

amsterdam marketing

PRESS FEATURE: New Land

Walking on sea bed, 5 meter below sealevel

From dams to dykes and embankments – water management is a Dutch specialty that is used worldwide. As a country below sea level, the Netherlands has ages of experience with taming water. One of the impressive results is the ‘new’ province of Flevoland, located in the largest polder in the world.

The vast sea known as the Zuiderzee endangered the Netherlands for hundreds of years with the threat of floods. This led to the 1932 construction of a large dam, de Afsluitdijk. Eight years later, the reclamation of 1,400 square kilometres of land began. Thus arose Flevoland, the country’s twelfth and youngest province, as well as the IJsselmeer, the largest lake in the Netherlands. With its remarkable history, contemporary architecture, unique ecosystem and variety of water sports, there’s plenty here for visitors from Amsterdam to discover.

New towns: ground-breaking architecture in Almere

Almere and Lelystad are so-called ‘new towns’: cities planned and built from scratch in the modern era. A blank slate is of course the dream of every architect, and these two cities are characterised by modern architecture that speaks to the imagination.

In this area, Almere takes the lead. Nowhere else in the Netherlands can the line of contemporary architecture in all its diversity be traced as easily as in this new city. Contrarian and fanciful cubes, estates and water homes, but also endless districts planned according to the ‘Vinex’ model – Almere has it all.

Architects like Rem Koolhaas and Herman Hertzberger have earned their spurs in Almere. Also worth checking out: Citadel Christian de Portzamparc, a colourful building with shops and homes; the city theatre, by the Japanese architect Kazuyo Sejima; and the fantastic new library by architectural firm Concrete.

The courage and bravery of those who defined the face of Almere can be seen through a guided tour or a self-guided hike, both available via [VVV Almere](#).

Lelystad: old and new stories

But there is more. The [Nieuw Land Museum](#) in Lelystad shares the story of how Flevoland was built, who thought of building it and how far back its history really goes. Surprising is the bicycle route along shipwrecks

offered by the museum – which makes you really realise that you're actually biking across the former seabed.

This ancient link with the sea is discussed at the [Batavia Shipyard](#), where visitors can admire a reconstruction of the VOC ship Batavia from 1628. Restoration work on 'De 7 Provinciën', a 17th-century warship, is also currently underway. Aimed at reviving traditional crafts, a number of workshops have been set up here as well, such as a woodcarving workshop, a forge and a rigging workshop. These are all open to visitors.

For fashionistas and bargain hunters alike, outlet shopping centre [BataviaStad Fashion Outlet](#) is a must-see. Each year, two million people visit this outlet mall of more than a hundred brands. Visitors will find clothing for the ladies, menswear, shoes, bags, lingerie, sportswear and jewellery, all at discount prices.

Another popular attraction is located at Lelystad Airport, where aviation theme park [Aviodrome](#) brings aviation history to life. The theme park has, next to an indoor exhibition (6,000 square metres) and a large-screen movie theatre, also an outside area with several historical aviation buildings and airplanes. In the racing laboratory, children can perform various tests and, in the outside area, you can get an up-close look at a real Boeing 747 or take a test flight in a flight simulator. You can find more information about these and other activities through [VVV Lelystad](#) tourist office.

Landscape art

Flevoland and landscape art are inextricably linked. Nowhere in the world can you see so much landscape art in such a relatively small area as [Land Art Flevoland](#). The following artworks can currently be found in Flevoland: the 'Observatory' of Robert Morris in Lelystad; 'Earthsea' by Piet Slegers and Richard Serra's 'Sea Level' in Zeewolde; 'The Green Cathedral' by Marius Bosom, 'Polderland' by Garden Love and 'Fire' by Daniel Libeskind in Almere; and 'Exposure' by Antony Gormley on the coast near Lelystad. The 7th Land Art is just built in the Noordoostpolder, the northern part of Flevoland. Pier + HOrizon, designed bij Paul de Kort is based on the painting of Mondriaan, Pier + Ocean.

Former island Schokland

Once Schokland was an island amidst the northeastern corner of the Zuiderzee. Since the draining of the Zuiderzee, Schokland is part of the mainland. Because of the unique history of the area, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the first in the Netherlands. You can still see the shape of the island standing above the surrounding land. During

a walk or bike ride on the former seabed, you can visit the Schokland Museum, where the history of the area is brought to life.

Water sports

The IJsselmeer and Markermeer lakes are the perfect playground for water-sports lovers. These lakes pose a challenge to any sail boat, yacht or catamaran, making them an ideal destination for experienced water-sports enthusiasts. Meanwhile, speed devils can make the most of their jet skis or powerboats. With no official routes, being out on the waves here is extra thrilling. You can go anywhere you like, exploring any of the region's excellent harbours, whether it's Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Edam, Urk or Lelystad. The lakes are the setting for a host of annual sailing regattas that take place in summer and early autumn. The *Bontekoerace* is a boat race for charter vessels and traditional fishing boats. Clippers, sail boats, barges, fishing boats and other vessels in all their traditional forms are testament to the country's seafaring heritage. Of all the boat races, the most internationally-known is without doubt the *24 Hour Race*, which attracts around 700 yachts from the Netherlands and abroad each year. Part of the fun is the end-of-race celebration that takes place near the finish line in Medemblik.

Pristine nature in the Oostvaardersplassen & Marker Wadden

Visiting the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve is like stepping thousands of years back in time. It is a vast wetland, full of lakes and wild grasslands. Here, nature is left untouched, making it the only reserve of its kind in the Netherlands and Europe. Large herbivores such as red deer, Konik horses and Heck cattle graze here in wild herds and are vital to the ecosystem. To ensure that these animals have enough wilderness to roam freely, the Oostvaardersplassen is a protected area and not fully accessible to the public. That doesn't mean there's still not plenty to discover, see and do. Whether you come to marvel at the plants and animals, take a bike ride and enjoy the stunning views, hike into the thick forests or enjoy homemade cakes and locally produced food at the [Gasterij De Oostvaarders](#), there are plenty of opportunities to experience the spectacular nature of the Oostvaardersplassen.

Last year Natuurmonumenten (Dutch Society for Nature Conservation) has started to restore one of the largest freshwater lakes in western Europe by constructing islands, marshes and mud flats from the sediments that have accumulated in the lake in recent decades. These ['Marker Wadden'](#) will form a unique ecosystem that will boost biodiversity in the Netherlands.

How to get there?

Although you can travel by car just fine, you can also use public transport. The best way to experience New Land is by train, enjoying the view as you ride through Oostvaardersplassen from Amsterdam Central Station to Lelystad Centre (38 minutes). From Lelystad Centre you can take bus line 3 to the New Land Museum, Batavia Shipyard and Batavia City. To visit Aviodrome, take bus line 17 from Lelystad Centre (approx. 10 minutes). On the way back from Lelystad, you can stop in Almere Centre. The easiest way to get to Almere Centre from Central Amsterdam is also by train. It takes about 25 minutes. The VVV Almere tourist office is near the station, offering architectural routes for both walkers and cyclists. The Oostvaarderplassen is within cycling distance of Almere Centrum. A good starting point will be Buitencentrum Oostvaardersplassen, Kitsweg 1, 8218 AA Lelystad. Almere also offers a variety of shops. Trains run every 15 minutes from Almere Centrum to Amsterdam Central Station.

Find a [map](#) with tips and useful information on public transport by [9292](#).

Facts & figures

Area:	1.419 km ²
Water surface:	47.6%
Land area:	52.4%
Coastline:	200 km
Altitude:	2 to 5 m below sea level
First inhabitants:	1940
Population:	407.000 (1 January 2016)
Age of population:	56% younger than 40
Cycling:	More than 800 km cycle paths
Capital of Flevoland:	Lelystad
Distance between Amsterdam and Almere:	22 km (as the crow flies) and 35 km (car)
Airport (from 2018):	Lelystad Airport

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Note to the editor: The information may be freely referenced or copied if the source is credited: www.iamsterdam.com. The above information is subject to change and Amsterdam Marketing accepts no responsibility for inaccuracies in published information.

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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 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.