



One Day in Amsterdam: A Layover Worth Loving

It's happened to all of us. You've planned a fabulous week in Europe. The itinerary is dreamy—perfectly balanced between must-see sights and luxurious downtime. You've booked that hotel with the picture-perfect view, and all you need now is a plane ticket.

And then... you check flight prices. *OUCH.*

More often than not, flying directly into your dream destination during high season means shelling out a small fortune. But here's a secret savvy travelers know: flying into or out of one of Europe's Northern cities—like Amsterdam—and using a regional airline to connect can be a total game-changer for your budget.

Now you're faced with a choice: do you skip this “bonus city,” or do you give it a day?

Trust us—Amsterdam is worth the stop.

Why Amsterdam?

Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport (AMS) is one of Europe's busiest and most efficient hubs. Airlines like KLM, United, Delta, British Airways, Lufthansa, Transavia, EasyJet, Ryanair, and many more all fly into AMS—often at a fraction of the price compared to other cities.

On top of all that, the city's train connections are a traveler's dream—seamless, scenic, and surprisingly fast. Think of it as your launchpad for adventures both Dutch and European.

From the airport, it's a breezy 15-20 minute train ride to Amsterdam Centraal (the main train station and the center of the city). Public transport is clean, safe, and runs like clockwork—making it super simple to get around.

But the real magic? That begins once you're in the city.

The Dutch are famously friendly, helpful, and fluent in English, making Amsterdam feel instantly welcoming. There's something about the soft shuffle of bikes, the gentle curve of canals, and the quirky tilt of townhouses that feels both novel and like you're coming home.

And if you only have one day? We've got you covered with a laid-back, delicious, and inspiring itinerary.



Morning Magic: Coffee, Croissants & Culture

Start your day at the **Cafe Restaurant Ceintuur Theater**, set inside a former 1920s cinema in the trendy De Pijp neighborhood. This urban café feels like a spacious retreat in the middle of the city—complete with hanging plants, wooden tables, vaulted brick ceilings, and cozy corners.

The menu is packed with wholesome, fresh options. Whether it's buckwheat blueberry pancakes, kimchi avocado toast, a cappuccino, or a green juice, it's the perfect place to ease into your day. We come back every time we're in Amsterdam. It's like a vacation *within* your vacation.

Market Strolls & Stroopwafels

No European city visit is complete without wandering through a local market, and Amsterdam is no exception.

Albert Cuyp Market

We recommend heading straight to the **Albert Cuyp Market**, just around the corner from Cafe Restaurant Ceintuur Theater. This bustling street market winds its way through Albert Cuypstraat, offering everything from colorful produce and aromatic spices to vintage clothing, art, and household treasures.

Don't miss **Rudi's Original Stroopwafels** stand. Warm, gooey, and the size of your hand—this Dutch treat is made right in front of you and is an experience all its own. (Pro tip: Order one with caramel and crushed hazelnuts. You can thank us later.)



Love Your Lunch

Two amazing lunch options—choose based on your mood!

Small World Catering

Prefer something a little more local and low-key? **Small World Catering** is a cozy organic deli with massive sandwiches, fresh daily specials, and a whole lot of charm. We loved it so much, we bought the cookbook: [Love Your Lunch](#). It's the kind of place where you'll want to linger, and maybe even strike up a conversation with a friendly local or two. Insider advice: seats fill up fast. But if you miss out, no stress—nothing beats eating your sandwich with your feet dangling over a canal.

Foodhallen

If you love options and a lively, social atmosphere, head to **Foodhallen**. Housed in a former tram depot, this indoor food market features over 20 food stalls offering everything from dim sum and tacos to local cheeses and Vietnamese bao. It's vibrant, buzzy, and ideal if you're with a group or feeling indecisive. This is the perfect place if you're into fitness: *Fit'ness whole taco in your mouth!*



Afternoon: A Museum (or Two)

Amsterdam is a city of museums—and not the kind that make you want to sneak out the back door.

Whether you're a die-hard art fan or a casual culture browser, there's something for everyone:

MOCO Museum

Bold, modern, and Instagram-worthy, the MOCO Museum features works by Banksy, Warhol, and other pop art icons. It's approachable, bite-sized, and just plain fun.

Rijksmuseum

For classic Dutch Masters, the Rijksmuseum is unmissable. Home to Rembrandt's *Night Watch* and Vermeer's *The Milkmaid*, it's a deep dive into centuries of Dutch culture in a stunningly restored building.

Anne Frank House

A humbling and deeply moving experience. Book your tickets well in advance—it often sells out days ahead. This visit stays with you long after you leave.

Van Gogh Museum

Intimate and beautifully curated, this museum charts Van Gogh's life and work in a way that feels personal and poetic. Even if you're not an art buff, it's worth the stop.



Wander & Wind Down

Still have a bit of time before dinner? Lose yourself in Amsterdam's charm.

- **Cheese shops** are everywhere. Sample your way through the endless varieties of Gouda—we love the extra aged and the truffle-infused.
- Grab a drink at **De Sluyswacht**, a teensy, crooked, 17th-century bar perched on the edge of a canal.
- Explore the boutique shops in **De 9 Straatjes** (The Nine Streets)—a scenic, shop-filled area ideal for finding unique gifts or indulging your inner fashionista.



Dinner: Plates Worth Traveling For

Amsterdam's food scene is diverse, inclusive, and brimming with culinary gems. Here are a few of our favorites:

Restaurant Gebr. Hartering

Set in a rustic canal-side building, this restaurant serves elegant, seasonal dishes in a cozy setting. The staff is warm, the wine list is stellar, and the tasting menu is always a win.

Kaasbar

A conveyor belt of cheese. Need we say more? Enjoy beautifully plated cheese bites (and wine pairings) in a sleek, modern bar dedicated to Dutch dairy.

Meatless District

Plant-based paradise. Think burgers, risottos, and desserts that will convince even the most die-hard carnivore. Sustainable and seriously satisfying.

De Kas

A true farm-to-table experience, housed in a massive greenhouse. Most ingredients come from their own gardens. Book well in advance—this one's a local legend.

Night Kitchen

We haven't been here yet, but it's firmly on our list for next time. Mediterranean-style small plates, cocktails, and a cozy candlelit vibe? Count us in.

Bonus: Sticking Around? Go for a Bike Ride!

If you're lucky enough to stay an extra day, we *highly* recommend a countryside bike tour. We've done it three times—and would go again in a heartbeat.

Mike's Bike Tours

Mike's Bike Tours offers relaxed, guided rides through Amsterdam's surrounding villages and farmland. Picture sheep-dotted fields, picturesque windmills, and centuries-old farmhouses. It's peaceful, invigorating, and gives you a true sense of Dutch life beyond the city.



Where to Stay: Something for Every Budget

Amsterdam's hotel scene is as diverse as its neighborhoods. Here are some solid options for every type of traveler:

Budget-Friendly

- **Generator Amsterdam**
Set in a former university building beside a park. Hip, clean, and safe—with private and shared rooms.
- **Bunk Hotel**
Located in a stunning converted church. Social, stylish, and affordable. Bonus: some rooms have terraces!

Mid-Range Sweet Spots

- **Apollo Hotel Amsterdam – A Tribute Portfolio**
A little off the beaten path, but set on a beautiful canal with peaceful vibes and lovely views.

- **Hotel De Hallen**
Trendy, modern, and just steps from Foodhallen. Great design and location.
- **NH City Center**
Bright, centrally located, and comfortable. Perfect for first-time visitors.

Splurge-Worthy Stays

- **W Amsterdam**
Modern luxury with a rooftop pool and bar. Great views, and even better cocktails.
- **The Dylan**
Nestled inside restored canal houses. Quiet luxury and timeless design. Think romance, elegance, and charm.
- **Conservatorium Hotel**
One of Amsterdam's most luxurious hotels. Set in a former music conservatory with jaw-dropping architecture. Even if you're not staying here, stop by for high tea or a glass of bubbly in their sunlit atrium.



A Final Word: Amsterdam, You've Stolen Our Hearts

Amsterdam is effortlessly cool, endlessly walkable, and full of surprises. Whether you're there for a full vacation or a well-timed layover, it's a city that feels both intimate and exciting.

You can cover a lot in a day. But you'll leave wanting more. We certainly did—and we're already planning our next trip back.

If this hasn't sparked your wanderlust, we honestly don't know what will.

See you in Amsterdam. ✨🚲

(Engagement Prompts/ CTAs:)

- Ready to plan your own Amsterdam adventure? Save this guide for your next layover.
- Have your own Amsterdam favorites? Share them in the comments—we love adding to our list!