

UNIQUE AND IRREPLACEABLE: WADDEN SEA UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE!

From the dynamic tidal area outside the dikes, with marshes and Wad plates appearing at low tide, to the open polder landscape within the dikes with its endless pastures and fields, former sea walls, historical churches and farms; you will be spoiled for choice in the Wadden Sea UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Dutch Wadden Sea area lies between the Marsdiep near Den Helder - via the Afsluitdijk and Frisian Wadden coast - and the Dollard in Groningen. Since 2009 a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Whether you explore the sandy beaches in the Tip of North Holland or the terps and mounds of Friesland and Groningen - spectacular nature is always just a stone's throw away.

The Wadden Sea was granted the universal UNESCO title for its panoramic, dynamic character and the many natural habitats that make it an ideal home for birds, fish and other aquatic creatures. This is why the Wadden Sea is in the same category as other world famous nature areas, such as Yellowstone in America, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

The nature in Lauwersmeer is so special that the area was awarded National Park status.

De Kiekkaaste, the only bird-watching hut outside the dike in the Netherlands.



DAY 1 LANDSCAPE IN GRONINGEN

This example tour begins in Nieuwe Statenzijl, a village with five houses and a lock, on the German-Dutch border. Get a unique view of the 'Dollard' from the Kiekkaaste. The Kiekkaaste is the only bird hide outside the dike in the Netherlands where you will have a fantastic view over the Wad mudflats. A perfect spot to see hundreds of dunlins and many other foraging birds.

Then we drive via the polder dike towards Termunterzijl. Various walking routes have been created in and around Termunten and Termunterzijl. A 'Termunten/Termunterzijl stroll' is 3 km and a walk to the Punt van Reide and Breebaart polder is 8 km. Admire the many seals in the Wad from behind the seal observation wall without disturbing them. But before starting on one of these walks we will have lunch in Hotel Termunterzijl. Optional: Dollard Visitors Centre.

From Termunterzijl we will travel along the dike towards Delfzijl. We will pass the Heveskes church which appears to have lost its way in the vast landscape. The 13th-century church on the mound is all that remains of the village that was once here. You are now very close to where the most northern dolmen in the Netherlands was found. See it for yourself at Muzeeaquarium in Delfzijl. You will spend the night in the Eemshotel, but not before enjoying a delicious meal at the charming restaurant with views over the Eems-Dollard and the sea dikes in Germany.

DAY 2 MOST NORTHERN POINT OF THE NETHERLANDS

From Delfzijl you depart for the most northern point in the Netherlands. Near Noordkaap you can admire a work of art called 'De Hemelpoort'. This 2.5 metre high steel gate was created by Groningen artist René de Boer. From this point you can feast your eyes on the panoramic views over the Wadden Sea and gaze into endless skies above the Wad. Follow the road signs to Noordkaap from Uithuizermeeden. De Hemelpoort is on the Wadden Sea dike in the Eemshaven.

The next stop is in Uithuizen. Here you will visit one of the few remaining castles (fortified historical outdoor areas) in Groningen, the Menkemaborg. The Alberda family lived here from 1682 to 1902 and in 1927 the Menkemaborg was opened as a museum. Admire this completely furnished house and its gardens and experience life in a Groninger castle in the 18th century.

The smallest seaport in the Netherlands is in Noordpolderzijk, near Uithuizen. Since as long as anyone can remember there has been a nostalgic brown pub, 't Zielhoes, in the former lock keeper's house in Noordpolderzijk at the foot of the sea dike. Take a walk out to the dike after lunch and enjoy the beautiful views of the Wad and the fishing harbour.

From Noordpolderzijk it's off to the village of Pieterburen, and a visit to the Zeehondencentrum. Take a peek inside the largest seal hospital in Europe! And if you are lucky, you might witness seals being released back into the sea. This is always organised on specially planned days. You have never been this close by!

TIP FOR EXTRAS

- Expedition to the uninhabited island of Rottumeroog (1 day extra, seasonal, you must book in advance).
- We leave Pieterburen and head towards Friese Anjum in the Lauwersmeer area where the nights are still pitch black. After dinner at one of the restaurants in Anjum, we will spend the night in a it Dreamlân holiday home in Kollum. On a Frisian terp, in the middle of nature.
- Optional: Book an extra night to explore the Lauwersmeer National Park and surroundings by bike, car or on your own two feet.

WADDEN
visitwadden.nl

Highlights

- 1 Menkemaborg
- 2 Kollum
- 3 Rottumeroog
- 4 Lauwersmeer
- 5 Afsluitdijk Wadden Center



Historic Harlingen

DAY 3 HISTORIC HARLINGEN

Guided walking story tour in Harlingen. You can purchase city walking tours at the VVV and the Hannemahuis and explore the harbour town at your own pace. 't Havenmantsje restaurant is located between the Wadden Sea and Harlingen city centre. Where the cutters used to moor and unload their catch you will find the former courthouse with the same name where top chef Marco Poldervaart now reigns supreme.

Via the parallel road towards Zurich you will drive on to the Afsluitdijk towards Kornwerderzand. Visit Afsluitdijk Wadden Center and the Kazematten museum, where this Wadden coast tour comes to an end.

In the Afsluitdijk Wadden Center you will find an interactive experience exposition about how the Dutch lived and thrived in the Delta.

