



Pilgrim Tour

Amsterdam - Maastricht / Maastricht - Amsterdam

This tour will take you along the Dutch part of the famous “Camino de Santiago” – the Way of St. James – passing beautiful Dutch mansions, through stunning scenery with splendid gardens and historic towns where you can experience traditional craftsmanship and old architecture.

The tour from Maastricht to Amsterdam will be slightly different but basically program, routes and distances are the same.

Amsterdam

Sunday 10 miles / 17 km

Arrival on board the Elodie in Amsterdam where the crew will welcome you with a nice cup of coffee or tea. Following, there's an introduction to the crew, explanation of the rules on board and information on the program. After that we will go on a short tour through the rural area of Amsterdam North in order to make you feel comfortable with your bike. In the evening, after dinner, your guide will take you for a walk through Amsterdam.

Amsterdam – Vianen

Monday 26 miles / 40 km

Early in the morning the Elodie will start sailing for Nigtevecht where this day's cycling tour will start. You can enjoy the scenery with mansions in a beautiful surrounding and cycle along one of our country's most beautiful rivers, the Vecht, with its many estates and splendid gardens, and further on to Vianen where we will spend the night. In the evening we pay a visit to this town.

Vianen – Leerdam – Woudrichem

Tuesday 21 miles / 30 km

From Vianen we will cycle through Vijfherenlanden to Leerdam, famous for its glasswork. We will take a look at one of the glass blowing facilities and watch a performance of the craft. The town itself is well worth a visit. The river Vecht boasts the most beautiful houses on its banks, but the river Linge along which we will cycle now, certainly flows through the most



beautiful nature. We will then arrive in Gorinchem, a charming town on the river Waal. From Gorinchem we will take the ferry to Woudrichem - an old fortified town on the picturesque banks of the river Waal. In the old harbour there we will spend the night.

Woudrichem – Den Bosch

Wednesday 27 miles / 45 km

Along high dikes and passing beautiful farmhouses we will cycle along to Heusden on the Maas river. The French name of the Maas is "Meuse". It is 925 kms long. It rises in France, flows on through Rotterdam, and drains into the North Sea. The Meuse is referred to as a "rain river" which means the state of the water is somewhat "whimsical". You will see today that the ferries are important to us.

They are served by local volunteers who will show us how confident we have to be in a country that consists of water rather than land. The volunteers may be farmers and old skippers who have a love of being on the water. For us cyclists it means that we can cycle through the most beautiful natural areas, choosing the best side of the river. We may have a coffee break in old Heusden, one of the many picturesque, fortified towns on the route. The structure of the fortress remains clearly visible. You will have time to stroll around here and have lunch. At the end the day we find ourselves in the Burgundian's Hertogenbosch, also called Den Bosch after the famous painter Jeroen Bosch. You can find out more about him in the Jheronimus Bosch Art Centre or lose yourself in this Burgundian city with its abundance of cafés and shops. Last but not least, don't forget the impressive St. John's Cathedral. It will, however, be part of our after-dinner walk.

Den Bosch – Grave

Thursday 22 miles / 36 km

Today we will cycle from village to village, more or less following the Meuse. There are vast natural areas with browsing Galloway cattle and sometimes wild horses. We will find a nice scenic place on the Maas banks for lunch and coffee. The end of the day will see us in Grave. In Grave you can find the smugglers' museum. If the smuggler is not too busy we will try to make an appointment because nobody knows more about Grave than the smuggler ☺.

Grave – Nijmegen

Friday 10 miles / 15 km

Today will be a relaxed day with a short ride that brings us in time to Nijmegen. It is nice to have some time to visit this town because there is a lot to be seen and done - time for shopping, visit terraces and World War II memorials as this town played an important role in operation "Market Garden". You can even try your luck at the casino on the waterfront of the Waal river because we have left the banks of the Maas river for one day.



Nijmegen – Groesbeek – Cuijk

Saturday 12 miles / 20 km

Today again no long distance tour but be prepared because it can be a bit hilly. Through hay fields and across the territory of the “Mookerheide” we will continue towards Groesbeek, a nice town very close to the German border where we will touch German soil for a short distance, then back to Cuijk where we will find the Elodie waiting for us to spend the night.

Cuijk – Gennep – Arcen

Sunday 30 miles / 50 km

This day offers a magnificent river Maas route. You will cycle through the Maas valley to Afferden and Heyen and Gennep, a beautiful town with a rich history. It was only in 1839 that the town became Dutch. At the Congress of Vienna it was decided that the Germans (Prussia) should remain a cannonball’s flight away from the river Maas, so not to have any influence on the river traffic. Our trip will continue past the recreational area Leuken-Bergerheide to Well where we will see Well Castle with its heavy round brick tower dating from the 14th century. From Well, we will cycle several kilometres further through the Maas valley to Arcen. The famous Castle Gardens of Arcen reveal their beauty in scents and colours in abundance. Broekhuizen is the Dutch cultivation centre of roses. We will spend the night in this haven of beauty. Arcen is also known as the hometown of Hertog Jan Brewery. If you are a beer fan this is the place and time for having a taste.

Arcen – Venlo – Roermond

Monday 33 (18) miles / 55 (30) km

Via Broekhuizen ferry we will continue to the Castle of Arcen with its beautiful gardens and further continue to the city of Venlo where we will take a break for coffee and a walk around. Those cyclists who want to do the short ride will get off the Elodie here in order to meet the rest of us. Further along the way we will pass Kessel’s Castle with its magnificent terrace on the waterfront. Either here or a little bit further up the river at Café Rosegarden we will stop for lunch - an excellent opportunity to have a taste of Limburg’s Vlaai, a specialty of the province of Limburg. In Roermond we will spend the night back on board the Elodie and within walking distance of the town centre.



Roermond – Born – Maastricht

Tuesday 22 miles / 37 km

Our first stop today will be Maasbracht. The locks at Maasbracht surmount the largest drop of the river Maas, which is about 12 meters high. Maasbracht is the centre of inland shipping and has a very interesting museum on river shipping that is run by former skippers. We will try to make an appointment with one of them to show us around and have our coffee next door.

We arrive in Thorn via Heel and Wessem. Thorn is called “the white town” and you will immediately realise why. This pilgrim’s town with its history of more than (first documented in 922 BC) has long been the capital of a ministate that has been reigned by women for 800 years. From here we cycle further through Belgium to Maaseik. This town is famous for its sons, the painters Hubert and Jan van Eyck. On the market square we see typical renaissance houses with their impressive facades. For those who dare there is an opportunity here to try a Belgian “pint” on this beautiful square.

Via Driebeukenbos and Stokkum, our route leads us back to the river Maas. A little further along the Juliana canal, the Elodie is waiting for you in front of the Born lock. We will pass through the lock with its fall of more than 11 metres and continue our journey aboard ship to Maastricht.

In Maastricht we will take you for a stroll through this magnificent city with its abundance of culture, history and fine architecture. And maybe we will end up on one of the many terraces at the main square where we can breathe in its unique atmosphere.

Maastricht

Wednesday

We take leave of you after breakfast around 9 a.m.

All distances mentioned are approximate and are subject to change due to weather, road or water conditions or other circumstances that might occur during the tour and were not foreseen at the moment of offering this tour.