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ROUTE 1: WONDERFUL WATERLAND

BROEK IN WATERLAND
This picturesque village lies just 20 minutes from Amsterdam Central Station, and is connected to the rest of the country by bus and train. As you tour the village, you will find yourself strolling at the beautiful sites – the locals are proud of their charming and peaceful village. The village is famous for its wooden houses, and explore the tiny canals behind the 14th century Saint Nicholas church.

MARKEN
Marken was an island in the middle of the Zuider Zee until 1937. Today it is connected to the mainland by dike, and its little wooden houses are snugged together on the former island. It’s like walking through an open-air museum! So don’t be shy about exploring the village streets and alleys! Where the houses even look like they protect them from the water. You’ll find quaint cafes on the harbor. And if you’re lucky, you may spot someone in traditional dress.

WATERLAND’S SPEELTOREN MUSEUM
Learn more about the Waterland region. The museum is dedicated to the origins and rich history of the unique landscape. Noordzeeweg 2-4, T: +31 (0)299 640200, www.despeeltoren.nl

ROUTE 2: HEAD TO THE HEARTLAND

GRAFT – DE RIJP
Just outside Amsterdam – far from the usual tourist traps, in the heart of nature – you’ll find the lovely village of Graft-de Rijp. Although it’s actually 2 small villages, you can’t find one that’s more charming than the other! This bus stop was still connected to the Zuider Zee, it was famous for its hemp. From which rope was made, fishing, and other activities. Over time, as waterways slowly linked to the region, the region lost its link to the sea – but you’ll find that Graft-de Rijp still weathering history is still clearly visible as you walk its historic streets, just beside the village in a nature reserve. Each home is a living historical landmark. The name of the village means “the smallest shop in Holland”.

BRAM EN AAGIE’S SMALL SHOP
Bram en Aagie is “the smallest shop in Holland” in the 15th century. From which hemp was called, fishing, and other activities. Over time, as waterways slowly linked to the region, the region lost its link to the sea – but you’ll find that Graft-de Rijp still weathering history is still clearly visible as you walk its historic streets, just beside the village in a nature reserve. Each home is a living historical landmark. The name of the village means “the smallest shop in Holland”.

MIDDENBEEMSTER
During the 17th century, when the Amsterdam elite wanted to escape the city, they headed out to the region known as De Beemster. Here, they built smaller versions of their homes. The best place to explore this unique area is De Beemster. The area is also one of the Defense Line of Amsterdam, a ring of 42 forts built in the 19th century to protect the city of Amsterdam. Not only is a De Beemster a UNESCO World Heritage Site, but the defense line has earned this title as well. The unique museums of these UNESCO World Heritage sites are absolutely worth a visit.

PIETERMAN
The best place to try the most delicious local seafood. Pieterman 8, T: +31 (0)299 323392, www.beemsterinfo.nl

THE PURMENENDS MUSEUM
The Purmerends Museum is housed in the former town hall of the Purmerend and has a stated collection relating to the town and the region. T: +31 (0)299 647218, www.purmerenmuseum.nl

PUMMEREND
Purmerend is a great combination of modern and traditional Holland. Originally a small fishing village, the city has maintained many of its charming historical landmarks. To reach its heartland, Seaport or Cast Market, it is one of the highlights. Today it’s a traffic-free square, lined with bustling cafés and historical monuments. Visit its market, a fast-paced market in a small space more than you’d expected in Purmerend. Visit the 19th-century Saint Nicholas Church for a sense of history, wander through the museum, and then head out for a bit of shopping and a drink. Purmerend will charm you before you know it!

EDAM
Back in 1537, Edam was awarded the right to be a city – and to have a salt trade. That’s how the fishing and trading of an exotic area of trade, which brought merchants and ship builders to Edam. One of them is the Edam Museum, located both at the former city hall and in the former cheese market. Visit the Edam Museum, one of the re-erecteds of the cheese market action, held each week during summer.

VOLENDAM
Buiting with visitors eager to catch a glimpse of the world-famous port. Volendam may be a small place today, but it’s certainly worth a visit. Once known as the Pearl of the North, Volendam was an important town for international trade, and it’s still pretty much preserved to this day. Take a walk away from the harbor, and down the back of the dike. There, you will discover an amazing beauty of tiny streets and homes well preserved. And if you’re hungry then you’re, try some local smoked eel or eel hunting.

GRAND CAFÉ-RESTAURANT PIETERMAN
The best place to try the most delicious local seafood. Pieterman 8, T: +31 (0)299 323392, www.horecamarinepark.nl

MARKEN
Marken was an island in the middle of the Zuider Zee until 1937. Today it is connected to the mainland by dike, and its little wooden houses are snugged together on the former island. It’s like walking through an open air museum! So don’t be shy about exploring the village streets and alleys! Where the houses even look like they protect them from the water. You’ll find quaint cafes on the harbor. And if you’re lucky, you may spot someone in traditional dress.

THE SUITJE BOSES SHOP
Pop-style, Sytke’s original house for a real taste of the past. Havenbuurt 19, T: +31 (0)299 601451

ROUTE 3: THE HARBORS OF HISTORY

EDAM
From Edam’s bus stop, take bus 314 to Marken and exit at the bus stop Vlieland.

VOLENDAM
From the bus stop, take bus 314 to Edam and exit at the bus stop Baberam.

GRAND CAFÉ-RESTAURANT PIETERMAN
From Edam’s bus stop Baberam, take either bus 118 or 315 and hop off on Prinses Margrietlaan (Vlieland).

MARKEN
From Marken’s bus stop, take bus 316 to Prinses Margrietlaan (Vlieland).