Grand Tulip Tour – the best of Holland

Small as the country by the North Sea may be, it has a dazzling number of historical, cultural and engineering sights. From the Dutch masters of painting to sober medieval and ornate renaissance architecture. From well kept museums to gardens with millions of brightly coloured flowers. Exceptional water works both centuries old and practically brand new. And, to pique your gustatory senses, a tremendous variety of cheeses and chocolate.

These are just a few of the many exciting and interesting things the country has to offer. Come with us and see the very best of them, enhanced by fascinating lectures and guided tours executed by local experts. Bikes will be on board and will be available for organized tours.

You’ll discover the Netherlands in an unusual way via its most typical element: the water. Rivers, canals, ditches and lakes abound, and you’ll sail many of them on the lovely Fiep. This comfortable barge will be both your main mode of transportation and your group’s hotel for the entire fortnight. The Grand Tulip tour gives you a wonderful insight into the heart and soul of the people that founded New York.

Program Fee: $4,500.00 per person based on double occupancy. In-country costs are covered, including barge accommodations, lectures, entrance fees, three meals a day, tipping, and ground transportation. Your transportation costs to and from the Netherlands and transfer from the airport are NOT included.

Important note: Travel insurance is always recommended for any travel out of the United States. It protects the passenger’s financial investment, as well as any unexpected medical needs during travel. University of Alaska Fairbanks does not sell travel insurance policies, but there are several ways to purchase coverage. Some credit card companies insure trips that are purchased with their card. Another option is to check with a local travel agency. We advise that you look in to coverage within 15 days of making the deposit, as some vendors require the coverage to be purchased within that time period to receive the most benefit.
DAY 1 - Saturday, March 23

Amsterdam

**Afternoon**  Embarkation on the Fiep. Official welcome by and introduction to the crew and your tour guide. Then kick off your river cruise with a bubbly welcome drink, followed by the first dinner aboard the ship.

**Evening**  A presentation of the tour, which will most likely whet your appetite for the cruise to come even more.

---

DAY 2 - Sunday, March 24

Amsterdam art day

**Morning**  Savouring the beauty of Amsterdam is best done on foot. You’re taken on a city walk to the stunning Rijksmuseum of Dutch art and history, where a knowledgeable local guide will show you some of its absolute highlights. Lunch possibilities in the area around the Rijksmuseum abound. However, you may not want to miss out on the delicacies served in the museum café itself.

**Afternoon**  You’ll continue walking to our next destination, the Anne Frank house. At the end of the afternoon, you’ll see the city from the water during a trip by canal boat. A very different experience from strolling around its streets!

**Evening**  Dinner aboard the ship
DAY 3 – Monday, March 25

Amsterdam - Zaanse Schans

Morning While you’re having a leisurely breakfast, the ship sails to Zaanse Schans. This small village looks like an open air museum, but the lovely original wooden homes are still inhabited, its windmills from the nineteenth century still used. A guide takes you to and through paint mill De Kat.

Afternoon A bus trip to the village of De Rijp and a visit to mill/museum The Schermer. At the end of the afternoon you can join your tourleader on a short bikeride through the charming farmland of the Zaan area.

Evening Dinner aboard the ship

DAY 4 – Tuesday, March 26

Dutch painters

Zaanse Schans - Haarlem

Morning Ship sails to Haarlem. On board a lecture makes you much more knowledgeable on Dutch painters, with specific attention to the works of Frans Hals.

Afternoon After lunch on board a city walk in Haarlem, sometimes nicknamed little Amsterdam. Visit to the grand and huge Saint Bavo church and a demonstration of the sound of its famous organ, followed by a guided visit to the Frans Hals museum.

Evening Dinner aboard the ship and port talk about Dutch water management and tulips.
DAY 5 – Wednesday, March 27

Keukenhof day

Haarlem - Leiden

Morning  
By bus to the Cruquius museum of water management.

Subsequently, the bus takes you to the truly breath taking tulip and flower fields of the Keukenhof. You can have your lunch in one of its restaurants.

Afternoon  
Your bus trip continues to Leiden center, birthplace of painter Rembrandt and home to the oldest university of the Netherlands. Visit to the American Pilgrim museum.

Evening  
Return to the ship on foot. Dinner.
DAY 6 – Thursday, March 28

The Hague day

Leiden - Delft

Morning and afternoon While sailing to The Hague and having breakfast, an expert lectures about the Dutch royal family and Dutch government. In The Hague a tram takes you to town for a guided visit to Panorama Mesdag. A work of art which might be described as a walk-in painting. In the beautiful museum villa The Mauritshuis you can, among others, see Vermeer’s *Girl with the pearl earring*. The nearby House of Parliament (Binnenhof) has foundations dating back to the twelfth century.

Lunch on your own. In this part of The Hague, your only problem is which restaurant to choose.

At the end of the afternoon, you return by tram to the ship awaiting us in Delft.

Evening Dinner on board.
DAY 7 – Friday

Delft pottery day

Delft - Rotterdam

Morning  A visit to the city center of Delft. In the morning, your tour leader accompanies you on a tour of the Old and New churches. The latter’s crypt is the final resting place of much of Dutch royalty.

Afternoon  After lunch on board, you will walk to the famous Delft Blue pottery for a guided visit. This is the place that has been producing the typical blue-and-white ceramics since the 17th century.

Evening  Around 5 p.m. the ship starts cruising to Rotterdam while you are enjoying dinner. Docking in the harbor named Rotterdam-Coolhaven.
DAY 8 – Saturday, March 30

Rotterdam day

Morning A visit to the city center, some of its water storage projects and the recently built market hall. A lecture on water storage will make you an informed visitor. Rotterdam is a striking contrast to many of the medieval and renaissance cities you’ve seen on the trip so far. The harbor town boasts an abundance of avant garde architecture and is the home base of many world-renowned architects like Rem Koolhaas and Francine Houben. One look at the city’s skyline and you’ll understand why it’s proudly called Manhattan on the (river) Maas.

Afternoon Buy your own lunch from any of the excellent food stalls in de Markthal, while looking up to the jaw dropping decorations on its ceiling. In the area you’ll also have plenty of shopping possibilities.

Evening For dinner, a thirty minute trip/harbor tour by water taxi takes you to Hotel Restaurant New York. This beautiful building dating back to 1901 used to be the headquarters of shipping company Holland America Line. From its quay, thousands of European emigrants left for a new future in North America. One or more of your ancestors may have been among them!

Return to the Fiep, again by water taxi.
DAY 9 - Sunday, March 31

Kinderdijk Unesco

Rotterdam - Dordrecht

Morning: The ship brings you to the village of Kinderdijk for an extensive visit to nineteen beautiful windmills, constructed in the 18th century to pump water out of the surrounding lowlands. The mills are on the UNESCO cultural heritage list. Your tour leader will organize a short optional bike ride along the nineteen windmills.

Afternoon: Lunch on board while sailing to Dordrecht. For many visitors a lesser known or even unknown town. Unjustly so, because it’s brimming with history and has over a thousand architectural monuments! The ship docks in the historical Kuipershaven, an excellent departure point for a town walk and enjoying some time on your own.

Evening: Dinner on the ship
Day 10 – Monday, April 1

Water management day

Dordrecht - full bus day

**Morning**  By bus to Watersnoodmuseum Ouwerkerk in the province of Zeeland for a guided visit. The museum memorizes the disastrous springtide in 1953, that flooded large parts of Zeeland and the provinces South Holland and North Brabant. This tragedy triggered the development of the “Delta Works,” an elaborate engineering project built to protect the Netherlands against future flooding.

**Afternoon** Lunch at a brasserie overlooking the Oosterschelde river, then on by bus to the Oosterschelde dam and Maeslantkering, both part of the Delta Works. Visit to Maeslantkering.

**Evening** Dinner on the ship, still docked in Dordrecht Kuipershaven.
DAY 10 – Tuesday, April 2

Gouda day

Dordrecht - Gouda

Morning  Leaving Dordrecht and sailing on to Gouda. From Ouderkerk you may hop on the bikes again to bike to Gouda. But you can also enjoy the scenery while cruising on the Fiep. After lunch on board it’s time to explore this pretty town, whose name has become synonymous with cheese.

Afternoon  Visit Gouda’s Market square, where farmers from the area still trade their cheeses during the weekly Thursday market from April through August. A guide shows you around the 123 majestic meters long Saint Jan’s church with its 72 stained glass windows, depicting many biblical and historical scenes.

Evening  Dinner in town on your own

DAY 11 – Wednesday, April 3

Utrecht day

Gouda - Uithoorn  Full bus day

Morning  A bus takes you to the medieval university town of Utrecht, which you’ll explore on foot. The heart of the old center is the cathedral’s bell tower, forever separated from the main body of the church in 1674 by a raging tornado. The many street-, café- and church organs in the nearby museum “Van speelklok tot pierement” will raise your spirits with their lively tones.

Afternoon  Utrecht is a food lovers paradise, so finding a good lunch on your own should be a breeze. Our bus then continues to a cheese farm for a visit and of course a lot of tasting. From there return to the Fiep, docked in the small town of Uithoorn near a fort.

Evening  Dinner on the ship.
DAY 12 – Thursday, April 4

Flower auction

Uithoorn - Amsterdam

Morning  After an early small breakfast, a bus takes you to the world’s biggest flower auction in the town of Aalsmeer. Here, in the wee morning hours of every workday, millions of flowers are auctioned off and immediately afterwards sent off to all parts of the world. On returning to the ship, you can enjoy a second breakfast while sailing to Amsterdam.

Afternoon  Once docked in the Dutch capital, a small lunch gives you the energy for the walk to “THIS IS HOLLAND”. Using the latest technology, THIS IS HOLLAND lets you experience in the middle of Amsterdam what it’s like to fly across the country. Including the feeling of wind in your hair, moist fog and typical odours. When your flight is over, you can spend your time any way you wish. Dinner is on the boat.

Day 13 – Friday, April 5

Amsterdam day

This is a day set to get another taste of Amsterdam. The Van Gogh museum and the Stedelijk museum (specializing in contemporary art) are wonderful choices, but the city has a lot more to offer. Ask your guide for tips that suit your specific interests.

In the evening the ship’s crew serves a festive fare well dinner on the Fiep.

DAY 14 – Saturday, April 6
Amsterdam Morning  We won’t let you leave with an empty stomach. Enjoy your last breakfast aboard before disembarking from 9 a.m.