



Dutch events

Each year, various events take place in the Netherlands. These events are often visited and appreciated by tourists on holiday, but for business guests they are equally worthwhile.

Text and images www.holland.com

AMSTERDAM LIGHT FESTIVAL

During the Amsterdam Light Festival, the best light artists from Holland and abroad light up the city's canals with their work. Every night you can see the beautiful works along the Amstel river or the old canals in the city centre. Board one of the boats decorated with light and take a tour past the many unique light installations. You can also visit several beautifully lit canal houses. Dozens of boats decked out with spectacular lights sail through the canals past fairy scenes in the Christmas Canal Parade. A number of choirs along the way reinforce the intimate Christmas mood. The Amsterdam Light Festival takes place from December 1st till January 22th 2017. amsterdamlightfestival.com/en

DICKENS FESTIVAL

The historic center of the city of Deventer provides the background for the Dickens Festival. Well over 900 characters featured in the famous books by the 19th-century British writer Charles Dickens come to life. Come and meet Scrooge, Oliver Twist, Mr. Pickwick, Christmas carolers, orphans, drunks, office clerks, and the upper class. Enjoy the aromas of English punch and roasted chestnuts, thousands of fairy lights, and tall Christmas trees. Also, there's a market on the main square with 200 stands. The Christmas ambience continues in the churches in the city center with a cultural program. Different choirs, orchestra and vocal ensembles perform Christmas music. Not only in the street, but also behind the windows, in the houses and in the little shops and galleries the romantic time of Dickens will revive. Over 160,000 people come to this festival annually. Admission is free, so be prepared for queues at the entrance. The Dickens Festival takes place on December 17th and December 18th. www.dickensfestijn.nl

NATIONAL TULIP DAY

Every year on National Tulip Day, Dutch tulip growers build a huge garden with tens of thousands of tulips for



Dickens Festival



National Tulip Day

the official start of tulip season on Dam Square in Amsterdam. The biggest garden of Amsterdam transforms Dam Square into a sea of colour, where thousands of people come to pick a free bouquet of flowers every year. In addition to the garden the tulip growers organise countless surprises and promotions. This festive event sets off tulip season because some 1.7 billion Dutch tulips are expected to bring spring into homes around the world.

Tulip season is the period from January until the end of April in which most tulip varieties are available from florists, supermarkets and flower stands. Thousands of tulip variants in every colour of the rainbow find their way from auctions in Holland to vases around the world. In 2017 National Tulip Day will take place on January 21th. tulpenpromotie.nl/en

International Film Festival Rotterdam
Photo Sophia van den Hoek

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM

Hundreds of film makers and other artists present their work to a large audience in Rotterdam every year during the International Film Festival (IFFR). Twelve days in a row, twenty-four screening venues are fully programmed. The festival attracts many interested visitors, plus up to 3,000 press and film industry representatives. The International Film Festival Rotterdam defines its unique character by focusing on new, innovative, independent films and film makers. The festival is a

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mixture of cinema, film-related visual art exhibitions and live performances. The highlight of the International Film Festival are the VPRO Tiger Awards. Not the established film makers, but new talent receive awards for their promising work. The awards are an important encouragement for young directors. The International Film Festival Rotterdam takes place from January 25th till February 5st. iffr.com

FashionWeek Amsterdam

Holland has claimed a serious stake in the fashion design world. This is demonstrated by Fashion Week Amsterdam, which is held in Amsterdam twice a year. AIFW Amsterdam is held at the Westergasfabriek but fashion-oriented events can be found throughout the city of Amsterdam. In addition to the big fashion houses that use the opportunity to present their designs, FashionWeek Amsterdam devotes a lot of attention to young upcoming talent. There are many catwalk shows (most by invitation only) but Amsterdam also hosts the Downtown event with a range of exhibitions, parties and other fashion-related happenings. FashionWeek Amsterdam takes place from January 20th till January 30th. fashionweek.nl/en

TEFAF MAASTRICHT

The world's leading art and antique fair attracts the best dealers, academics, art critics, and collectors. Well over 250 of the world's most prestigious antiques and art



National Mill Day: Zaanse Schans, Zaandam

dealers from different nationalities come together at TEFAF Maastricht each year. The masterpieces they bring along are all examined on quality, condition and authenticity by one of the 150 internationally respected experts. TEFAF Maastricht offers stands with medieval manuscripts, maps, coins, classical antiquities, silver, jewelry, porcelain, furniture, modern art, old masters and other objects, originating from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, England, Italy, Egypt, Asia, Africa and South America. TEFAF Maastricht will take place from March 10th till March 19th. www.tefaf.com

NATIONAL MILL DAY

The Netherlands are usually associated with mills, and rightly so. For centuries, mills have played an important role in reclaiming land, processing raw materials and manufacturing products. These days, mills barely have any economic value, but they are iconic for Holland and still attract a great deal of attention. Therefore, the second Saturday in May was proclaimed National Mill Day. On that day 600 windmills and watermills open their doors to visitors. Millers make a real effort to decorate their mills as beautifully as possible with flags and flowers. A miller will take you on a tour, providing a good explanation of the type of mill you are visiting. It could very well happen that you will be asked to give the miller a hand in turning the sails. In 2017, National Mill Day will be held on March 13th.

HOLLAND FESTIVAL

Since 1947 the Holland Festival has been the number one trend-setting performing arts festival in Holland. The festival is a mixture of performing arts, theater, music theater, dance, opera and music, and visual arts, literature and architecture. This festival always tries to renew itself. Each year you will be surprised by daring experiments and trend-setting performances presented at an international level. This year the festival will be taking place in Amsterdam. www.hollandfestival.nl/en

More Dutch events can be found at www.holland.com



Holland Festival: Classic and modern dance