

# PLACES IN AMSTERDAM



Make time for a getaway to the nearby town of Haarlem – there are no trams, traffic or tourists here

What makes it so special, and far lighter than the average Oud Holland meat 'n' two veg offering, is the kitchen's French influence. An ideal meal here would start off with their signature cheese soufflé or Zeeland oysters, then you load up with hotchpotch (more subtle than it sounds!) and marrowfat peas.

**Where:** Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 5 (020 420 2224).

**When:** Open daily 5.30-11.00pm.

**How much:** Average main course 150.

## 6 THE GRAND AMSTERDAM HOTEL

They don't come much grander than this truly splendid 16th-century pile, which was formerly a royal residence and then served time as the City Hall. Each of its 182 rooms have been individually designed – and for this sort of money you deserve one with a canal view, so make sure you get it. Its stylish Café Roux restaurant is presided over by Albert himself, and there's a nice indoor pool as

well as spa, massage and other comforts for the pampered classes.

**Where:** Oudezijds Voorburgwal (020 555 3111). [www.thegrand.nl](http://www.thegrand.nl)

**How much:** Double rooms from 1765.

## 7 BLOEMENMARKT (FLOWER MARKET)

This is the place to buy your *Tulpen uit Amsterdam*, or indeed most other flowers or plants. Admittedly, it is over-hyped as "the world's only floating flower market", a description that immediately conjures up exotic images of the Far East. The reality, however, is that the market is a row of 15 dull, permanently-moored barges. On the upside, though, the produce is good quality and lasts well.

**Where:** Singel, between Muntplein and Koningsplein.

## 8 DE WILDEMAN PUB

Love beer, but hate smoke? Then make a beeline for this genuine

spit-and-sawdust pub. More than three centuries old, De Wildeman has no less than 18 beers on draught, another 200 bottled and the rare luxury of a non-smoking room. Despite its somewhat savage name, the barstaff are friendly, very helpful and dutifully diligent, carefully matching each beer to its own style of glass. Popular with locals and beer connoisseurs, but thankfully not rowdy lads' parties.

**Where:** Nieuwezijds Kolk 5.

**When:** Closes 9pm Saturdays, closed all day Sunday.

## 9 GRAND HOTEL KRASNAPOLSKY

Set right in the heart of the city, this Amsterdam institution dates from 1883. It's famed for its conservatory Winter Garden – a great glass-roofed Crystal Palace of a dining room where you can enjoy breakfast and lunch while the hoi-polloi of Dam Square press their noses against the panes. Elsewhere, Belle Epoque

battles with Art Deco and there are two Japanese restaurants, which should tell you something about its clientèle.

**Where:** Dam 9 (020 554 9111). [www.krasnapolsky.nl](http://www.krasnapolsky.nl)

**How much:** Double rooms from 629.

## 10 YELLOW BIKE GUIDED TOURS

Pedal power is what makes most Amsterdammers go round as they bike the dykes. However, if you want to avoid runaway trams, suicidal local cyclists and fiendishly incomprehensible traffic lights (which control cars, trams and cycles), the answer is Yellow Bike Guided Tours. They will lead you gently by the handlebars, out of town, gliding quietly through a bucolic landscape of meadows, lakes, canals, windmills and nature reserves – all on the flat, of course.

**Where:** Yellow Bike Guided Tours, Nieuwezijds Kolk 29 (020 620 6940)

**When:** Tours daily.

**How much:** Price 152.50.