



Cycling trip through North Holland, cycling along beautiful lakes and Dutch polders, near Amsterdam.

75 KM

DAY 1 Along the dikes via “footie Gerard’s cottage on the island of Marken heading towards Enkhuizen.

Amsterdam-Marken-Volendam-Edam-Hoorn-Enkhuizen

On the way there we have a lovely tail wind on our backs making for wonderful cycling across the IJsselmeerdijk! However the big question for today is whether or not that the 75km to Enkhuizen is going to be to far for us to cycle in one day?

Sometime back in May us five friends conceived a plan to do a cycling trip through the beautiful North Holland Provence along the Ijmeer, Gouwee following the wonderful IJsselmeerdijk “ it is a really fantastic place for cycling” said Wim. From Durgerdam to Uitdam and along the dike to the former island of Marken and then catch the ferry to Volendam.

On your right-hand side there is water as far as you can see and on your left hand-side the beautiful polders. And what about that continual eternal strong wind from the southwest? Well that should only be a real issue on the way back and if it’s real bad we can always jump on the train.

It is an early morning car drive for the five of us to Amsterdam-North with our bikes securely fixed to the

bike racks. Parking the cars was no problem and we were straight into a wonderful nature area and on the durgerdammerdijk along the Kinselmeer in the direction of Marken. Just before we got to Marken a quick phone call to “footie Gerhard” our mate who we had regularly gone to watch AJAX with and had celebrated those many championships ☺ Good News Gerard and his girlfriend Carin are at home so a quick detour to the bakers in Marken for cakes and pastries. Wim even thought about bringing something special for the dog as well.



Marken and the storm of 1916.

Gerard lives in one of those small wooden cottages on the dike in Marken directly opposite the ferry to Volendam. During coffee on the terrace in front of his cottage he told us the following “ did you know that in the olden days in the attics of these cottages they all had open fires to dry the fishing nets the soot is still visible on the wooden beams”

He went on to tell us about the history of the former island of Marken and showed us pictures of the terrible storm of 1916 in which the water was so wild that it threatened to lift the wooden ships and smash them against and destroy the cottages so that the villagers had to sink these ships to avoid this happening. During these floods on the island of Marken 16 people were killed and many more were made homeless.

After coffee Gerard gave us the grand tour around Marken on the bikes. First we visited a traditionally furnished cottage on the dike with an old fashioned bedstead. The lady of the cottage was also clothed in the national costume of Marken.

The peninsula is well known for its tourist attraction of “De Dijk” and it’s historic harbour but if you are willing to look further there are many more beautiful quiet spots and other attractions.

There is a beach that is only used by the local villagers with a fabulous lighthouse called “the Horse of Marken” This was built in 1839 and can be found on the eastern point of the island.

After the grand tour and with very little time to spare we just caught the ferry to Volendam a

delightful trip across the Markermeer sitting relaxing in the sun with our bikes neatly placed below the deck in the cargo bay.

After docking in Volendam we enjoyed the pleasant hustle and bustle on “de Dijk”. Volendam has many cafes, bars, restaurants and souvenirs shops.



From Volendam we cycled along the Zeedijk and the Ijsselmeerdijk to a surprisingly pretty place called Edam. Edam has an old historic center with beautiful 17th Century monumental houses, a Town Hall and an orphanage.

Between Edam and Warder Harry shouted out “Guys just stop! I see an Avocet sitting there in the grass” What a beautiful bird!

Arriving in Warder it was time for our first beer! The crime scene for this is on the terrace of the cafe “the old school”

“Is it still a long way to Enkhuizen?”

“Still another good two hours hard peddling!” responds the waiter

“Let us all get back on our trusty steel steeds” say’s Bert. Onwards along the Dike towards Schardam and Scharwoude, both lovely places where you would like to live. “Look there, a beautiful Church” Jan called out

Further along the dike we reached the nature area called “the Hulk” on the “Hornse Hop”. In this area there were all kinds of meadow birds and waders.

Hoorn is worth a visit, the center with its unique 17th Century houses and a rich history as a trading and harbour town during the Golden Century.



On arrival in the historic harbour of Hoorn we decided at the café “de Volendammer that it was time for another beer “ we have definitely earned this one” said Harry. This Café opposite the main tower was the inspiration for that traditional Dutch folk song “the little café at the harbour” (“het kleine café aan de haven”)

After Hoorn it was still another hour cycling to Enkhuizen our destination for today. We decided to take the scenic route along the Zuiderdijk past Kraaienburg and Oosterleek

In Enkhuizen we located our sleeping quarters and afterwards a good restaurant on the beautiful harbour of Enkhuizen.

The next morning we had breakfast outside in the sun. We had decided on another cycle route back to Amsterdam. For the first part of the day we are going to be cycling more inland away from the coast.





70 KM

DAY 2 Through the West Fries flower bulb region in the polder land "Purmer" and back to Amsterdam

Enkhuizen-Grootebroek Lutjebroek-Receiver-Monnickendam Broek in Waterland Amsterdam

We cycled out of Enkhuizen with a tail wind on our backs through the bulb regions of North Holland. Beautiful elongated villages! North of the village Bovenkarspel het Streekbos there is a unique nature and recreation forest. In this region flower bulbs are grown in the sandy soil. We cycled through Hoorn back on the dike along the Markermeer. Wim calls out " we are all going skinny dipping in the lake" and before we knew it he was already swimming 😊

After this lovely refreshing swim we resumed our cycle route along the Ijsselmeerdijk.

Arriving in Monnickendam we found ourselves at the yearly "Jan Haring Race" a street party that brings people together. Performances by many Choirs for the fans of song and music and sailing competitions for the skippers and their crews and last but not least a smoked eel competition with plenty off freshly smoked fish that

always taste good for both participants and visitors that rarely is any thrown away.



After Monnickendam cycling more inland through the polder "Purmer". Before the reclamation "Purmer" was part of a number of special inland lakes in the province of North Holland, together with "de Schermer" and the "de Beemster". These were tidal salt-water lakes that had an open connection with the sea.

There is a folk tale about a mermaid who was captured in "de Purmer" in May of 1403 after the appearance of a comet. Due to a huge storm she was thrown from the Zuiderzee into "de Purmer" and eventually found by some Edam farmers maids. Since then there has been a wooden statue of a female standing in Purmer gate and the mermaid is immortalised in a church window.

Through the polder "Waterland" we cycled to Durgerdam over the Dike with views across the water. At "Buiten Ij" we have another final beer together to toast a wonderful cycling weekend "Cheers!"





Practical

Bicycle trails We drove two days (with distances of 75 and 70 km per day) of cycle paths and low-traffic roads. From sign to sign.

Tours:

For the tour: www.hollandcycletours.com

A number of tours at www.hollandcycletours.com have included these two days of cycling in their itinerary, such as the "Amsterdam and Waterland Tour" six nights and the nine nights tour the "Ijsselmeer round-trip". The advantage of this all-inclusive bicycle tours is that hotel, breakfast and bike is arranged for you, even with a "Bike Emergency Hot Line" in case your luck will go.

Cards & Guide, websites

For general information about cycling in the Netherlands: www.nederlandfietsland.nl/ among other things cycle paths Zuiderzeeroute, clothing, GPS, bags.

Four times provisioning

Marken Eatery Flying Sailer,
Westerstraat 25, Marken.

<http://www.eencafe.nl/marken/flying-sailer>

Warder, Cafe the old school, 128A Warder, Warder
<http://cafedeoudeschool.nl/>

Hoorn, Restaurant Madame Cheung,
Kleine Noord 53-55, Hoorn.
<http://www.madamecheung.nl>

Enkhuizen, Restaurant Tydloos, Westerstraat 116,
Enkhuizen <https://hetwapenvanenkhuizen.nl/>

