

GO BEYOND THE USUAL TOURIST
HAUNTS AND DISCOVER
AMSTERDAM OF THE LOCALS.

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THE OTHER SIDE OF Amsterdam

Dam Square, check. Rijksmuseum, check.
Bloemenmarkt, check. Canal cruise, check.
If your Amsterdam itinerary looks like this,
think again. There's nothing wrong in checking
out the popular touristy places; they are, after all,
popular for a reason! But Amsterdam has so much
more to offer, from cool cultural hangouts and
quiet residential areas, to huge parks that are just
perfect for families. We bring you six Amsterdam
neighbourhoods that deserve your attention.

This page: An aerial view
of Amsterdam city and the
Sarphatipark.

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Jet Airways operates a daily direct flight to Amsterdam from Mumbai and New Delhi. W.e.f. October 29, 2017, the airline introduces a new direct flight between Bengaluru and Amsterdam.



Above: Westerpark hosts music gigs, food markets, and picnics.
Below: Bungee jump from the top of the crane-turned-hotel Crane Hotel Faralda in NDSM.



WESTERPARK

Westerpark is arguably Amsterdam's most happening urban park – there's always something going on. A gas factory was located here in the 19th century; after it was shut down, the red brick architecture remained and it was eventually converted into an events space – with a large stage, an exhibition space, a theatre, and a cinema. There's also a kiddie pool, a petting zoo, and an amusement park of sorts during summer. On the weekends, there are live music gigs, food markets, and picnicking families. On Sundays, the park hosts a special market in the restored gas factory space, which attracts designers and artists selling unique design products, retro clothes, jewellery, ceramics, and much more. During winters, an ice skating ring is set up within the park.

NDSM

Formerly a rugged ship wharf on the banks of River IJ, NDSM has transformed into a cultural hotspot hosting exhibitions, festivals, performances and all sorts of other events. Its full name is quite a mouthful – Nederlandse Dok en Scheepsbouw Maatschappij; the Dutch Dock and Shipbuilding Company. After the company went bankrupt in the '80s, the wharf fell into disrepair and has only recently been converted into an art and culture 'laboratory'. The graffiti-splashed area houses offices and co-working spaces of many media and creative companies, as well as artist studios and galleries. You can even go bungee jumping from the top of the unique crane-turned-hotel Crane Hotel Faralda. Stop for a bite at IJ-Kantine or at Pllek, which has a prime waterfront location and its outdoor terrace



Clockwise from left: Former tram terminus, De Hallen, is now a cultural and shopping centre; Traditional red shutters on houses and restaurants in Prinseneiland; Try the Dutch specialty, Stroopwafel, at the Albert Cuyp Market in De Pijp.



transforms into a city beach in the summer. NDSM is easily accessible via a free ferry from Amsterdam Centraal Station.

WESTERN ISLANDS

It's hard to imagine that a short walk west of Centraal Station will bring you to an oasis of calm. Here lie three islands – Realen, Prinsen and Bickers – collectively called the Western Islands. These were home to the West India Trading Company's warehouses as well as several ship works. Today it is largely residential, with colourful canal houses, pretty houseboats, quaint wooden drawbridges, and public parks. The islands are perfect for a stroll on a lazy afternoon, away from Amsterdam's bustling city centre. Start on Prinseneiland, the smallest of the three islands, and walk along Galgenstraat admiring the restored facades of the erstwhile warehouses, many of which have been converted into apartments and artist studios. Continue to Bickerseiland, which has a mix of modern buildings and boathouses. Finally, cross a white wooden drawbridge to Realeneiland, which has the historic 17th-century merchants' houses.

OUD-WEST

This vibrant neighbourhood with a great mix of cultures is located just west of Vondelpark, Amsterdam's popular public park. There are large residential areas, especially on the posh streets around the park, as well as busy shopping streets. At Kinkerstraat, you can buy local art, indie design, quirky souvenirs, vintage items, kitchen bric-a-brac, etc., and then grab a bite or two in one of the many excellent cafes and restaurants dotting the street. Nearby, the Ten Katemarkt is a busy street market, which is open from Monday to Saturday and where you can buy fresh produce, meat and cheese, flowers and plants, fabrics and clothes, and more. And don't miss visiting De Hallen, a former tram terminus that now houses a cultural centre, a theatre and cinema, design shops, and the massive Foodhallen – an indoor food market with many street food restaurants.

DE PIJP

De Pijp (pronounced pipe) is Amsterdam's Latin Quarter – multicultural, happening, and fast replacing Jordaan as the 'it' neighbourhood. Wander about the daily Albert Cuyp Market, a buzzing street market, which has been trading here since 1904. Today, more than



Above: A stall selling fresh seafood at Albert Cuyp Market.
Below: Introduce kids to the fennec fox, also known as desert fox, at the Artis Royal Zoo.



300 stalls offer everything from clothes and accessories to seafood, meats and cheeses, not to mention a cute white van aptly named Original Stroopwafels that doles out the freshly made, warm waffle pancakes, which are a Dutch staple, drizzled with caramel syrup. Just around the corner from the market is Sarphatipark, a lovely public park where you can take a picnic and mingle amongst the locals. Indie boutiques, vintage shops, small bars and cafes, and fine restaurants abound in De Pijp, and you're never too far from a lovely terrace where you can sit with a coffee or a beer and watch the world go by. Speaking of beer, the Heineken Experience housed inside a historic brewery is a must-do. This interactive museum gives a comprehensive history of Amsterdam's

most popular beer; there are four floors of multimedia exhibits, a tasting bar and more.

OOST

Oost, or Amsterdam East, is an upcoming hipster neighbourhood in the city – there are trendy third wave cafes, swinging cocktail bars, cool concept stores, and more. Stroll along Czaar Peterstraat and Javastraat for some high-end shopping and then visit Dappermarkt, a sort of exotic flea market known for its 'multiculti' feel. Wander around Oosterpark, which was the first big public park created in the city. It has an al fresco art gallery with numerous monuments and sculptures strewn about, plus plenty of walking paths, ponds and streams, and a wading pool for children. If you're travelling with kids, the Artis Royal Zoo is a great place to visit. Founded in 1838, it is one of the oldest in the world and has lush gardens, outdoor enclosures housing giraffes, lions, meerkats, fennec foxes, etc., a butterfly pavilion, an aquarium, a planetarium, and much more. Head to the neighbourhood's beach and rooftop pubs to enjoy stunning views of the city. ■



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QUICK FACTS

ACCOMMODATION

You can make the city centre near Centraal Station your base. There are plenty of hotels across various price points.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Log on to www.iamsterdam.com