

## The 5 best places to eat BITTERBALLEN

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### 31 DE BALLENDAR

FOOD HALLEN

Hannie Dankbaar

Passage 33

West ④

[www.deballenbar.com](http://www.deballenbar.com)

The Hallen is a covered market with food stands, a library, galleries, shops and a cinema. It opened in 2014 in a former tram depot. Due to the hype, it can get quite busy making it hard to find a table. One of the reasons to go there are De Ballenbar's *bitterballen*. Their bouillabaisse ball with brown shrimp inside is a treat and was invented by Michelin-starred chef Peter Gast.

### 32 HOFTUIN

Nieuwe Herengracht

18-A

Plantage Quarter ②

+31 (0)20 370 27 23

[eatwelldogood.nl](http://eatwelldogood.nl)

Be surprised by the bar snacks at Hoftuin, an 'all-day brunch restaurant' in a somewhat hidden garden next to the Hermitage Museum, which is surrounded by monumental buildings. Everything on the menu is homemade using only fresh and organic ingredients.

### 33 CAFÉ LUXEMBOURG

Spui 24

Old Centre ②

+31 (0)20 620 62 64

[www.luxembourg.nl](http://www.luxembourg.nl)

Grand Café Luxembourg's veal bitterbal is the very best *bitterbal* in town. At least, according to a food critic whose job it was to test the products of 140 Amsterdam cafes. The bitterballen on Luxembourg's menu are made by the Amsterdam pastry shop Holtkamp. Luxembourg also serves Holtkamp's shrimp bitterballen. A real treat!

### 34 CAFÉ STEVENS

Geldersekade 123

Old Centre ②

+31 (0)20 620 69 70

There's only one place to enjoy a real *bitterbal*. In a real Amsterdam bar, of course. Café Stevens is one of those typical watering holes, to which locals flock in the morning to enjoy a coffee and read the newspaper. After work, people pop in for a beer and after a few rounds decide they can't resist the lure of the tasty *bitterbal*.

### 35 CAFÉ-RESTAURANT AMSTERDAM

Watertorenplein 6

Westerpark Quarter ④

+31 (0)20 682 26 66

[www.cafrestaurantamsterdam.nl](http://www.cafrestaurantamsterdam.nl)

Café Restaurant Amsterdam is housed in a former pumping station of the municipal water company. It was built around 1900. From the inside, the café is spacious, bright and has an industrial vibe. It serves Oma Bobs *bitterballen* and Holtkamp shrimp croquettes, both from Amsterdam, as well as a mid-priced lunch and dinner menu, and a nice selection of beers.



# The 5 nicest places for a drink ON THE WATERFRONT

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## 121 AMSTERDAM ROEST

Jacob Bontiusplein  
Oostelijke Eilanden ②  
+31 (0)20 308 02 83  
[www.amsterdamroest.nl](http://www.amsterdamroest.nl)

The Van Gendthallen, a large factory complex on Oosterburgereiland, was built in the late nineteenth century. Café Roest opened in 2011 in the building where the electricity for the factories was generated. This creative freespace draws a quirky mixture of families, hippies, journalists and hipsters.

## 122 HANNEKE'S BOOM

Dijkgracht 4  
Oostelijke Eilanden ②  
+31 (0)20 419 98 20  
[www.hannekesboom.nl](http://www.hannekesboom.nl)

Hanneke's Boom was first featured on a city map in 1662. It was the entrance to one of the waterways leading into the city. Here the authorities checked everything that came in and went out of the city. In 2011, a popular bar opened here. The terrace is on the water level. Enjoy watching the boats glide by.

## 123 DE CEUVEL

De Ceuvel  
Korte Papaverweg 4  
North ⑦  
+31 (0)20 229 62 10  
[www.cafedeceuel.nl](http://www.cafedeceuel.nl)

The Amsterdam North city council held a competition to find a new use for an old, polluted shipyard. A group of young entrepreneurs came up with a plan to build an entirely self-supporting and sustainable cafe including a waterless urinal, soil-cleaning vegetation and solar panels on the roof.

## 124 DE WATERKANT

Marnixstraat 246  
De Jordaan ①  
+31 (0)20 737 11 26  
[www.waterkantamsterdam.nl](http://www.waterkantamsterdam.nl)

Nobody could have imagined that the area below the Europarking garage would one day become a vibrant bar-restaurant. Well, it did. Waterkant refers to the boulevard along the Surinam river in Paramaribo, a popular meeting place for locals. The Amsterdam version can get quite crowded too. The bar offers a great selection of beers, bar food (nachos, chicken wings, salads), and dinner after 5.30 pm.

## 125 PLEK

T.T. Neveritaweg 59  
North ⑦  
+31 (0)20 290 00 20  
[www.plek.nl](http://www.plek.nl)

Plek is a bar and restaurant on the shore of 't IJ. On sunny days, the patio (or rather their spacious city beach) can get very crowded, at night campfires are lit. Plek serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. Most dishes are organic using seasonal and regional products.



## The 5 best places to **RENT A BIKE**

### 196 **FIETSVERHUUR HET AMSTERDAMSE BOS**

**Bosbaanweg 1**  
**Amstelveen (suburbs)**  
**+31 (0)20 644 54 73**  
**[www.amsterdamsebosfietsverhuur.nl](http://www.amsterdamsebosfietsverhuur.nl)**

In the southwest of the city, you'll find 935 acres of green space and 51 kilometres of bike trails. The Amsterdamse Bos bike rental shop is a good place to start your visit. You can park your car for free and get a rental bike, or start with a drink on the patio of cafe De Boshalte.

### 197 **HET ZWARTE FIETSENPLAN**

**Lijnbaansgracht 282**  
**Canal Belt South ③**  
**+31 (0)20 670 85 31**  
**[www.hetzwartefietsenplan.nl](http://www.hetzwartefietsenplan.nl)**

Het Zwarte Fietsenplan has several bike shops all over the city. The locations in Lijnbaansgracht and Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 146 are the places to go if you want to rent a bike. All their shops are open seven days a week.

### 198 **FIETSREPARATIE-FIETSENVERHUUR AMSTERDAM**

**Buiksloterweg 5-C**  
**(Tolhuistuin Paviljoen)**  
**North ⑦**  
**+31 (0)6 139 98 675**  
**[www.fietsreparatieamsterdam.nl](http://www.fietsreparatieamsterdam.nl)**

Take the ferry behind Central Station and you'll be in Amsterdam North in a matter of minutes. This is a fairly large part of the city, but public transport is scarce. It's nicer to explore North and its surroundings by bike. Some destinations that are worth a visit are the picturesque Nieuwendammerdijk and nature reserve 't Twiske.

### 199 **BIKE CITY**

**Bloemgracht 68-70**  
**De Jordaan ①**  
**+31 (0)20 626 37 21**  
**[bikecity.nl](http://bikecity.nl)**

If you don't want a rental bike that screams 'hello, I'm a tourist!', then go to Bike City in the Jordaan. They rent inconspicuous, typically Dutch bikes out of the basement of an old house on one of Amsterdam's most beautiful canals, Bloemgracht. Please note they may adjust their opening hours in winter.

### 200 **STARBIKES RENTAL**

**De Ruyterkade 143**  
**Oostelijke Eilanden ②**  
**+31 (0)20 620 32 15**  
**[www.starbikesrental.com](http://www.starbikesrental.com)**

StarBikes Rental rents so-called 'granny bikes'. To stop these minimalistic bicycles just back-pedal. Also available are tandems, kids' bikes and bikes for disabled people. And if you ever need to wait: StarBikes also serves food and beverages.



196 FIETSVERHUUR HET AMSTERDAMSE BOS



# 40 BUILDINGS TO ADMIRE

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<i>The 5 most striking</i> <b>MODERN BUILDINGS</b> —	128
<b>5 TOWERS</b> <i>to climb</i> —————	130
<i>The 5 most iconic</i> <b>AMSTERDAM SCHOOL buildings</b> —————	132
<i>The 5 most striking</i> <b>CANAL HOUSES</b> —————	134
<i>The 5 best</i> <b>NEIGHBOURHOODS</b> <i>to admire</i> —	136
<i>The 5 most</i> <b>CROOKED HOUSES</b> —————	138
<i>The 5 most special</i> <b>RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS</b> —	140
<i>The 5 most fascinating</i> <b>GABLE STONES</b> —————	142

## The 5 most BEAUTIFUL STREETS

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### 276 NIEUWENDAMMER- DIJK North ⑦

The lucky people living here are keen to point out that their street really is a village within the city. This dike was built in 1516 and seamen and captains used to live in the charming wooden houses with clock gables. In recent years, this street has been heavily gentrified. It still has a historical feel to it though, contrasting beautifully with the more modern parts of North.

### 277 VESPUCCISTRAAT West ④

This 1920s street with its Amsterdam School architecture is a bit hidden in West, but it's definitely worth walking through it just once. The red houses with symmetrical brick patterns seem to cast a warm glow, especially in the late afternoons. And when the rows of Japanese Ginkgo trees bear yellow leaves in autumn, it's as if the whole street is lit up.

### 278 HENRI POLAKLAAN Plantage Quarter ②

This street in the old Jewish quarter has a hushed grandeur, with nineteenth-century stately buildings and majestic trees. It was named after Henri Polak (1868-1943), a social democrat and chairman of the diamond workers union (ANDB). The architect H.P. Berlage designed their headquarters at Henri Polaklaan 9, which you can visit (see: [www.deburcht.nl](http://www.deburcht.nl)). There is an old Portuguese-Israeli hospital across the road.

### 279 RINGDIJK Watergraafsmeer ⑤

The seventeenth-century Ringdijk is one of the dikes that prevents Watergraafsmeer (a *polder* 5 metres below sea level) from flooding. Walking across the green dike, you look down on the typical dike houses. Each one is different. At the corner with Middenweg there's an old courthouse (1777). It was here that Emperor Napoleon was symbolically offered the keys to Amsterdam when he visited in 1811.

### 280 BROUWERSGRACHT De Jordaan ①

Connoisseurs know this is the most beautiful canal of them all. Eight bridges span Brouwersgracht, a canal in De Jordaan that's still lined with old warehouses with wooden shutters. *Brouwersgracht* (Brewer's canal) was named after the many beer brewers established here in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Look for the smallest house (number 20, 'the sprout') and the largest warehouse (number 174).



## 5 places to see LIVE MUSIC

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### 351 BITTERZOET

**Spuistraat 2**  
**Old Centre** ②  
**+31 (0)20 421 23 18**  
[www.bitterzoet.com](http://www.bitterzoet.com)

Red stained glass windows featuring nudes, an upstairs smoking lounge with comfortable sofas, and a restaurant next door which serves Asian street food. These are just some of the benefits that Bitterzoet has to offer. This intimate venue is known for its R&B and hip-hop parties, but also hosts regular live concerts, featuring a wide range of musical styles, from rock, pop, soul and funk to electro and hip-hop.

### 352 MELKWEG

**Lijnbaansgracht 234-A**  
**Canal Belt South** ③  
**+31 (0)20 531 81 81**  
[www.melkweg.nl](http://www.melkweg.nl)

In the early seventies, this former milk factory was converted into a cultural centre, with a music and theatre hall, a tea house and a restaurant. Over the years, Melkweg expanded and now boasts two downstairs concert halls, an exhibition space and restaurant, and an upstairs cinema and theatre. It's also home to the annual 5 Days Off festival for electronic music.

### 353 PARADISO

**Weteringschans 6-8**  
**Canal Belt South** ③  
**+31 (0)20 626 45 21**  
[www.paradiso.nl](http://www.paradiso.nl)

This former church was squatted in the sixties and became a 'cosmic relaxation centre'. Paradiso is now one of the most legendary concert venues of Amsterdam, its nickname is 'The pop temple'. The downstairs hall still has a very distinct church feel to it, with stained glass windows and a high ceiling. In addition to being a concert hall, Paradiso is also a night club.

### 354 AMSTERDAMSE BOSTHEATER

**De Duizendmeterweg 7**  
**Amstelveen (suburbs)**  
**+31 (0)20 670 02 50**  
[www.bostheater.nl](http://www.bostheater.nl)

Come summertime, Amsterdamse Bos is the place to go for plays and concerts in a fairytale open-air setting. The forest serves as a backdrop for the stage, the audience watches from wooden benches, wine in hand. Blankets are supplied on colder evenings. Before the show, have a bite to eat or buy a drink from the food trucks lined up near the entrance.

### 355 ROODE BIOSCOOP

**Haarlemmerplein 7**  
**Haarlemmer Quarter** ①  
**+31 (0)20 625 75 00**  
[www.roodebioscoop.nl](http://www.roodebioscoop.nl)

In the early twentieth century the socialist and anarchist Gerhard Rijnders ran this cinema. He was inspired by the ideas of Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis (you'll find his statue opposite the entrance to Westerpark). Now it's a music, theatre and poetry club that's known for its Sunday afternoon performances, or *Roode Zondagen* (red Sundays).



## The 5 most UNUSUAL PLACES TO SLEEP

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### 411 FARALDA NDSM CRANE HOTEL

NDSM-Plein 78  
North ⑦  
+31 (0)20 760 61 61  
[www.faralda.com](http://www.faralda.com)

Sleeping in this monumental dockside crane is not for the faint of heart as the three suites are 50 metres above the city. There's a rooftop pool and thrill-seekers can even bungee jump from the crane. The rooms are lavishly decorated, with a golden ceiling, a stuffed peacock next to the bed and a blue and purple love nest.

### 412 HOTEL NOT HOTEL

Piri Reisplein 34  
West ④  
+31 (0)20 820 45 38  
[www.hotelnothotel.com](http://www.hotelnothotel.com)

In this hotel in the western part of town, a room isn't just a room, but an art installation. A group of young designers created intimate sleeping spaces. You can sleep inside an old tram car, in a crow's nest, or behind a secret book case. While the rooms are small, there are enough nooks and crannies in the hotel to relax in, or grab a chair in the downstairs bar.

### 413 FLORES & PUCK

Rietwijkerstraat 51  
South ⑥  
+31 (0)6 445 31 522  
[www.amsterdambedandbreakfast.org](http://www.amsterdambedandbreakfast.org)

Astrid and her daughter Sammy run this bed and breakfast. The cottage at the end of their garden has its own entrance and a sunny terrace where, weather permitting, breakfast is served every morning. Astrid always has good tips for exploring Amsterdam. You can also rent a bike.

### 414 CAKE UNDER MY PILLOW

Eerste Jacob van  
Campenstraat 66-2  
De Pijp ③  
+31 (0)20 751 09 36  
[www.cakeundermypillow.com](http://www.cakeundermypillow.com)

A bed and breakfast located above the famous cake shop 'De taart van mijn tante' (co-owner Siemon de Jong is the host of a kids talk show on TV). Downstairs the cakes are luscious and extravagant, while the upstairs b&b is tastefully decorated and offers rooms with private or shared bathrooms, and has a communal kitchen and living room.

### 415 AMSTERDAM COUNTRY COTTAGE

Durgerdammer-  
gouw 51  
North ⑦  
+31 (0)6 294 36 357  
[www.amsterdamcountrycottage.nl](http://www.amsterdamcountrycottage.nl)

A two-floor country cottage in the middle of a bird sanctuary, with its own dock and terrace with a barbecue. It's a great place to enjoy nature and only a stone's throw from the city, although it might be difficult to get to without a car. Compared to hotel prices in the city, the cottage is great value for money.



411 FARALDA NDSM CRANE HOTEL

# The 5 best SIGHTSEEING TRIPS by public transport

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## 451 NDSM FERRY

Central Station  
Old Centre ②  
[www.gvb.nl](http://www.gvb.nl)

The ferry link between the northern NDSM dockyard and Amsterdam Central Station gives you a free sightseeing tour in 15 minutes. En route you'll see modern architecture, some old warehouses, and even a Russian submarine from the 1950s. Wind blowing in your hair, clouds floating over the River IJ, and boats passing by: what a way to unwind.

## 452 TRAM 2

Central Station  
Old Centre ②  
[www.gvb.nl](http://www.gvb.nl)

National Geographic listed tram line 2 as one of the best public transport rides in the world. And it's true, on your way you'll see many of the city's highlights. The line departs from Central Station and ends at Oudenaardeplantsoen in New-West. On your way you'll pass Dam square, the Flower Market, Leidseplein, the Rijksmuseum and Vondelpark.

## 453 TRAM 16

Central Station  
Old Centre ②  
[www.gvb.nl](http://www.gvb.nl)

Tram 16 will take you from north (Central Station) to south, ending at VU hospital. Along the way, buy a book in Spui square, pick up some groceries from the Albert Cuyp market, pop into a museum in Museumplein, marvel at the grandeur of Valeriusplein, and see where the 1928 Olympics were held, at the Olympic Stadium.

## 454 BUS 22

Central Station  
Old Centre ②  
[www.gvb.nl](http://www.gvb.nl)

Bus line 22 connects two vibrant areas in the east and west of the city. It departs from Zaanstraat in the western Spaarndammerbuurt passing by Haarlemmerplein, continuing its way along the River IJ, towards Amsterdam's Central Station. From there it leaves for the Plantage quarter, Muiderpoort train station and Javaplein in the Indische Buurt. Its terminus is Th.K. van Lohuizenlaan.

## 455 TRAIN TO OVERVEEN

Central Station  
Old Centre ②  
[www.gvb.nl](http://www.gvb.nl)

The track to Haarlem was the first ever built in the Netherlands. Just past Haarlem lies charming Overveen train station, which was built in 1881. From here it's a short walk to the dunes of the Zuid-Kennemerland national reserve. Walk another five kilometres and you'll find yourself in a bathing resort called Zandvoort aan Zee. From here, you can take the train back to Amsterdam.

