coat of arms with the black vertical bar and the three St. Andrew's crosses in the middle. Maybe those crosses represent the three dangers which often plagued the city: flood, fire and pestilence. The black bar might represent the River Amstel. On top of the coat of arms once again you see the imperial crown.

13. The **Westelijke Eilanden** (Western Islands). This area exists of three islands (Prinseneiland, Bickerseiland and Realeneiland) which have been man-made in the IJ in the 17th century. There were shipyards, wharves, working area's and warehouses where goods were stored such as salt, cereals, tobacco, wines, cat skins (!!), pitch and tar. In the middle of the 20th century the islands were abandoned. Now they're transformed into a dwelling area, much favoured by artists. It's a romantic neighbourhood with narrow streets, small drawbridges, houseboats in the canals and carefully renovated living appartements.

