

What to do when in Amsterdam

Location Kien B&B in the City Centre.

To give you an idea where you are in town at the B&B: Kien B&B is located just 400 meters from the van Gogh and Rijksmuseum. It's less than a 5 min walk to the Leidseplein or Rembrandtplein (plein = square) where you will find tons of bars and clubs.

You can see the Bed and Breakfast on Google Earth (click here) or paste this link in your web browser:

http://maps.google.nl/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=nl&geocode=&q=tweede+wet+eringdwarsstraat+65+Amsterdam&sll=52.469397,5.509644&sspn=3.306516,7.03125&ie=UTF8&ll=52.362118,4.890525&spn=0.006473,0.013733&z=16&iwloc=addr

Some things to do for free

- Take the free ferry behind central station to the other side of the IJ and go for a walk along the North Holland Canal.
- Walk up the roof of the New Metropolis and admire the view (follow the rail lines east from Central Station, and cross the footbridge to the big green building that looks like a ship).
- Go to the Begijnhof (entrance from the Spui, or round the corner in the Gedempte Begijnensloot)
- Visit the Historical Museum gallery (take the Gedempte Begijnensloot exit from the Begijnhof and turn left).
- Wander along the Flower Market (on the Singel).
- Browse the Waterlooplein market (at the Waterlooplein).
- Visit the Albert Cuyp market
- Go to a free lunch concert in the Concertgebouw (Museumplein)
- Go up the tower to the cafe in the Kalvertoren shopping mall, and admire the view (Kalverstraat near the Munt).
- Visit the West Indies House: the headquarter of the Dutch West India Company which was founded in 1609 after Henry Hudson, an Englishman working for a Dutch company, discovered the island of Manhattan. The colony founded there was named *Nieuw Amsterdam* (New Amsterdam, now New York). A statue of the first commander of New Amsterdam, Pieter Stuyvesant is in the courtyard. (More details in the great book [The Island at the Center of the World](#)).

Museums

Note that all museums are open on Sunday at 09:00AM

A few recommendations:

Het Rijksmuseum

www.rijksmuseum.nl

Adres:
Museumstraat 1, 1071 XX, Amsterdam
It's wise to buy tickets beforehand online.

Anne Frank Huis
www.annefrank.org

Adres:
Prinsengracht 267
It's wise to buy tickets beforehand online.

Van Gogh Museum
www.vangoghmuseum.nl

Adres:
Museumplein 6, 1071 DJ Amsterdam
It's wise to buy tickets beforehand online.

Nemo
www.e-nemo.nl

National Center for Science & Tech
Adres:
Oosterdok 2, 1011 VX Amsterdam

Vondelpark

Vondelpark can be the ideal place to rest after a visit to the Museum Quarter. It's at a walking distance from the major museums. This ample park with a playground and bars offers a summer programme: free entertainment is provided during the afternoon, with activities going from theatre plays and concerts to performances by mime artists and acrobats.

Dutch Directness:

In general, all Dutch and specifically the Dutch living in the Western (urban) part of The Netherlands (= Amsterdam) can be very direct or outspoken towards each other and to strangers. This "openness" sometimes can be misunderstood as being rude, nosy or unmannered. The Dutch merely see this as a sign of honesty and trust rather than being unmannered. So do not be shy and try to go with the flow. Also it is good to understand that few Dutch know the nuances and innuendo of the English language so they will try to directly translate what they are normally saying in Dutch.

Bicycles

The fastest way to travel is by bike. Amsterdam is one of the most bicycle-friendly large cities in the world and is a center of bicycle culture with good facilities for cyclists such as bike paths and bike racks. In 2006, there were about 465,000 bicycles in Amsterdam Theft is widespread - in 2005, about 54,000 bicycles were stolen in Amsterdam. A wide variety of bicycles are used, such as road bicycles, racing bikes but the vast majority of bicycles are second hand , older-model, heavy bikes with one gear and back-pedal coaster.

Just a 5 min walk from the Bed and Breakfast you find a bike rental store. "Het Zwarte Fietsenplan" also known as the black-bikes. Out the door to the right and walk till the end of the street over the bridge and then on your right hand. You see all bikes standing outside ! This is a less than 5 min. walk.

They are 7 days a week open. They rent out decent Dutch bikes with a good lock.

When hiring a bike, you will be required to pay a deposit, and you should take some form of identification.

For info check their website <http://www.black-bikes.nl/?p=rentalbikesn>

Walking

Central Amsterdam is very small: most distances are walkable, and walking is pleasurable, giving the best chance to appreciate the Amsterdam architecture. Beware of walking on bike paths, which are distinguished by their reddish color: cyclists will show no mercy. Also take care when crossing roads, even at a green pedestrian light. Cyclists consider themselves pedestrians in Amsterdam, and so tend to ignore traffic lights.

Surrounding the old center, you have the three concentric ring canals Herengracht, Keizersgracht and Prinsengracht (it can help to note that they're in alphabetic order). All canals are nice to walk along. The Herengracht is the grandest, especially along the 'Golden Crescent' to the east of the Leidsestraat, the Prinsengracht is perhaps the friendliest with its houseboats. The streets that connect the ring canals, especially the area called "[The Nine Streets](#)" in the section between the Brouwersgracht and the Leidsestraat shouldn't be missed for their lovely individual shops.

To the west of the ring canals, in the area on the map where the streets all run at an angle to the canals, is the *Jordaan*, a lovely area to walk, with quiet canals, and tiny streets, and many unusual shops. You'll find a lot of good restaurants and interesting bars there too

Retail

Shops in Amsterdam range from large department stores such as De Bijenkorf founded in 1870 and Maison de Bonneterie a Parisian style store founded in 1889, to small specialty shops. Amsterdam's high-end shops are found in the streets *Pieter Cornelisz Hooftstraat* and *Cornelis Schuytstraat*, which are located in the vicinity of the Vondelpark.

One of Amsterdam's busiest high streets is the narrow, medieval *Kalverstraat* in the heart of the city.

Another shopping area is the *Negen Straatjes*: nine narrow streets within the *Grachtengordel*, the concentric canal system of Amsterdam. The Negen Straatjes

differ from other shopping districts with the presence of a large diversity of privately owned shops.

As well on Sundays most of the shops are open, starting at 12:00 A.M.

The city also features a large number of open-air markets such as the *Albert Cuypmarkt, Westermarkt, Ten Katemarkt, and Dappermarkt.* (on sunday the open air markets are closed)

A favourite shop of ours is:

Frozen Fountain

www.frozenfountain.nl

This shop is specialised in art and design.

Adres:

Prinsengracht 629, 1016 HV Amsterdam

Supermarkets

About 150 meters from the B&B there are several supermarkets from an Organic one till the very common "Albert Heijn" both are open till 22.00 hours even on Sundays !

If you want to go there:

Go out of the B&B left and then on the end of the street to the left again ,on the end of the street on opposite side of the street you have both supermarkets.

Breakfast /early lunch

If you want to have breakfast in Amsterdam, you have many places to choose from.All in walking distance (less than 500 meters) are:

Panini (Open 9:30 till 23:00)

www.restaurantpanini.nl

Vijzelgracht 3-5

1017 HM Amsterdam

If you want to go there;

Go out of the B&B left and then on the end of the street to the left again, on the end of the street on opposite side of the street you have Panini

Village Bagels (Open 7:30 – 18:00)

Vijzelstraat 137

1017 HJ Amsterdam

020 427 2213

if you want to go there;

Go out of the B&B left and then on the end of the street to the left again, on the end of the street on opposite side of the street you have Village bagels

T blauwe Theehuis (Open 9:00 -23:00)
Vondelpark 5, 1071 AA Amsterdam
020 662 0254

The Blauwe Theehuis ("Blue Tea House") is a 1930s [Modernist pavilion](#) in the [Vondelpark](#) in [Amsterdam](#), [The Netherlands](#). It is a ring-shaped building, somewhat reminiscent of a flying saucer. Originally a [tea house](#), it is now in use as a café and restaurant, surrounded by outside seating. The Blauwe Theehuis is also used for theatre performances, festivals, weddings, and other events. The building was constructed out of concrete, steel and glass. It consists of two circular floors stacked on top of each other, with a circular roof as the third "saucer". The octagonal shaped ground floor is topped by a 12-sided top floor which originally served as residence of the proprietor. A staircase on the outside of the building provides access to the top floor. The roof edges and balustrades and the 12 pillars supporting the top floor are painted blue. You find this in the middle of the Vondelpark.

HOLTKAMP

Just a few steps away from the B&B you find will "Holtkamp"
Holtkamp is an Amsterdam tradition when it comes to baked goods and pastries; Dutch people reserve birthday cakes from Holtkamp for very special loved ones. Of course, the prices are somewhat high...but the flavour is more than worth the penny paid. Chocolate flavours are brought out with complementary liquors and moulded into artistic creations. Fruit tarts feature fresh sweet and tart flavours that are as visually attractive as they are delicious. For those who prefer snacks above sweets, Holtkamp also has a quick turnover rate for their quiches and ragouts. Their croquettes are famous...and if you don't know what that is, all the more reason to try one from a shop whose recipe is famous!

Their website is in English and in Dutch! www.banketbakkerijholtkamp.nl

Table Manners☺

When going to a restaurant it is polite to wait until the host/waiter welcomes you and brings you to a table. In less formal restaurants, lunchrooms or diners you can just grab an empty table and wait for the waiter there. When in doubt just wait or ask the staff.

Dutch people generally eat with a fork in the left hand and a knife in the right hand. In restaurants it is seen as awkward to just using the fork in the right hand when eating a meal.

Tipping in The Netherlands is not mandatory. By law the service charge for dining at restaurants is included in the price of the meal. But in general however, rounding up is expected and considered polite. Ten percent is a good figure to keep in mind.

Of course there are some nice restaurants I can recommend:

De Kas

<http://www.restaurantdekas.nl/>

This restaurant is set in a converted greenhouse. The vegetables grow around you and, minutes before you will be served, picked for you. You must book in advance. This restaurant is located outside the center, so it is convenient to take a taxi or tram.

Address:

Kamerlingh Onneslaan 3, 1097 DE Amsterdam, Tel: 020-4624562

Srikandi

www.srikandi.nl/

Be prepared for an exotic culinary journey when you choose to visit this restaurant. This restaurant is all authentic Indonesian. The food, the interior with changing authentic wall decorations, the music ... Obviously there on the menu appropriate rijsttafels but you cannot order course à la carte.

This restaurant is located just 200 meters from the Rijksmuseum!

Address:

Stadhouderskade 31, 1071 ZD Amsterdam, Tel: 020 664 0408

Okura

<http://www.okura.nl>

Okura is a hotel but their restaurant "La Camielia" has a Michelin star. In the Okura are several restaurants that we can warmly recommend from personal experience.

Address:

Ferdinand Bolstraat 333, 1072 LH Amsterdam, Tel: 020- 678 71 11

Grand Café de Jaren

<http://www.diningcity.nl/cafedejaren/en/index.html>.

In this massive building, located on the ground floor a nice restaurant on the first floor with an extensive salad bar. Moreover, there is the terrace with an amazing view of the canal.

Address:

New Doelenstraat 20-22, 1012 CP Amsterdam, Tel 020 62 55 771

Thai Corner

<http://www.thaicorner.nl>

A simple Thai restaurant with a sober decoration but with a very high quality food.

Weteringschans 187d, 1017 XE Amsterdam, Tel 020-2331257

Nam Kee

<http://www.namkee.net>

This restaurant has the atmosphere of a canteen, can not really authentic. No credit cards.

Address: both in Amsterdam,

Geldersekade 117, 1011 AV, Tel: 020- 6392848 and

Zeedijk 111-113, 1012 AV, Tel: 020-6243470

Eating at a special location: / Unusual locations

In De Waag

<http://www.indewaag.nl>

In De Waag is located in a 15th-century city gate at the Nieuwmarkt.

Address:

Nieuwmarkt 4, 1012 CR, Amsterdam, Tel: 020-557 9844

1e Klas (First Class),

<http://www.restaurant1eklas.nl/> (Website only in Dutch)

This restaurant is housed in the former Waiting 1st Class of the Central Station.

The interior is entirely in authentic late 19th century style.

Address:

Main station, Perron 2b

Bangkok Amsterdam

<http://www.restaurant-bangkok.nl/>

A very good Thai restaurant, near Rembrandt Square

Address:

Reguliersdwarstraat 115-117, 1017 BL, Amsterdam, Tel: 020- 6273030

Coffee and Jazz

<http://www.coffeeandjazz.nl/>

A very good Indonesian restaurant, spicy food and mellow music.

Address:

Utrechtsestraat 113 1017 VL Amsterdam, Tel: 020 624 58 51.

Reservation is necessary because of the limited number of tables. The choice for vegetarians is limited. Payment cash only.

Bars & Café's

These are everywhere. We only list here some exceptional and interesting ones.

There is little distinction between a café and a bar in Amsterdam. Both sell alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, food and coffee. The kitchen in a bar or café usually closes at 21:00. A very nice property of Amsterdam, that you certainly don't find everywhere, is that you pay the same price wherever you sit; it doesn't cost more to sit outside on the terrace.

Coffee is served *Hollands* with evaporated milk, *espresso*, *cappuccino*, and *verkeerd* ('reversed'), which is with lots of hot milk (the Dutch version of a Caffee Latte). Beer-lovers should try a *witbier* (white beer) like *Hoegaarden* or *Dentergems*, with or without a slice of lemon.

The Dutch invented gin (it was introduced to England when William of Orange became king in 1689, and spread from there); it is called *Jenever* after the Dutch word for juniper. There are

two types: *Jong* (young) which is the closest in taste to gin, and normally drunk neat and very cold, and *Oud* (old). The Dutch also invented Brandy (*Brandewijn* means 'burnt wine') which they call "Vieux" (Yes, the Dutch call it by a French name and the French call it by a Dutch name).

There are three micro-breweries in Amsterdam [Brouwerij 't IJ](#) in a windmill just outside the center (with a bar, and large terrace in the Summer), [De Bekeerde Zuster](#) (formerly Maximiliaan) in the heart of the red-light district (actually as part of a bar), and [De Prael](#) (no bar, but they do keep a [list of bars that serve their beer](#)).

There is one remaining distillery in Amsterdam, A. van Wees [De Ooievaar](#), that makes a truly astonishing range of traditional Old Dutch and Amsterdam spirits and liqueurs (around 200 of them), many of which you will never have heard of. Founded in 1782, and still family run, it is open for visits Monday and Wednesday 9:30-12:00, Driehoekstraat 10 deep in the Jordaan. You can try their products at the [De Admiraal](#), Herengracht 319.

You can drink beer and wine from age 16, and spirits from age 18. Amsterdam is a paradise for beer drinkers, but alas the wine drinker is usually left with a 'choice' between red and white. (It is surprising that a nation known as a nation of traders could leave such a segment of the market uncatered for.) For a fuller description of Amsterdam bars, see the [Amsterdam Pub Guide](#).

Door 74

<http://www.door-74.nl>

A perfect cocktail bar in the center and less than 5 min away from the B&B Before you get to Door 74 there are some obstacles. Hidden in the Reguliersdwarstraat on number 74 you find this gem of Amsterdam. You walk past it before you know it.

Door 74 is a typical case of: "never judge a book by its cover"

You need to call or text message in advance to ensure a place and in the message you need to tell the time / name and total amount of persons

Address:

Reguliersdwarstraat 74, 1017 BN Amsterdam, Tel: 06-34045122

More trendy dancing and dinner sites:

Check out <http://www.supperclub.com/> and <http://www.the-mansion.nl/>.

Jimmy Woo Korte Leidsedwarstraat 18, city center www.jimmywoo.com

Brasserie Harkema Nes 67, www.brasserieharkema.nl

Odeon Singel 460 www.odeontheater.nl

Coffeeshops

As you are probably aware, Amsterdam also has a policy of tolerating the sale and use of soft drugs. This activity is centered around so-called smoking cafes or "Coffee shops" as the Dutch euphemistically call them. Whether you wish to avoid them or patronize them, they are easy to recognize: they are usually dark, have a characteristic smell, and tend to use words like *free*, *high*, *happy*, *dreams*, and *space* in the name of the cafe. They typically have a menu of the products they have on sale. One thing worth knowing is that by law they are not allowed to sell both dope and alcohol, so if you order a beer you'll be getting an alcohol-free one. There is a [map of the coffee shops](#).

Red light district

De Wallen, also known as Walletjes or Rosse Buurt, is a designated area for legalized prostitution and is Amsterdam's largest and most well-known red-light district. This neighborhood has become a famous tourist attraction. It consists of a network of roads and alleys containing several hundred small, one-room apartments rented by female / male sex workers who offer their services from behind a window or glass door, typically illuminated with red lights. The area also has a number of sex shops, sex theatres, peep show, a sex museum, a cannabis museum, and a number of coffee shops offering various cannabis products.

Laundry

If you need to some clothing to be cleaned you can go to
Self Service Laundry & full Service
Ferdinand Bolstraat 9 (This is behind the Heineken Brewery)
1072 LA Amsterdam T: 020-6627167
www.cleancenteramsterdam.nl
Open 6 days a week 08:00 -21:00, closed on Sunday

About the B&B studio

The Kien Bed & Breakfast studios are totally self-supporting. The studio of 50m² features one big room, TV, safe, hairdryer, toilet (no bidet), bathroom with a shower and a small kitchen. Everything is for private use.

The beds are "twin" beds, single beds. There are sheets and blankets, pillows and towels, they are included in the total price as well as the Tourist Tax and VAT/BTW.

The kitchen provides everything for a good breakfast: coffee maker, water cooker, dishwasher, fridge, stove and pans for baking or boiling eggs in the morning. No microwave/oven/wash machine/freezer.

The water from taps in Amsterdam is of a very high quality, and therefore perfectly drinkable.

As well there is free wireless internet!

All studios have a typical "Amsterdam" garden view. Which means they all look out on the inner gardens of all the neighbourhouses and the garden of Kien Bed and Breakfast !

Amsterdam is a safe city, and there is nothing to fear from walking in any part of the city. Even in the red-light district around the Oude Kerk, there are always lots of tourists wandering around. As in any large city you should beware of pick pockets.

To ensure the safety of your valuables a safe is installed in your studio in your wardrobe. (It's a key operated safe), Kien Bed and Breakfast is not responsible for any loss, left belongings or theft in your studio or in your safe !

Electrical power in Holland and in most of Western Europe runs on cycle of 50hz, and a voltage of 230 Volt, alternating current. In North America, power runs at 60hz/110 Volt.

This means you need to bring a travel converter for such things as contact lens cleaning kits, laptop computers, curling sets and battery chargers. You may need to bring several converters if you anticipate needing to operate these items concurrently.

Converters for up to 2,000 watt equipment are available from luggage- or electronics stores, or — at a higher cost — at the airport. Amazon.com carries a wide range of [travel converters](#).

we don't have electrical converters in the studio's! So bring the one you need !

Departure & left luggage

You can leave your luggage at Central Station for €4 to €6 a locker, for 24 hours. This is a great service if you have to check out at the Bed and Breakfast but still have some time left to explore the city before you depart. The station luggage lockers are open daily (Working with credit cards/debit cards and also coins)

Help

Make sure to take my phone number with you or store it in your cell-phone so you can always contact me when you need help: **+31 651 933 131**.

Please email us with your arrival time at Kien Bed and Breakfast
So we can give a warm welcome and open the door for you !

If you want to know more about the B&B or Amsterdam, just email me!

Greetings,

Martin Segaar

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