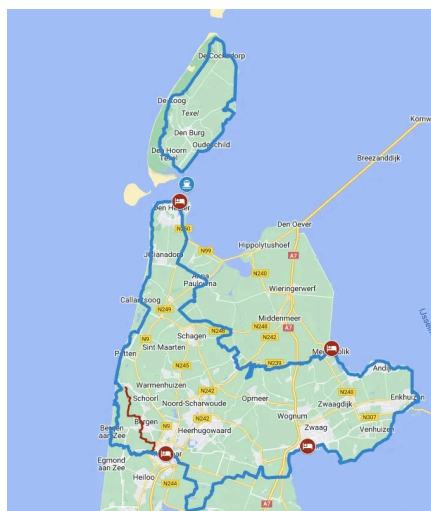


Top of North Holland Tour

7 days, € 804



Introduction



The Netherlands have 12 provinces, one of them is "Noord-Holland". The North of this province is where this tour will take you. You'll be surprised to discover all the delights of this region, surrounded on three sides by North Sea, Wadden Sea and Lake IJsselmeer (former Zuiderzee). One of the largest areas of bulb flower fields in the world is right up in the top of the peninsula. Texel, a Wadden Island, is just a short boat trip away. It will be hard to tear yourself away from the beautiful sandy beaches, but this attractive bike route continues past windmills, historical towns and nature reserves.

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Alkmaar**

Arrival in Alkmaar

Day 2 **Alkmaar - Hoorn**

48 km

Alkmaar is known worldwide for its traditional cheese market, which is still held as a tourist attraction on Friday mornings from early April to early September. On today's scenic coast-to-coast bike ride you will stop off at the picturesque village of Schermerhorn on the border of Schermer and Beemster polders. Schermerhorn was an island of whalers until, in the 17th century, private investors from Amsterdam decided to transform the lakes surrounding the village into polders and then sell off the new land. The polders were drained by windmills that scooped the water up out of the polder into a discharge canal. Just outside the village stand some of the windmills that did this job – and what a pretty picture they make! Opt to visit Schermer Museum Windmill and experience the workings and rhythmic creaking of the moving parts. "The Beemster Polder, dating from the early 17th century, is an exceptional example of reclaimed land in the Netherlands. It has preserved intact its well-ordered landscape of fields, roads, canals, dykes and settlements, laid out in accordance with classical and Renaissance planning principles" is how the entry on the World Heritage List reads. On the shore of Lake IJsselmeer, you will see the Dutch Golden Age reflected in the historical buildings of the beautiful town of Hoorn.



Day 3 Hoorn - Medemblik**49 km**

Today's highlight is the lovely town of Enkhuizen. Like Hoorn, it has a history in whaling, shipbuilding, fishery and of course shipping, both having had East India Company headquarters. Excellent Zuiderzee Museum explains all about the heyday of the harbour towns of former Zuiderzee. In the 17th century, ships from these towns sailed the seven seas trading in spices and bulbs. Furthermore you can enjoy a collection of adorable architecture in a re-created Zuiderzee village of old. Continue up the coast of IJsselmeer, atop the old sea dike, enjoying views of farmland, orchards and cute old farmhouses.

Day 4 Medemblik - Den Helder**66 km**

You cycle between Medemblik and Keins, the northern part of the Westfriese Omringdijk is your guide. This 126 km long, 800-year-old dike connects the cities of Alkmaar, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Medeblik and Schagen. Spot birds in the nature reserves of Twisk and Oostermare, and be amazed in the coastal garden "Dutch Kremlin" near Winkel. Just like elsewhere in this region, you will come across many farmhouses: square buildings with both the living and working areas under the same, characteristic high pyramid-shaped roof. The village of Barsingerhorn provides a pleasant foretaste of picturesque Kolhorn. Until 1844, this former harbor and fishing village was located on the Zuiderzee. There are still old barns on the West Frisian dyke, which house two museums. Further along this dike is the village of Keins with the Lady Chapel on the Keins. After Keins you leave the West Friesland and arrive at the next former port city: Oudesluis. The VOC ships were once anchored here. The last part of this route to Den Helder goes through the largest flower bulb area in the world. In the spring it is one big sea of ??colors of tulips and other flowers. Den Helder started out as a whaling village. The city center was destroyed in the second world war and therefore the city has a relatively modern appearance. Den Helder has a strong maritime slant: shipping, rescue, offshore and the navy.

You can shorten the route by 7 km by continuing to follow the dike between Winkel and Kolhorn.

Day 5 Tour of Texel

The ferry crossing from Den Helder to Texel takes about twenty minutes. Texel is the largest of our five Wadden Islands, places of outstanding natural beauty. You'll have a great time touring this island by bike, enjoying villages, countryside, dunes, beaches etc. There are many bike routes to choose from on Texel. Be sure to also visit De Slufter, a beautiful nature reserve and one of the few areas in the Netherlands where the sea has always been able to penetrate unhindered. Lilac sea lavender comes into bloom here in July and August.



Day 6 **Den Helder - Alkmaar**

61 km

Hit the tracks and head down the North Sea coast, through dunes and woodland. You will pass pretty seaside resorts and Zwanenwater dune reserve. All along our North Sea coast, dunes protect the hinterland from being flooded by the sea - except near the town of Petten. Here the dunes have been washed away and a sea wall has been built called Hondsbossche Zeewering. An interesting exhibition "Dijk te Kijk" explains all about the past, present and future of this sea wall and about the trials and tribulations of the people of Petten over the course of many centuries.

Alternative route through the bulb fields: Savour the colours as the tulip fields take center stage, situated snugly behind the dunes, a natural protective barrier against stormy seas. At the village of Petten, however, a sea wall had to be built where the dunes had been washed away - find out more at the Information Center. Later on, enter the dunes of Schoorl for a wonderful bike ride past high dune tops, dense woods and fields of heather. In recent years, pioneering dune management in De Kerf has welcomed sea water into the dune valleys. This has led to a rapid increase in biodiversity. Eventually, you will arrive at the beach. Relax, sit in the sand and take in the sea view. Further along the coast, you will come to Bergen aan Zee. At this seaside resort, treat yourself to a bite to eat and a well-earned drink. The Zee Aquarium can be visited to see 300 types of North Sea fish up close. When you arrive back at your hotel in Alkmaar, put your feet up and look back on a colourful holiday. Short cut: Skip Bergen aan Zee (58 km).

Day 7 **Return Home**

After breakfast in your hotel, you will return home.



Prices, Data, Booking

Starting dates:

Daily from April 1 till September 24.

Price pp		€
Double room, breakfast		799.00
Single room, breakfast		1,189.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only		100.00
Upgrades pp/night		€
Grand Hotel Beatrix, Huisduinen		12.50
Rental bike		€
Child bike		66.00
Hybrid		78.00
E-bike		168.00
Extra services		€
Bike Breakdown pass	€ 4.00 x 6	24.00
Child seat	€ 5.00 x 6	30.00
Bike theft insurance	€ 3.00 x 6	18.00
E-bike theft insurance	€ 6.00 x 6	36.00
Extra luggage	€ 5.00 x 6	30.00
Tag-along bike	€ 10.00 x 6	60.00
Child trailer	€ 18.00 x 6	108.00
Bike helmet	per piece	10.00
SGR	per piece	5.00
discount	per piece	-20.00

Starting point:

Alkmaar



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 accommodation, 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 Alkmaar ** (Alkmaar)**

www.hotelalkmaar.nl



Heavens Hotel Hoorn ** (Hoorn)**

www.heavenshotelhoorn.com



Hotel Medemblik * (Medemblik)**

www.hetwapenvanmedemblik.nl



Hotel Lands End * (Den Helder)**

www.landsend.nl



Practical Info



6 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



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 Alkmaar departs 2 times per hour. Travel time is about 50 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.

