The Big Cities Tour

14 days, *€ 1835*



DUTCH BIKE TOURS
Bike, Breathe & Discover

Introduction



This is our longest cycle route: two action-packed weeks of many beautiful and interesting sights. Cultural landscapes such as panoramic polder landscapes with windmills, dikes, meadows, farmhouses; or bulb flower fields (in spring) will delight you. Natural landscapes such as lakes and rivers; dunes, woods and nature reserves will relax you. You will ride your bike on cycle tracks right through big cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Haarlem as well as picturesque smaller towns. You will be spoilt for choice of tourist attractions, many of them reminders of a rich history in trade and fishery.

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Utrecht/Bunnik**
Arrival in Utrecht.

Day 2 **Utrecht/Bunnik - Harderwijk** **61 km**
Hidden away in the woods is hamlet Lage Vuursche. Have a break at the famous pancake inn round the corner from Queen Beatrix castle Drakensteyn. Along the shores of Randmeren, lakes formed in 1957 when the Flevopolder was created, youll reach Harderwijk. This lively town was once a member of the Hansa League, a Northern European alliance of trading guilds in the 13th-17th Centuries. Harderwijk was a fishing port until 1932 when the Zuiderzee was cut off from the North Sea and work was started on the Flevopolder. Today, the Fish Gate and fish restaurants are among the many reminders of the towns fishing and seafaring past.

Day 3 **Harderwijk - Enkhuizen** **61 km**
Ride through the woods and farmland of Flevopolder to Lelystad. In Nieuwland Museum you can see an exhibition on why and how the polder came to be. Cross Lake IJsselmeer to Enkhuizen atop a 30 km dike! You will see our Golden Age reflected in the historical buildings of pretty Enkhuizen. Dont miss the excellent Zuiderzee Museum which includes an exhibition about the days when Dutch East India Company trading ships from towns on the Zuiderzee sailed the seven seas trading in spices and bulbs. Moreover, you can visit a recreated Zuiderzee village of old.

Day 4 **Enkhuizen - Alkmaar** **59 km**

After looking around pretty Hoorn, which also made its fortune trading in the Golden Age, you will set off on today's coast-to-coast bike route from Lake IJsselmeer to the North Sea. You will pass by Holland's oldest polder, Beemster, drained by windmills in 1612(!). You can also visit an interesting "museum windmill" as well as "cheese town" Alkmaar. If possible, plan your trip so you can see the Friday morning traditional cheese market.

Day 5 **Alkmaar - Zandvoort** **57 km**

The sandy beaches of the North Sea are backed by dune systems that safeguard the hinterland from the sea and supply drinking water to neighbouring towns. Today you will cycle through a Dune Reserve and a National Park that protect the many species of dune flora and fauna. Cross the North Sea Canal by ferry and then set course for Zandvoort, a well-known seaside resort.

Day 6 **Zandvoort - Amsterdam** **32 km**

You'll love the elegant city of Haarlem, voted best city for shopping, Haarlems pedestrianised city centre and the three lovely market squares are a delight. Look up at the façades of historical buildings and spot the Renaissance style stepped gables and bell-shaped Dutch gables. At the end of the day, Amsterdam awaits! This wonderful city has surprises in store for everybody.

Day 7 **Amsterdam - Utrecht/Bunnik** **61 km**

Follow the River Amstel out of town. On the banks of the small River Vecht, Hollands Golden Age is reflected in the beautiful stately homes and garden pavilions built by rich Amsterdam merchants in the 17th and 18th Centuries. The lively centre of the big city of Utrecht will draw you to its attractive canals and unique 14th Century wharves.

Day 8 **Utrecht/Bunnik - Gouda** **62 km**

Today you'll set course for Gouda and see stately homes, castles, woods, lakes and parks along the way. If possible, plan your trip so that you can visit the traditional Thursday morning cheese market at the start of Day 9. Gouda is also famous for making candles and syrup waffles (try one hot!).

Day 9 **Gouda - Scheveningen/The Hague** **64 km**

Through open grassland you will cycle to The Hague, home to the government and the Queen. The Hague is brimming with things to do and see. You might like to take the opportunity to see Vermeer's famous painting "The Girl with the Pearl Earring" in Mauritshuis Museum. Another favourite is Mesdag's cylindrical Panorama of Scheveningen in 1881. Then climb back on your bike and check out 21st Century Scheveningen, the busy seaside resort where you'll spend the night.

Day 10 **Scheveningen/The Hague - Rotterdam** **64 km**

Cycle down the coast through dunes and past seaside resorts. Then pedal east along the New Waterway ship canal (completed in 1872), past fishing villages, windmills and jenever distilleries, to the great city of Rotterdam. Today you can also choose for a shorter route, which will take you through the beautifull city of Delft, Today you can also choose for a 14 km shorter cycling route, which will take you through the beautiful city of Delft, the city where painter Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675) lived.

Day 11 **Rotterdam - Papendrecht** **31 km**

Modern Rotterdam offers architecture, art, port tours, a maritime museum and shops galore. The re-developed inner-city harbours are hotspots. First you'll cycle to Kinderdijk, explore the site where 19 windmills have been standing majestically in rows since 1740. They were used to drain excess water out of the low-lying polder up into the River Lek. One of the mills is open to the public. Your destination, Papendrecht, is just a ferry crossing away from of one of Holland's oldest towns; Dordrecht. Dordrecht is completely surrounded by rivers. Beautiful bridges take you across the water into the heart of town. Around the harbour you will see many monumental buildings.

Day 12 **Papendrecht - Gorinchem** **59 km**

Today you cycle through a part of Biesbosch National Park, one of the few remaining freshwater tidal areas in Europe. The countless islands of marshy willow woods, reed-lands and grasslands are surrounded by creeks and rivers. The place is a resting, foraging and breeding site for water birds. Nature lovers should visit Biesbosch Centre Dordrecht for information on this fascinating area. Before you arrive in Gorinchem you can, if you wish, take a boat trip to visit the interesting Loevesteijn castle. The town of Woudrichem is definitely worth a visit.

Day 13 **Gorinchem - Utrecht/Bunnik** **58 km**

Gorinchem's walled town centre has a long turbulent history and over two hundred monuments to remember it by. It used to be big in fishery, markets and trade, but was often plagued by floods and conquerors (the town was the gateway to Holland). "Glass town" Leerdam is a meeting place where glassblowers from many countries demonstrate their craft. As you near the end of this tour, stop off once again at the lovely city of Utrecht.

Day 14 **Return Home**

After breakfast in your hotel, you will return home.

Prices, Data, Booking

Starting dates:
Daily from April 1 till September 17.
Please note: a minimum stay of 2 nights in a row is required in the hotel in Amsterdam on the following dates (and a higher price will be charged):
26–28 March 2027
27–30 April 2027
1 May 2027
6–8 May 2027
14–16 May 2027
25 and 26 May 2027

Price pp		**€**
Double room, breakfast		1,825.00
Single room, breakfast		2,800.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only		110.00
Upgrades pp/night		**€**
Boutique Hotel Karel de Stoute, Gorinchem		25.00
Hotel Mitland, Utrecht		40.00
Relais & Châteaux Weeshuis Gouda, Gouda		100.00
Westcord Art Hotel, Amsterdam		10.00
Surcharge per person		**€**
Stay in Amsterdam on Saturday		25.00
Rental bike		**€**
Child bike		143.00
Hybrid		169.00
E-bike		364.00
Extra services		**€**
Bike Breakdown pass	€ 4.00 x 13	52.00
Child seat	€ 5.00 x 13	65.00
Bike theft insurance	€ 3.00 x 13	39.00
E-bike theft insurance	€ 6.00 x 13	78.00
Extra luggage	€ 5.00 x 13	65.00
Tag-along bike	€ 10.00 x 13	130.00
Child trailer	€ 18.00 x 13	234.00
Bike helmet	per piece	10.00
SGR	per piece	5.00
discount	per piece	-25.00
Giving back to nature	per piece	5.00

Starting point:
Utrecht, Bunnik, Harderwijk or Amsterdam

Accommodation

The hotels or B&Bs on this trip have been carefully selected for their location, atmosphere and/or unique services. All rooms are en-suite. A list of the hotels we work with appears below. If a certain accommodation is unable to confirm due to lack of availability, we will request a comparable alternative.
When selecting the accomodation, we try to take into account as much as possible a safe and closed bicycle shed. However, we cannot do this with all of them guarantee and this partly depends on the number of bicycles of other guests.

Hotel Mitland ** (Utrecht)**
www.mitland.nl

Best Western Hotel Baars **
(Harderwijk)
www.hotelbaars.nl

Hotel Restaurant Die Port van Cleve * (Enkhuizen)**
www.deportvancleve.nl

Grand Hotel Alkmaar **
(Alkmaar)
www.grandhotelalkmaar.nl

NH Zandvoort ** (Zandvoort)**
https://www.nh-hotels.com/nl/hotel/nh-zandvoort

Westcord Art Hotel */****
(Amsterdam)
www.westcordhotels.nl/hotel/art

City Hotel Gouda ** (Gouda)**
www.cityhotelgouda.com

Boulevard Hotel *
(Scheveningen)
www.boulevardhotel.nl

ss Rotterdam ** (Rotterdam)**
www.ssrotterdam.com

Leonardo Hotel Papendrecht
****** (Papendrecht)**
www.leonardo-
hotels.nl/papendrecht

Van der Valk Hotel Gorinchem-
A27 * (Gorinchem)**
www.hotelgorinchema27.nl

Practical Info



13 Nights included



3/4 Star Hotels



Breakfast included



Detailed roadbooks with maps and tourist information



The possibility of renting our bikes



7-days a week service-hotline



Luggage transport to your next hotel



CS Utrecht. For more information:
ns.nl/reisplannen



Parking possibilities at the hotel



Any ferry crossings are not included

Arrival info



Nearest Airport is Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)



The train from Schiphol to Utrecht departs 4 times per hour. Travel time is about 30 minutes. A single ticket costs approx €10- per person excl. bicycle.

For timetables and tickets, go to www.ns.nl/en. For bus details, how to reach the hotel, check: www.9292.nl/en.