



Route description

This cycle route starts in Zevenbergen. Free parking is available on the parking area De Kasteeltuin or at the railway station. Go to cycle node **07** at the crossing Stationslaan and Prins Hendrikstraat. Follow the route to node **37** and then to node **38**.

You are now on the Blokweg. From node **38** follow on the Achterdijk the route to nodes **40** and **57**. You are now cycling on the Hoge Zeedijk.

The Hoge Zeedijk crosses over the motor highway A16 and the railway. Go from node **57** to node **58**.

After the village of Zevenbergschen Hoek, you get to the hamlet Blauwe Sluis.

From node **58** cycle a short stretch to node **22** and then turn left onto the Keizersdijk. That dyke later becomes the Kruisstraat. Follow this street straight on until the Nieuwlandsedijk. Turn left here.

You are now on the route from node **21** to node **90**. At the latter, follow the route to node **12**, this is the Zwaluwse-dijk. At node **12**, go to node **39** via Moerdijk village.

Continue the route to nodes **39**, **38**, **37** and the last, **07**. You are now back in Zevenbergen and at the end of this cycle route.

1 Messerschmitt Bf109



This cycle route was compiled with the aid of Willem van Dranen, on behalf of the local historical societies in the Moerdijk municipality.

Publisher: Visit Moerdijk (Tourist Bureau) 2022

Design: ik-ook

Pictures: Visit Moerdijk

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, without prior agreement of the publisher. For the compilation of this flyer utmost care is taken. The publisher does accept any responsibilities for any errors.



visitmoerdijk.nl

moerdijk

1st Polish Division cycle route



On the trail of the Allied liberators of north-west Brabant.

moerdijk



29km



visitmoerdijk.nl





About this route

This cycle route is in remembrance of the liberation of north-west Brabant in November 1944. The area is more or less identical to the current Moerdijk municipality. The route is named after the 1st Polish Armoured Division that in the Second World War, under command of General Maczek, liberated the eastern part of the Brabant Westhoek, the north-western corner of the province of North-Brabant.

Fire exchange Zevenbergschen Hoek

The village of Zevenbergschen Hoek encountered quite some damage in 1940 and in 1944. In May 1940, following the fire exchange between German intruders and French defenders and in November 1944 between the Germans and the troops of the 1st Polish Armoured Division. Both battles damaged the Sint Bartholomeus church to such extent that the church had to be rebuilt in 1948.

Moerdijk village in wartime

The village of Moerdijk was part of the frontline in May 1940 as well in November 1944. During those days in May a number of German airplanes crashed around the village. Three of them are shown on a crash map of the Westhoek. From 1943 till February 1944 the Germans set up a so-called 'Aussenkommando' in the village. That was a small sized concentration camp, a satellite camp of the concentration camp in Vught.

The forced labourers in that camp were partly Jews and partly political prisoners. They had to work, under extreme circumstances, on defence installations in the neighbourhood of the village. In autumn 1944, Moerdijk was (again) on the frontline between the Germans and the Allied troops. The 1st Polish Division had to fight hard for almost every building in the village. The majority of the Germans withdrew over the Moerdijk bridges to the north and the bridges were blown up afterwards. On the 9th November the remaining Germans in Moerdijk surrendered to the Polish troops and the village was liberated.

More info? Check www.visitmoerdijk.nl



Must see

This is what you will see!

1. Crashed German airplanes

Here, in the direct vicinity, at least three German airplanes crashed in May 1940. The crash locations are known and plotted on the Westhoek crash map, to be seen at the local historical societies within the Moerdijk municipality.

2. Tank barrier

After cycling a while along the Zwaluwsedijk, you will see large concrete blocks at both sides of the road. These are remnants of a German tank barrier, to stop advancing enemy tanks and vehicles. Some distance to the south, at the Dirk de Botsdijk, there are more of those blocks. Both barriers were connected by a former anti-tank ditch, dug by the forced labourers of the concentration camp in Moerdijk village.

3. German bunker

Just before the railway viaduct, there is a German bunker (type 621) at the right-hand side of the road. The Germans built these bunkers during 1942-1943 to defend the Moerdijk bridges. They forced the prisoners from the concentration camp Moerdijk to work for them.

4. Old Moerdijk bridge

Just before the traffic bridge is a monument at the right-hand side of the road in memory of the old Moerdijk traffic bridge over the river Hollands Diep. The Dutch bombed this bridge on 13th May 1940 in vain to stop the Germans crossing the river. In November 1944 the Germans, after withdrawal of their troops from west Brabant, blew up both the traffic and the railway bridges. The traffic bridge was rebuilt in 1946 and replaced by the current bridge in 1978.



Tank barrier

Between Zwaluwsedijk and Dirk de Botsdijk
Lage Zwaluwe
www.tracesofwar.com
search for 'Lage Zwaluwe'



German bunker

Zwaluwsedijk, Moerdijk
www.tracesofwar.com search for 'Moerdijk' and 'German 621 bunker'



Old Moerdijk bridge

Zwaluwsedijk, Moerdijk
<https://en.wikipedia.org>
search for 'Moerdijk bridges'



Bell cage

Opposite Steenweg 99, Moerdijk
www.tracesofwar.com
search for 'Liberation memorial Moerdijk'



Liberation audio spot

Opposite Steenweg 99, Moerdijk
www.liberationroute.com
search for '161'

5. Bell cage

After you entered the Moerdijk village, you will notice a 'klokkenstoel', a bell cage, on the right-hand side of the Steenweg. This is in remembrance of the liberation of the village by Polish troops in November 1944. The bell and its clapper were found after the war in the cellars of the RC church in the village.

6. Liberation audio spot

Next to the bell cage is a so-called audio spot of the Liberation Route Europe. Turn the wheel and you will hear the story of sister Cornelia.

