



THE NETHERLANDS

AMBER CELIE



WELL ORGANISED

In the Netherlands, the well-structured society stands out, with well-maintained roads, clear traffic signs, punctual trains, and a clean environment. The organized store assortment, stable laws, and accessible information also contribute to this impression. This is true for both foreigners and Dutch people returning from abroad, although the perception of what is considered 'well organized' may change over time.

COMPLAINING



Dutch people are pragmatic and solution-oriented, known for systematically addressing problems, such as managing water and land. They are quick to take action, but when things don't go as planned, they tend to complain. In cultures where broken items cause less frustration, the Dutch get irritated when things aren't fixed quickly. This can be hard for Dutch people abroad, especially when conflicts or problems aren't resolved immediately.

OUD HOLLANDSE SPELLETJES (OLD DUTCH GAMES)

Old Dutch games are traditional games that have been played in the Netherlands for generations. They are often simple but provide a lot of fun and are an important part of Dutch culture. Some well-known Old Dutch games include "koekhappen" (cookie biting), sack racing, and tug of war. These games are often played during holidays, village festivals, or within families, bringing people together in a fun and active way. They reflect the gezelligheid (coziness) and social aspect of Dutch culture.



COFFEE WITH A COOKIE

The Dutch are true coffee lovers, and coffee drinking is an important social ritual. "Going for coffee" often just means stopping by for a visit, usually by appointment, as most Dutch people aren't too keen on unexpected guests. Upon arrival, you'll almost always be asked, "Coffee? With milk and sugar?" And of course, coffee comes with a cookie—literally one cookie! The cookie tin is brought out, you pick one, and then the tin usually disappears again.

At parties, too, it's traditional to start with coffee before moving on to alcohol. Nowadays, you might see the "cup of joe" replaced at more modern gatherings by a welcome drink like prosecco or a cocktail, but coffee remains a significant part of Dutch culture.



KLOMPEN

Many people believe that Dutch people wear clogs, but in reality, you rarely see this in the Netherlands. Clogs aren't uniquely Dutch; centuries ago, they were worn across Europe. Today, clogs are mainly seen as folklore and are a popular souvenir for tourists, who love to take home a pair of "wooden shoes" as a reminder of their visit.



MOLENS



Windmills are found worldwide as they harness wind—a free energy source. Although some countries have more windmills than the Netherlands, it's known as the land of windmills due to its unique polder mills. These mills historically used wind power to pump water from lower to higher ground, crucial for managing water levels. While modern pumping stations now perform this function, many windmills remain in the Dutch landscape, valued for their cultural heritage. They are also a popular attraction for tourists, representing an iconic part of Dutch history.

GIVING YOUR OPINION

The Dutch are known for openly sharing their opinions, whether solicited or not, and often without needing extensive expertise on the topic. This tendency has both positives and negatives: on one hand, it's seen as meddling, symbolized by the familiar "raised finger" attitude. On the other hand, this characteristic also means that Dutch people are generally willing to help each other when needed. However, in today's more individualistic society, this sense of helpfulness is slowly declining.



THE COLOR ORANGE

In the Netherlands, the color orange symbolizes the country, the royal family, and national sports teams. It's seen as a unifying color, especially during major sports events like the World Cup, Olympics, and key skating competitions, when fans dress in orange and decorate their homes and streets. On King's Day, orange is also prominently displayed in public celebrations, and even some products come in special orange editions, reflecting the national pride associated with this color.





CYCLES

In the Netherlands, nearly everyone learns to cycle from a young age, often starting around age 4 or 5, and continues to cycle throughout their life for school, work, social visits, and recreation. Cycling is one of the top sports in the country, and with the popularity of electric bikes, even more people—including seniors—are cycling again. Foreign visitors are often surprised by what Dutch people transport on bikes: children, groceries, and even Christmas trees are common sights. What seems ordinary to the Dutch is often remarkable to outsiders.

THE WEATHER

The weather is one of the most popular conversation topics in the Netherlands, often involving light complaints. The weather rarely meets everyone's wishes—winters are either too cold or "not real winters," and summers either lack warmth or are "too hot" when they bring tropical days. The impact of weather on people's mood is especially noticeable in spring. A bit of sun can lift spirits and make people friendlier and more relaxed, which is easy to see on the streets, in shops, and at work.



SPORTS

The Netherlands is a sporty nation, with many people actively participating in one or more sports and enthusiastically following sports events. There are extensive opportunities for young sports talents to develop, including specialized schools that combine education with advanced sports training. Thanks to a disciplined approach, the Netherlands excels in international sports, playing key roles in sports like speed skating and soccer. Dutch athletes consistently win medals in both the Winter and Summer Olympics, and the Dutch national soccer team is regularly ranked among the world's top ten teams.



TULIPS

Tulips are not native to the Netherlands, nor do they only grow there, but they are often associated with the country. Tulips thrive in the Dutch climate, as they need a cool winter to grow. They symbolize the Netherlands' booming flower bulb industry, with the country being the world's largest exporter of tulips and tulip bulbs. In spring, tourists flock to the colorful tulip fields, with Keukenhof in Lisse being especially popular. This flower park attracts nearly a million visitors over just two months, making it one of the top five attractions in the Netherlands.



SHORTAGE OF SPACE

In the Netherlands, there is a constant shortage of space due to a strong emphasis on preserving nature, leaving little room for housing, work, and infrastructure. As a result, land prices are high, and homes often have smaller plots. Many Dutch people live in apartments or terraced houses, where homes are connected in rows, often identical.



This space shortage also makes it difficult to expand or build large-scale projects, contributing to the high costs of projects like the HSL railway line and the Betuweroute. Expanding Schiphol Airport is another challenging task, despite the demand for more space.



THANK YOU

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