

# amsterdam marketing

## PRESS FEATURE

### Amsterdam Beach

**It's a surprisingly short distance from Amsterdam to the sea. The nearby coastal towns of Zandvoort, Bloemendaal and IJmuiden, and the rolling dunes in between, will all put you in that delightful beach mood. Strolling, swimming, sunbathing, kite-surfing... whatever your pleasure may be, discover Amsterdam Beach!**

#### **Zandvoort: historical seaside resort**

Cosy and lively, Zandvoort is one of the oldest seaside resorts in the Netherlands. For centuries the inhabitants had made their living in the fishing industry, but that all changed in the 19th century. "Sea bathing" was becoming popular in England, and enterprising local physician Dr Mezger was eager to introduce this upper-class activity in Zandvoort as well. Soon the resort started to attract celebrities such as the Austrian Empress Sissi. The 1881 opening of a direct train link between Amsterdam and Zandvoort further ensured a steady stream of tourists.

The popularity of Zandvoort grew quickly after the Second World War, and thanks to the easy connection with Amsterdam, many Amsterdammers still visit the resort for a bit of relaxation. Zandvoort is also very popular among German sun-seekers. Nowadays, Zandvoort generates half of its income through tourism. For a glimpse of the rich history of the resort, be sure to visit the Zandvoort Museum.

#### **Sun and sea**

A promenade runs parallel to the 9-kilometre beach, which in some places stretches to around 100 metres wide. The beach mainly draws day visitors. In the high season, more than 30 beach pavilions (catering establishments) open their doors. Most of these establishments are family businesses, and some are open all year round. Among the more popular are Tijn Akersloot, Havana aan Zee, Club Nautique and Vooges. Every year, Zandvoort is awarded the Blue Flag: the international eco-label awarded to safe and clean beaches.

#### **Other attractions**

There's plenty to do in Zandvoort outside traditional beach season. Nature lovers can hike through the beautiful and extensive dune areas without ever seeing another person. And smack in the midst of the dunes there's the superb Kennemer Golf & Country Club – a true golfer's heaven. On the beach itself there's plenty to do for water-sports

enthusiasts, with ample opportunities for kite-surfing, wave and windsurfing, surf canoeing, rafting, catamaran sailing and so on.

Zandvoort also has a cinema, a “subtropical swimming paradise”, a bowling centre, horse-riding stables and fitness clubs, the Holland Casino, a monumental water tower and the Circuit Park Zandvoort, a motorsport racetrack.

### **Bloemendaal**

The young and hip tend to gravitate north to trendy Bloemendaal, with its stylish beach clubs where dancing nights continue into the wee hours in summer time. Velo-taxis will take you there in the high season. These modern bicycle rickshaws operate throughout Zandvoort.

### **How to get there**

The train is the perfect way to get to Bloemendaal, stopping just 100 metres from the beach and taking a mere 25 minutes from Amsterdam Central Station. You can also take bus 80, which departs from Marnixstraat and takes about 50 minutes.

### **IJmuiden: paradise for sports enthusiasts**

IJmuiden has an incredibly broad beach, making it a perfect place for wind- and water-sports. Specific zones have been designated for fly boarding and kiting or for racing across the sand with kite buggies or blokarts. The piers that jut far out to sea create a unique wave pattern, and the kite surfers put on a spectacular show for beach visitors. All beaches in IJmuiden have been awarded the Blue Flag for their safety and cleanliness.

### **IJmuiden aan Zee**

IJmuiden aan Zee has one of the broadest beaches in the Netherlands, with beach pavilions that are open all year round. The Kennemerboulevard is lined with bars and restaurants, shops, a wind- and water-sports centre and an amusement arcade. There is a trampoline centre on the beach, and one of the country’s largest climbing towers stands on the shores of Kennemermeer lake, where all sorts of activities are organised. IJmuiden aan Zee borders Marina Seaport IJmuiden

### **IJmuiderslag**

For those seeking a broad and peaceful beach, IJmuiderslag is the place to go. There’s just one beach pavilion and dogs are permitted here all year round.

## **Strand Noordpier**

Strand Noordpier is located directly to the north of the Noordzeekanaal, or south of Wijk aan Zee. It is a unique site for wind- and water-sports. Not surprisingly, there is a wind-and water-sports centre on the beach.

## **How to get there**

The beach of IJmuiden aan Zee (municipality of Velsen) is easily accessible by car, bicycle and public transport. There is a direct bus link from Amsterdam, departing from Marnixstraat (bus 82). Or try the *Fast Flying Ferry*. This hydrofoil will take you from behind Amsterdam Central Station to Pontplein in Velsen-Zuid in just 30 minutes. Bring your bicycle for free, and there's an information board at Pontplein to point the way to the three beaches.

## **Dutch dunes: an iconic, protected landscape**

Did you know that the largest dune area in north-west Europe lies just outside Amsterdam? A seemingly infinite stretch of sandy hills wedged in between the green polder landscape and the North Sea, it's a wonderful area to go cycling or walking and to enjoy the peace and beauty of nature.

Foreign visitors to Amsterdam often have no idea how close they are to the coast and the dunes. Within 30 to 45 minutes you can be lying on the beach or wandering through the unique "Dutch Dunes". Many visitors are surprised to discover this hilly landscape, so unlike the classic flat polders. One minute you're peddling through green meadows and endless flower bulb fields, and the next minute you're in the midst of an entirely different world: a designated natural sanctuary, where the high sandy dunes, waving grass and pools of water support a rich fauna and flora. Rabbits bounce around at every turn of the corner, and you may even chance upon deer. Unusual though they are, these dunes are an intrinsic part of the history of the Netherlands, and have protected the land against the sea for many centuries.

## **A voyage of discovery**

Take an adventurous trip through the Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen near Zandvoort and National Park Zuid-Kennemerland to the south of IJmuiden aan Zee. You'll find Duincentrum de Zandwaaier, selling numerous walking and cycling routes, in the middle of this National Park.

All information about the Waterleidingduinen and the routes through this area is available at visitors' centre De Oranjekom, near the main entrance on Boekenroodeweg in Vogelenzang.

### **Starting points**

Start off by visiting the visitors' centre in Overveen to get your walking guides, bicycle routes and information about the landscape, local history and nature management. Starting from Zandvoort, every Thursday at 10:30 you can join a guided walk along the Second World War bunkers scattered throughout the area.

The Santpoort-Noord train station is the jumping off point for a 16-kilometre walk through the National Park, in the direction of the sea. You can end the route at the train station of either Overveen or Zandvoort. Many more walks through the dune landscape, guided or self-led, depart from Zandvoort.

### **How to get there**

You can reach the Dutch Dunes from Zandvoort, Bloemendaal aan Zee and Velsen. From Amsterdam it's easy to reach Zandvoort aan Zee by train. Several bus lines depart from Haarlem with bus stops offering direct access to the dunes.

The dune areas are protected natural parks. Entry to National Park Zuid Kennemerland is free of charge, but there is a parking fee for cars. Conversely, you need to pay to get into the Amsterdamse Waterleidingduinen, but car parking is free.

More information about Zandvoort and the dunes: [www.vvvzandvoort.nl](http://www.vvvzandvoort.nl)  
More information about IJmuiden aan Zee: [www.vvviijmuidenaanzee.nl](http://www.vvviijmuidenaanzee.nl)

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**About Amsterdam Marketing**

Amsterdam Marketing is the city marketing organisation of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, active in the fields of promotion, information, research and services. Our ambition is to put this region on the map as one of the five most attractive metropolitan areas in Europe for its residents, visitors, businesses and influential groups. Under the motto "I amsterdam", we present the region as a dynamic place to live and work, an attractive travel destination and a test market for innovation.