



Giro d'Italia 2016

# The province turns pink

**The Netherlands are the world's leading bicycle country. This claim is supported by the fact that our nearly 17 million inhabitants are the proud owners of 23 million bicycles. Which boils down to 1.3 bike per person. The city of Utrecht is building a parking garage which is to accommodate 12,000 bicycles. The city of Amsterdam has a population of 850,000, but over one million bikes. The Dutch Cycling Embassy worldwide sells Dutch know-how on, for instance, the ideal bike infrastructure for a city.**

**I**t is no wonder then, even almost logical, that our country is chosen as starting location for major international cycling events. Last year, for instance, the city of Utrecht hosted the 'Grand Départ' of the Tour de France, followed by a leg through the province of Zeeland. This

## ITINERARY

- 1 April- 8 May: Piazzas (street festivities) in cities throughout Gelderland
- 1 May: Giro Gelderland amateur tour
- 5 May: Team presentation in Apeldoorn
- 6 May Leg 1: Apeldoorn – Apeldoorn (individual time trial)
- 7 May Leg 2: Arnhem – Nijmegen
- 8 May Leg 3: Nijmegen – Arnhem

year, on 6 May, the Giro d'Italia will start (the Grande Partenza) in the city of Apeldoorn, followed by two legs which will traverse a large part of the province of Gelderland. In 2017, the cities of Arnhem and Nijmegen will co-host Velocity, a major international event for the bicycle industry.

## MAXIMUM PROFIT

Cees Priem, the former cycle racer and team manager, played a major role in bringing the Giro to the Netherlands. He approached Jan Markink, County Council Deputy for sports in the province of Gelderland, and presented the plan. They soon concluded that bringing the Giro to Gelderland was an excellent idea. They



### WORLD TOUR

The World Tour includes the 27 most important cycle events worldwide, of which the Tour de France is still considered the biggest event. To name some others: the Italian Giro d'Italia, the Spanish Vuelta, the Belgian Ronde van Vlaanderen, Luik-Bastenaken-Luik, and the Vlaamse Pijl, as well as the Dutch Eneco Tour and the Amstel Gold Race, but also the Tour de Suisse. The comparison with the tennis world is quite apt: as 'grand slams', the Tour de France then counts as the Wimbledon tournament, the Giro rates as the US Open. Lately, however, a turn is taking place: the Giro is gaining in interest, and therefore also in importance regarding the points that can be scored in this World Tour classification.



especially considered possibilities to have Gelderland profit maximally from such a large event. Crucial in that aspect is that the event should span a period of several days. Negotiations were held, and the result was that Gelderland hosts the Giro for three days: the start (Grande Partenza) will take place in the city of Apeldoorn with an individual time trial. The next two days will see two legs which will pass through almost the entire province of Gelderland. Which is an excellent reason for a great many activities to be organized in and around the cities that are passed through, but especially in the start/finish cities of Apeldoorn, Arnhem and Nijmegen.

### SIDE EVENTS

In total, the Giro will stay in the province of Gelderland for four days, but the event is actually started with an extensive promotion campaign to stimulate the cities and villages the Giro passes through, to organize all kinds of activities around

the cycling event. Already, some 500 so-called side events will be taking place. The French image of the Tour is more than matched by the Italian character of the Giro, so these side events all have an Italian get-up. To give an example: municipalities can submit requests to hold 80 convivial neighborhood feasts, called *piazas*. The intention of these feasts is that neighbors enjoy an Italian-style meal in a Giro-pink setting. To facilitate this, the organization supplies packages including, among other items such as ingredients for a pasta recipe, accessories with which the street or the square can be decorated in pink. There also is a limited budget available with which the inhabitants can organize all kinds of activities around the cycling, in order to make the Giro street feast even more successful. These *piazas* will be taking place from 1 April to 8 May. Furthermore, Italian markets will be organized, so-called *mercato*s, for which companies can submit requests to present themselves by means of hospitality and sponsoring.

### PROJECT TEAM

Remarkable for the activities around the event is that these are actually organized and facilitated by the provincial government. The project team responsible for the organization, GiroGelderland, is made up by civil servants from the province, complemented by colleagues from the partner cities of Apeldoorn, Arnhem and Nijmegen. Apart from these, several professionals experienced in the organization of major sports events were included, in order to guarantee the success of the event.

For the Dutch, the person drawing the largest crowd will be Tom Dumoulin. This Dutch racing cyclist is the first sportsman in years to have a chance to win. Of course, many more great cyclists will be present, such as Roberto Cancellara, but a Dutchman in the Pink Sweater in the Netherlands, that is so exceptional that it may never happen again, so that is something you simply must witness.  
[www.girogelderland.nl](http://www.girogelderland.nl)