

EXPLORE GRONINGEN CITY AND PROVINCE

ENG

# GRONINGEN

—  
off the  
beaten  
track



ROUTES INCLUDING THREE BEAUTIFUL  
3

**STAGE  
FOR  
CULTURE**

Museums, music and theatre

**'MEST  
EN VORK'  
ROUTE**

A culinary journey

**11X  
WONDERFUL  
WALKS**

Clear your head

53° 23' 79" N 7° 20' 68" E

# GRONINGEN A WELL-KEPT SECRET FOR MANY

The city and province of Groningen have so much to offer - from the boundless energy of museums, festivals and shops, to the peace and quiet of almshouses and gardens behind gates. This is where you can venture out on the seabed on foot, or enter the impregnable Bourtange fortress.

Let us take you on an exploratory expedition that includes places of interest, various routes and detours to take in city highlights and great places out of the centre. Visit beautiful villages near the city. All of these are places to find silence and tranquillity, let go of old ideas and allow new ones in. And let's not forget the Groningen special producers, who proudly create their merchandise with plenty of love for their land. Some places are a slightly longer bike ride away, but you might get lucky and have the wind at your back.



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Map of Groningen

**6**  
Rural idyll

**12**  
City highlights

**14**  
'Mest en vork' route

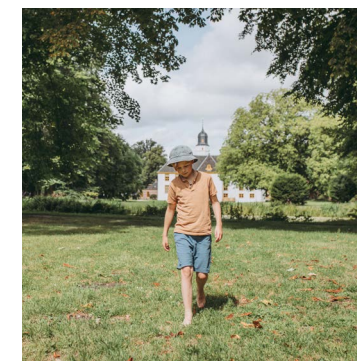
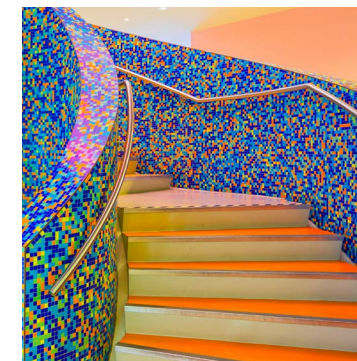
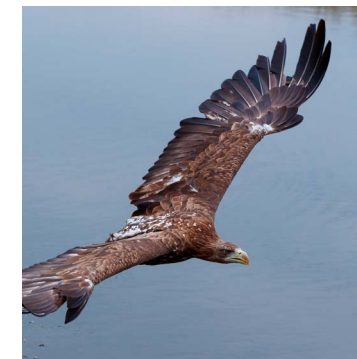
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With the children

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Groningen stage  
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Groningen store  
Pure, fair and sustainable

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# PROVINCE OF GRONINGEN



**10**

**KIEKKAASTE  
NIEUWE STATENZIJL**

**10**

**HANGING KITCHENS  
APPINGEDAM**

**1**

**MUSEUMRAILWAY STAR  
STADSKANAAL**

**31**

**IDYLLIC VILLAGE  
NIEHOVE**

**1**

**DARK SKY  
LAUWERSMEER NATIONAL PARK**

**LEGEND**

- Idyllic village
- Estate house
- Church
- Industrial heritage
- Nature
- Museum
- Other

Use this map to set out on your exploratory route through Groningen. Although it is impossible to capture Groningen in sixty or so pages, this magazine deals extensively with most places of interest. You will undoubtedly agree there are so many interesting places, but we have added even more great destinations and highlights to the map. Combine some of them in a daytrip, create your very own routes and take in the beauty and individuality of Groningen.

**15**

**KNUPPELPAD  
'T ROEGWOLD**

**16**

**UNESCO HERITAGE SITE  
WADDENSEA**

**36**

**FORTIFIED VILLAGE  
BOURTANGE**

**12**

**FRAEVLEMBORG  
SLOCHTEREN**

**2**

**MONASTERY  
TER APEL**

# INDEX MAP



## Idyllic villages

1. Midwolde
2. Ezinge
3. Garnwerd
4. Groot Wetsinge
5. Schouwerzijl
6. Onderdendam
7. Tinalinge
8. Rasquert
9. Stitswerd
10. Rottum
11. Toornwerd
12. Huizinge
13. Lellens
14. Eenum
15. Leermens
16. Godlinze
17. Spijk
18. Noordlaren
19. Wessinghuizen
20. Ter Wupping
21. Smeering
22. Feerwerd
23. Krewerd
24. Uitwierde
25. Zuidhorn
26. Westeremden
27. Termunten
28. Finsterwolde
29. Bellingwolde
30. Borgercompagnie
31. Niehove
32. Zoutkamp
33. Oudeschans
34. Slochteren
35. Visvliet
36. Bourtange
37. Kiel-Windeweer
38. Noordbroek
39. Midwolda
40. Bad Nieuweschans



## Industrial heritage

1. De Toekomst, Nieuwe Compagnie Wildervank
3. Sawmill Nootgedacht, N. Pekela
4. Strawboard factory Free & Co., O. Pekela
5. De Toekomst, Scheemda
6. De Turfcentrale, Veendam



## Churches

1. Kerk Niehove
2. Ludgeruskerk, Oldehove
3. Kerk Ezinge
4. Kerk Feerwerd
5. Kerk Garnwerd
6. Kerk Fransum
7. Kerk Oostum
8. Walfriduskerk, Bedum
9. St. Hippolytuskerk, Middelstum
10. Kloosterkerk Thesinge
11. Schoolkerk Garmervolde
12. Kloosterkerk Ten Boer
13. Stefanuskerk, Noorddijk
14. Bartholomeuskerk, Stedum
15. Kerk Godlinze
16. Janskerk, Huizinge
17. Andreaskerk, Westeremden
18. Jacobuskerk, Zeerijp
19. Petrus en Pauluskerk, Loppersum
20. Kerk Eenum
21. Donatuskerk, Leermens
22. Mariakerk, 't Zandt
23. Sebastiaankerk, Bierum
24. Mariakerk, Krewerd
25. Stefanuskerk, Holwierde
26. Toren van Uitwierde
27. Kerk Marsum
28. Nicolaïkerk, Appingedam
29. Juffertoren, Schildwolde
30. Ursuskerk, Termunten
31. Kerk Noordbroek
32. St. Petruskerk, Zuidbroek
33. Margaretha Hardenbergkerk, Wildervank
34. Nicolaaskerk, Onstwedde
35. Kerk van Sellingen
36. Bartholomeuskerk, Noordlaren
37. Kerk Midwolde
38. Kerk van Heveskes, Farmsum
39. Scheemder Kerk, Scheemda
40. Kerk van Finsterwolde
41. Kerk van Niekerk
42. Lettelbert Kerk
43. St. Vituskerk, Doezum
44. Kerk Meedhuizen
45. Petruskerk, Woldendorp



## Routes

- Through the Veenkoloniën
- A church tour
- 'Mest en Vork' route



## Estate houses

1. Coendersborg, Nuis
2. Iwema Steenhuis, Niebert
3. Nienoord, Leek
4. Piloersemaborg, Den Ham
5. Allersmaborg, Ezinge
6. Verhildersum, Leens
7. Breedenborg, Warffum
8. Menkemaborg, Uithuizen
9. Rensumaborg, Uithuizemeeden
10. Rusthoven, Wirdum
11. Landgoed Ekenstein, Appingedam
12. Fraeylemaborg, Slochteren
13. Welgelegen, Sappemeer
14. Ennemaborg, Midwolda
15. Burcht Wedde, Wedde
16. Ewsum, Middelstum



## Museums

1. Museumrailway STAR, Stadskanaal
2. Monastery Ter Apel
3. Veenkoloniaal Museum, Veendam
4. The MOW, Bellingwolde
5. National Carriage museum, Leek
6. Abel Tasman Museum, Lutjegast
7. Museum Wierdenland, Ezinge
8. Open air museum Het Hoogeland, Warffum
9. Berlagehuis, Usquert
10. Museum Helmantel, Westeremden
11. Fishery museum, Zoutkamp
12. Monastery museum St. Bernardushof, Aduard
13. Museums Heiligerlee
14. MuzeeAquarium, Delfzijl
15. Museumplein, Grootegast
16. Museum steam mill, Winschoten
17. Museum pumping station De Hoogte, Nieuwolda
18. Fortress museum, Oudeschans
19. The Jewish School, Leek
20. Museum Kapiteinshuis, Nieuwe Pekela
21. Fire brigade museum, Sappemeer
22. National Bus Museum, Hoogezand
23. North Netherlands Train & Tram Museum, Zuidbroek



## Other

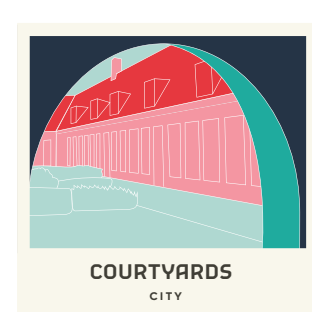
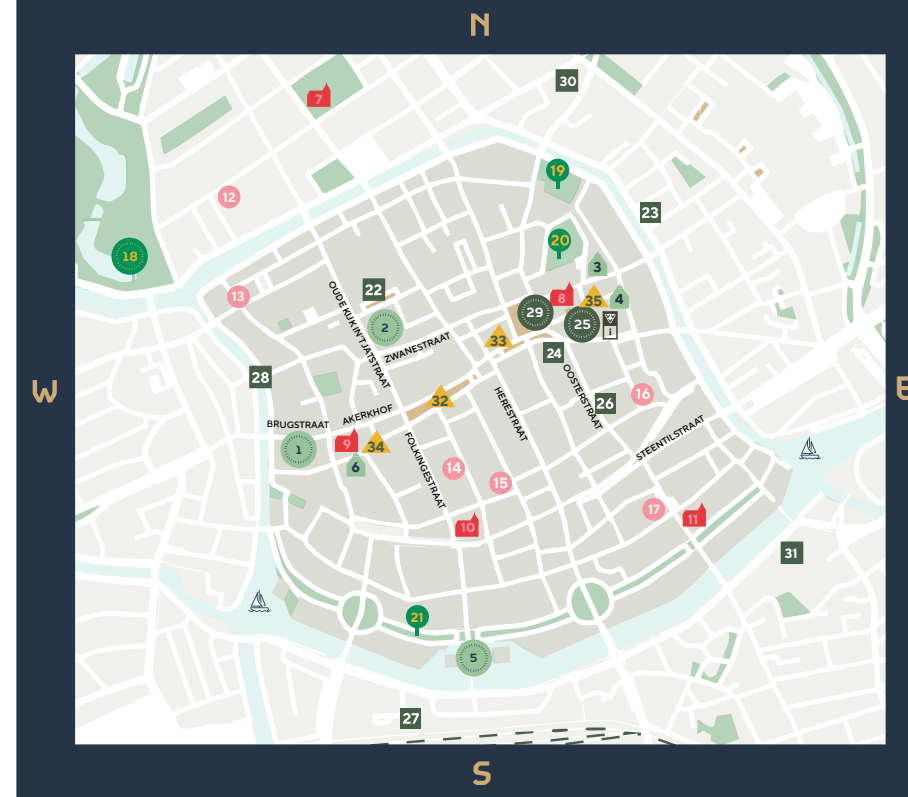
1. Batterij Fiemel
2. Information centre Lauwersnest
3. Thermen Bad Nieuweschans
4. DoeZoo, Leens
5. Wonderwereld, Ter Apel
6. Dinopark Landgoed Tenaxx, Wedde
7. Familypark Nienoord, Leek
8. Waddenfun, Wehe-den-Hoorn
9. De Mikkelfhorst, Haren
10. Hanging kitchens, Appingedam
11. Hortus botanicus, Haren
12. Op Maarhuizen, Maarhuizen
13. De Boog van Ziel, Termunterzijl
14. Schleuze, Nieuwe Statenzijl
15. Mill De Korenbloem, Vriescheloo
16. Mill Fortuna, Noordhorn
17. Coöperatie De Graanrepubliek



## Nature

1. Dark Sky Park, Lauwersmeer
2. Appelbergen, Glimmen
3. Noordlaarderbos, Noordlaren
4. Heemtuin, Muntendam
5. Borgerswold, Veendam
6. Ruiten Aa, Sellingen
7. Lauwersmeer National Park
8. Blotevoetenpad, Opende
9. Drentsche Aa, Glimmen
10. Kiekkaaste, Nieuwe Statenzijl
11. Punt van Reide, Termunten
12. Noordkaap, Uithuizemeeden
13. Noordpolderzijl
14. Sealcentre Pieterburen
15. 't Roegwold UNESCO heritage site
16. Waddensea, UNESCO heritage site
17. Leekstermeer (Drenthe)
18. Slochter Ae
19. Schildmeer
20. Ambonezenbosje
21. Carel Coenraadpolder
22. Kwelderrotte
23. Smeering
24. Schaapskooi Ter Borg
25. Westerbroekstermadepolder
26. Domies Toen

# CITY



## Museums

1. Museum aan de A
2. University museum
3. GRID Grafisch museum
4. Storyworld
5. Groninger Museum
6. Noorderlicht

## Churches

7. Nieuwe Kerk
8. Martinikerk
9. De Akerk
10. Synagoge
11. St. Josefkerk

## Courtyards

12. Pieternellagasthuis
13. Jacob en Annagasthuis
14. Juffer Margarethagasthuis
15. Pelstergasthuis
16. Pepergasthuis
17. St. Anthony Gasthuis

## Green

18. Noorderplantsoen
19. Prinsentuin
20. Martinikerkhof
21. Singels

## Other

22. Academy building
23. Stadsschouwburg
24. Grand Theatre
25. Forum/Groningen Store (VVV)
26. VERA
27. Main railway station
28. Hoge der A
29. Martinitoren
30. Machinefabriek
31. Oosterpoort
32. Vismarkt
33. Grote Markt
34. A-kerkhof
35. Nieuwe Markt

# RURAL IDYLL

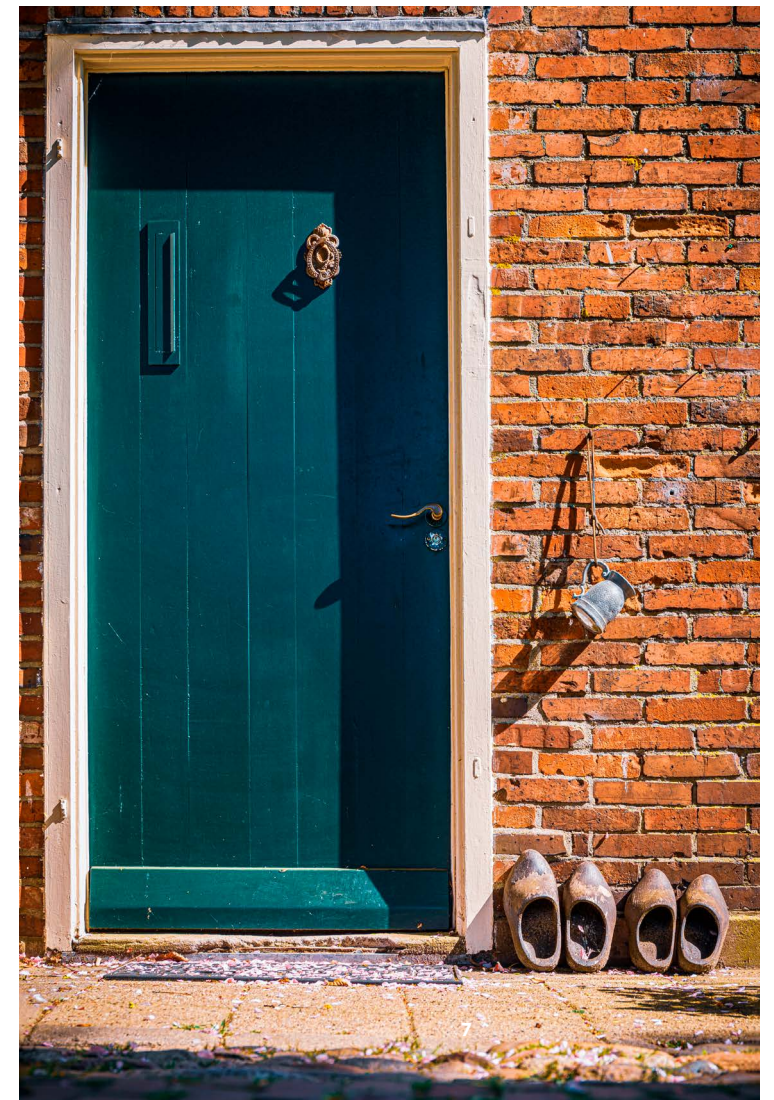
Take a leisurely drive through the Groningen Ommeland and take in views of various beautiful villages in the province of Groningen, each with their very own distinct character. Most of these villages are surrounded by meadows, farmlands, tree-lined roads and canals. Actually, the entire province is dotted with them, each one well worth a visit.

## WINSUM

As you enter the village of Winsum, you can't miss its hustle and bustle, not to mention the various small businesses established in the charming village centre. One such business is PUUT, a children's wear shop that sells second-hand clothing. Also check out Old Dutch and Friends, a shop and studio where traditionally crafted leather accessories are sold. With no fewer than 59 listed buildings, Winsum is charming from every angle. Explore it on foot, by bike, or from the water; the views of Winsum are special everywhere you look. See the vanes of two operating windmills turn and take in the characteristic churches towering above the village. The Dutch Automobile Association awarded Winsum the title of most beautiful village in the Netherlands 2020 – and once there, you'll understand why. Would you prefer to see the village from the water? Follow the historic inland route along the Winsumerdiep canal, past the historical buildings and under two bridges that once linked the villages of Winsum and Obergum.

## NIEHOVE

A visit to the small and ancient Niehove artificial dwelling hill village, located on one of the many Groningen settlement mounds, can bring a lump to the throat. Time seems to have stopped in this village of beautiful red-brick houses. Imagine yourself in an era long past as you explore the narrow church paths with centuries-old spider's web patterns that lead to the thirteenth-century Romano-Gothic church in its centre. The visitor centre is located in the church and provides all the information you might need or would like to know about the village and surrounding Humsterland. Would you believe that this actually used to be a Frisian island? And of course a café is rather commonplace for a village, but the Eisseshof Indonesian restaurant may come as something of a surprise. Sample the rich tastes of Indonesia or enjoy a delicious cup of coffee and some homemade cake. Not finished exploring this region? Simply follow one of the winding roads from Niehove into the province.





GRONINGEN

ONDERDENDAM



RURAL IDYLL

MIDWOLDE



### ONDERDENDAM

If you're travelling by boat or canoe, be sure to pass through the village of Onderdendam – the views from the water are simply breathtaking. This village, with its Korenmolen Hunsingo flour mill and charming church from 1840, has great appeal for any visitor, hikers and cyclists alike. Another distinctive element is the old cantonal court, of which the former prison is rather casually suspended above the Winsumerdiep canal. De Molenaar restaurant in de flour mill has wonderful options for a meal and overnight accommodation in the former granary. Don't forget to visit 'DE KERK'; an Amsterdam school-style church with a permanent collection of Amsterdam School furniture and varying exhibitions. If you want to get those bicycle wheels turning, mapping out a route that takes in the Stadsweg, the Jaagpad and the Onderdendamsterweg is highly recommended. All of them old roads for you to experience and enjoy the countryside every inch. If you are ready for some well-deserved peace and quiet, take the Jaagpad by the Rasquerdermaar three kilometres north of the village; turn left from Onderdendam after a sharp bend in the Onderdendamsterweg.

### MIDWOLDE

If you are planning a visit to the Landgoed Nienoord rural estate near Leek, be sure to take the scenic route there, via the lovely village of Midwolde. The name Midwolde roughly translates as 'in the centre of the forest'. The forest disappeared long ago, but before then this boggy and thickly-grown area was impenetrable. If you are touring by bicycle, turn at the church and take the driveway to Nienoord. This is the way the noble Van Ewsum and Von Inn- und Knyphausen families would travel to 'their' Adelskerk, a very distinctive 12th-century church. It is part of the Grootste Museum van Nederland: a collection of the most beautiful churches in the Netherlands. This is where you can see the impressive monument created by Rombout Verhulst between 1665 and 1669 by order of the young widow Anna van Ewsum. She herself was also immortalised in the sculpture, resting beside her deceased husband.

## THERE'S MORE

- **Spijk**  
Perfectly round, the ancient Spijk artificial dwelling hill is in mint perfection. You'll find the moated church in the exact middle.
- **Finsterwolde**  
Explore the rich past of Groningen in this village which features stately country houses and villas from the Graanrepubliek's 'golden age'.
- **Borgercompagnie**  
This is a typical view of the De Veenkoloniën peat district: an elongated ribbon village beside the water, where impressive farms and panoramic views alternate.
- **Ezinge**  
This ancient village is one of the icons among the Groningen artificial dwelling villages. A photogenic church with a separate tower perches on the edge of the village hillock.

- **Oudeschans**  
The smallest of fortified villages developed during the Eighty Years' War. Stroll down its former defensive walls and be sure to visit the Fortress museum.
- **Noordlaren**  
Rural, charming and bathed in greenery, the thirteenth-century Bartholomeüskerk church and much older megalith clearly demonstrate that you have entered an ancient area.
- **Kiel-Windeweer**  
Explore this delightful ribbon village from the water – sail past Groningen farms and under the beautiful bridges.
- **Smeerling**  
A few farms, some sturdy trees and the charming Ruiten Aa countryside; this is the scenic area in and around the hamlet of Smeerling.

*Up for some more exploring?  
Refer to the map in this magazine  
for other lovely villages to visit.*



### APPINGEDAM

The famous 'hanging kitchens' of the village of Appingedam are suspended above the Damsterdiep canal and resemble bay windows. Get the perfect shot of them from the Vrouwenbrug bridge.



### ZOUTKAMP

Come to Zoutkamp to experience a traditional fishing village: this is the perfect place to enjoy some fresh fish and take some photos of the cheerfully coloured fisherman's cottages.



### BOURTANGE

This unassailable Groningen fortress has been restored to its former glory. Stroll across its photogenic ramparts and share your photo.



**#visitgroningen**  
**#nothingtopsgroningen**

# 311 STONE STEPS UP

Fire, lightning or collapse: the Martinitoren has stood firm. Climb the tower to experience its tangible history and a stunning view. Because there is no lift, climbing the Olle Grieze – Old Grey One – involves some unremitting labour. But rest assured that your work-out will be handsomely rewarded.  
- [visitgroningen.nl/en/martinitoren](https://visit groningen.nl/en/martinitoren)

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# CITY HIGHLIGHTS

Feel the energy as you look over the city from the Martinitoren or walk through the ancient city streets. Groningen features so many undiscovered gems, lovely boutiques and small-scale high-quality restaurants. Wander around the city, open a gate to one of the courtyards and enjoy some quiet time alone. Have a cold glass of beer at a local pub and learn more about Groningen culture.

## Oases of tranquillity Courtyards

The city centre features various oases of tranquillity: courtyards where long ago the poor, sick and widows were offered free shelter through the charity of devout private individuals. Although their function has since changed, the courtyards have been retained. Feel free to enter.

## Chilling in green Noorderplantsoen

Whenever the weather is nice, the banks of the ponds in the Noorderplantsoen park become crowded. Would these people be aware of the fact that bloody wars were fought here? Or that this actually is the former city defence works? That even before those days, an ice cap pushed up the heights in this area? Ah well: why dwell on history if you can doze in the warm shade of the park.

## An entirely different world Prinsentuin

Close to the Martinitoren and surrounded by the walls of the leafy and flowery Prinsentuin, it's easy to imagine yourself in an entirely different world. Wander through the shady foliage passages, enjoy a cup of tea at the tearoom or take a rest on a bench to read and lose track of time.

## Lively market Vismarkt

Market workers shout out their wares as cyclists wind around pedestrians. Locals buy lunch in the old Korenbears or enjoy some cod parings. Today, the shops, cafés and restaurants in the historical buildings surrounding the market welcome visitors under the watchful eye of the Akerk. The Vismarkt is – and has been for centuries – a hive of city activity.

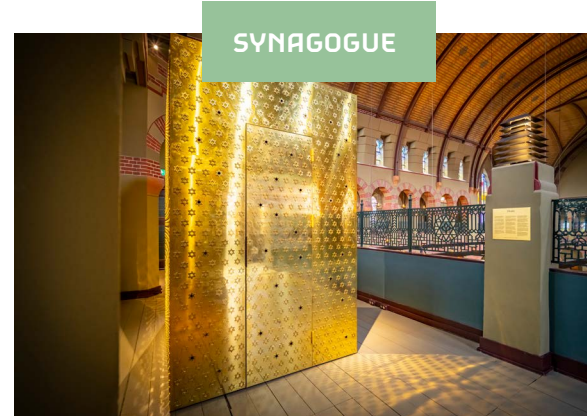
## FORUM GRONINGEN



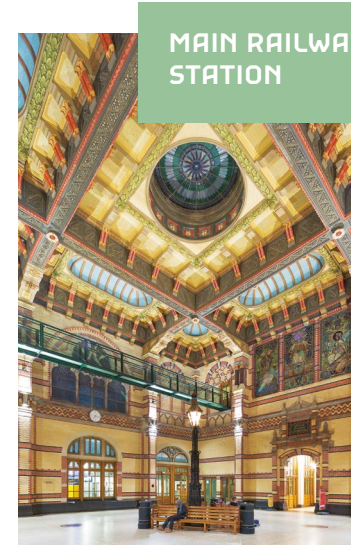
## ACADEMY BUILDING



## SYNAGOGUE



## MAIN RAILWAY STATION



## NOORDERPLANTSOEN



## COURTYARDS



## HOGEDER A AND LAGEDER A



## A place to meet others Forum Groningen

A meeting-place for anyone with just the slightest touch of curiosity, the distinctive Forum is located in the heart of the city centre. This is where you find a museum, exhibitions, cinemas, cafés, a restaurant, the library and the Groningen Store (VVV); all under a roof that provides a phenomenal view of the city.

## Breathtaking

### Main railway station

Missing your train in Groningen is far from the end of the world, because it will allow you take some time to view the most beautiful station hall in the Netherlands. The tile-tableaux ceiling and special acoustics further add to the experience.

## Long-standing university Academy building

The academic heart of the city has been beating at the Broerplein since 1614. Before that, the university was located in an old monastery, which was converted into a new academy building in 1850 that in turn went up in flames in 1906. The current building is a wonderful example of the north Netherlands Neo-Renaissance style.

## The stately warehouses at the Hoge der A and Lage der A

The old warehouses alongside the canal demonstrate the industriousness of the olden days. Ships would enter and depart here and the sounds of rattling wheels and stamping horses could be heard all day long. Stroll

by the quays to take in a few of the many monuments.

## Cultural place of worship Synagogue

Groningen had a considerable Jewish community before the German occupation. Most of the people from this community lived around the Folkingestraat, where you still clearly see the traces of its past. One example is the city synagogue, which in 1981 was converted back into use as a place of worship again. Feel free to enter for a tour or exhibition.





40KM



# MET MEST EN VORK

Groningen is the perfect place for a culinary experience. Take your bicycle, bring some cash and off you go. This 40-kilometre bicycle route takes in some wonderful locations in the province where you can sample all the flavours of Groningen. Fill your saddlebags with delicacies bought on the road to enjoy at home or where you're staying.

Groningen residents have known for centuries that the fertile clay by the coast is perfect for growing and cultivating food. Vegetable gardens flourish here naturally, and surprisingly enough, certain wine grapes also feel right at home on the salty Groningen soil. This extensive countryside is an invitation to try new flavours during your break from cycling. Step off your bike for a bit to enjoy a casual drink and bite to eat and buy some dairy, wine and tea to take with you. All regional products of course.

*Be sure to check all opening times before setting out.*

START

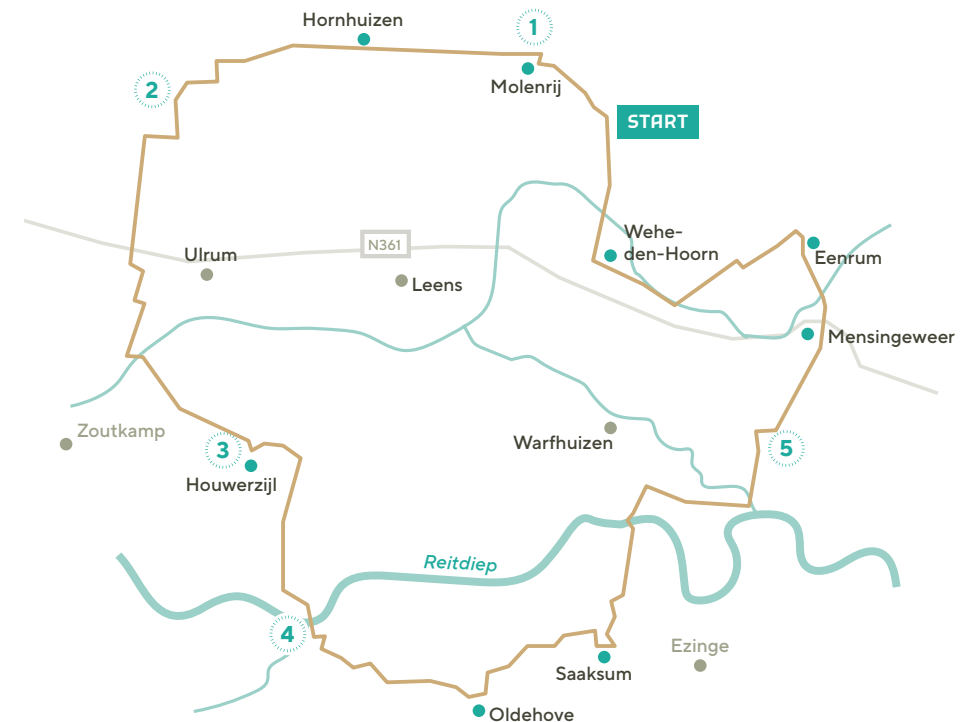


## MOLENRIJ

There is a reason for your bicycle trip to start and end in Molenrij. In De Groene Luwte, culinary green author and organic market gardener Alma Huisken and her partner and photographer Doortje Stellwagen run their organic B&B Het Groene Huisje and stylish holiday accommodation De Deel. They believe that their special green and organic land is to be shared, which is why the greater part of their spacious garden is open to guests. Spending the night at their B&B is highly recommended if you plan on cycling over several days. Alma and Doortje have also created the book 'Met mest en vork' – a book about vegetable gardens and nature, including recipes that are tributes to the Hogeland. Buy your copy when you visit them. Their neighbours at the Herberg Restaurant Molenrij prepare delicious lunches and meals using regional and seasonal produce. Their fresh seasonal tart served up with your coffee is simply delicious.



HERBERG RESTAURANT MOLENRIJ



TIP

Guests are always welcome in this cosy, authentic inn. Enjoy a meal when you're done cycling for the day and if you want, you can roll right into your bed.



**WADDENMAX, HORNHUIZEN**

Time to set off again. A bit further on, in Hornhuizen, you finally see what 'mest en vork' stands for: farm life. You are now headed for WaddenMax, the Van Tilburg family's biodynamic dairy farm. This family treats people and animals alike with friendly respect. Take a look in their cowhouse and follow the cowpath to the sea bank for a breath of fresh sea air. You could say that the Lauwersmeergebied is actually their backyard. Conclude your visit in the shop where all kinds of dairy products are available, from quark to wild garlic cheese and from butter to buttermilk.

**DE THEEFABRIEK, HOUWERZIJL**

The route takes you even further inland to the next stop: the village of Houwerzijl. This is a popular stop among tea drinkers for a break from their bike. Surrounded by a lovely garden and outdoor café, De Theefabriek is located in a former church and parish. It is a tea museum, tearoom and teashop combined, and their menu boasts 300 tea varieties and various homemade cakes, scones, sandwiches and Groningen *poffert* – a ring-shaped cake. Once you have rested your weary legs, browse the teashop to buy some tea to take home. Take as much as you like. After all, it weighs almost nothing!

**WJNGAARD HOF VAN 'T HOGELAND**

Contemplate this sloping incline to the south with rows of vines in taut lines as the sun comes out from behind the clouds. Oh, yes, this is also Groningen. On the Groot Maarslag artificial dwelling hill, located between Schouwerzijl and Mensingeweer, you will find the organic Hof van 't Hogeland vineyard. It was established in 2013, when winegrower Elma decided to plant two thousand vines. She's had great success. Her grapes start to grow in mid-May and are harvested in September, and produce approximately 3,000 bottles white wine a year. Pure, fresh and dry, this is as organic as it gets. Wine tastings are held by prior appointment, but no worries: you can usually buy a bottle of wine in the barn if you happen to cycle by. You just need to be lucky that they're home.

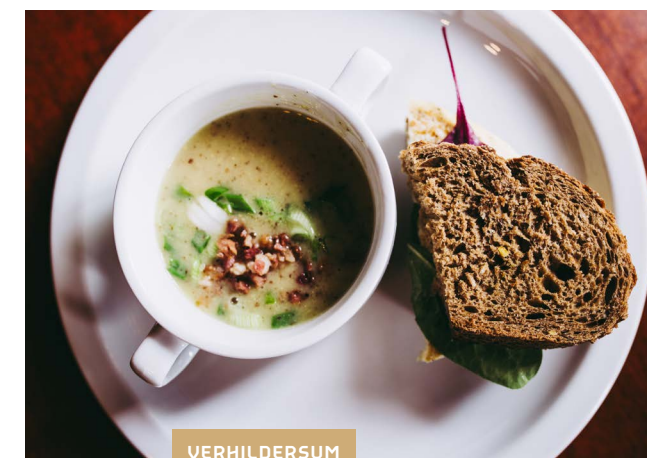
END

**INMAKEN EN ZO, LAUWERZIJL**

In Lauwerzijl, next to pumping station the Waterwolf, you will find the local products shop Inmaken en Zo. Here, they grow and process all kinds of fruit and vegetables from their own garden and orchard. Delicious chutneys, piccalillies and various pickled vegetables, such as zucchini, cucumber and gherkins. They also make typical Groningen dishes like *poffert* and apple pie and sell all kinds of herbs and spices. Take a break here to get some delicious ice cream in the sun. They are open on Friday and Sunday afternoon and when the "open" sign is outside.

**FUN & NEARBY**

Borg Verhildersum  
Pumping station De Waterwolf Niehove  
Rianne's Boerderij IJs (ice cream in Niehove)  
Fishing village Zoutkamp





A muddy path under your bare feet, a zoo that allows more than just observing, or an exploratory expedition in a monastery where you can see what life used to be like. Groningen is one giant adventure for children.

#### SEALCENTRE PIETERBUREN



Visit the seals at Sealcentre Pieterburen. Lie on a blue pillow and peek through a window. Whoosh, that was a seal! This one is almost ready to return to the Wadden Sea. Other seals in Sealcentre Pieterburen are still too sick. During your visit you will learn everything about seals and their natural habitat. - [zeehondencentrum.nl/en/](http://zeehondencentrum.nl/en/)

#### MONASTERY TER APEL



A long time ago, monks used to live here. The monastery has since been transformed into a museum that shows what life here was like back then. Put on a habit and take a picture as a monk. Look around the refectory, the garden and the bedrooms. Or play outdoors in the Kloosterbos. - [kloosterterapel.nl](http://kloosterterapel.nl)

#### GNOME AND HEDGEHOG PATHS



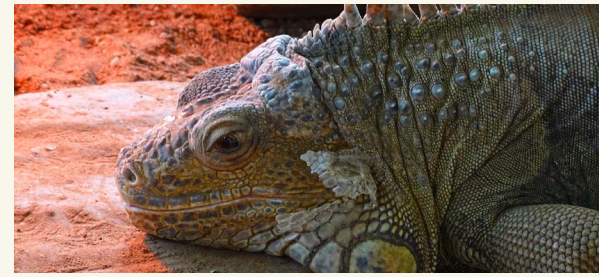
Explore one of the gnome paths that traverse the wooded areas in the province to see if you can find a gnome or hedgehog. You could also follow the hedgehog path at Sellinger, where hedgehogs lead the way. The expedition includes various assignments. Do you think you can outrun a hedgehog? - [staatsbosbeheer.nl/kabouterpad](http://staatsbosbeheer.nl/kabouterpad)

#### FAMILY PARK NIENOORD



Do you always want to do something different than your brother or sister? Then rest assured, because there are heaps of children's attractions here. A small steam train traverses the playground, the petting zoo and an obstacle course. Oh, and there is the swimming castle. - [landgoednienoord.nl](http://landgoednienoord.nl)

#### DOEZOO



If you think nature is boring, you have never had a snake curled up around your neck or petted a skunk. In addition to feeling and seeing, you can also hear and smell a large variety of animals in DoeZoo in Leens. If you would also like to taste something, how about... a worm biscuit? - [doezoo.nl](http://doezoo.nl)

#### MUZEEAQUARIUM



Learn all about the world of water in the MuzeeAquarium in Delfzijl. Scrutinise minerals and gemstones and see thousands of objects related to the theme of shipping and the largest shell collection in all of Europe. The aquarium houses sharks, rays, lobsters and many more sea creatures. Do you have the nerve to touch and pet them? - [muzeeaquarium.nl](http://muzeeaquarium.nl)

#### SPEULPARADIES BEERTA



Come and play all day in this play paradise. Try the bouncing pillow and whiz down the cable ride. Don't forget to check out the petting zoo with all kinds of animals, even alpacas. As you can see: anything is possible here. - [speeltuibeerta.nl](http://speeltuibeerta.nl)

#### MAMMOTH PATH



Set out on an adventure on the 'Mammoetpad' - mammoth path - ; a nature study route with a nod to the area's earliest inhabitants. Take off your shoes and socks and dip your feet in the water. Use one of the rafts or cross a bridge for your next adventure. Do the ABC nature quest, engage in a game of bingo or set out on a ditch safari. After all the excitement, have a well-deserved break at the Heemtuin outdoor café. - [heemtuinmuntendam.nl](http://heemtuinmuntendam.nl)

#### LEGIO MUSEUM



The LEGIO museum is a museum featuring everything that has to do with LEGO®. This is where you come to look, build and play. The museum is located in the old LEGO Nederland building at the Legolaan in Grootegast; a historic location of LEGO, because it was established here from 1963 until 1998. - [museupleingrootegast.nl/legio-museum](http://museupleingrootegast.nl/legio-museum)



## GRONINGER MUSEUM

# GRONINGEN STAGE FOR CULTURE

In Groningen, your year-round cultural diary is easily filled with a variety of artistic highlights: museums, music of all kinds and styles, theatre and so much more. Culture enthusiasts are right at home here. Visit some of the many museums, get up front with your favourite band or enjoy the art in public spaces and places.

## MUSEUMS

Groningen city is home to several notable museums, each with a highly distinctive character and special exhibitions. Let's start with the Groninger Museum located on the Museumeiland. The futuristic and colourful exterior is enough reason to be curious about what's inside. The huge range of items included in their in-house collection, coupled with innovative and sometimes provocative exhibitions make visiting the Groninger Museum a very memorable and full-on experience. If you are interested in designs and designing, you really should go to GRID, the printmaking museum located next to the Martinikerk. Look around the printing office and bookbindery and get to work with designing, typesetting and various printing techniques. The University museum is located in the city centre. Situated in the Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat, the academic core of the city, this is where nature, culture and science are woven together. The Museum aan de A (the former Noordelijk Scheepvaartmuseum) is just a bit further, in the Brugstraat. The

central focus of this museum is on the stories of the city and province, and the ordinary and extraordinary people who live here. You might also like to check out the synagogue to take in one of their regularly changing exhibitions. The Synagogue is located at the start of the Folkingestraat in a traditionally Jewish district with a rich history. Fans of photography, videos and other lens-based art are in the right place at Noorderlicht. With a keen eye for developments yet averse from trends and hype, they hold a photo festival once a year, in addition to interesting events. Storyworld is located in the Forum, the distinctive building on the Nieuwe Markt. It is one of the newest and most fun museums in the Netherlands and the perfect place to go and learn all about comic strips, animation and games. Don't know which museum to choose? Consider visiting all of them during the Groninger Museumnacht, which takes place in early September. It's a night filled with art, music, performances and more.

## WORLD-FAMOUS BANDS LIKE U2, NIRVANA AND PEARL JAM PERFORMED IN VERA

VERA



STREET ART



### THE FORUM

The Forum has more culture in store than Storyworld alone. This building was designed to be a meeting-place for anyone curious about today's world and tomorrow's novelties. In addition to varying exhibitions, it also houses the library and a cinema. Be sure to check out their programme for courses and talks.

### MUSIC

Groningen has a lively music scene and plenty of places to take in a concert, both large-scale and small-scale, local or international. One of your options is the Oosterpoort at the Trompsingel. They book bands and concerts in any style for all kinds of audiences. If sweltering guitars are more your thing, be sure to drop in at VERA in the Oosterstraat; a household word in the city and far beyond. The walls here are clad with posters, pages from papers and photos from a rich musical past of which the Vera team are very proud – and rightly so. This is the place where many bands starting out performed before achieving global fame (or notoriety). Alternatively, go to Simplon, a pop music venue with an innovative and varied programme. Simplon's main focus is electronic music from dance to urban, but there are also evenings filled with punk, jazz or folk. When walking or cycling through the city, you hear music coming from cafés, clubs and pubs. Sure sounds great, right?

### THEATRE

Any venue is the best venue for a lovely evening of theatre. The Stadsschouwburg theatre is located in a historical building at the canal. Performances held in this beautiful and classic hall vary from cabaret to dance, and anything in between. The Grand Theatre is at a short distance from here, at the Grote Markt. The building, which was once a squat, has since developed into a high-profile theatre. Be sure to take in its rich history. Most of their unconventional and contemporary programme has a social twist, which can also be said about the former Machinefabriek. Home to the Noord Nederlands Toneel en Club Guy & Roni, their programme of performances is not by definition mainstream.

### ART ROUTES

Groningen is also synonymous with art in the streets. Various art routes will shed an entirely new light on the city – both visually and aurally. Take in graffiti and street art as you enjoy a musical tour, explore four centuries of musical history or hop on your bike after dark to go see light works of art that are easily missed during the day. Raw, edgy contemporary art pieces combine well with Groningen gems and other striking examples of art in the city. View them on - [visitgroningen.nl/en/art-routes](http://visitgroningen.nl/en/art-routes)

# PURE, FAIR & SUSTAINABLE

Sometimes all it takes is for you to just look around the corner. Or to cross a dike with headwind. There is so much to discover in Groningen, you probably could use some help.

The Groningen Store (VVV) in the Forum Groningen is your starting point for an exploratory expedition of Groningen. Find any information about the city and environs, routes, or a visit to the Martinitoren. This is also the place to be for fun, sustainable and delicious products, all manufactured and invented by Groningen entrepreneurs. No need to stick to the opening hours to seek inspiration, either!



All products sold at the Groningen Store have a great story to tell: they are sustainable where possible and the typical Groningen goods are devised and produced by Groningen producers or creators. Buy chocolate made in the picturesque village of Niekerk, soap made from Groningen rapeseed, or a bag in Groningen design. Be surprised by the infinite variety of Groningen design and ingenuity.



NIEUWE MARKT 1 - [WWW.GRONINGENSTORE.NL](http://WWW.GRONINGENSTORE.NL)



The compact Groningen city centre features shops that sell famous brands, in addition to experimental solopreneurs who sell luxury and special vintage items. Browse the streets and be surprised by the variety of what's on offer. Following are some lovely examples of streets and venues that should really be on your wish list.

#### FOLKINGESTRAAT



Let's start with what might be the best and most entertaining street of them all. With its blend of special shops, boutiques and restaurants, of course this street has once been voted the best shopping street in the Netherlands.

<b>Le souk</b>	North-African grocer
<b>Ascoli</b>	Gift store
<b>Beans and grapes</b>	Coffee and wine store
<b>Belluci</b>	Womenswear
<b>Ariola</b>	Italian deli

#### OOSTERSTRAAT



The shopping street that connects the Grote Markt and the Rademarkt forms a chain of listed buildings. This is where you go for fashion, lifestyle and home decoration items, and even a speakeasy bar. Shhhh, don't say if you found it!

<b>Klup de dag</b>	Clothing store
<b>H. Witting &amp; Zoon</b>	Hatshop
<b>Appel &amp; Ei</b>	(Second-hand) clothing store
<b>Hartendief</b>	Children's store
<b>The Stockroom</b>	Cocktailbar

#### OUDE KIJK IN 'T JATSTRAAT



Now this is one of those streets that will easily captivate you for the entire day. The speciality shops here are unparalleled. Even if you don't really need any particular item, browsing the shops here is great fun and very interesting. Afterwards, have a well-deserved rest at one of the many cafés.

<b>Kunst &amp; Vliegwerk</b>	Bookstore
<b>Kastanje Wonen</b>	Home and living store
<b>De Zwerver</b>	Travel bookshop
<b>Wirwar</b>	Game store
<b>De Stadsakker</b>	Gardening and vegetable store

#### GRONINGEN

#### SHOPPING

#### STEENTILSTRAAT



Not all places are within the same easy reach. One example is the Steentilstraat; a true gem on the outskirts of the city centre. However, many people are happy to bridge the distance to get a good record, trendy outfit or comfy shoes. The Steentilstraat; a.k.a. something for everyone.

<b>De Jongens van Hemmes</b>	Record store
<b>Onder de Linde</b>	Second-hand clothing store
<b>Viva! Vintage</b>	Vintage clothing store
<b>De Olijfbom</b>	Greek deli
<b>Cafe bistro Kult</b>	Café Bistro

#### HERESTRAAT



The Herestraat is the longest shopping street in the city. It's home to large chains and names, in addition to smaller shops that sell special items. From fashion chains to jewellers and charming cafés, this is just another place to be.

<b>Cotton Club</b>	Clothing store
<b>De Pindakaaswinkel</b>	Peanut butter store
<b>Van Arendonk</b>	Shoe store
<b>Van Delft</b>	Pepernoten and more
<b>Favolosa</b>	Café

#### ZWANESTRAAT



The Zwanestraat features fun and unusual shops only. Fill up on special products and items in this street that was also once elected the best shopping street in the Netherlands.

<b>Cledingraad</b>	Menswear
<b>SchoenenZaken</b>	Shoe store
<b>Diezijner</b>	Clothing store and more
<b>Kaaskop</b>	Deli
<b>Musjes</b>	Children's store and café

# 6 OPTIONS FOR FOOD AND DRINKS

## IN THE CITY CENTRE

### Breakfast

#### Pernikkel

The name Pernikkel is derived from the Flemish word *pernikkelen*: the irresistible urge for something, such as some healthy and delicious food. With a small but regularly changing menu, the Pernikkel chef prepares food from scratch using unprocessed local and seasonal products and ingredients. Start your day with an English breakfast, French toast or the Groningen morning meal.

- [pernikkel.nl](http://pernikkel.nl)

### Coffee

#### Koffiestation

Koffiestation has made it their mission to transform something ordinary into something special. They have a ten-year reputation of roasting the very best coffee. Starting out in a basement in the Oosterparkwijk district, it has since transformed into a flourishing company with an establishment in the Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat. They work with the motto that coffee must be experienced. 'Always start the day with a good cup of coffee.'

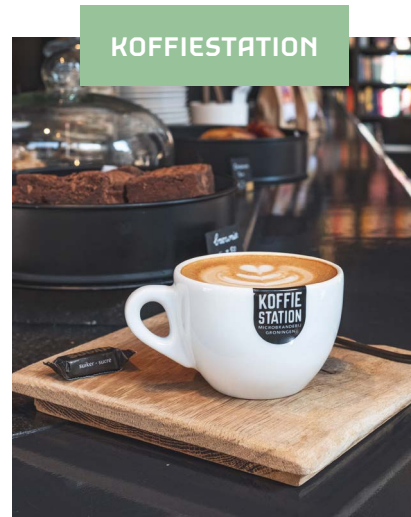
- [koffiestation.nl](http://koffiestation.nl)

### Lunch

#### Sepia

Wonderfully located just outside the city centre, Sepia serves a 4-course surprise lunch that is definitely worth making time for. They use local ingredients where possible and are happy to prepare a delicious vegan alternative.

- [restaurantsepia.nl](http://restaurantsepia.nl)



KOFFIESTATION



SEPIA



PERNIKKEL



DOT

### Gatherings

#### DOT

Located near the city beach, the striking DOT building is a lovely place to spend some time. Come in and enjoy a film in the spherical-shaped construction, or a themed evening. Enjoy street food while playing one of their many games with friends. Options include sesame buns filled with pulled chicken, loaded fries and a Thai salad.

- [dot groningen.nl](http://dot groningen.nl)

### Dinner

#### Restaurant Florentin

Florentin draws inspiration from the lively Tel Aviv district of the same name. Come and sample 'Balagan-style' food and drinks and immerse yourself in the creative city atmosphere where cultures blend together. Don't skip desert this time, because they will make a real feast, right at your table.

- [florentingroningen.nl/en/](http://florentingroningen.nl/en/)

### Drinks

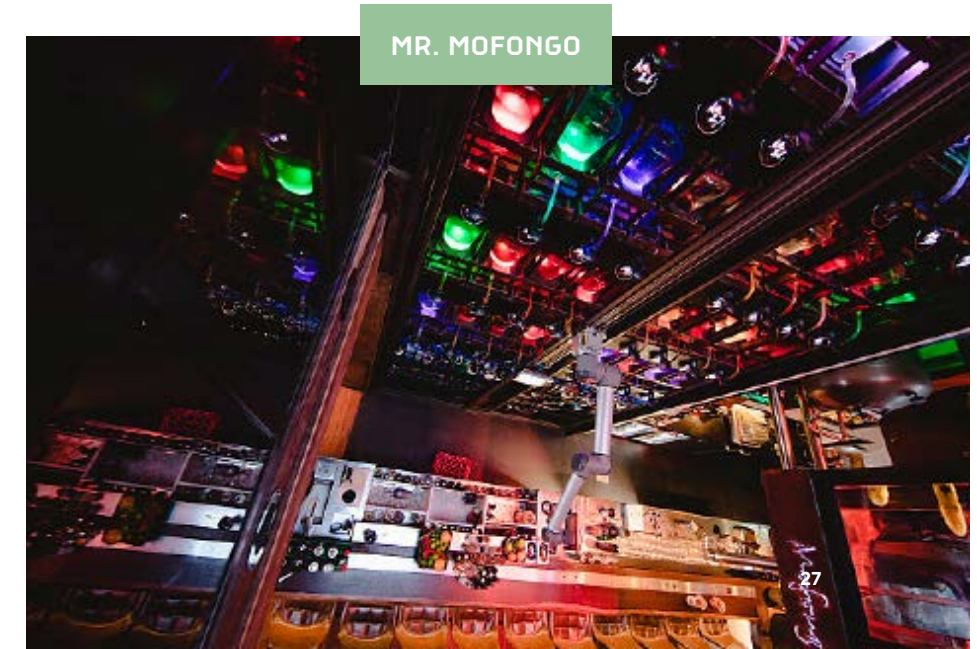
#### Mr. Mofongo

Groningen residents love this classic venue. Their menu includes delicious food and a huge selection of cocktails. In addition, they distil their own liquor. The robotic arm is always on stand-by to tap your drink from the eight-metre-high liquor cabinet. If you prefer a glass of wine, check out the Rooftop Wine Bar.

- [mofongo.nl](http://mofongo.nl)



FLORENTIN



MR. MOFONGO

# TRAVERSING THE REALM OF WOODS AND WATER

If you are thinking of going for a hike near Ter Apel, be sure to check out the first hand-operated cableway in the Netherlands. It measures 22.4 in length and connects the banks of the Ruiten Aa stream. Take a seat in the gondola and bring yourself across using the wheel.  
- [visitgroningen.nl/en/ruiten-aa](https://visit groningen.nl/en/ruiten-aa)





N  
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GRONINGEN TAKE A DETOUR THROUGH

40KM



LEERMENS

# A CHURCH TOUR



If you want to make sure you don't lose your way, download the route on [visitgroningen.nl/en/tour-churches](http://visitgroningen.nl/en/tour-churches).

This route takes in beautiful churches between Groningen city and Delfzijl. You will find the doors to many of these churches already open to visitors. And if not, you can simply borrow the key from the house next to it. Love the serenity of churches and their surroundings? Follow this route to see more churches and take in the beauty and wealth of the Netherlands.

While some may refer to them as beacons of silence, quiet and contemplation, others boast of their solid appearance or consider all churches combined to be one huge museum. Sometimes people refer to France or Tuscany to emphasise the beauty of Groningen churches. This is totally unnecessary, the churches of Groningen are simply special as themselves, with their own particular character.

Groningen churches generally have ancient roots, deriving their special character from the reddish brown Romanesque bricks that were fired using Groningen clay. While their towers are usually modest in height, they stand head and shoulders above the artificial dwelling hills. Their interiors, with old murals and beautiful vaults, are true hidden gems. Welcome to the churches of Groningen.



- Main route
- - - Alternative route
- - - Bicycle path
- 1 Featured spot
- Interesting stop
- Exit to alternative route
- Railway station
- Food & drinks**
- 1 Huiskamercafé Westerwijtwerd
- 2 Hotel Spoorzicht
- 3 Visrestaurant De School
- 4 Restaurant De Basiliek
- 5 De Luingahof Bierum

## 1 SCHOOLKERK GARMERWOLDE

A white staircase reminiscent of an Escher print leads up to the top of the old tower in Garmerswolde. Climbing it involves bending under a beam as old as the hills. The tree was probably cut down sometime around 1250. Religious celebrations have been playfully portrayed along the stairs. Once you reach the top, you'll be rewarded with a beautiful view. The Schoolkerk, a late-Romanesque church from the 13th century, includes a combination of modern and medieval architecture. Originally a cruciform church, its shape was lost after the nave was demolished in 1859. The contours of the nave have been made visible again, which shows that this must have been quite a large church, certainly when considering the modest size of this village. Inside the church are tableaux from the life of Christ. They were probably created by Jan van Aken (1380-1454), grandfather of Jeroen Bosch. After your visit, enjoy a drink at the visitors' centre.

## 2 DONATUSKERK LEERMENS

The Donatuskerk of Leermens has been here since time immemorial, and has also been under construction and renovation since then. The tuff sidewalls delineate the oldest part from 1050. When you enter the transept, you see the tuff is mixed with red Roman bricks. It is evident that in the 13th century these bricks were all the fashion. Inside, the 15th century paintings on the walls and ceilings immediately catch the eye. Look up: can you make out the symbols of the four Evangelists? And how about the Lamb of God in the vault? From the walls, St Donatus, St Sebastian, the Virgin and Child and St Ursula look down benevolently. Look closely to see the virgins hiding under Ursula's cloak. And who could that crowned figure next to Sebastian be? Maybe it's Emperor Diocletian. The 17th-century pulpit is the only remaining old piece of furniture; everything else was lost in a fire in 1957.

## APPINGEDAM

## 3 NICOLAÏKERK APPINGEDAM

Many Groningen residents consider it a gaffe, but it is actually a fact that Appingedam is a Frisian city; the medieval centre of the Frisian district of Fivelingo. The Nicolaïkerk clearly demonstrates Appingedam's wealth of those days. It originated as a small 13th-century church and in a fairly limited period of time developed into a large hall church. This resulted in its status of largest church of the Groningen Ommelanden and 'the Nicolaï' really deserves its place in the Top 100 of Dutch listed buildings. Inside are murals that resurfaced during a restoration. They show four crowned martyrs and the eponym of the church: St. Nicolaas of Myra. Want to sit down for a break? Appingedam has plenty of cafés and restaurants with a free view of the old city. Restaurant De Basiliek, which is located in the charming Nicolaas church, is very popular. Or sit at the waterfront at Paviljoen Overdiep.



## KREWERD



## PIETERBUREN

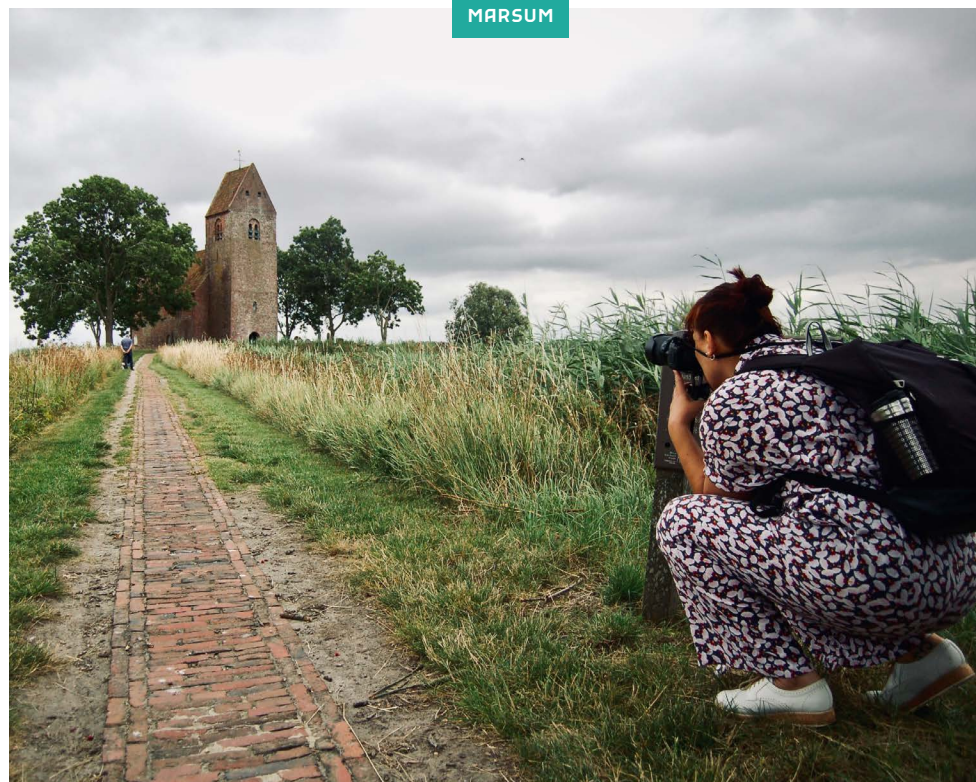


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## 4 KERK MARSUM

A church without a village, how can this be? Where did the village go? This is a sad story really, because virtually the entire population of Marsum died during the siege of Delfzijl in 1814. A group of stubborn French soldiers refused to surrender because Colonel Maufray would not believe that Napoleon had been beaten. Fortunately, the Romanesque church was saved, and stands as an icon on an artificial dwelling hill. Construction is assumed to have been initiated in the second half of the 12th century. Outside, on the apse – the half-round back of the church – you can see old monks and nuns on the roof; this is what the concave and convex tiles are called. Once inside, look up to see a blue-green attic. While it's pretty, it's not original. It is assumed that this church once had vaults. Similar to the simple benches, the attic was created around 1788 by Jan Ates van Holwierde, the carpenter who also built the pulpit a few years later. The tabernacle and piscina are medieval.

## MARSUM



## GARMERWOLDE

## 5 MARIAKERK KREWERD

This charming church is located on the artificial dwelling hill of Krewerd. It is such a beautiful sight that you could almost forget to enter it. And once you do, you will see the second oldest organ in the Netherlands, which is still in operation. Connoisseurs from far and wide come to see it. The church also has medieval paintings on display, such as the brick imitation and the plant motifs on the vaults. Another special item is the coat of arms filled with attributes used by construction workers: a trowel, a carpenter's square, a hammer and axe. There is a story to this late-Romanesque hall church about a widow Tiadeke, who had a seriously ill son. She lived in a Groningen estate house near Krewerd and promised to have a church built if her son recovered. After his recovery, Tiadeke failed to keep her promise. When her son died later without leaving any children, she still had the church built out of remorse. The Mariakerk is naturally included in Het Grootste Museum van Nederland: a collection of the most beautiful Dutch churches.

## 6 SEBASTIAANKERK BIERUM

If ever there was a robust church, it's the Sebastiaankerk, with its huge buttress to support the tower. This is not the church's only special feature, by the way. Have you ever heard of a 'reduced westwork'? It's actually a church tower built into the church. Although it may seem perfectly normal, it really isn't, certainly not in these regions. Its exterior looks Romanesque, while the interior with domed vaults and brick imitation is late-Romanesque; in other words, this is a church in a transitional style. The large buttress was added much later. Subsidence must have been a serious consideration to justify this kind of colossus. Inside, be sure to look up at the image of Christ, St Catherine with the wheel, St Sebastian and the Virgin and Child. For years they were covered and invisible under a thick layer of chalk. Afterwards, take a well-deserved break under the apple trees of the De Luingahof tearoom and fruit and vegetable trade. Be sure to get your Fladderak Kouk cake at the Bakkerij Olinga cake champion.

## ALSO WORTH SEEING

Four Groningen churches are included in the Grootste Museum van Nederland. The Mariakerk of Krewerd is one, and these others are also certainly worth visiting:

## – Sint-Hippolytuskerk

Concordiaplein 1, Middelstum

## – Adelskerk

Hoofdstraat 134, Midwolde

## – Petruskerk

Hoofdstraat 74, Pieterburen

The Stichting Oude Groninger Kerken website provides plenty of information about the ninety-plus churches the foundation owns. This is the perfect starting point for your continued explorations of the rich religious heritage of Groningen.

– [groningerkerken.nl](http://groningerkerken.nl)

## TIP

Bring your bicycle by train to Stedum, Loppersum, Appingedam or Delfzijl to start your journey.

# THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF LAUWERSMEER NATIONAL PARK

**Naturally there was a plan involved in the closing-off of the Lauwerszee in 1969, but who could have possibly imagined that the Lauwersmeergebied area would develop into one of the most beautiful scenic areas in the Netherlands? This is the only place in the country that features this combination of panoramic views of the horizon, stunning flora and fauna and such a huge number of recreational options.**

Come for the adventure and stay for the beauty. Take things fast or slow, whether on land or water, on foot, by bicycle or boat. Anything is possible here, from angling to gazing at the starry sky or spotting a white-tailed eagle. Alternatively, enjoy the beauty of the landscape during a leisurely hike. Whether solo or with others, young or old: the Lauwersmeer National Park has plenty for everyone.



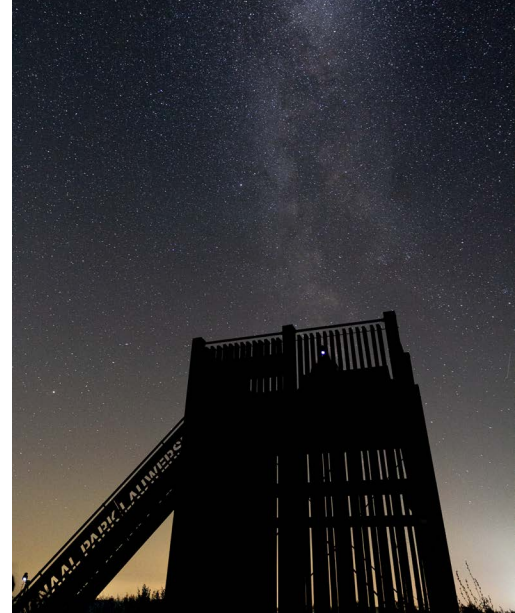
## LAUWERSNEST

The start of your exploratory expedition through this area is the Lauwersnest activity centre, the park's beating educational heart. This is where children can see informative videos, build huts and learn all there is to know about the huge number of bird species that live in the area. The Dutch Forestry Commission employees are happy to assist where they can. Feel free to take a map with routes and places of interest from the bin outside the building to help you explore the region. With the smallies? Be sure to venture out on the gnome path in the wooded area behind the Lauwersnest. Perfect for children and anyone who is still a child at heart.



## FISHING

Located by the Waddensea, the Lauwersmeer area is teeming with fish. Cast your fishing line at one of those perfect spots, such as the Robbengatsluis. Anchor your boat and see if you have any luck. Fish just love to hang out in this fish-friendly place where new lock doors were placed only last year. Clever feature: they have special holes for migratory fish to swim through when the doors are closed. Their free migration from the Waddensea to the Lauwersmeer and vice versa supports biodiversity. If you don't catch anything but have worked up an appetite, be sure to visit Lauwersoog harbour for some fresh fish. From shrimp to perch, everything served here is ultra-fresh.



GRONINGEN

## DARK SKY

Have you ever experienced utter darkness to the extent that you were unable to distinguish between land and sky? Few places exist where the Milky Way can be seen in a clear sky. The Dark Sky Park is one of two places in the Netherlands where evenings actually get this dark. Once your eyes have adapted to the darkness, you'll be surprised at what you can see. It will take your eyes about twenty minutes before they are fully accustomed to the darkness. Once they have, you will see more and more. Look up at the sky, focus on the stars and embrace the darkness.

LAUWERSMEER NATIONAL PARK

**THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE IN THE COUNTRY WHERE YOU WILL FIND THIS COMBINATION OF PANORAMIC VIEWS OF THE HORIZON, STUNNING FLORA AND SUCH A HUGE NUMBER OF RECREATIONAL OPTIONS.**



— Since 2010, the white-tailed eagle has been successfully brooding in the Lauwersmeer area.

## BIRD WATCHING

Look carefully and try to spot some of the various bird species living in the Lauwersmeer National Park. See spoonbill, common snipe and barnacle goose, and, if you are lucky: the impressive white-tailed eagle with a wingspan of over 2.5 metres. This area is actually a junction of one of the main bird migratory routes frequented by thousands of birds from over one hundred bird species. See what's flying, hopping and foraging here from a birdwatcher's hut or observation tower. Whether you're an advanced or novice bird spotter, everyone is in for a great day. While you can see plenty with your bare eyes, field glasses will come in handy to observe birds more closely. A fairly simple one will do. We also recommend shoes with good soles to prevent sore feet. The Lauwersnest provides a handy bird brochure to get you started on your exploratory expedition. In addition to info about birds, it also indicates where you are most likely to spot your favourite species. Be sure to keep your ears and eyes open to hear and see as much as you can.



# 11 WONDERFUL WALKS

Experience Groningen's wide open space. No need to look too hard to find it, because it's always close by. The province of Groningen has it all: beautiful countryside, ancient heritage and infinite horizons. Altogether, these are exactly what make Groningen the perfect place for a lovely walk or hike. There's no need for you to worry about leaving a temporary footprint here.

## A picturesque hamlet Smeerling

Footpaths traverse the Smeerling hamlet and take you for a lovely hike through the old Metbroekbos wooded area. They bring you past various charming authentic farmhouses from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, so be sure to stop for a closer look.

## Explore the past Noordlaarderbos

The Noordlaarderbos is an enchanted wooded area with a rich past. Did you know that the cart tracks you see here actually date from the Middle Ages? They are part of the old trade route between Coevorden and Groningen, once one of the area's lifelines. This cultural historical area is a perfect place for a lovely hike.

## So many different sights in one scenic area Appelbergen

Enjoy the huge diversity of this area during a walk marked with yellow posts. Naturally, you can also go on your very own exploratory expedition. The views alternate between dense wooded areas and clearings, sand drifts, pools and marshes.

## Clear your head Noordpolderzijk

Noordpolderzijk, the village with the smallest open seaport in the Netherlands, is located in the northernmost part of the Groningen mainland. Enter this oasis of quiet and tranquillity and forget all about your daily hustle and bustle. This is also the place to be for a walk over the dyke.

## Outside the dyke De Kiekkaste

The waves of the sea break over the mud flats while birds pick for food. De Kiekkaste birdwatcher's hut provides a stunning view of the ever-changing countryside. Walk through the reeds, cross the deck path and see the birdwatcher's hut slowly emerging. Don't forget to bring your field glasses.

## DE ONLANDEN



## APPELBERGEN



## PUNT VAN REIDE



## DE KIEKKAASTE



## Meander through an old wooded area Bos Ter Apel

Hike the Bos ter Apel forest: follow meandering wood-paths beside the waters of the Ruiten Aa stream valley for lovely views of open fields. Try and find the Bosbeek; an extension of the Ruiten Aa, and quietly enjoy the views from the Leidijk. Continue your walk on a path fringed by ancient oaks and beeches over a thousand years old.

## A vast marsh area De Onlanden

This wide marshland is a mere stone's throw from Groningen city. Great white egret, marsh harrier, white-tailed eagle and bittern all have their perfect habitat here. Climb that 25-metre-high watchtower to spot Exmoor ponies, roe deer or – if you are lucky – a fox.

## Peninsula in the Dollard Punt van Reide

The Punt van Reide – a marshland peninsula where nature reigns – is located in the Dollard estuary. Enjoy the peace and quiet in this almost otherworldly area where birds peacefully live alongside seals.

## Cross the wooden deck path 't Roegwold

The Knuppelpad in nature reserve Roegwold is one of the most photographed places in the Groningen countryside. The path comprises a 750-metre long wooden deck path that leads through the water. Take a break on one of the benches and enjoy the unique view.

## BLOTEVOETENPAD



## A muddy adventure Blotevoetenpad Opende

The Westerkwartier area features a very special path: the Blotevoetenpad Opende. The course includes crawling barefoot over trunks and ropes when crossing drains. You'll feel the grass tickle your feet and mud ooze between your toes.

## A refreshing wooded area Slochterbos

Behind the Fraeylemaborg rural estate is a wooded area with plenty of surprises. Whatever the season, the almost 1.3-km route through the Slochterbos is highly recommended. In spring and summer, enjoy the songs from innumerable bird species. In autumn, you will find an abundance of mushrooms and a palette with any colour imaginable. Break your walk with a homemade sandwich on one of the various benches.

## SLOCHTERBOS



Explore the city of Groningen on foot. Choose one of the route booklets from the Groningen Store and set out on a city walk, opt for an online walk or join one of the city guides.

- [visitgroningen.nl/en/city-walks](https://www.visitgroningen.nl/en/city-walks)

# WALKING ACROSS THE SEABED

Enjoy the fresh breeze, inhale that healthy sea air and empty your head: crossing the mud flats is an active way to relax. Brave salt marshes, silt fields, sandbars and channels. It may require perseverance, but this is what makes crossing the mud flats so very special. The village of Pieterburen is the perfect starting point for an unforgettable exploratory expedition of the Waddensea. Take that leap and off you go!  
- [visitgroningen.nl/en/crossing-the-mudflats](https://visit groningen.nl/en/crossing-the-mudflats)



OFF THE  
BEATEN  
TRACK

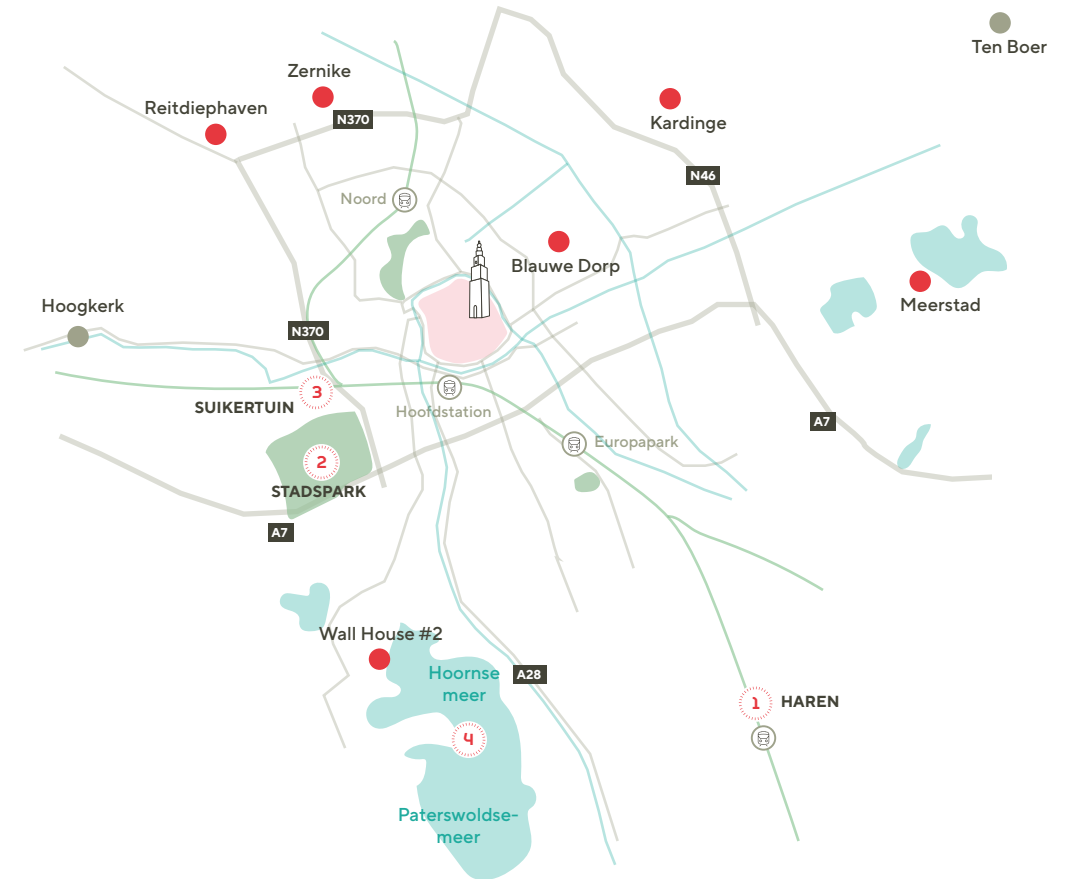
CREATE YOUR OWN ROUTE



# IN AND AROUND THE CITY

The best way to explore a city is to simply start walking. Turn into that particular small street and go left where others go right. And be sure to broaden your exploratory expedition beyond city centre limits to take in all of the surprises and special venues. Naturally we can provide you with some tips you can use to create your own route.

Groningen carries one great risk, namely that people stick around the city centre. This is a pity if you consider the great places outside of the centre: a special building, a green oasis, a creative hotspot or a charming village. Take a leisurely stroll or get those bicycle wheels turning to take in an entirely different view of Groningen.

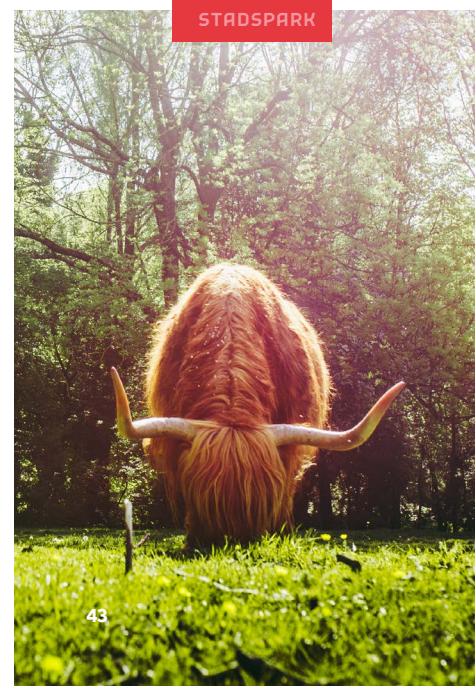


## 1 HAREN

The authentic village of Haren is located at a close distance south of the city, in a lovely green area. Centuries ago, rich Groningen residents discovered Haren and many of them decided to construct a country house in this green area on the Hondrug sand ridge. One example is the Tuin de Vennen villa. It was built by Mr Niemeyer – a name that might sound familiar from the tobacco factory of the same name. The gardens have been restored to their original layout and are open to the public. The heart of the village is built around the church. Find your perfect outfit at one of the boutiques and enjoy a meal in one of the restaurants that serve dishes inspired by cuisines from all over the world. Enjoy a relaxing visit to the Hortus Botanicus, one of the largest botanical gardens in the Netherlands with various themes. The wonderful Chinese Ming garden is one of its kind in Europe and the absolute highlight of your visit.

## 2 STADSPARK

In 1907, industrial magnate Jan Evert Scholten was one of the benefactors who presented the city of Groningen with what may strike as a very special gift: a park! Jan Evert made his fortune growing sugar beet and potato and producing straw. Today, this park – the Stadspark – is one of the finest locations in the city of Groningen. Many people think that the Stadspark's beauty exceeds that of the popular Noorderplantsoen park near the centre because it combines rich history with stunning scenic beauty. In addition, this much larger park is just so much quieter and more tranquil. Actually, the large parks you find elsewhere in the Netherlands, such as Amsterdam's Vondelpark and the Hague's Zuiderpark all pale in comparison with the 140 hectares of the Stadspark. Come for a walk, bicycle ride or lounge by one of the ponds and enjoy the wonderful views of the English-styled park. Don't forget to visit the petting zoo.





SUIKERTUIN



HOORNSEMEER

## ALSO WORTH SEEING

### Kardinge

Come to Kardinge to climb the highest climbing tower in all of Europe, or enter into battle with your friends at the go-cart track. A Valhalla for sports fans, Kardinge also has a scenic area with plenty of adventures waiting. Come face to face with Scottish Highlander cattle, pick an apple right from the tree or chill at the small beach of the Zilvermeer lake.

### Meerstad

Park Meerstad combines nature and art in the largest land art project in the Netherlands. Water and sports fans come to the Woldmeer for some hiking, cycling, swimming and sailing. The beach is perfect for building sandcastles and beach volleyball or there's windsurfing on the waters of the Meeroevers. Conclude the day at the charming beach pavilion.

### Oosterpark and the Blauwe Dorp

The Blauwe Dorp in the Oosterparkwijk district clearly demonstrates that you don't have to leave the city to experience a Groningen village. In addition to its enchanting 'house farms' in green, the Oosterpark also features some magnificent Amsterdam School-style gems. Savour that lovely aroma of fresh coffee from the Koffiestation roasting house or enjoy a meal at the Bie de Buuf restaurant or Stadsrestaurant Het Oude Politiebureau.

### Zernike

Groningen students and researchers meet at the Zernike Campus, where they build on the future in a green area with charming cafés.

### Reitdiephaven

With its colourful Scandinavian-based appearance, the Reitdiephaven is one of the most frequently photographed places in Groningen. Do you like it?

### Wall House #2

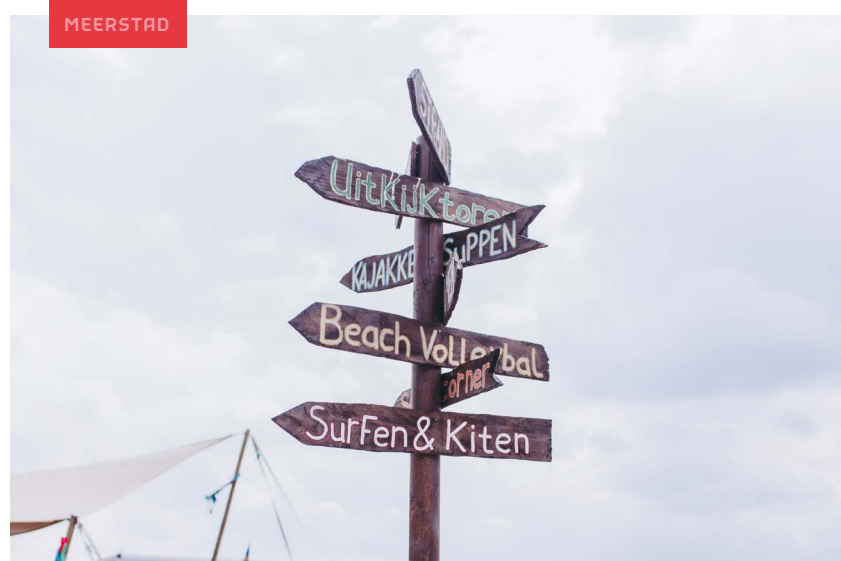
Granted: Utrecht has the Rietveldhuis and Fayette County has Fallingwater, but Groningen has Wall House #2. With its ingenious interior and exterior, this special house designed by John Hejduk is an icon in international architectural history. Changing temporary exhibitions by local artists are held here. Come to think of it: it is rather a surprise that people don't queue up outside.

### 3 SUIKERTUIN

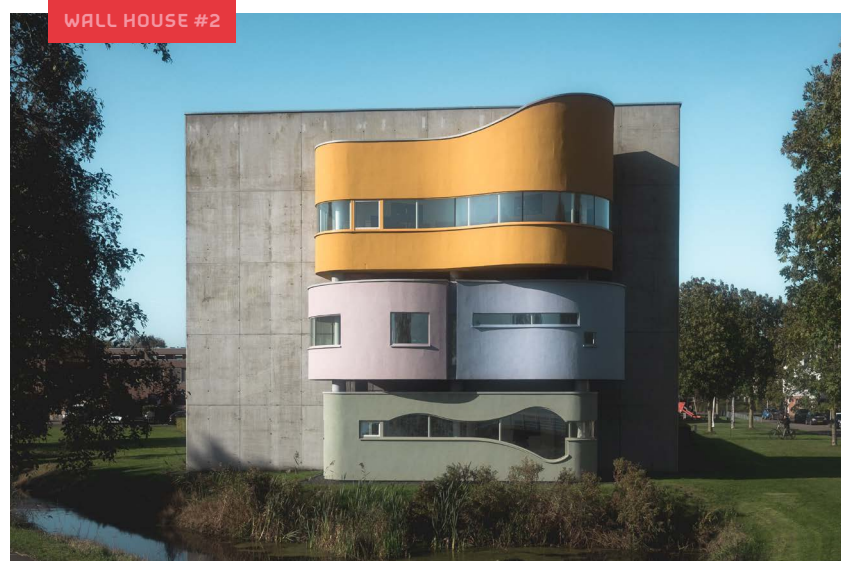
Now a creative hotspot frequented by people who love a good time, this was once a place where thousands of sugar beets were processed. In recent years, the former Suikerunieterrein grounds have been converted into a wonderful and spacious venue with outdoor cafés, delicious food, music and children's theatre. Wriggle your toes in the sand at the Rebel Rebel Hostel city beach or hang out in a hammock at EM2. If you like heights, be sure to have a drink at BOOVN. Their roof garden on the former sieving building has an unforgettable view of the city skyline. Events are held on a regular basis in the Suikertuin, such as at Paradigm. You are in for the most wonderful time at this special venue on the outskirts of the city.

### 4 HOORNSEPLAS & PATERSWOLDSEMEER

As soon as summer is about to hit, many Groningen residents will head to the south. Nope, not to France or Spain: they go to the Hoornseplas and Paterswoldsemeer lakes. And rightly so, because they are perfect for those warm summer days. Take a dip in the water and doze off in the shade of a large tree. Naturally, various water sports are practised here. Skim the water on your water skis or take a relaxing SUP yoga course. The youngest have a blast in the wading pond, playground or one of the playing fields. Fun activities such as beach volleyball and barbecues are held on a regular basis, and you can enjoy drinks and meals at the various beach pavilions beside the lake. In short: plenty of options for an entire day of fun in the sun.



MEERSTAD



WALL HOUSE #2



REITDIEPHAVEN



# DISCOVER THE BORGEN

While the rest of the Netherlands has fortresses and castles, Groningen is the place where you find borgen – estate houses. They are scattered around the province and ready for you to explore. So get on your bike or in your car to check out these chateaux of the north. If you think you can explore all sixteen in a single day, think again. Simply select a few to take in the splendour of the olden days.

Over two hundred borgen and estate houses, homes of Groningen aristocracy, once dotted the province. These estate houses date from the 13th century, when they were built on the lands belonging to rich farmers. Set up as places of refuge or defence, over time they lost their strategic function and were converted into stately country houses with beautiful gardens. This is when nobility started living in borgen instead of farms. Outside were the stables and barns: the treasuries. By the late 18th century, only a few borgen were left. Peerage had experienced barely any new increase and gentleman farmers had started buying the buildings and grounds up to obtain the rights that came with them. The buildings themselves remained empty. Others were bought by non-noble Groningen regents.

While the occasional borg found a new function as a country seat, others were demolished or converted into farms. The last borg to be demolished was the Dijksterhuis near Pieterburen (1903). By that time, the 16 remaining ones had been declared listed buildings. Fortunately they were not the buildings in the worst condition. Today, they are the showpieces of the province of Groningen. Many of them are open to the public, and some even provide overnight accommodation. The gardens and surrounding rural estates are wonderful places to visit. As soon as you enter, it feels as if the residents of old could return from a lovely outing any second.



FRAEYLEMABORG



VERHILDERSUM

## FRAEYLEMABORG

If you are coming to visit the Fraeylemaborg, don't simply enter the building, but instead walk to the far back of the garden, where you will see a bus. It's one of the estate's follies: funny and distinctive buildings that do not serve any practical purpose. This country estate, with its romantic English-styled garden, is a lovely place for a walk. With numerous little vistas, beautiful trees and hillocks, you can spot the odd part of the older Baroque garden. While the house itself originates from the Middle Ages, its current design dates from 1781. The Louis XVI-style halls and white plasterwork you see were all the fashion in those days. The old coach house now functions as a museum shop with various exhibition spaces. Conclude your visit with a drink and a bite to eat in the treasury. - [fraeylemaborg.nl/english/](https://fraeylemaborg.nl/english/)

### BURCHT WEDDE - WEDDERBORG

As you approach the Wedderborg, it is immediately obvious that this must have been a 'real' castle. It endured the occasional war, and in the 15th and 16th century had a circular wall with high defence towers. For centuries, the Wedderborg served as the seat for the Lords of Westerwolde. In 1619, it came into the ownership of the city of Groningen, which in 1829 planned to demolish it. Fortunately these plans never came to pass, and notary Arnold Hendrik Koning bought and renovated the castle. The Koning family owned it until 1955. Today it functions as special holiday accommodation for children and young people. Adults are welcome to stay in one of two stylish heritage guest rooms. Enjoy a lovely stroll in one of the beautiful gardens. - [burchtwedde.nl](http://burchtwedde.nl)

### BORG VERHILDERSUM

A walk through the Baroque style garden of Landgoed Verhildersum takes in various buildings, such as a coach house, the treasury and a labourer's cottage. In spring, the garden transforms into a beautiful sea of flowers. Go to the museum farm and see how Groningen aristocracy used to live in conjunction with the farmers and farm workers. Old crop varieties are grown on the Verhildersum fields. It's just one of the ways in which the estate house keeps attention for historical varieties alive. A regional market is held on the country house grounds every first Saturday of each month, where the past and present meet. With its beautiful 19th-century decoration, this estate is more than worth a visit. - [verhildersum.nl/en/](http://verhildersum.nl/en/)

### NIENOORD

Nienoord is really the outsider in this list. This is not originally an estate house, but instead a peat estate which was founded

in 1525 by Wigbold van Ewsum. He used it as a base to cultivate the surrounding peat moors. The house suffered great hardships due to weather conditions, strong winds and war. In 1846 nobleman Ferdinand Folef van Inn- und Knyphausen set fire to the upper floor - it's uncertain if this was deliberate. A few years later, the orangery and coach house met the same fate, and it was rumoured that this too must have been the work of the mad squire. Since 1958, the Nationaal

Rijtuigmuseum has been established in the country house. The garden features the Schelpengrot: a cottage, the interior of which is entirely covered with a shell mosaic. The country estate also includes a deerpark, a swimming pool and the Familiepark Landgoed Nienoord. Perfect for children! - [landgoednienoord.nl](http://landgoednienoord.nl)



MENKEMABORG

### GRONINGEN



HERMANS DIJKSTRA

### DISCOVER THE BORGEN

### MENKEMABORG

So if you would like to know how Groningen nobility lived and breathed in the 17th and 18th century, be sure to go to the Menkemaborg in Uithuizen. Its interior has not been changed at all since those days. Originally an estate house built in the 14th century, over time it developed into its current Baroque splendour. It features beautiful gardens which have basically remained unchanged since the 18th century. In July, the rose tunnel flowers abundantly and fragrantly and the maze is a lovely place to get lost in. The garden had more than just an aesthetic function: after all, the nobility had to eat as well. Behind the treasury - the former farm next to the country house - is another kitchen garden, and you'll find various fruit varieties in the orchard. Drinks and meals are served in the Restaurant 't Schathoes. - [menkemaborg.nl](http://menkemaborg.nl)



BURCHT WEDDE



NIENOORD

### FARMHOUSES

In former times in Groningen, spacious dwellings were not reserved for nobility alone; other prosperous residents also used their fortune to build their place in the sun. Oldambt is dotted with farmhouses with castle-like front parts. The cultivation of grain once brought farmers enormous wealth, allowing them to live their best lives. Their money often went to their heads. They called themselves gentlemen farmers and built fancy front houses and entrance halls. Nonetheless, these farmhouses are really worth visiting. The Hermans Dijkstra farm in Midwolda is one of the better-known locations. They also serve drinks and snacks. - [visitgroningen.nl/en/farmhouses](http://visitgroningen.nl/en/farmhouses)

Refer to the map in this magazine for all of the Groningen estate houses.

# REAL-LIFE CRAFTS

Most of the numerous museums in the province were established by collectors, such as the Brandweermuseum (Fire Brigade Museum) and the Schaatsmuseum (Skate Museum). Chat with one or more of the enthusiastic volunteers of the Busmuseum, or the smith at the Historische Scheepswerf and learn all about their passions. In most galleries, the artist is available to discuss their work.  
- [visitgroningen.nl/en/specialty-museums](https://visit groningen.nl/en/specialty-museums)



# 11 VENUES FOR REGIONAL PRODUCTS

Whoever said that delicacies need to come from far away? This is certainly not the case in Groningen, where people put their own creative stamp on what the sea and land provides. Sweet-sour apples, bitter beer, salty shrimps and sweet rolls made from Groningen corn and sugar: try each and every flavour.

## Unwanted apples Doggerland Cider

At Doggerland, they sure know how to make the best of excess and unwanted apples. They simply use them to produce Groningen cider. Better yet: everyone who donates apples receives a percentage in the form of cider. If you do not have any apples, no problem: you can also simply buy the cider. - [doggerlandcider.com](http://doggerlandcider.com)

## Strawberries and the white gold Meinardi

The Meinardi family has been a household word in Groningen for many years. They grow the most delicious strawberries and have the freshest asparagus. They also produce various types of juice, jams and more yummy things. Some of their products are farm-fresh, others preserved to last a bit longer. - [bijmeinardi.nl](http://bijmeinardi.nl)

## Good old-fashioned free-range meat Waddenvarkens

Venture out to one of the northernmost tips in the Netherlands to visit the small-scale Waddenvarkens company. They sell traditional free-range meat from pigs kept in a cruelty-free and sustainable manner. Here, pigs have all the space they need to root around and laze about in a pleasantly mucky home. - [waddenvarkens.nl](http://waddenvarkens.nl)

## Homebrewed beer Brouwhotel Parkzicht

his hotel in the centre of Veendam is home to a very special beer. A local craft beer made according to traditional methods, their beer is brewed in glass hop boilers so that everyone can see the brewing process. In the restaurant, the beer is served with delicious dishes. - [parkzicht.com](http://parkzicht.com)

## Meat from Groninger Blaarkoppen De Scharrelderij

De Scharrelderij is a small-scale beef cattle company where sustainability and quality take centre stage. Groningen Blaarkop cattle forage in the 'Het Groninger Landschap' scenic areas and keep the grass short. They also have a farm shop that sells their meat and other - organic - products. - [descharrelderij.nl](http://descharrelderij.nl)

## DE GRAANREPUBLIEK



## KOFFIEBRANDERIJ MAALWERK



## DE ZELFMAKERIJ



## Groningen ground corn Joeswert flour and hulling mil

This mill grinds organic Groningen grain according to traditional methods. The adjacent shop sells everything you could possibly need for home baking, from spelt flour to wheatmeal and spiced gingerbread to *poffert* mix. - [joeswert.nl](http://joeswert.nl)

## From the private garden De Zelfmakerij regional farm

This regional farm provides daycare for people with a distance to the labour market. They create a variety of regional products and the farm shop is filled with local products, from their own garden and from other suppliers. All with the taste of the region. - [zelfmakerij.nl](http://zelfmakerij.nl)

## MEINARDI



## Traditional coffee Koffiebranderij Maalwerk

The focus of the Maalwerk traditional coffee roasting house in Delfzijl is on roasting high-quality coffee. Averse to mass production and limitless stocks, instead they use selected hand-picked beans to roast and package. This is the place to go for freshly roasted coffee with a lovely full flavour. - [maalwerkkoffie.nl](http://maalwerkkoffie.nl)

## Experimenting with Groningen grain De Graanrepubliek

De Graanrepubliek cooperative is established in a former steam locomotive shed where various producers and farmers experiment with new and old applications of Groningen grain. The historical building is home to a mill, malt-house, bakery, pasta house, brewery, distillery, a bar and a taste laboratory; all set up especially for you to taste the rich Groningen history of grain. - [graanrepubliek.nl](http://graanrepubliek.nl)

## Brown shrimps from Zoutkamp Solt

In 2016, five Zoutkamp residents established Solt, a brand under which shrimps north of Groningen are caught to be peeled in Lauwersoog. Sustainable, with 100% natural ingredients and produced according to fair rules, they reach the very best and purest taste: deliciously salty sweet. - [soltmen.com](http://soltmen.com)

## For cheese lovers Westerwolds Goud

Under the name of Westerwolds Goud, the Westerwolds Goud Bioboerderij Landleven produces farmhouse cheese, quark, cream and ice cream. Here, dairy products are produced on-site using fresh milk from their cows. Feel free to taste! Guests are welcome to make their own cheese, so roll up those sleeves. Once done, you can bring your very own organic cheese home. - [westerwoldsgoud.nl](http://westerwoldsgoud.nl)



## DE SCHARRELDERIJ



Vegetables from a kitchen garden, meat from the farm around the corner and fresh fish from the Waddensea. The province of Groningen is full of surprising flavours and products, and local restaurants are very happy to use them. Following are just a few of those restaurants that serve the flavours of Groningen.

**De Amshoff, Kiel-Windeweer -**

De Amshoff restaurant is slightly tucked away in a Groningen heritage site. They serve 3- and 4-course menus using top-notch local and seasonal products. Come and enjoy French and Mediterranean dishes made from Groningen produce.

**Piloersema, Den Ham -**

A driveway lined with high trees leads you to the Piloersema, where the chef prepares food according to the seasons. During his excursions through the Groningen countryside, he is always on the look-out for interesting new suppliers. Their products are the ingredients of his pure and organic Italian dishes.

**Hermans Dijkstra, Midwolda -**

With its winding paths and ponds, the nostalgic Hermans Dijkstra farmhouse looks just like it did in its heyday. There, chefs use their culinary talents to work magic and serve a seasonal surprise menu using local products where possible.

**Restaurant De Basilek,**

**Appingedam** - Dine in a former church and choose from a varied menu with a selection of dishes made from home-grown products with the motto of 'Dutch cuisine'. A meal here is synonymous with an unforgettable taste experience.

**De Betere Tijden, Groningen -**

Using products from Groningen and environs, this private restaurant serves the best dishes inspired by Dutch cuisine. From their bread to peppermint, everything here is homemade.

**Gasterij Natuurlijk Smeerling,**

**Smeerling** - Enjoy a lovely lunch in green at this charming local restaurant. De Gasterij considers a healthy environment and lifestyle to be of paramount importance and uses sustainable and regional products only.

**De Groene Stoel, Groningen -**

Escape the city's hustle and bustle and enter De Groene Stoel. They use organic and local ingredients to prepare dishes inspired by influences from around the world.

**Brussels Lof, Groningen -**

Brussels Lof uses fresh and pure local organic products. Enjoy their fresh fish and shellfish from the Waddensea, or delicious vegetables from the province. The chef regularly goes to the Waddensea coast to pick salty herbs. Top-quality food guaranteed.

**Restaurant Graansilo,**

**Groningen** - Some odd 130 years ago, various varieties of one of the main ingredients of beer - grain - were stored here. They don't bring a menu to your table but instead surprise their guests with four different dishes which blend perfectly with their home-brewed speciality beers.

**Uit de Buurt, Groningen -**

The name of this restaurant translates into 'From the neighbourhood', referring to the fact that they use local products. After carefully selecting fair produce from local small-scale suppliers, the kitchen prepares dishes that remain a surprise until they reach your table.

Enjoy some of the best-tasting goodies from Groningen at home. Get them yourself, or even better: make your own!  
[-visitgroningen.nl/en/local-products](https://www.visitgroningen.nl/en/local-products)



## RECIPE THE SECRET OF THE EIERBAL

At first sight, it may resemble a giant croquette, but inside its crispy coating is a layer of ragout and a whole egg. Whether you want to try all of the culinary surprises you find in Groningen, or simply feel like a late night snack: the eierbal (Dutch Scotch egg) is something you must try at least once in your life. Use this recipe to make it at home.

### PREPARATION

#### The ragout

Sift 65 grams of flour in a bowl and add parsley and spices. Melt the butter in a saucepan. Add the flour and spice mixture as soon as the butter starts bubbling. Heat and stir this for 3 minutes on a low heat. Don't let it get too dark while it boils down. Pour in the vegetable stock, bring to the boil and stir to prevent lumps. Season with salt and pepper and leave to cook for a few minutes on a low heat while stirring. Ladle the ragout into a bowl, cover and allow to cool to room temperature. Allow to stiffen for 5 hours in the fridge or 1.5 hours in the freezer.

#### Preparing the eggs

Boil 4 eggs for about 5 minutes until hard, plunge into cold water and remove the shells. Pat them dry using kitchen paper. Divide the ragout into 4 equal portions of about 80 grams. Dust the palms of your hands with flour. Make ragout balls and press them until flat. Dust the eggs with flour and evenly fold each egg into ragout. Wrap them in cling film and allow to stiffen for 24 hours in the fridge.

#### Coating

Sprinkle 50 grams of flour on to a plate. Beat an egg in a bowl and put breadcrumbs on a plate. Cover ragout-wrapped boiled eggs with flour, egg and breadcrumbs. They are now ready to be deep-fried!

### INGREDIENTS

#### TO MAKE 4 EIERBALLEN

115 g wheat flour

1 tsp curry powder (or to taste)

1 tsp ground mustard seed (or to taste)

Dried or fresh parsley

32 g unsalted butter

250 ml cold herb or vegetable stock

5 medium-sized eggs

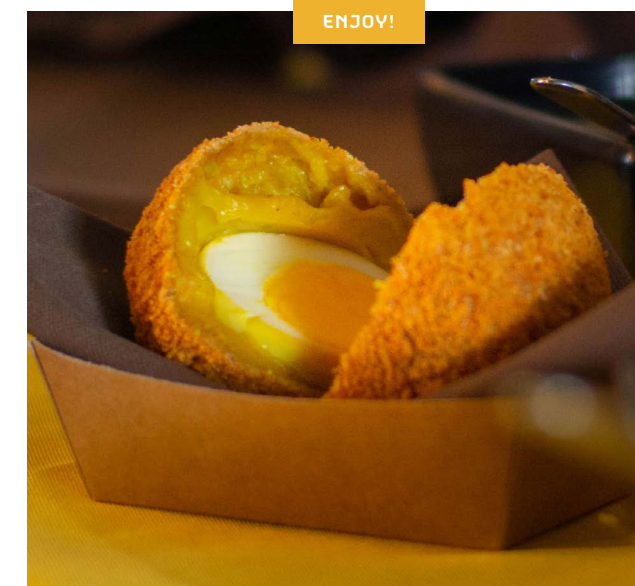
50 g breadcrumbs

#### Deep-frying

Heat oil in a deep fryer to 170 °C. Deep-fry the eierballen for about 5 minutes. Note: don't deep-fry them in oil that is too hot. If you do, the egg inside will not be warm while the outside becomes too brown. Eat them straight away or keep them refrigerated for two days. They won't be good after that. They cannot be deep-frozen.

View the video on [visitgroningen.nl/en/make-your-own-eierbal](https://www.visitgroningen.nl/en/make-your-own-eierbal)

### ENJOY!



N  
W TAKE A DETOUR THROUGH GRONINGEN E  
S

55KM



WILDERVANK

# THROUGH THE VEEN KOLONIËN



If you want to make sure you don't lose your way, download the route on [visitgroningen.nl/en/route-veenkolonien](http://visitgroningen.nl/en/route-veenkolonien).

This expedition takes in the special history of the Veenkoloniën (peat district), with its straight canals that cut right through the countryside, infinite ribbon villages with beautiful farms and rich industrial heritage. The route is about 55 kilometres long and can easily be shortened or extended.

Not everyone immediately falls in love when they see the Veenkoloniën on their first visit to the region. This part of Groningen tends to draw a particular type of visitor. But if you give the Veenkoloniën some time, you are sure to become fond of it. For centuries, high moorland lay thick in this area. In the Middle Ages, people started cutting it for fuel: peat or turf. Later on, in the 19th century, the Veenkoloniën developed into the home of Groningen coastal trade and agribusiness. By then, turf huts had long become a thing of the past in this highly industrious area.



## 1 VEENKOLONIAAL MUSEUM

Be sure to visit the Veenkoloniaal Museum and immerse yourself in the history of peat extraction, the canals, inland shipping, the rich agricultural industry and shipbuilding; in short, everything that contributed to the area's importance. The museum is established in the former Rijks Hoogere Burger School, designed in Dutch Classicism by government architect J.A. Vrijman. Take time to explore the environment on foot to see the beautiful villas in various architectural styles, from Amsterdam School to Jugendstil. The Julianapark is another (green) treasure, as is the Hertenkamp deerpark around the corner from the museum. They all demonstrate the particular style of Veendam. - [veenkoloniaalmuseum.nl](http://veenkoloniaalmuseum.nl)

## 2 BORGERCOMPAGNIE

In Borgercompagnie, you can follow the straight road for kilometres on end without a trace of boredom or monotony. The ribbon village's canal is fringed with leafy trees and features impressive Oldambt farms. The history of this village takes you back to 1647, when Groningen city reinforced its grip on the Veenkoloniën. Nine citizens were granted permission to cut the peat. They decided to unite in a company, hence the name of the village: borger (citizen's) compagnie (company). In 1655, one of these citizens had a country house built: the Welgelegen peat country estate. Need a rest from cycling? Visit the French country estate garden.





MUSEUMSPOORLIJN STAR



WILDERVANK

## ALSO ON THE ROUTE

### Voormalige aardappelmeelfabriek De Toekomst, Nieuwe Compagnie

Don't be confused with the other Toekomst Strokartonfabriek (a strawboard factory) near Scheemda. Instead, potatoes played the leading part in this Toekomst factory, where urban explorers drool over the remnants of past glory. Today, jumble sales are held in this raw and unpolished building where time has literally and figuratively stopped.

### Heemtuin, Muntendam

The Heemtuin may come as a welcome pause along the route. It also has amenities like as the nature playground and the Mammoetpad: an exciting route filled with obstacles both on and beside the water. In spring and summer, the Heemtuin explodes with wild flowers, herbs and plants. - [heemtuinmuntendam.nl](http://heemtuinmuntendam.nl)

### Turfcentrale, Veendam

In 1901, a power station was built in Veendam. And what would one use as fuel for such a plant? Exactly, peat! Today this is a hotbed for art and a few artists actually have their studios here. Both the inside and outside of the Turfcentrale building exude character and inspiration. - [turfcentraleveendam.nl](http://turfcentraleveendam.nl)

### De Amshoff, Kiel-Windeweer

The city of Groningen must have considered that the peat district deserved a house of worship when, in 1755, it had a church and parsonage built in Kiel-Windeweer. It has since been transformed into the Amshoff restaurant which also provides overnight accommodation. It's a popular venue for weddings, which will come as no surprise once you have been here. - [de-amshoff.nl](http://de-amshoff.nl)

### Margaretha Hardenbergkerk, Wildervank

On a warm summer's day, Margaretha Hardenberg - wife of rich peat extractor Adriaan Wildervanck - fell asleep on the moors. When she woke up, she saw a viper had coiled around her arm. She promised to build a church if it didn't bite her. The viper didn't bite, and the first stone was laid on 24 September 1659.

### Middenverlaat, Wildervank

Peat cutting is simply impossible without locks, because the water level must be high enough for peat barges to pass. The Middenverlaat in Wildervank ensured this. You will find the Verlaathuis by the lock which was constructed in the 17th century.



### 3 MUSEUMSPOORLIJN STAR

Feel steam blow around your head as you depart. See the extensive countryside pass before your eyes from the historic railway carriage. This is STAR: the longest museum railway line in the Netherlands. It starts in Stadskanaal and ends in Veendam - or the other way around. Experience old steam trains and diesel trains being operated on this railway line; a purely nostalgic experience. Board in Stadskanaal, Breveld, Wildervank or Veendam. But hold on: there's still more to see at the Rijtuigloods of Station Stadskanaal, which features old locomotives and all kinds of information about the railway line. And now that you are in Stadskanaal, you should really take the opportunity to visit the Parkwijk near the station. It features charming workingclass houses from the 1930s, which were rightfully declared as listed buildings. - [stadskanaalrail.nl/english/](http://stadskanaalrail.nl/english/)



### 4 DE PEKELA'S

Pekel is a Dutch word for salt, and Pekela simply refers to the Pekel A: a brackish river in the bogland that for centuries was governed by the Dollard tides. In the 17th century, peat extraction boomed in this area and Groningen city purchased almost all of the land around the Pekel A. Two centuries later, after all of the peat had been cut, the area started to flourish. Shipping, trade and agrarian industry reigned supreme. The Pekela ribbon is testimony to this rich history, embodied by the raw Strokartonfabriek Free & Co strawboard factory and the mighty De Volharding farm shed. Villa Elsa, which was built in 1902, shows that some people made a fortune here. Wouldn't you just love to live here? And we'd almost forget the captain's house and Houtzagerij Nooitgedacht sawmill that are reminiscent of the once flourishing shipping and wood industry.



DE AMSHOFF



VEENDAM



Bring your bicycle with you by train to Hoogezand or Veendam to start your journey.

# LOCAL FESTIVALS

Whatever your taste and whether in the city, a village or the countryside, Groningen is sure to have a festival you will not want to miss. From new events to established ones, theatre and music festivals include Jonge Harten, Grasnapsky and Eurosonic. Loaf about the grounds, or get up front to take things in from up close. We have listed some of them below to help you decide which ones to visit.

— **Eurosonic Noorderslag**  
The year traditionally kicks off with Eurosonic. In mid-January, the entire city functions as a backdrop for musical talents from all over Europe. An impressive number of over three hundred artists are scheduled to perform in main halls, churches, schools, cafés and shops. Take in some musical fireworks, and hear the music that will be played on the radio. The festival features small-scale concerts of tomorrow's mega stars.  
- [esns.nl/en/](#)

— **Grasnapsky**  
This lovely festival, which is held at the end of the year, is sure to astonish and surprise. In a former strawboard factory in the middle of the countryside, learn all there is to know about art and music. The event features local artists and celebrated names, and the rich history of the area is also taken into account. The factory and environment are festival leitmotifs; as are the musical programme, the art

and expedition programme, the staging and design.  
- [grasnapsky.nl](#)

— **Hongerige Wolf**  
Indeed, Hongerige Wolf (Hungry Wolf) is the name of a village in the province of Groningen. During the art festival of the same name, young artists are provided with a stage to perform and exhibit their music, dance, theatre, film, visual art and literature. Take in a concert in the sun in a sheep pasture or theatre on the dyke and dance in a backyard. The ultimate place to discover new talents.  
- [festivalhongerigewolf.nl](#)

— **Noorderzon**  
Each summer, the green Noorderplantsoen is transformed into a fairy-tale venue. Explore the grounds to see what's happening, whether during the daytime or in the evening when the lighting makes for an enchanting atmosphere. See something new everywhere you look. The festival features a wonderful collection of artists and

stage artists, in addition to outdoor cafés, food stalls and hundreds of lights leading the way. Take in a performance or concert or evoke that creative streak in yourself. This is the festive start of the cultural season and a wonderful end to the summer holiday.  
- [noorderzon.nl/en/](#)

— **WinterWelVaart**  
Take in this special event over several days at various locations at Hoge de A and Lage der A. Enjoy wintry scenes at former business locations. The quays feature a huge number of ships and vessels that are reminiscent of the olden days and which are brought to life through cultural events. Climb aboard and immerse yourself in theatre and musical performances, lectures and more. The adjacent Museum aan de A and the Akerk join in the festivities. On the quays, find all kinds of stands selling products varying from art and clothes to fresh fish. WinterWelVaart exudes history and Groningen individuality.  
- [winterwelvaart.nl](#)



The above far lists all of the festivals, events and festivities held in Groningen. All of them with their very own charm, we are sure there is something for everyone. Large-scale or small-scale, and in the city or province, these are our tips for you.

— **Roeg Klassiek**  
Savour those last summer rays and enjoy Classical music in the countryside during Roeg Klassiek. Take in a concert at one of the various locations around the 't Roegwold scenic area before you get those wheels turning again and cycle on to the next experience. Classic with a twist.  
- [roegklassiek.nl](#)

— **Terug naar het Begin**  
Well, talk about unparalleled locations. This summery festival literally puts you in the front seat of a church to hear enchanting music and endearing stories and take in high-profile art projects. Choose your own route across meandering roads and ancient seawalls.  
- [terugnaarhetbegin.nl](#)

— **Paradigm Festival**  
Groningen has its very own highlight in the Dutch leading electronic music scene. Each August, for two days Paradigm stages big techno names at the dynamic venue Suikertuin. Dance in the open air or enjoy the banging bass lines in the former factory.  
- [paradigmfestival.com](#)

— **ZomerJazzFietsTour**  
Listen to jazz in a barn or a church. In August, the Reitdiepdal becomes the backdrop of the ZomerJazzFietsTour. Visit one or more of thirty concerts that take place along five different bicycle routes through the magnificent artificial dwelling village area.  
- [zjft.nl](#)

— **Mediaeval Ter Apel**  
If you are interested in how people used to live in the past, be sure to go to Ter Apel at the end of summer. For an entire weekend, this village is all about the Middle Ages. See craftsmen work, dance to some cheerful music and enter into battle with knights.  
- [middeleeuwsterapel.nl](#)



# 7 SPECIAL OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are looking for special overnight accommodation, you have come to the right place in Groningen. Consider spending the night in a church, under the stars or outside in nature. Alternatively, book a return to the land of Nod in an old carriage. Sleep well!

## Hayema Heerd

Overnight accommodation in a covered wagon or an igloo made of straw; anything is possible at Hayema Heerd. Spend the night in the straw hotel for that nostalgic, romantic, fab and comfortable feel. - [hayemaheerd.com](http://hayemaheerd.com)

## Spend the night in a church

If you have always wanted to sleep in a historic building, this is your chance. Enjoy your holy night in your favourite church, monastery or convent in the province of Groningen. - [heiligenachten.nl/en/](http://heiligenachten.nl/en/)

## STARwagon

Buy a return ticket into the past in one of the STARwagon carriages of the Museumspoorlijn STAR. Start the day with a nostalgic trip by train and end it by making up the wood-burning stove for a warm night in a goods carriage. - [stadskanaalrail.nl/english/](http://stadskanaalrail.nl/english/)

## De Molenaar

At B&B De Molenaar, spend the night on the former granary of a mill that dates from 1855. Although the mill is no longer in operation, the owners have managed to retain its charming character. Enjoy views of the canal and the lovely village of Onderdendam and a delicious lunch or meal at the mill restaurant. - [restaurantdemolenaar.nl](http://restaurantdemolenaar.nl)

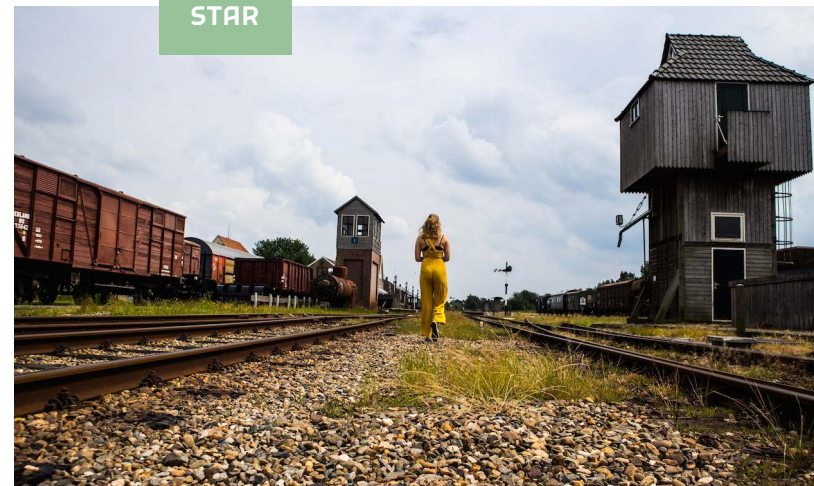
## Noorder Yurts

A yurt perfectly combines ancient tradition, luxury and comfort. Noorder yurts are located beside the water and with magnificent views. At the end of the day, enjoy the stary sky through the skylight. - [noorderyurts.nl](http://noorderyurts.nl)

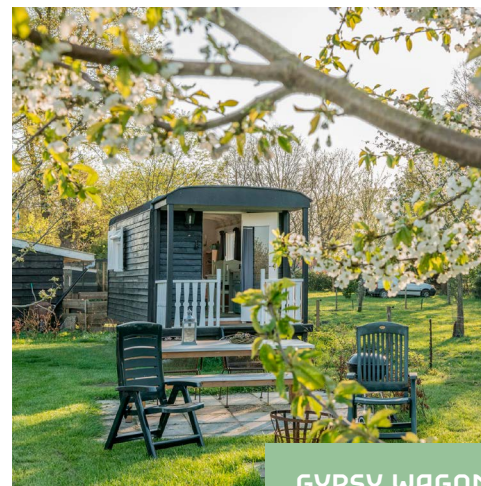
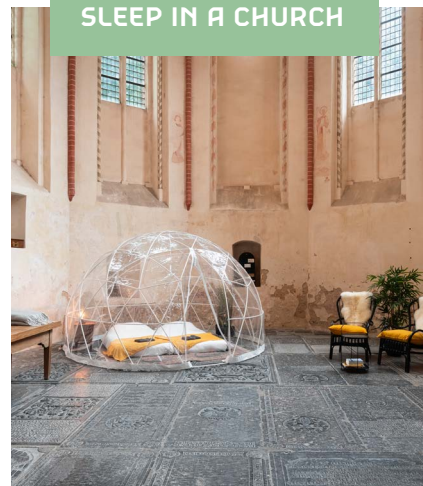
## HAYEMA HEERD



## STAR



## SLEEP IN A CHURCH



## GYPSY WAGON

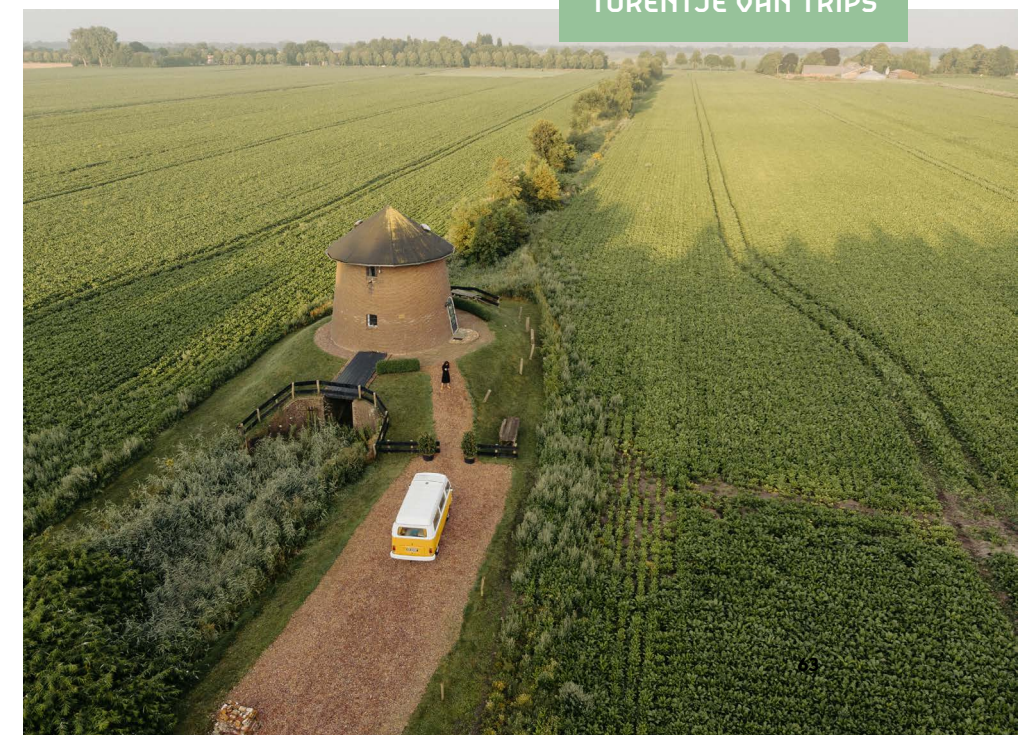
## DE MOLENAAR



## NOORDER YURTS



## TORENTJE VAN TRIPS



## Old water tower

Somewhere in the vast countryside is the Torentje van Trips, a completely renovated old water tower that provides lovely overnight accommodation. Admire the infinite horizon from one of the windows. - [torentjevantrips.nl](http://torentjevantrips.nl)

## Gypsy wagon

On the Boerderij De Klaproos yard, you will see a very distinctive and charming way to spend the night. Hidden among the trees are two gypsy wagons, each with its own little garden and an unobstructed view of the pastures and surrounding scenic area. - [boerderijdeklaproos.nl](http://boerderijdeklaproos.nl)



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**GRONINGEN MAGAZINE IS A PUBLICATION BY MARKETING GRONINGEN**

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Shutterstock  
Beeldbank Marketing Groningen

**ILLUSTRATION**  
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**TRANSLATION**  
Vertaalbureau Noorderlicht BV

**PRINTING**  
MarneVeenstra Druk > print > sign

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