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Innovative hotel concepts for hospitality 2.0 - Utrecht: Bike Capital of the World - Hotels look forward to the Grand Départ - Water in the leading role - 2015: The year of Vincent van Gogh

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Small surface, many possibilities

The Netherlands are not a large country, but with its no less than 16,877,351 (2014) inhabitants and a surface of 41,543 km², it has a rather high population density. Consider then that more than 18% of the surface consists of water and that 27% of its surface is actually below sea level, and you may come to the conclusion that space is not exactly abundant everywhere. The Dutch, however, consider this more of a challenge than an impediment and manage to use the scarce space extremely efficiently. Take, for instance, the number of hotels that opened lately, according to an NBTC article (the Dutch tourist and congress travel organization). There is even room for the 'nhow on air' hotel that will open at the Amsterdam Zuidas business district in 2018. Mark, this concerns a hotel tower, 91 meters high, boasting 650 hotel rooms located on 25 floors, which makes this the largest in the Benelux countries.

Another advantage of this high population density is that cities are relatively compact and that the distance between those cities is relatively short. No wonder the bicycle is such a favorite means of transport for the Dutch who use the bike for commuting as well as for leisure activities. The city of Utrecht has proclaimed itself Bike Capital of the World and has taken various measures to even better facilitate and promote the bike traffic. A mega bicycle storage facility accommodating no less than 12,500 bikes is part of this project. The highlight of this positioning is, of course, the Grand Départ of the Tour de France which will take place in this city on 4 July.

The country's compactness enables the visitor to the Netherlands to easily combine visits to various cities and regions. Ideal if you are a Vincent van Gogh fan and want to make a Grand Tour of the many different museums and locations in the Netherlands that have organized an exhibition or other activity dedicated to this world-famous artist, to commemorate the fact that he died 125 years ago. Or if you wish to combine the royal grandeur of the city of The Hague, which includes the working palace of the Dutch king Willem Alexander, with the modern architecture the city of Rotterdam has to offer. Possibilities aplenty!

Kind regards
Team Meeting International

“Every congress, seminar, brainstorm, convention or management meeting is unique, and so is every moderator.”

Hans Etman, pagina 24

7 NBTC: Innovative hotel concepts for hospitality 2.0, the Dutch Way

The construction of the Amsterdam nhow hotel, close to the Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre, was recently announced. This will be the second iconic property designed by Rem Koolhaas that this NH-brand will operate, nhow Rotterdam being the first one. You may well wonder when there will come an end to this building frenzy in our relatively small country.

10 Utrecht: Bike Capital of the World

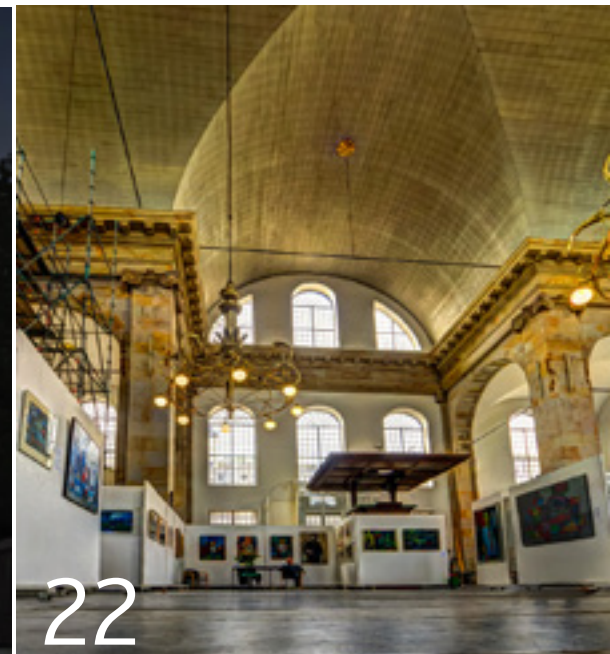
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16 Hotels are looking forward to the Grand Départ

The countdown to 4 July has started. On that day, the streets of the city of Utrecht will be the background for the first stage of the Tour de France, an individual time trial of 13.7 kilometers. According to Leo Hollman the energy that is generated by the Grand Départ will give the regional economy a long-year boost. “The Tour start is a means, not an objective.”

26 Water in the leading role

Whether you look at the Netherlands from an historic, economic or touristic perspective, water always seems to play an important role. And if the past, present and future of the country are closely linked to water, why not connect the element with a business meeting?



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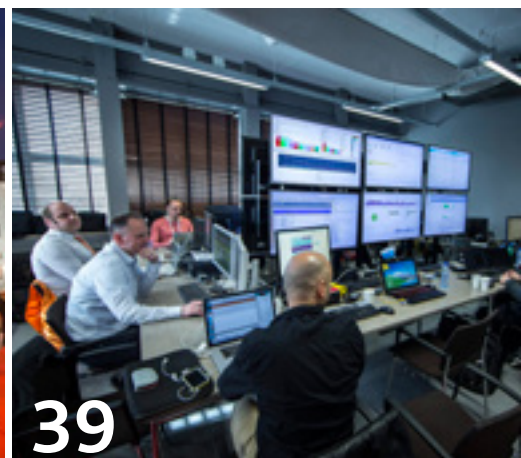
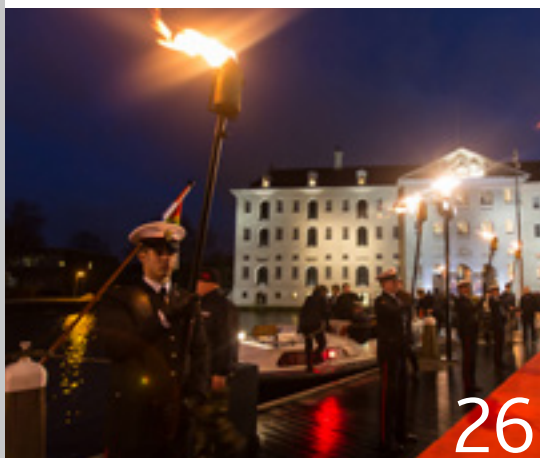
COVER

The new hotel 'nhow on air' that will open near
the Amsterdam Zuidas business district in 2018.
Photo: ©OMA

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32 2015: The year of Vincent van Gogh

2015 will see the 125th anniversary of the decease of the internationally renowned painter Vincent van Gogh. The Stichting (foundation) Van Gogh Europe, a form of collaboration between some 30 institutions, will honour this Dutch artist by means of an international program. As part of the program, four museums in the Netherlands will organize beautiful exhibitions with original works of art by Van Gogh.

36 What does the guest want?

For 2015, several trends and developments have already been projected. The locations as well as the meeting and event planners should heed these forecasts, if they wish to continue to organize successful meetings for satisfied clients.

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Dreaming of Holland

Say goodbye to sleepless nights searching for the perfect destination. Holland has all the ingredients dreams are made of. Come to the Holland Meeting Point (E100) during IMEX Frankfurt 2015 and find out why Holland is the Dream Destination for your next business event.



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Innovative hotel concepts for hospitality 2.0, the Dutch Way



The construction of the Amsterdam nhow hotel, close to the Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre, was recently announced. This will be the second iconic property designed by Rem Koolhaas that this NH-brand will operate, nhow Rotterdam being the first one. You may well wonder when there will come an end to this building frenzy in our relatively small country. Fact is that several international chains have opted for new projects in Holland, which, in my opinion, is an indication of the growing market in our country.

This is not just about quantity, but also about quality. The bigger hotel chains view their visitor mix very differently than some ten years ago. They no longer differentiate by 'leisure' or 'business'. First and foremost, a hotel has to be a place where people can meet for leisure or business purposes, for a short or a long stay, for a meeting or convention. A hotel has added value when it is able to meet these multi-form needs.

It goes without saying that every hotel will look for its own niche in the market. This uniqueness may be enhanced by impressive architecture. However, architecture by itself does not do the trick. The concept must fit in with its surroundings by meeting the needs of local, national and international visitors.

This is hospitality 2.0; the opportunity to host both the local population, tourists and demanding business travellers. This is exactly

what the new hotels in Holland aspire to and how they stand out from the crowd. Some examples are listed in the box on the right. Will there ever be too many hotels? I am of the opinion that those hotels that take admirable advantage of the changing needs of their guests deserve a position in the Dutch market; even though the only criterion for this is, of course, the satisfaction of the meeting and convention planner, of his or her delegates, and the leisure guests. ■

Eric Bakermans
Marketing Manager Meetings & Conventions
NBTC Holland Marketing

New in Holland – a non-exhaustive list

Amsterdam

- Motel ONE
- Hotel W
- Element hotel
- Steigenberger Hotel
- Hyatt Regency Amsterdam
- Hilton Amsterdam Airport Schiphol
- INK Hotel
- Atlas ArenA Amsterdam
- Mercure Hotel Amsterdam Sloterdijk Station

- Corendon Vitality Hotel Amsterdam
- Nhow Amsterdam RAI (2018)
- Maritim Amsterdam (2018)

Rotterdam

- Hotel WINGS Rotterdam Airport

Groningen

- Apollo Hotels & Resorts / Apollo Hotel Groningen

Rem Koolhaas designed megahotel
NH Group near RAI Amsterdam

'nhow on air': largest hotel in the Benelux

The Amsterdam skyline will definitely change because of the construction of an iconic megahotel near the RAI convention center. The trendy and luxury 'nhow on air' hotel will be 91 meters high and boast 650 rooms on 25 floors. This will make the NH Hotel Group's latest project the largest hotel in the Benelux countries. Designer Rem Koolhaas of Architectenbureau OMA got his inspiration from the billboard column in front of the RAI.



Ever since the opening in 1961 the Amsterdam RAI convention center had the wish to realize a hotel on its own site. In June 2014, the convention center jointly with the council of Amsterdam invited quotes for the development, realization and exploitation of a 'headquarter' hotel that was to create a link between the Zuidas business district and the city proper. On 28 April 2015 came the announcement that from the eleven offers, the innovative 'nhow' concept of NH Hotel Group had been elected the winner. The megahotel is developed by the Amsterdam project developer COD and is designed by OMA, Rem Koolhaas' architect agency. The start of the construction is planned for the middle of 2016; the hotel is to be completed in 2018.

'nhow on air': unique experience

The pioneering 24-hour experience of the trendy nhow concept and the iconic design will make any stay in the four-star hotel into a unique experience. Managing Director Maarten Markus of NH Hotel Group: "nhow Amsterdam RAI will be based on the theme 'On Air', in which elements of connection, innovation and media are interconnected in a special manner. This makes the hotel

a hotspot with international allure which will not only be a base of operation for the corporate market for organizers, trade show participants and visitors of large international events, but also be a special meeting point without hotel stay, thanks to the restaurant and the skybar on the top 25th floor, a multimedia lounge for meetings and presentations, a television studio, a luxury spa and wellness center, sports facilities and a gallery with statues garden." The nhow in Amsterdam is the fourth establishment of the trendy chain of hotels, following hotels in Berlin that has music as the theme, Milan where fashion is the focus, and Rotterdam that has architecture as its basic theme. The Spanish NH Hotel Group exploits nhow Amsterdam RAI. Rufino Pérez, Global Head of nhow, came over from Spain especially for the presentation of the winning design on 28 April. He considers this new, international hotspot to be a big gain for the global hotel chain that now has more than 375 establishments.

Iconic design

At the presentation Rem Koolhaas of Architectenbureau OMA said that he thought that nowadays, the majority of the hotels look like big lumps that have no con-

nection at all with their surroundings. Earlier, he designed the interior of the nhow establishment on the Rotterdam Wilhelminakade for NH Hotel Group. The inspiration for the winning design in Amsterdam he got from the billboard column 'Het Signaal' that has sat in front of the RAI convention center since the sixties. The hotel consists of three large volumes which are shifted in relation to each other and are shaped like blocks randomly placed on top of each other. "The Zuidas business district is actually detached from the city; with this iconic building we hope to create a connection with the dynamics of Amsterdam. I want

to show that a hotel is not an isolated compound to sleep, but a special location for a stay. Each element will get its own character and the hotel rooms and suites are located around the public utilities. There is also a great deal of room for art." The hotel is in the top 15 of highest buildings in Amsterdam. When it is finished, the individual visitor can ride a dedicated elevator directly to the 25th floor to enjoy the spectacular vista of the city from the skybar or the restaurant.

Pioneering design

Amsterdam wants to achieve a larger and more varied hotel portfolio spread all



Maarten Markus



over the city. The nhow Amsterdam RAI will have a strong competitive position in the international market for trade shows and congresses. Maarten Markus is convinced that the hotel is a gain for the Amsterdam convention center as well as for his chain of hotels. "This complex will not only be the largest hotel in the Benelux, but will also be high profile because of its pioneering design and the 24 hour experience of the nhow concept, which adapts itself day and night to the 'now' like a chameleon. Business as well as leisure guests can count on a spectacular combination of hospitality and gastronomy with innovation and multimedia." nhow Amsterdam RAI will be realized on a small building site, which makes the footprint during the construction process as small as possible. The largest hotel in the Benelux will constitute the eastern access gate to the Zuidas and will connect this to the city of Amsterdam in a very natural manner. ■

www.nh-hotels.nl



Utrecht, the Netherlands:

Utrecht: Bike Capital of the World

The Utrecht region (city as well as province of the same name) is very successful as destination for national and international knowledge events. In March of this year, in order to even further this success, the Economic Board Utrecht (EBU) announced that it grants an investment package to the amount of 1.3 million euros.

Part of this package is a promotion fund, intended especially for organizers of knowledge events in the province of Utrecht to promote it as destination. International congresses and meetings that relate to the spearhead objectives of green, health and clever,

can jointly count on a contribution in the costs for a congress to a maximum of one hundred thousand euros a year. This is perfectly in line with the intended profile of Utrecht as Bike Capital of the World.

In Utrecht, the use of the bike is in the city's DNA. Between 7 A.M. and 7 P.M. more than 100,000 citizens and commuters cycle in the city centre. In order to promote the use of the bike even more, the municipality of Utrecht has constructed various cyclist-friendly routes, and the world's largest bicycle store, which can accommodate 12,500 bicycles, is realized next to the central railway station. There was even a special bicycle manager appointed who will further optimize the routing through the city.

Grand Départ

This profile is of Bike Capital of the World was ultimately confirmed by the fact that in and around Utrecht, stages of no



The advantages of Utrecht

- Central location in the Netherlands
- 30 minutes from Schiphol Airport
- Excellent congress locations and hotels
- Venues in the city centre in walking distance
- Favourably priced compared to other European cities
- Lively university city with an authentic and friendly atmosphere
- Citizens with the highest education level in the Netherlands
- Ideal mix of history and modern culture
- Politically stable country and city

less than two major cycling events were held. During the Giro d'Italia in 2010, one of the stages ran around the city and the finish was right in the city centre. This year, for the sixth time, the Netherlands are also the location for the Grand Départ, the festive start of the Tour de France. For the first time, the start will take place in Utrecht. After the team presentations in the Lepelenburg park on 2 July, the first stage, an individual time trial, will start on 4 July. During the second stage on 5 July the cyclists will tour the Dom cathedral and leave the province of Utrecht to finish at Neeltje Jans in the province of Zeeland. The Business Peleton Utrecht (BPU) is still working hard organizing the Grand Départ, but is already focussing on the organization of the start of the Vuelta a España in 2019. When the BPU succeeds in this objective, the city of Utrecht will be the first city worldwide to have hosted these three major cycling events.

Focus on cycling

In the field of congress organization, this focus on cycling has been quite profitable for Utrecht. This year the 'Domstad' (named after the famous cathedral tower) will host no less than three large conventions focused on cycling. On 18 June the Nationaal Fietscongres (national cycling convention) will take place in the Beatrix building of the Jaarbeurs Convention Centre. At this congress the aspects of the bicycle as a means of transport will be discussed, with topics like health, accessibility, livability and safety. On the eve of the Grand Départ the seminar 'Cycling & Society' is organized. At this seminar the four Utrecht knowledge institutions will discuss with politicians, policy

makers and interested citizens on the meaning of cycling for society in general and an event like the Tour de France in particular. On 1 and 2 July, in connection with this, the international congress 'Science & Cycling' will be held in collaboration with the UMC medical centre. Experts from the professional cycling world and scientists share their most recent research results and experiences with an interested audience of researchers, doctors, food experts, cycling unions, trainers and, of course, cyclists, triathletes and players from other sports disciplines.

Independent advice

Economic Board Utrecht hopes to attract even more appropriate international knowledge events to Utrecht in the future. Utrecht Convention Bureau (UCB) endorses this and

promotes Utrecht as congress capital where green, healthy and clever developments take place. Knowledge institutions like the Utrecht University, the UMC Utrecht, Hogeschool van Utrecht, the Utrecht Science Park and Stichting Hotel Overleg Utrecht (HOST) are important partners in this. The UCB is keen to help organizers in the realization of their congress. This organization offers independent and free advice and can take care of various organizational elements like choice of venue, transportation, hotel arrangements, marketing and promotion and the compiling of social programmes. They can also help to get access to the stimulation fund.

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“Here, every guest feels special”

Located in the Utrecht region, the Carlton President is a luxury 4* business hotel where ‘meetings’ truly are the focal point. Ideally situated near various arterial roads and just a few minutes’ drive from Utrecht city centre, the hotel prides itself on providing the perfect business destination always exceeding the expectations of its guests.

Meeting any possible demands concerning comfort, inspiration and connectivity, the Carlton President manages “to combine the personal attention required by guests with the efficient handling of the assignment”, says General Manager Bart Blikman. “We welcome the trainer or keynote speaker of a meeting and together we will ensure that the day runs perfectly. The conference team then extend this personal attention and service to the participants or other meeting guests to create the perfect working environment - that is what Carlton President is known for.”

Meetings, meeting and connecting

The nine multifunctional rooms at the hotel are readily used by a wide variety of industries accommodating guests from both the Netherlands and around the world. Able to accommodate meeting briefs from 4 up

to 300 delegates, each congress room at the hotel offers a range of business features – the largest of which at 265 square metres boasts both uninterrupted meeting space and a 6 metre ceiling height for the ultimate conference destination.

Apart from the function rooms, there is also the possibility to use the President’s business centre facilities with its range of complimentary coffee, office facilities and free wifi. “We invite our guests to network with each other and to share experiences. The unexpected is sometimes the most exciting. Besides, (un)expected business meetings will advance your enterprise: you often find the piece of the puzzle that you were missing.”

FoodBook, eat when you want

Guests who wish to extend their stay, can be accommodated in one of the hotel’s 164 rooms, famous for their uber comfortable ‘box spring’ mattress and expertly designed pillow menus. For breakfast, lunch or dinner, the Garden Brasserie is the place to be with a selection of delicious international dishes available from the innovative FoodBook throughout the day. Possibilities for guests who wish to explore are also abundantly present in the nearby Utrecht city centre, as is relaxation in the hotel’s very own wellness and leisure centre.

The bar is located in the President’s Exchange lounge and here the attentive nature of the bar manager generally receives high praise from hotel guests. “Perfectly matching the hotel’s philosophy”, says Blikman, “We want every guest to feel special.” ■

About Carlton President:

- 164 Rooms
- 9 Multifunctional rooms with private dining areas
- Free wifi throughout the hotel
- Bar & Brasserie
- Business centre with complimentary work spaces, coffee and office facilities
- Leisure: billiard room, table football and darts
- Wellness: Jacuzzi, sauna, Turkish steam bath, solarium and fitness suite
- Complimentary shuttle service from Maarssen Train Station, as well as to and from various office locations
- Located on the A2 motorway. 22 minutes’ drive from Schiphol Airport and 10 minutes’ drive from Utrecht city centre
- Spacious parking lot for 250 cars, including charger facilities for electric-powered cars.



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Comfortable, efficient, and in green surroundings

How relaxing can a meeting be? Very relaxing, especially when you're in a multifunctional conference venue located on the edge of the woods, central in the Netherlands. Hotel De Bilt-Utrecht is a 4-star hotel where all-round facilities, hospitality and service for the guest have the highest priority and are the main focus of the staff.

The hotel is special because of its location, easily accessible thanks to its close proximity to major highways A27 and A28, but is also easy to reach by public transport, just 10 minutes from Utrecht city centre. The hotel has a characteristic ambiance for both business and leisure guests.

Besides the 102 comfortable rooms, the hotel boasts cosy restaurants, a bar, 15 multifunctional conference rooms: all have a quiet location, are comfortably furnished and feature all modern conveniences. The function rooms can accommodate from 2 to 300 persons. Any conceivable conference facilities and equipment to make your meeting a success are available or can be booked. We can make all additional arrangements for your meeting, entirely to your wishes: a post-meeting drink in the bar, a private dinner or an overnight stay with breakfast. In short: Hotel De Bilt-Utrecht is the ideal venue to combine business with leisure. Our sales team is happy to assist you with your meeting requirements and can make you an interesting, personalised offer. ■

www.biltschehoek.com

Naturally Mitland

Service and hospitality as highest priorities

Nestled in a picturesque city park on the outskirts of the historic city of Utrecht lies the luxurious Hotel Mitland. With its prime location close to major traffic arteries and the city centre, this multifaceted hotel is the ideal setting for your visit to Utrecht. Hotel Mitland is a genuine family business, where a high service level, warm hospitality and an informal ambience go hand in hand.

The combination of 141 luxuriously furnished hotel rooms and 14 multifunctional meeting rooms – all enjoying natural daylight – makes Hotel Mitland a favoured location for meetings and conferences for up to 250 people. And with extensive facilities including a swimming pool with sauna, its own bowling alley and a restaurant with two terraces, the four-star hotel also offers everything you need for a perfectly relaxed stay. The meeting rooms feature comprehensive modern facilities, including state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment. Some of them even have beautiful terraces with photogenic views over the peaceful waters of Fort De Bilt. What is more, at Hotel Mitland your stay is truly green: thanks to a host of environmentally friendly initiatives the hotel has proudly held the coveted golden Green Key certificate – the premier eco label for the tourism sector – since 2012. ■

www.mitland.nl



Hotels are looking forward to the Grand Départ

‘Utrecht wants to hold on to the energy of the Tour’

The countdown to 4 July has started. On that day, the streets of the city of Utrecht will be the background for the first stage of the Tour de France, an individual time trial of 13.7 kilometers. According to Leo Hollman the energy that is generated by the Grand Départ will give the regional economy a long-year boost. “The Tour start is a means, not an objective.”

Leo Hollman, director of Grand Hotel Karel V and chairman of Hotel Overleg Stad en Schil Utrecht (HOST) does not mince matters: “For the Utrecht hotels, the Grand Départ is the dreamed public event. We obviously depend on the destination. The choice for a hotel follows only when the visitors opt for Utrecht. That is why the start of the Tour is an ideal opportunity to promote the city and our efforts.”

The period in which the cycling event takes place is also convenient for the Utrecht entrepreneur. “Most of the hotels focus on the corporate guests. Of course, during the

summer months their bookings decline. July and August are our quiet months; then, the number of personnel and the room rates are the lowest. If you manage to attract a world-size event in this period, you hit the jackpot.”

Covert

HOST unites 23 hotels, located in the city of Utrecht as well as in nearby cities like Zeist, Nieuwegein and Houten. “Most of the hotels are members of HOST. Jointly, the members can supply 1,800 rooms, where the entire area counts some 2,250 rooms.”

The hotel collective has put a lot of effort in Utrecht’s long-lasting lobby to attract the Tour start. It was an exciting period. “For our hotel as well. Several times, the Karel V was the ‘covert host venue’ when the Tour management paid another visit to the city.” Before the formal announcement, the rumours were getting stronger and stronger that Utrecht would be the winner. Hollman was already sure: “Conclusive was the request from the A.S.O. to quote rates and availability. The Tour organizer wanted to book in time, before the official announcement. We knew then what would happen.”

Higher interest

The Tour coming to Utrecht is made possible thanks to a joint effort of local governments and the city’s business



community. “The hotels also take their responsibility. We are ten per cent from the basic room turnover of all bookings made through the central site of Toerisme Utrecht.” It was easy to convince the hotels to make this contribution. “The Grand Départ’s higher interest is recognized by all.”

Not the first prize

The wildest tales are told about the rates the Utrecht hotels charge for their rooms during the period of the Tour start. Hollman is not exactly pleased by this. “A few exceptions are getting a lot of attention, whereas the exact opposite is true. The majority of the rooms of the hotels united in HOST is offered with only a slightly increased rate.” Of course no agreements were allowed, but the members were asked to keep their room rates as low as possible. “The Tour start is a unique opportunity to present Utrecht

as an attractive venue to a public counting billions. The suggestion that hotels here demand excessive rates for the rooms, is completely wrong. Now a dime, later a quarter. Nearly all hotels understand this and keep their rates reasonable. Some colleagues, however, think they can win first prize. They think they can profit from the scarcity. I think that is unwise, but everyone is free to choose a strategy.”

No pop-up

To facilitate the expected rush for hotel rooms, a number of hotel owners explored the possibility to realize pop-up hotels. “Such a temporary facility entails quite a few issues. Even if the council is co-operative, the safety regulations are strict. And only after the fire safety check just before the opening by the fire department it will become clear whether all regulations are complied with. Considering

that you have only a few days to get a return on that investment, the risk is simply too big.”

Rooms available

Hollman wishes to correct the suggestion that all Utrecht hotels are already booked full. “When it became clear that the Tour would start in Utrecht, big bookers reserved many rooms. It now appears that not all these rooms are actually taken. These will now be put on the market. At this moment – late April, ed. – there are still rooms available in the hotels in the city and the region. The big flow of reservations at the temporary camping sites has also yet to come. You see that many people only decide at the very last moment to come to Utrecht and to witness the Tour start live.”

By the collar

What is the inheritance the Tour caravan will leave behind in Utrecht when, during the second stage, it will cross the municipal borders and head for the province of Zeeland? “In order to be able to organize a large public event like this, collaboration between council and business community is essential. For all participants this was a learning process, and there were occasions that we had to take each other by the

collar. But as we went along, an understanding was created for each other’s interests. We now have a partnership and mutual trust. That is extremely valuable for future projects.”

Long-year stimulant

The energy generated by the Tour start is already showing results. “Among other profitable aspects, it has contributed to the fact that, led by EBU, the councils of Utrecht and Amersfoort, as well as Universiteit Utrecht, Jaarbeurs, Provincie Utrecht, De Marienhof, De Flint and HOST have established a fund that is used to attract knowledge events. For this, together they grant over three hundred thousand euros annually to the Utrecht Convention Bureau.”

An other example is the continuation of the Business Peloton Utrecht (BPU). “This corporate network co-ordinates the economic activation around the Tour start,” says Hollman, also BPU board member. “We want to hold on to the present energy under an other name and convert this into new initiatives after the Tour. This once again stresses the fact that for Utrecht, the Grand Départ as such is not an objective. It is an instrument, a catalyst that supplies the city’s and region’s economy with a long-year stimulant.” ■

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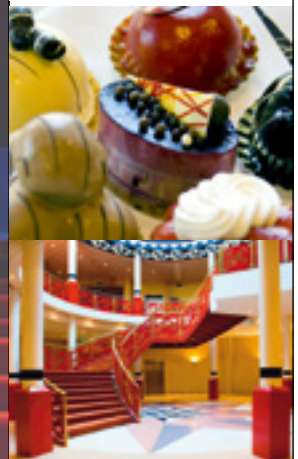


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Last year, the hotel reopened its doors after a complete renovation of the ground floor. The bar and restaurant together are at the heart of the lobby. The public areas around it are multifunctional, each with its own atmosphere, and flow seamlessly into one another. During the day, flex workers find their piece here and in the evening there's a lively dinner atmosphere. This makes the hotel very suitable for both business- and leisure guests. Especially because of the convenient location! Whether you want to go sightseeing in the centre or do business at the Zuidas, Amsterdam Arena, Ziggo Dome or the RAI congress centre; all these places are easy to reach within 15 minutes from the hotel.

The 368 modern rooms are fully equipped; the Business Room is characterized by modern design with a local twist,

combined with business comfort. A double bed, spacious desk and a luxurious bathroom with rain shower make sure your stay is comfortable. In the Privilege Room you will find extras like a newspaper, stocked mini bar, Nespresso coffee-making machine, a bathrobe and free, unlimited Premium Wi-Fi.

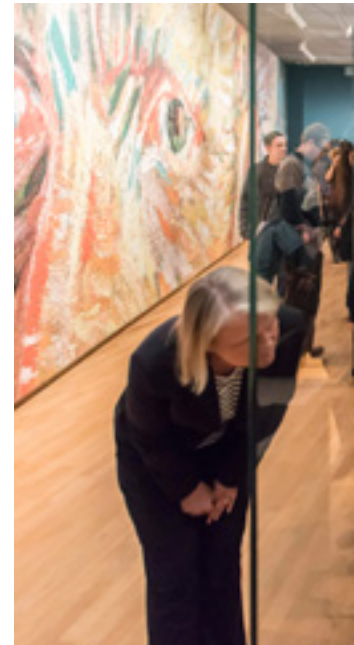
On the entire first floor, the hotel boasts 14 multifunctional meeting rooms which are able to accommodate up to 250 guests. The meeting rooms are equipped with all technical facilities which means that possibilities are endless.

On top of that, the hotel is ideally suited for people who like to enjoy life. After a long day it is lovely to rest in the fitness or wellness area, with sauna and Turkish steam bath. Needless to mention, the hotel takes very good care of the well-being of their guests; in the trendy Restaurant Lounge FLOOR you can enjoy a good cocktail or taste one of the delicious French dishes, prepared with local ingredients.

Of course you can also enjoy the beautiful (heated) terrace, overlooking the water. Rather taste the atmosphere in the centre of Amsterdam? Here you can take a boat shuttle, which brings you downtown across the Amstel River. ■
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Artist impression Nieuwe Entree, Museumplein



A continually inspiring location

The city of Amsterdam is flourishing, economically as well as culturally. With an expected economic growth of three per cent in 2015, as well as various developments in the cultural area, the Dutch capital remains an inspiring location, perhaps even more so in 2015.

The 'Economische Verkenningen 2015' (Economic Surveys), a research report by a consortium of TNO, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, EY supervised by Walter Manshanden (TNO) and Henri de Groot (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) show that the economic prospects for Amsterdam and its immediate surroundings are extremely positive. For this year, a growth of no less than three per cent is expected. Apart from that, in 2014 the capital was in great demand with foreign companies. In the past year, 130 enterprises were established in the Amsterdam region, which created 1,308 additional jobs.

Various developments are also taking place in the cultural area. For instance, this year the capital city highlights two of the most important artists the Netherlands have produced.

From 12 February until 17 May, the Rijks Museum hosts the exhibition 'Late Rembrandt'. This exhibition focuses on the works Rembrandt (1606-1669) made between 1650 and 1669. In this period the famous painter produced his most expressive works by means of loose strokes, thick clods of paint and the scratching off of paint. Unfortunately, this was not always appreciated by his contemporaries and patrons. 'The conspiracy of the Bataves under Claudius Civilis' which Rembrandt painted for Amsterdam's new city hall, was replaced after just one year because of the loose paint strokes, the dark background and the image of the Batavian leader as a one-eyed, weak man.

Hypnotising

In the summer of this year, the Van Gogh Museum finalizes a thorough renovation. The main entrance is moved to the Museumplein. The new entrance consists of a transparent building with technically advanced glass constructions, designed by Kisho Kurokawa Architect and Associates. The new entrance offers 800 square meters of additional surface,



Natura Artis Magistra



Photo: Jan Kees Steenman



Oosterkerk



Rembrandt

which makes it possible to organize, among other events, large meetings and receptions. The permanent collection can still be found on the three floors that were renovated in 2014. The first thing that catches the attention of the visitor is the huge picture on that wall of Vincent's hypnotising eyes. Drawings and letters provide an insight into the ideas and ambitions behind his works of art. Attention is also paid to important aspects of Van Gogh's artistry, like the myths around the painter and the impact he had on the generations after him. On a regular basis an exceptional work of art is shown which is an example of Van Gogh's inspiration and influence. Francis Bacon's 'Study for a Portrait of Van Gogh VI' is the first work of art to have this honor.

The zoo as a link

Not just the museums, the Natura Artis Magistra zoo is also working hard on its infrastructure. In 2014, Micropia was opened. This museum is dedicated to the world of micro-organisms, invisible to the naked eye, but each person carries

around 1.5 kilos of these life forms. These organisms, made visible in this location, are the most powerful, most successful and at the same time, smallest life form on earth. Micropia is also a platform and serves as a connecting link between science and public.

The new Artisplein was also opened to the public. On this square lie the state monuments the Groote Museum (1851-1854) and the recently renovated Ledenlokalen (1870-1893). These Ledenlokalen house, among other establishments, the new café-restaurant 'de Plantage', Studio Artis, Micropia and the historic rooms. Opposite the Groote Museum and the Ledenlokalen lies the Hollandse Polder, a monumental aviary with meadowbirds (including the largest collection of spoonbills), pollard willows and a ditch.

This year the terrain between the current parking lot will be used to build an underground parking lot with room for up to 650 cars; on top of this garage an animal house and two animal pavillions will be realized. Besides this, the present Ledenlokalen will be housing a Microzoo as well as a Kennisplein (Knowledge square).

A new location?

There are plans to add the Oosterkerk (church) at the Oostelijke Eilanden quarter to the current location of the Amsterdam MICE collection. This Oosterkerk dates back to 1671 and was built after a design by Adriaan Dortsman with the assistance of Daniël Stalpaert. At the moment, a new function for the building is being considered, preferably (semi-)public, which makes good use of the special character (interior, exterior) of the church. One of the options is to convert it into a conference center. Thanks to the basic form of the church – a Greek cross – the Oosterkerk has a large central space which is extremely suitable for concerts, as well as other activities like exhibitions, meetings, presentations or gatherings. ■

www.iamsterdam.com/en/business



Masters in Moderation finds you the perfect moderator

Agent provocateur or cooperative connector?

After ROI, Meeting Design and Event-Tech, the 'next big thing' will be Meeting-Moderation. That is the firm belief of Hans Etman and Jan-Jaap In der Maur, managing partners at Masters in Moderation. "Choosing exactly the right moderator-facilitator for each occasion makes meetings and events more effective, more fun and definitely more worthwhile", they say.

Masters in Moderation are the only agency worldwide which is completely focussed on moderator matchmaking and coaching. Pioneers in the industry In der Maur and Etman want to provide every meeting, however large or small, with

the perfect moderator. "That might be a carefully selected professional", says Jan-Jaap, "or a well-trained candidate, facilitating for the occasional event only."

The best moderator

A great moderator is sensitive to the atmosphere in the room, is flexible, yet goal driven and knows his way around a wide variety of skills; from group dynamics to body language, psychology, debating, interviewing, interaction, facilitation, etc.

But a great moderator is not always the perfect moderator, according to Hans Etman: "The fact that you've seen someone perform well, doesn't necessarily mean he will make your meeting effective. Every congress, seminar, brainstorm, convention or management meeting is unique, and so is every moderator."

Masters in Moderation have a tried and tested selection method, taking into account the skills needed for the event, the personality of the moderator, the kind of meeting and

the relation the moderator should have to the topic. Speaking from personal experience, Etman gives some examples: “One moderator might be more of an entertainer, while another excels in a journalistic approach. There’s the host on the one hand and the debater on the other. Some of them are ‘agents provocateurs’, others ‘cooperative connectors’.”

“Furthermore, we take into account whether you organize an award show full of happy people or a town hall meeting with an angry mob ... or any kind of meeting you can think of. On some occasions, someone from within your own organization might be the right choice, or an expert on the subject. Or maybe, after careful consideration, you decide to go for a celebrity or a professional moderator.”

The moderators at Masters in Moderation speak English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch and even languages like Urdu, Arabic and Hebrew.

The value of moderation

Why should meeting owners invest in the moderation of their events? Being a seasoned moderator himself, In der Maur has a mathematical equation to prove the value of moderation: “An effective, high ROI meeting = objective x meeting design x moderation. And you don’t have to be a professor in maths to understand that if you don’t get a maximum score on either of the elements, your end score will not be 100%.”

“What emphasises the value of moderation even more”, Etman adds, “is that the objective and the meeting design are ‘just on paper’. It’s the moderator that has to help make it happen on stage. That’s a big responsibility that you do not want to put into the hands of the wrong person.” ■

For more information:
www.mastersinmoderation.com
Coaching and workshops:
www.dagvoorzitter.nl/training-coaching.html



Lars Sorensen
(foto Jasper Suyk)

Lars Sorensen is a frequently booked international moderator. If you are looking to create engagement, energy and an experience, this representative of the ‘Dutch School’ might be a great candidate.

“Working internationally”, Sorensen says, “is a great challenge. On the one hand, there are the different cultures, demanding a carefully executed ‘moderation design’. And on the other hand, all participants have the same needs and wishes: we all want to be seen, heard and acknowledged. I’m convinced meeting makes the world a better place, and I feel blessed I can help the process of getting there.”



Jan Jaap In der Maur
(foto PunkMedia)



Gerrit Heijkoop



Otto Wijnen

These days, moderation often means performing online. Hybrid moderation brings the rest of the world into your meeting and your meeting into the rest of the world. This requires a different kind of moderators, able to interact with remote participants, connecting them to the ones on site. Hybrid, if executed well, is much more than just video-streaming the event. Masters in Moderation offer the services of two hybrid skilled professionals: Otto Wijnen and the internationally well-known expert Gerrit Heijkoop.



Water in the leading role

Whether you look at the Netherlands from an historic, economic or touristic perspective, water always seems to play an important role. And if the past, present and future of the country are closely linked to water, why not connect the element with a business meeting?

That water is of vital importance to man, is corroborated by the fact that the first settlements in the Netherlands were situated near important water locations like rivers and estuaries. Where at first, we just had to cope with the whims of this element, we later on

succeeded more and more in curbing it and to employ it for our economic gain. Archeological findings have proved that at the time of the Iron Age there already was a flourishing inland navigation, which shipped, among other products, salt from the German mountains to be marketed in these regions. Our ancestors also made a living from the various types of fish from the sea, and this industry only intensified in the course of the centuries. In villages like Volendam, Marken, Urk and Veere the gathered riches from those days are still evident in the many monuments you can admire there. In the seventeenth century, the Netherlands were even the most powerful seafaring nation of Europe thanks to explorers like Jan Huygen van Linschoten, Hendrik Abel Tasman and Oliver van Noort, the VOC (United East India Company) and the WIC (West India Company), and capable admirals like Michiel de Ruyter and Cornelis Tromp. The monuments in cities

like Zwolle, Zutphen, Bolsward, Kampen and Stavoren remind us of the flourishing-period of the so-called Hanze cities, whereas the many canal buildings in large cities like Amsterdam and Middelburg are remainders from the prosperous VOC period. It is with good reason that in the Netherlands, several museums dedicated to shipping have been established. To name one example: at the Batavia wharf in the city of Lelystad the interested visitor can admire the Batavia vessel, a reconstruction of a VOC ship from 1628, as well as the construction of the 'De Zeven Provinciën', admiral Michiel de Ruyter's flagship from 1665.

The Dutch economy still partly depends on the water. Among other ways, the import and export of products is done by sea, and the port of Rotterdam is the largest and most important container port and transshipment port of Europe. Because of their advanced expertise, Dutch dredging companies were also involved in major projects like the construction of the port of Jubail, the raising by spouting sand up of Chek Lap Kok for Hong Kong International Airport, and the realization of the famous Palm islands in Dubai. The Netherlands are also forerunner in the field of offshore activities with multinational Shell and two windmill parks in the North Sea.

Battle against the water

The first dikes in our country stem from the period that the Romans planted their banners in our soil. In the course of the

centuries, our ancestors have been continuing to experiment with new techniques for dikes and polders in order to curb the capricious waters. One of the highlights in this battle was the damming of the Zuiderzee, which was initiated in 1920. In this enormous project, this large body of water was split up, by, among other elements, the Afsluitdijk, into the smaller IJsselmeer and a part that was added to the Waddenzee. In phases, polders were drained as well. The present province of Flevoland consists of the IJsselmeer polders Noordoost polder, Oostelijk Flevoland and Zuidelijk Flevoland which were drained between 1936 and 1968. Apart from the construction of dikes, the filling up of canals (Damrak and Rokin in Amsterdam) and the draining of polders to curb the waters, the Dutch have also wanted to use this element to make areas inaccessible, and thus, keep the enemy at bay. In 1672 the then 'Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden' was attacked by France, England and the city-states of Munster and Cologne. A water line was constructed by which the land from the village of Muiden via Woerden and Goejanverwellesluis to Gorinchem was inundated by a shallow body of water. The enemies' armies could not cross this water line until, in 1672, the water froze at Woerden. Later, the 'Hollandse Waterlinie' was reinforced with forts, batteries and other defence structures. From 1815 onwards, a completely new line of defence was established with the city of Utrecht as central point. This line runs from the island of Pampus in the Zuiderzee to the Biesbosch area and comprises the five fortified cities of Muiden, Weesp, Gorinchem and



Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam (photo Eddo Hartman)



Woudrichem. A number of structures, from the old as well as the new water line, can still be visited, like Fort Ronduit, Fort Wierickerschans, Fort Pampus and Fort bij Vechten.

World wonder

In spite of these measures, the Dutch history mentions a number of major disasters caused by flooding. In 1570, for instance, the Dutch and Flemish coast was ravaged by the so-called All Saints flood in which 20,000 people were killed. The best known disaster is the Watersnoodramp of 1953 when, because of a combination of a storm surge, a spring tide and a heavy north-west storm, the dikes in the Delta region collapsed and 1,836 people and tens of thousands of animals were drowned. In the years following this disaster, the Deltaplan was executed to shorten the Dutch coastline by some 700 kilometers by the construction of closed and openable dams between the islands of the provinces of Zuid-Holland and Zeeland. The Oosterscheldekering and the Maeslantkering are of such high technological level that the American Society of Civil Engineers has proclaimed these one of the seven modern wonders of the world. At Deltapark Neeltje Jans visitors can learn more about the Watersnoodramp and the Deltawerken. Thanks to the quest for solutions, the Netherlands are leaders in the field of water management, with king Willem-Alexander as its champion. But the flooding of the Maas river in 1993, the evacuation

of the inhabitants of the Rivierengebied in 1995 and the All Saints flood of 2006 have shown that the work on the Dutch dikes is never finished.

Roaring waves

These days, many tourists as well as the Dutch themselves, like to spend their free time near water. Areas like the Wadden islands, the Beemster polder, the Kinderdijk and Schokland are included in the UNESCO World Heritage list, as are the Amsterdam canals. And with more than 4,400 kilometers of navigable rivers, canals and lakes, the Dutch like to board ship (or boat) to sail these waters and then moor their vessels at one of the beautiful regions and locations bordering these waters. From 19 to 23 August this year, we can once again enjoy Sail Amsterdam, an international event during which the so-called tall ships and marine heritage will be sailing the Amsterdam waterways and canals. For ages, water, seas and rivers have also been among the favorite subjects of art painters. In the seventeenth century marine pieces and seaviews were genres a painter could specialize in. Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Jacob van Ruisdael and Salomon van Ruysdael, amongst other artists, have produced paintings in this genre. In the nineteenth century, the painters made good use of the inspiration they got from these famous predecessors. The representatives of the Dutch Romanticism like Louis Meijer and Mauritz de Haas as well

as the members of the so-called Haagse School like Hendrik Willem Mesdag were known for their tranquil seaviews and marine pieces with roaring waves and 'dancing' vessels.

Sustainable initiatives

For ages, water has been a standard element in the Netherlands, but in view of the increasing drought, we are becoming more and more aware of the great value of drinking-water. In the Netherlands alone, we use 1.5 million liters of water per person per year – without even opening the tap. 95% of all that water is hidden in everyday products like a cup of coffee (130 liters) or a cotton T-shirt (2,700 liters). Therefore it is imperative to reduce our water footprint, in addition to the already familiar CO2 footprint. Within the MICE industry a number of initiatives is already being developed to make meetings and events more sustainable. Country estate Zonheugel in Doorn, for instance, uses rain-water in the grey water circuit to flush the toilets. To this end, the rainwater is collected and filtered en stored underground. Remarkable is the shower coach: an hourglass to make guests aware of the length of their shower session. If, for instance, the average shower session can be reduced from 8.5 minutes to 4 minutes, no less than 45 liters of warm water can be saved per session, which boils down to 315 liters per week. Hotel and Congress center Kontakt der Kontinenten in Soesterberg contributes to the battle against the water issue by donating a sum of money to Stichting FairWater for every

bottle of chilled and purified house water served at this location. This organization (the Stichting) replaces broken water-pumps in African villages with durable BluePumps from the Netherlands. When these BluePumps are installed they donate, at the same time, water bottles to the users of these durable pumps via the BlueBottle project.

The Fokker Terminal in the city of The Hague has determined the average water use per visitor by means of a survey conducted by the Water Footprint Network and the TU (Technical University) Twente. This 'water footprint' comprises all the clean drinking-water needed in the production chain of food and drinks, plus the water use for cleaning and toilet use at this location. By means of a collaboration project with Made Blue, the Fokker Terminal will be the first Dutch event location to make available in developing countries, for every liter of used drinking-water, the same quantity of clean water. This is done by means of donations to clean drinking-water projects like desalination machines and water pumps, but also via information and education. It is estimated that in 2015 the Fokker terminal wil make available some 9.6 million liters of water.

Whether your preferences are for the historic, artistic, technical, touristic or sustainable aspects of water, for every point of view there are various interesting locations where you can learn more about these specific subjects. ■





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2015: The year of Vincent van Gogh

2015 will see the 125th anniversary of the decease of the internationally renowned painter Vincent van Gogh. The Stichting (foundation) Van Gogh Europe, a form of collaboration between some 30 institutions, will honour this Dutch artist by means of an international program. Central theme of this program will be '125 years of inspiration'.

The foundation includes various museums and (cultural) institutions from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Great Britain which have played a role in the artist's life and work. As part of the program, three museums in the Netherlands will organize beautiful exhibitions with original works of art by Van Gogh.

The activities taking place in the Netherlands are organized by, among other institutions, three institu-

tions that establish the basis of the Stichting Van Gogh Europe: the Van Gogh Museum, the Kröller-Müller Museum and Van Gogh Brabant (the fourth founding institution Mons 2015, Cultural Capital of Europe, is the capital city of the Walloon province of Henegouwen in Belgium).

From 25 April to 27 September 2015 the Kröller-Müller Museum will host the exhibition *Van Gogh & Co.* This exhibition focuses on the traditional genres at the end of the 19th century: still lifes, landscapes and vistas, nature, city views and portraits. Paintings and drawings by Van Gogh from various periods will be combined with those from contemporaries from the museum's own collection, such as Jean-François Millet, Henri Fantin-Latour, Paul Cézanne, Auguste Renoir, Paul Signac, Jan Toorop and Johan Thorn Prikker.

This year, in the scope of the Van Gogh Year, The Noordbrabants Museum organizes four exhibitions, of which two will be held in the fall. The exhibition 'Waar is Van Gogh?' (Where is Van Gogh?) shows how artists,

designers and product developers have been inspired by this artist. Sometimes funny and casual, but often also stylish and refined. 'Rondom de pastorie - een zaal vol Van Goghs' (Around the vicarage – a room filled with Van Goghs) pays extra attention to the museum's regular Van Gogh presentation that is shown in a separate room and to which surprising pieces on loan are added. The central theme is the development of Van Gogh as an artist in the province of Brabant. Both exhibitions can be visited from 3 October 2015 till 10 January 2016.

Earlier, Studio Roosegaarde developed a 600 meters long innovative cycling path for the Eindhoven region, inspired by the famous painting 'Starry night' (Museum of Modern Art, New York), as part of the interactive Van Gogh cycling route that was opened in May 2013.

The Van Gogh Museum, in collaboration with the Munch Museum, goes all out with the exhibition Munch : Van Gogh (25 September 2015 to 17 January 2016). Munch : Van Gogh is a grand exhibition that brings together the works of Vincent van Gogh and Edvard Munch for the first time in history. More than 100 iconic top pieces from all over the world that are seldom lent out, are on display. Both Vincent van Gogh and Edvard Munch (1863-1946) are known for their emotionally pregnant paintings and drawings, their personal and innovative style and life full



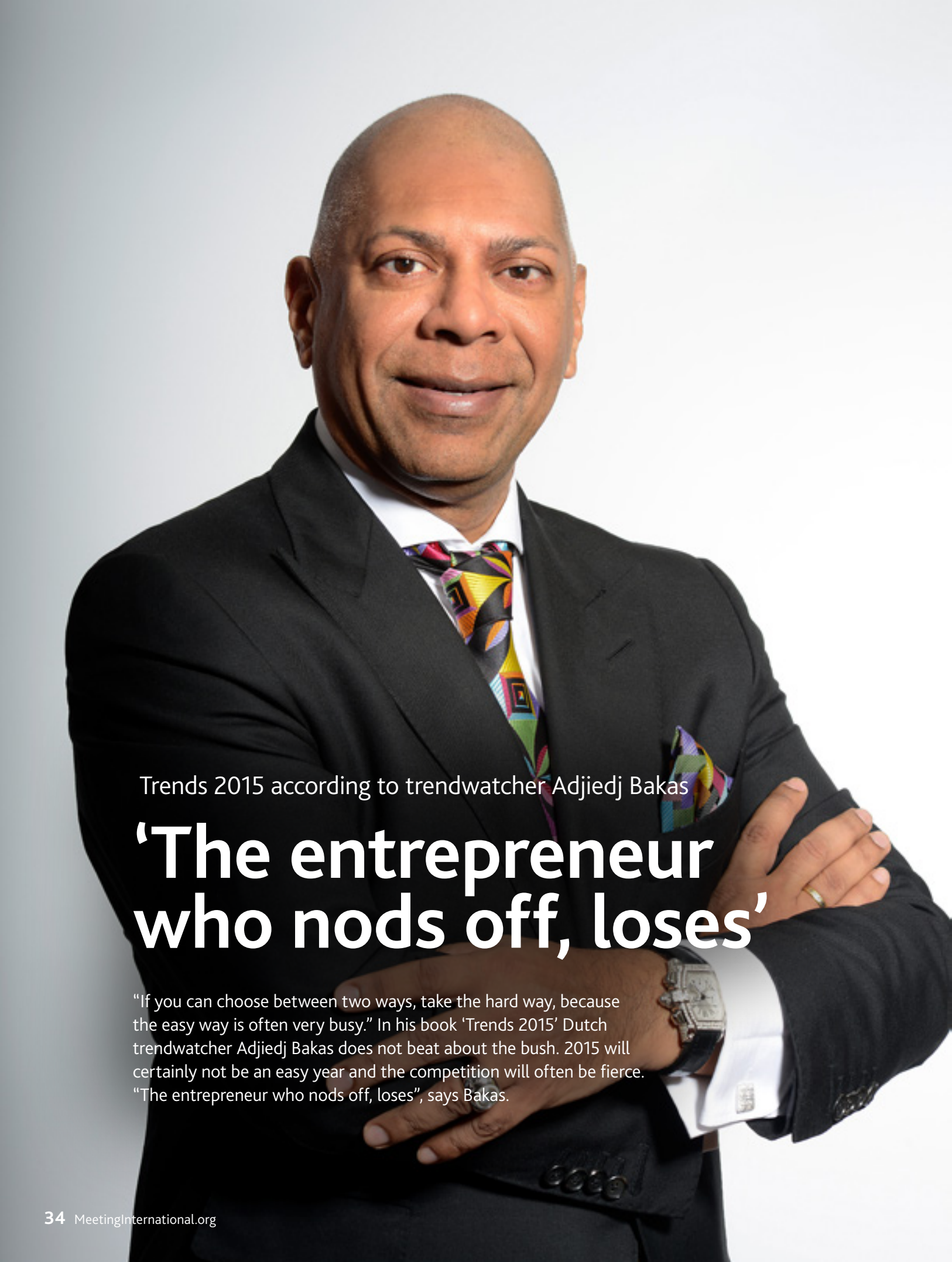
of hardships. In April this year, it was announced that The Cry, the world famous painting by Edvard Munch, will be part of this exhibition.

Source of inspiration

Apart from these exhibitions, numerous organizations and initiatives have taken up Van Gogh as a source of inspiration. This fall, inspired by Munch : Van Gogh, ten leading Amsterdam cultural institutions (EYE, Toneelgroep Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Koninklijk Concertgebouw Orkest, De Balie etc.) will show, by means of film, performance, debate and music, that the influence of Munch and Van Gogh on art and culture is very much alive. The Keukenhof horticultural event will be paying special attention to Van Gogh in 2015 by planting tulip arrangements inspired by Van Gogh's self-portraits. At the initiative of the community of Ede, the nature, art, culture and food of the Veluwe region will be combined in a varied programme entitled 'Taste of Van Gogh'. The Tuinen van Appeltern gardens will be designing ten Van Gogh gardens in 2015. Works of art inspired by Van Gogh will be on show during the GLOW light festival in Eindhoven, and Festival Boulevard in 's-Hertogenbosch will give young theatre producers the chance to develop Van Gogh program. Even the Flower Parade in Zundert, the Redhead Days in Breda and dance event Wish Outdoor are taking inspiration from Van Gogh. ■

vangogheurope.eu - vangoghbrabant.com



A professional portrait of Adjiedj Bakas, a middle-aged man with a shaved head, wearing a dark grey suit, a white shirt, and a colorful patterned tie. He is standing with his arms crossed, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light grey.

Trends 2015 according to trendwatcher Adjiedj Bakas

'The entrepreneur who nods off, loses'

"If you can choose between two ways, take the hard way, because the easy way is often very busy." In his book 'Trends 2015' Dutch trendwatcher Adjiedj Bakas does not beat about the bush. 2015 will certainly not be an easy year and the competition will often be fierce. "The entrepreneur who nods off, loses", says Bakas.

In their markets, entrepreneurs are challenged by new players. Bakas mentions the rise of outsiders and the young ‘techies’, the fact that profit systems change and that entrepreneurs must be alert. “Nowadays versatility is key for enterprises”, Bakas stresses. But he also warns against letting the concern for the employees slip. “Companies want to have more work done by fewer people, and you have to perform better than your colleague. Each employee must excel, or will be replaced by a flexworker. Employees experience a higher work pressure and they feel they have less influence in organizing their own tasks. Of the 4.6 million sick days registered by the Dutch labour institute ArboNed in the first half of 2014, ten per cent was stress-related. That is eight times the 2009 number.”

The Big Sobering

But according to Bakas, the more than one million entrepreneurs without personnel (EWP) must also keep on excelling in 2015. “You must have positive recommendations from present and former clients, you must reward existing clients with a permanent cuddling offensive, be promiscuous and network wherever you can.” The number of EWPs is rising and, left in the lurch by politicians and multinationals, they more and more unite in institutions to insure their livelihood. “What is more, online platforms make it possible for people to easily value their services, car, house themselves”, Bakas reasons. “Ordinary citizens put up solar panels on their roofs or buy energy jointly with the neighbors.” According to Bakas this is also a consequence of the Big Sobering. “The middle class is getting poorer, families have too many debts and it is time for an other type of life. That is why the market for ‘hope and comfort’ will grow in 2015: the Dutch join forces and help each other. Sharing and bartering is also part of this picture. Peer to peer capitalism is on the rise. By excluding intermediate trade and middlemen, citizens obtain more power, transaction costs are lowered and a more inclusive economy is created: anyone can participate.” The force of this new form of economy has obliterated the monopolies of existing industries in just a few years’ time. “The taxi and hotel sectors, for instance, have lost their power base to platforms like Uber and AirBnB”, Bakas explains. That is why nowadays entrepreneurs must react flexibly to innovations and opportunities, but also have the resilience to be able to counter unexpected problems. “The successful companies of the future focus on quick learning instead of maintaining the status quo,” he explains. “If companies want to remain strategically flexible, they should implement more flexible work processes and IT solutions. Versatility happens to be one of the major survival strategies for companies.”

Biography Adjiedj Bakas

Trendwatcher Adjiedj Bakas (1963) wrote several best sellers on the future, including the 2014 ‘Plenty’, ‘Megatrends Water’, ‘Energie en Grondstoffen’ and ‘Megatrends Werk’, about jobs that disappear and jobs that will be. Before that, he published, among other books, ‘The Future of Food’, ‘The State of Tomorrow’ and ‘Het Einde van de Privacy’. In the past years, over 700,000 copies of his books were sold.

Serial entrepreneur

The life cycle of companies is getting shorter as the technology develops exponentially and business models quicker become obsolete. The serial entrepreneur is on the rise: the entrepreneur who starts up a company, brings it to fruition and then sells it, only to start up a new company (in the Netherlands, John de Mol is an example of this trend). Spending your entire career as an entrepreneur with only one company and one company name, is becoming more the exception than the rule. But the serial employee is also an increasing phenomenon. 35-year olds now have had on average seven different jobs, and this trend will continue in 2015.

But the consumer also switches more and more easily. “Customers show less and less brand loyalty. Nowadays, they switch brands, even banks or insurance companies, for the simplest of reasons. The most important reason for this is the rise of social media and the internet. They cause consumers to be better informed and assertive. These days, consumers are more sensitive to customer service. If a brand abandons its customers as soon as a product does not meet the standards, customers will drop the brand en masse.”

Connected

In short, according to Bakas this year will be about ‘we’. Because of the rise of the barter and share economy, but also as a result of the rise of the peer to peer capitalism. “Companies will be looking for a closer relationship with their clients”, Bakas says. “More than ever before, the Dutch want to be connected instead of thinking themselves virtually connected. Being becomes more important than appearing.” ■

www.bakas.nl



Meeting trends for 2015

What does the guest want?

For 2015, several trends and developments have already been projected. The locations as well as the meeting and event planners should heed these forecasts, if they wish to continue to organize successful meetings for satisfied clients.

It appears that a number of demands that have been drawing more and more attention in the past, have now finally been met. One of the trends – it is impossible to ignore it – is sustainability. In the future, this aspect will gain more and more importance in selecting a location. One way to make meetings more sustainable, is to organize hybrid meetings, which necessitates provisions for digital interaction like connections for webcams.

A sustainability-related trend is the focus on health. In their daily life, guests increasingly pay attention to making responsible choices when it comes to food; more and more often, they also demand that this is also a concern during meetings. And this is not just about substituting sweet and savoury sins like cookies and fries with healthy, nutritious alternatives, but also about the effect of healthy food on body and mind. In choosing the ingredients, the location should take into the account the seasons and use high-quality ingredients of which the origin can be determined. Biological catering appears to be the solution to this problem. When a location is then also situated in a rural surroundings, the healthy, sustainable image is even more enhanced.

Service

Although it seems that sustainability is here to stay, there is one aspect that will always play the leading role: the price-quality ratio. As a consequence, the importance of

transparency increases, and this will cause an increase in all inclusive arrangements. Clients prefer to know immediately what the figure will be on the price tag, and not be unpleasantly surprised by additional costs after the event. The demand for transparency is also evident in other aspects of the selection process. Potential clients want to check the availability and be able to get an impression of the location by viewing a presentation. An aspect that greatly influences the ratio between price and quality, is the service offered. From the very first contact moment, this service must be good; a quick and appropriate response, proactive assistance and a customer-friendly attitude constitute the foundation for a positive assessment, and cause the client to actually choose for a certain location. This service and commitment must also be maintained during the meeting. It may be that locations find themselves forced to attract staff with a higher level of training, and to include special products in the menu. It is also important for locations to gain more knowledge about their guests and their target groups, and to reach their target groups by means of a tailor-made marketing strategy. And do not forget to adequately react to good and bad reviews, because these days, an opinion posted on social media is quickly disseminated to a very large audience.

Surprise

So sustainability and service are important, but the location itself must also be 'spot on'. A badly maintained or dated interior can cause a client to back out immediately, even if the conversation on the telephone was very pleasant indeed. A good accessibility by public transport and sufficient parking places are also practical demands that can not be ignored. And if the rooms are dirty, the beds uncomfortable or the room has a deafening noise level, a client will never return. A location must add something to the meeting and preferably be original and distinctive, so that the guests will be surprised and their curiosity is roused. Partly because of this wish, more and more locations enter the MICE market. If in the old days, the choice was limited to mainly hotels and a few castles, these days you can have meetings in a boiler room, have a party in a granary, or hold a presentation in a historic farmhouse.

Connected society

RAI Amsterdam is also spotting trends. Late 2014, the location published the RAI Insights trend report 'Hoe zijn evenementen veranderd in 2017' (How events will be changed in 2017). This report states that in 2017, events will be different from what they are now as a result of the





changing demands of the guests and the way they make contact. They form, as it were, a connected society. The online and offline sharing of information before, during and after meetings, for instance, becomes more and more common. Also because of this, it is essential for stakeholders to monitor the way guests participate in a meeting, how they experience it and contribute to its proceedings. What is more, the number of intercontinental visitors to international meetings is increasing. These visitors expect a combination of international standards and local elements. A third trend is the changing dominant culture, in which, among other elements, authenticity, sustainability and meaningful experiences are gaining importance and business and leisure are more and more combined.

Transition

According to this report, parties in the MICE industry would act wisely if they responded actively to these trends. The most important trend is the transition of a meeting, formerly mainly considered a way of getting people together, into a value-creating gathering as a physical meeting is combined with online possibilities. The physical getting together remains essential, virtual applications create an additional enrichment and added value. That is why it becomes of vital importance for professionals in the

industry to invest in the added value as well as in the resultative impact of the meeting.

It is possible to use several elements to create an added value for visitors of physical meetings. The trend report mentions, among other elements, the role of a meeting as a matchmaker before, during and after the event, the enhancement of the positive experience by means of technologies like holograms, as well as the use of robots. A dedicated program for the virtual visitors also contributes to the experience of the (online) guests. A personal conference or event program with a personal routing, or virtual bag the guests can fill themselves with goodies of their own choice, make sure that a meeting can be experienced at an individual level.

In order to better meet the demands of visitors of conferences, events and other meetings, it is essential for locations and clients to keep a close watch on the market, monitor the developments and, especially, seek the collaboration with other parties. According to the RAI, co-creation is the key element in this. Might it be a good idea to finally really contact those relations via the online rolodex LinkedIn? ■

‘I’m from Paris’,
she said. He smiled
and drank his wine.
‘Boston... but boy
do I love Amsterdam.’



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Global Conference on Cyberspace in The Hague

On 16 and 17 April, the Dutch city of The Hague hosted the Global Conference on Cyberspace (GCCS) 2015. After the Afghanistan Summit and the Nuclear Security Summit 2014, this was the next world summit meeting in the city of peace, justice and security. During the two-day convention some 1,700 participants from 90 different countries convened in the World Forum to discuss the challenges in the field of cyberspace.

Government ministers, corporate organizations, academics and social organizations from all over the world convened in The Hague to come to agreements on a free, open and safe internet. By investing in the international collaboration between public and private parties, the Netherlands not only enhances its own digital security, but also creates opportunities for economic growth and innovation. With the establishment of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, an international agency for cyber security that will reside in The Hague, a concrete step forward is taken in fortifying international public and private partnerships.

Earlier editions were held in Seoul (2013), Budapest (2012) and London (2011). The Hague managed to secure the

organization of the GCCS 2015 thanks to the strong representation of cyber security organizations, united in the largest security cluster in Europe: The Hague Security Delta (HSD). For several years in a row The Hague, in close collaboration with the World Forum, has managed to facilitate leading international congresses at a high (security) level, and proves to be an ideal congress destination in the fields of peace, justice and security.

Marco Esser, director Den Haag Marketing, is very enthusiastic about the fact that again, a world summit has taken place in The Hague. “Partly thanks to the presence of the security cluster The Hague Security Delta, the city of The Hague is internationally recognized as the place par excellence in the field of security matters. This attracts industries and congresses, which in its turn is essential for the local economy. With its more than 1,700 visitors, this conference generated additional turnover for hotels, restaurants and shops, and reinforced the image of The Hague as a destination for international congresses.”

Michiel Middendorf, general manager World Forum, is also proud to have hosted the conference. “This summit matches perfectly the new strategy and positioning World Forum has chosen to enhance the profile of the city with The Hague Security Delta. Instead of only renting locations, we place ourselves in the position of our clients; we know the policy-makers and work closely together with various ministries and institutions.” ■

www.gccs2015.com



The Delta Works, also great for doing business

On the 1st February 1953 there was a catastrophic flood in the Netherlands. In an exceptional way Delta Park Neeltje Jans lets visitors find out more about this historical disaster and the decision to build the world-famous flood defences, the 'Deltawerken'. As from 4 July, the presentation will be even more dramatic, thanks to the new 'Flood of Floods' 3D experience.

Holding a conference, exhibition or meeting with a view of the Oosterschelde storm surge barrier as back-drop, followed by a guided tour of the flood defences is a truly unique experience for any visitor.

International interest

Delta Park Neeltje Jans offers an inspiring setting for all occasions, with its perfect mix of professionalism, culinary expertise and relaxation. It is the most popular day attraction in the

province of Zeeland with an average of 300,000 guests every year. The unique construction of the Delta Works has also led to considerable international interest. International delegations and hydraulic engineers from around the world regularly visit Delta Park to attend presentations on Dutch water management and the Delta programme. The Dutch Delta Works receives considerable international acclaim and is often regarded as an exemplary model in the battle against flooding.

Successful meetings and inspiration

Surrounded by water and in the vicinity of Oosterschelde National Park, the largest nature reserve in the Netherlands, Delta Park Neeltje Jans is the perfect place to get inspired, hold successful meetings or participate in a training course, but also for special occasions the possibilities are endless.

A special feature, which can be hired exclusively, is the large Blue Reef Zeeland aquarium, where tropical sharks 'glide' by. Take a relaxing boat trip on Delta Park Neeltje Jans' own boat. The vessel can accommodate about six hundred people. Here



you can discover the unique natural diversity of the Oosterschelde and admire the flood barrier from the water. This boat is perfect for a corporate event or company party, but also for meetings or workshops out on the water. Those who like lots of fresh air can visit the flood barrier. Accompanied by a professional guide you can experience what it is like to be at the beating heart of the most impressive part of the Delta Works.

Delta Experience- flood of floods

The 3D edutainment experience 'The Flood of Floods' in the new double film building lets the visitor feel as if he is in the middle of the heavy storm. In a 13-minute show, the visitor can experience how the people of Zeeland then saw and heard the storm raging around their houses. From a rotating platform, viewing a panoramic 270-degree presentation, the visitor learns all about the flood, the building of the dikes and the storm surge barrier.

Delta plaza

Central to Delta Park Neeltje Jans is the main Delta Plaza, which covers 6,400 square

meters. The imposing building consists of three levels and has several exhibition spaces, including film rooms, a brasserie and a shop. The architect has incorporated the idea of a village square into the design, making everything interconnected. The various rooms have a capacity of 25 to 500 people and can be booked in combination or separately. Technical facilities such as a DVD player, beamer, overhead projector, flipchart and audio equipment are all present. Naturally, we take care of the technical support during the meetings.

In brasserie Nautilus you can enjoy lunch or dinner with a view of the Oosterschelde. By combining Deltazicht (Delta View) and Brasserie Nautilus we can cater for as many as 1,000 guests. The à la carte menu includes regional specialties from Zeeland, but buffet dinners can also be provided. From a conference, exhibition or a celebration to a stylish business dinner; you name it and we will arrange it.

Inspiring setting

Anyone who decides to work with Delta Park Neeltje Jans can expect tailormade precision.

At the customer's request we are happy to assist implementing the desired programme. In total we offer seven different function rooms, each with its own character, size and design, so that an appropriate space can be chosen most suited to the type of planned event. Whether for presentations, seminars, meetings, training or company parties, Delta Park Neeltje Jans offers an inspiring setting for every occasion. Our location can also be used for team building activities. We offer various sports programmes including, for example blokarting on the beach or abseiling from a reserve pier above the water.

Delta Park Neeltje Jans is centrally located in the province of Zeeland. There are over 500 free parking spaces near the entrance. From Rotterdam airport Delta Park is less than an hour's drive. Hotel accommodation is available nearby. On July 5 Neeltje Jans is the finish location for a stage of the Tour de France. ■

For more information: www.neeltjejans.nl

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The Netherlands has many meeting- or conference facilities. It is in the interests of clients and the market for meeting accommodations, to become transparent. Who offers which quality and meets the requirements of capacity, accessibility, comfort and so on. The “Congres- en Vergaderclassificatie” is an excellent way to gain insight into what companies offer and is objective. Since affiliated companies are regularly inspected, the provided quality can be assured. You can recognize the classified companies by the logo shown here below, which is always accompanied by a number of hammers representing the classification.

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agencies are explicitly in the forefront of the sector with high-grade service in the field of corporate meetings.

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Hotel Zuiderduin:

Meetings at the seaside

One of the major attractions a meeting location can offer for the corporate client, is that it has additional features. Such as a seaside in walking distance. Hotel Zuiderduin is located in the picturesque village of Egmond aan Zee, and lies about one hundred meters from the beach.

Meetings can take place in one of the 33 function rooms in the hotel. These vary in size from 30m² to halls of 1,000m² for large congresses, events and festivities. The hotel Zuiderduin itself has more than 400 comfortable rooms with all 'mod cons'. Last year, this room capacity was increased by 144 rooms, as the nearby new Strandhotel Golfzang was included in the Zuiderduin portfolio.

The hotel lounge has a central internet corner and all function rooms have fast internet connections. Of course, WiFi is available in all public spaces, halls and rooms.

The hotel Zuiderduin has many other attractive features that make a meeting – and a stay – at the hotel a pleasant experience. The large restaurant can accommodate 700 persons, the same floor also includes a bistro and a cosy bar. Further facilities for relaxation are a swimming pool, various saunas, a wellness center, a fitness

room, a squash court and a bowling-center with 8 modern bowling alleys.

If you prefer outdoor activities, the nearby beach offers a great location for sportive, active or recreational breaks in the meeting schedule. The Zuiderduin staff can arrange it all for you. The village of Egmond aan Zee also has a great deal to offer in the range of shops, but a visit to other nearby villages such as Bergen is certainly worth while.

More information about the sea of possibilities in Hotel Zuiderduin can be obtained from the hotel's sales department via sales@zuiderduin.nl or tel. +31 (0)72-7502020.

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Postillion: successful formula

Since April 1, Postillion Hotels runs the congress centre BEURS-World Trade Centre Rotterdam. And recently, Postillion Hotel Dordrecht won the Dutch national award 'Beste Congreslocatie van het Jaar 2014'.

With the takeover of the congress centre BEURS-World Trade Centre Rotterdam – which continues under the name Postillion Convention Centre WTC Rotterdam – a seventh location is added to the Postillion Hotels chain. The takeover is part of the strategy that aims to realize growth as a supplier of business facilities within the Netherlands. This expansion also has an international aspect, says Erik-Jan Ginjaar, Regio Directeur West at Postillion Hotels: “With the takeover of Postillion Convention Centre WTC Rotterdam we enter the international market for congresses and trade fairs. With this takeover, we score a double, as it were: we expand to the west of the country, and we can now facilitate large international congresses, consistent with our own, successful formula.”

Award

The success of this formula is obvious from the fact that Postillion Hotel Dordrecht has won the prestigious Dutch

Meet Work Stay

The Meet Work Stay concept is aimed at the mobile business person ('working nomad') who wants to make the most of the working day. Each Postillion Hotels location has meeting arrangements for four or eight hours, Business Points with wifi, and, of course, facilities for printing and copying. Rooms for a (work) consultation, meeting or 'ordinary' work in a Business Point can be booked online for only 6.50 euros per hour. Payment by credit card is possible. Supplied are magazines, coffee and tea, fruit juices and brain food, like healthy snacks and fruit. Any additional wishes can be fulfilled quickly.

award 'Congreslocatie van het Jaar 2014'. This award is granted on the basis of the criteria location, accessibility, interior decoration, catering and service. Ginjaar: “We are extremely pleased with this award. Our Dordrecht location was renovated recently, and this is a wonderful recognition of our achievements.”

The hotel has six large congress halls, eight modern meeting rooms, three boardrooms, a restaurant with terrace, a Business Point, two spacious breakout rooms, a fitness room, free wifi and a large parking area. But apart from meeting all the set criteria, the Postillion Hotel Dordrecht has an other important USP: the Meet Work Stay concept (see box). Ginjaar: “This concept is an important element of the uniform image we want to realize for all Postillion Hotels.” ■

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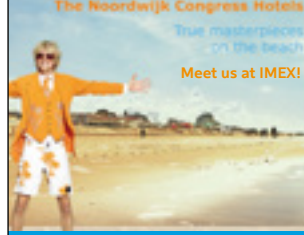
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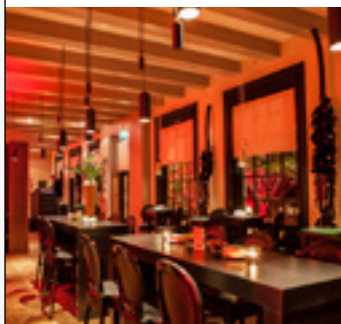



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are mostly made
around tables,
but not necessarily
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