

A large Dutch windmill stands on a grassy bank next to a calm body of water. The sky is filled with dramatic, grey clouds, with a bright light source breaking through near the horizon. The windmill's reflection is visible in the water.

# WELCOME TO

# THE NETHERLANDS

**A SMALL TRAVEL GUIDE ABOUT SIGHTS  
AND SURROUNDINGS NEAR XSPLATFORMS**



WELCOME TO

THE NETHERLANDS





XSPlatforms' headquarters and workshop are located in Gorinchem, The Netherlands. A small country in Europe, known for tulips, wooden shoes (clogs), cheese, windmills, bicycles and the Amsterdam canals.

Did you know that **about 1/3 of the Netherlands lies below sea level?** Most of the areas below sea level are man-made. To prevent the sea from reclaiming the land an intricate system of dikes was constructed. One of the most famous is called the Delta Works.

You'll see when you arrive in the Netherlands that **most of the country is extremely flat**, the highest point of the country can be found in the south with a height of only 322 meters above NAP. The lowest point sits at 6,7 meters below NAP.

Much of the countryside next to the freeways is used for agriculture, as such you can spot grasslands, cows and sheep from the car. **When driving from the top of the Netherlands, it takes about 4 hours to reach the lowest border.**

Another interesting fact, the Netherlands is home to more bikes than people. and the Dutch cycle an average distance of 2,9 km per day.





# GOOD TO KNOW

# BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

The Netherlands has a moderate marine climate. The average summer temperature is around 19°C (67°F), and the average winter temperature is 2°C (35°F). The weather is often topic of conversation as it's hard to properly predict, or changes drastically during the day.

## HOW TO GET AROUND

The Netherlands has a vast public transportation network with trains, busses, trams and metros that will help you get around. You can also rent a car (you'll need an International Driving Permit), flag a cab, or catch an Uber.

Within cities you can often walk, or you could join the locals by renting a bike.



## CURRENCY

The Euro is the official currency of the Netherlands. Debit cards and contactless payment types are very common throughout the Netherlands. Credit cards, however, are not widely accepted in shops.

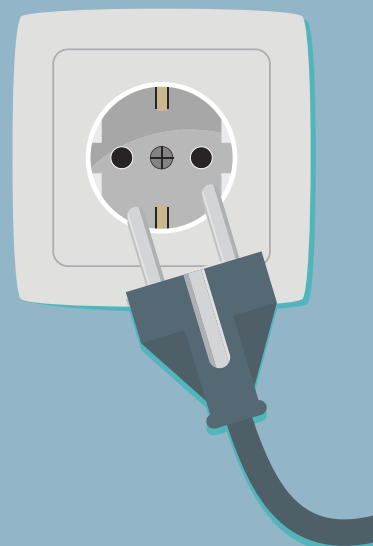
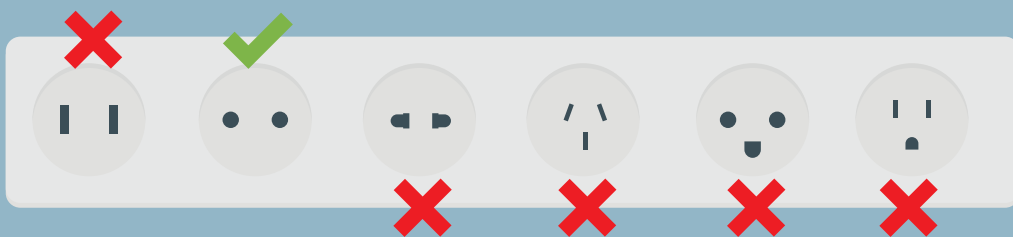


## TIPPING

Tipping in the Netherlands is not a requirement, as people working in hospitality earn living wages. That said, a tip shows your gratitude, and will be greatly appreciated. As a rule of thumb, you can either round-up the bill or leave between 0-10% of the bill as tip.

## ELECTRICITY

To use electricity in the Netherlands you'll need plug type C or plug type F. The standard voltage is 230V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz..



## LANGUAGE

English speakers do not need to worry about a language barrier. Almost all locals speak English. That being said, it's always nice to hear people try out our language.

Dutch	English
<i>Hallo</i>	Hello
<i>Doei</i>	Bye
<i>Bedankt</i>	Thanks
<i>Pardon</i>	Pardon or excuse me
<i>Tot ziens</i>	See you later



# OTHER

# FUN FACTS

## LARGEST DUTCH CITIES

1. Amsterdam
2. Rotterdam
3. The Hague
4. Utrecht
5. Eindhoven



Technically all drugs are illegal in the Netherlands, however there is a policy of tolerance towards cannabis. Coffee shops are allowed to sell small amounts of cannabis to people over the age of 18.



The Dutch were the first in the world to legalize same-sex marriage (2001).



The first multinational company, stocks and stock exchange can all be lead back to the Dutch East India Company.



Prostitution is legal (since 1811) as long as the sex workers are 18 or older, and their clients are 16 or older. Sex workers also have to pay taxes.



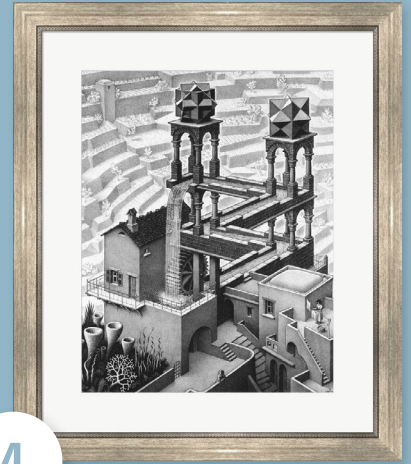
Gin was invented in the Netherlands, but it was called jenever. Ketel 1 is one of the more well-known brands.



Though you'll find a lot of churches in Dutch cities, more than half of the inhabitants of the Netherlands are not religious.



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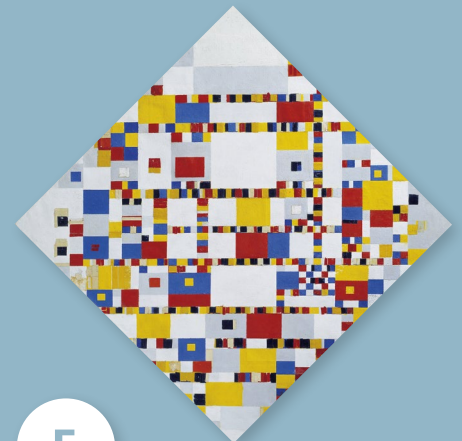
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## FAMOUS DUTCH PAINTERS

1. Rembrandt van Rijn, The Night Watch ([Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam](#))
2. Johannes Vermeer, Girl with the Pearl Earring ([Mauritshuis, The Hague](#))
3. Vincent van Gogh, Sunflowers ([Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam](#))
4. M.C. Escher, Waterfall ([The Palace, The Hague](#))
5. Piet Mondrian, Victory Boogie Woogie ([Kunstmuseum, The Hague](#))

## FAMOUS DUTCH LANDMARKS

- The Amsterdam canals
- The Rijksmuseum
- Windmills
- Zaanse Schans, Marken and Volendam
- Delta Works



## WELL KNOWN DUTCH COMPANIES



**PHILIPS**

**ING**



## DUTCH FOODS

1. Licorice (sweet or salty)
2. Herring
3. Cheese
4. Bitterballen
5. Stroopwafels



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# TRAVEL

# THE NETHERLANDS

A visit to XSPlatforms can vary in length. Depending on the length of your stay and the program at XSPlatforms you may have some spare time to see more of the Netherlands then just our Head Office. To help you, we've put together a list of interesting attractions and sights. You can easily travel to these places by (rental)car or public transport.

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

You can use **9292.nl/en** to help plan your trip with public transportation. 9292 is also available as app for your smartphone via the Google Play store or the Apple App Store.



9292 **travels with you**



# AMSTERDAM

The capital of the Netherlands has lots to offer to travelers. Amsterdam holds more than 100 kilometers of canals, with over 1,500 bridges to cross the water. De Magere Brug (literally: the skinny bridge) is possibly the most famous of all the bridges. You can walk around the city to explore the canals, as they form concentric belts around the city, or take a boat tour through the canals. Alongside the canals are can find many monumental canal houses.

But Amsterdam is also home to some of The Netherlands' most prestigious museums. The Dutch National Museum, The Rijksmuseum, is located in the center of Amsterdam. You can easily spend an entire day in this museum as the collection spans over 7 million items. Less than 500 meters from the Rijksmuseum you can find the Van Gogh museum and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Museum of Modern Art), as well as the Royal Concertgebouw (concert hall). Next to the world famous Anne Frank House, Amsterdam also houses small museums like the Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder a 17th-century canal house with a Catholic church in the attic.



## NEAR AMSTERDAM:



### ZAANSE SCHANS

Located around 15 kilometer north of Amsterdam, the Zaanse Schans is an open-air museum in which you can take a stroll through a traditional Dutch village. Take a look at the warehouse, where clogs are made, of visit the cheese factory. The Zaanse Schans is full of wooden houses, mills, barns and workshops.



### MARKEN OR VOLENDAM

The village of Marken provides picturesque traditional wooden houses as well as an insight in fishing culture. As Marken used to flood often residents built their homes on 'werven', artificially built hills, or stilts.

From Marken you can quickly reach Volendam another traditional town with colorful wooden houses. The main street is lined with seafood vendors, as befitting a traditional fisher's village.



# THE HAGUE

THE HAGUE IS THE SEAT OF THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT, AND HOUSES MANY MINISTRIES, EMBASSIES AND SEVERAL HEADQUARTERS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS THE INTERNAL COURT OF JUSTICE.

You can tour the seat of parliament, Het Binnenhof, on days when there are no political meetings. Otherwise you can only enjoy the

outside of the structure. A large scale renovation will start in 2020, blocking the view of the entire structure for about 5 years.

The Hague is also where the King's working palace, Palace Noordeinde, can be found. The palace is not open to the public, but you can visit the palace garden.



UTRECHT'S ANCIENT CITY CENTER ALSO HOLDS CANALS, BUT UNLIKE AMSTERDAM THE CANALS FEATURE MANY WHARF/DOCK CELLARS. THE WHARFS WERE ADDED TO CREATE AN INNER CITY HARBOR SYSTEM. THE WHARF CELLARS HAD PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS, HENCE CREATING A UNIQUE TWO-LEVEL STREET SYSTEM ALONG THE CANALS. TODAY MANY OF THESE CELLARS HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO SHOPS OR EVEN RESTAURANTS.

Compared to Amsterdam, Utrecht's canals are less known to tourists. Like many Dutch cities Utrecht is laid out around a church tower. The 14th century Dom Tower, the highest church tower in the Netherlands, marks the heart of the old city. Unfortunately the Dom Tower is currently undergoing restoration works, meaning its facade is partially covered. However, you can still climb the tower. A unique chance because you can see the restoration up close as you climb to 100 meters instead of 95 meters.

<https://www.domtoren.nl/en>



# ROTTERDAM

The city of Rotterdam is a major port in the Netherlands, dating back to medieval times. Most of the city center of Rotterdam had to be rebuilt after being destroyed in air attacks during World War II. The Great St. Lawrence Church is all that's left of Rotterdam's medieval buildings.

The modern city center holds many architectural highlights, such as the Cube Houses designed by Dutch architect Piet Blom or the Art Nouveau style White House.

Rotterdam's massive port occupies almost half of the city's total area. The so called Gateway to Europe (Europoort) can be toured by boat. Next to the port, the Euromast is one of Rotterdam's most distinctive marks. The 185 meter tower houses two restaurants with stunning views over Rotterdam.

## NEAR ROTTERDAM:



### THE WINDMILLS OF KINDERDIJK

Kinderdijk is a small village that holds the largest surviving concentration of windmills in the Netherlands. 19 windmills, built between 1722 and 1761 can be seen. Some of the windmills are now used as homes, which is why not all mills are open for visitors.

*Check the website for opening hours*  
**<https://www.kinderdijk.com/discover/the-story/unesco-world-heritage/>**



# GORINCHEM

The city in which XSPlatforms is located also hold historic value. Founded around 1000 CE by fishermen and farmers, Gorinchem (also called Gorcum) became a fortified city. Only one of the four old city gates still remains, with another being preserved in the gardens of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Gorinchem is the largest fortified city in the Netherlands that's still fully intact.

A 5km self-guided walk takes you over the earthwork ramparts and past sights like the tollhouse, the Dalempoort (the last remaining city gate) and two flour mills. One of which is currently undergoing renovations (De Hoop). The other mill (Nooit Volmaakt) is still fully operational and houses a small shop. Gorinchem is also the birthplace of Hendrik Hamel, who was the first Westerner to provide a firsthand account of Korea.

## NEAR GORINCHEM:



### LOEVESTEIN CASTLE

At the other side of the river from Gorinchem you can find Loevestein Castle. The castle's history spans about 650 years. Loevestein became notorious worldwide as the place in which the world-famous legal scholar, Hugo Grotius (Dutch: Hugo de Groot), was imprisoned and from which he subsequently escaped.

Check the website for opening hours  
<https://www.slotloevestein.nl/en/>

# PLACES TO STAY NEAR XSPLATFORMS

1

## HOTEL GOUD & ZILVER

**Address:** Langendijk 66, 4201 CJ Gorinchem  
**Distance:** 3.1 kilometers from XSPlatforms  
**Website:** [Booking.com/Share-iYNYEj](https://Booking.com/Share-iYNYEj)

2

## HOTEL LE BON APART

**Address:** Eind 16-18, 4201 CR Gorinchem  
**Distance:** 3.1 kilometers from XSPlatforms  
**Website:** [Booking.com/Share-t5vol2w](https://Booking.com/Share-t5vol2w)

3

## BOUTIQUE HOTEL KAREL DE STOUTE

**Address:** Buiten de Waterpoort 2, 4201 CS Gorinchem  
**Distance:** 3.3 kilometers from XSPlatforms  
**Website:** [Booking.com/Share-0xYqHkT](https://Booking.com/Share-0xYqHkT)

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## HOTEL AAN DE LINGE

**Address:** Lingedijk 2, 4247 EE Kedichem  
**Distance:** 6.2 kilometers from XSPlatforms  
**Website:** [Booking.com/Share-brRai3](https://Booking.com/Share-brRai3)

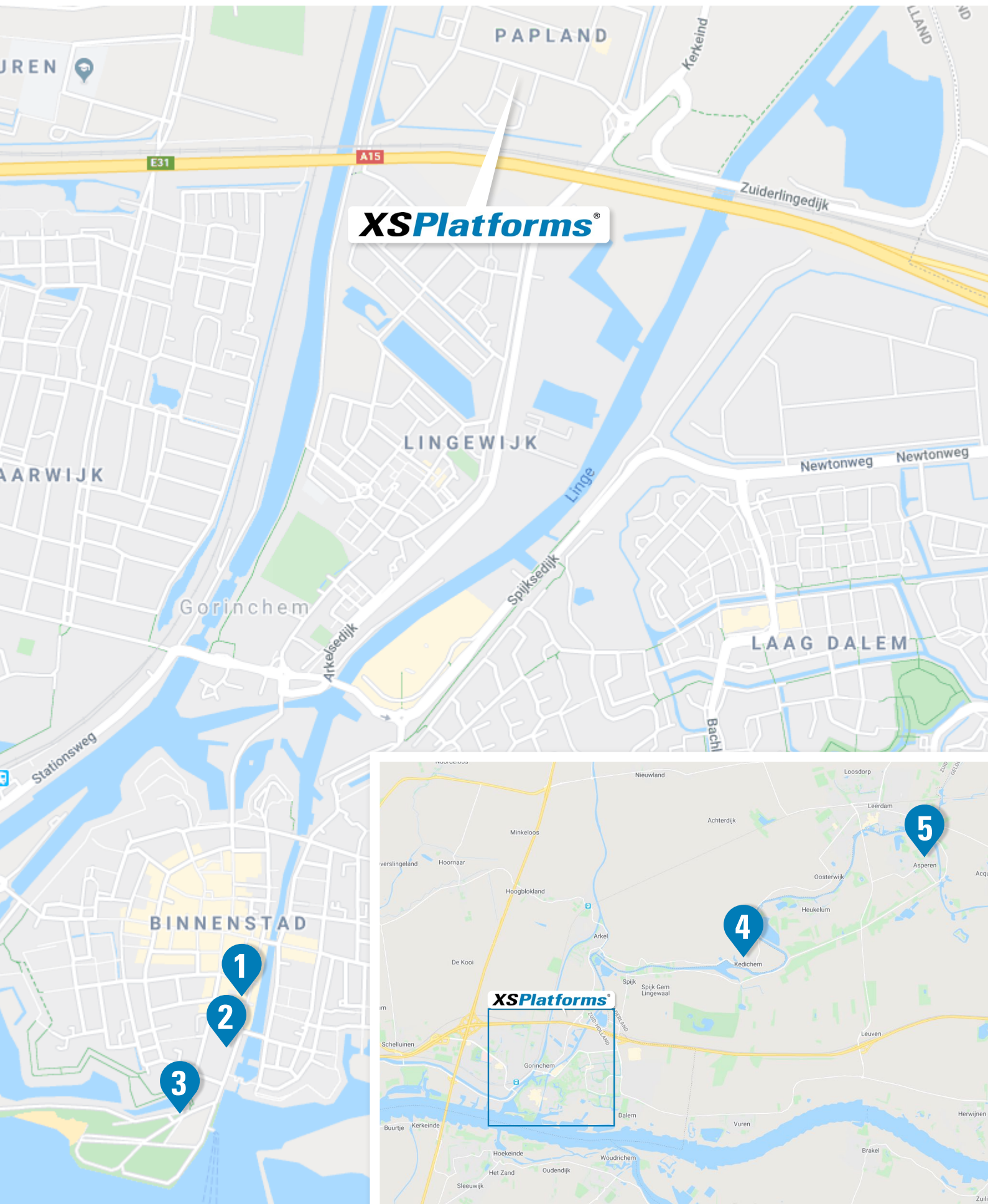
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## HOTEL DE SCHILDKAMP

**Address:** Leerdamseweg 44, 4147 BM Asperen  
**Distance:** 13 kilometers from XSPlatforms  
**Website:** [Booking.com/Share-0aEKyn](https://Booking.com/Share-0aEKyn)

*\*XSPlatforms is in no way affiliated with these hotels*







WE HOPE YOU ENJOY  
YOUR VISIT IN THE NETHERLANDS