



The Great  
**Canadian**  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

## The Netherlands General Information

The Netherlands, often referred to as Holland, is a county located mostly in Western Europe. Together with three island territories in the Caribbean (Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba), it forms a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The capital is Amsterdam and the seat of government The Hague.



### Documentation

Canadian Passports are required for visitors to travel to The Netherlands and must be valid for 3 months beyond the date you leave The Netherlands. The Netherlands is a Schengen area country. Canadian citizens do not need a visa for travel to countries within the Schengen area. However, visa-free travel only applies to stays of up to 90 days in any 180-day period. Customs officials may ask you to show them a return ticket and proof of sufficient funds for your stay.



### Airports

#### Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is the biggest and the busiest airport in The Netherlands. It's the fifth most trafficked airport in Europe. It is in Haarlemmermeer, a municipality that borders towards the city of Haarlem. The tourists who land at Schiphol can benefit themselves of the suitable Dutch Railways (NS) service that links the airport to Amsterdam Central Station within 15 minutes. Schiphol is the main civilian airport for Amsterdam.

There are two other large airports in The Netherlands as well as some smaller airports.



The Great  
**Canadian**  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

## Location and Geography

The Netherlands is located in northwestern Europe. It is bordered to the north and west by the North Sea, Germany to the east and Belgium to the south. The Netherlands is mostly flat land with large areas of lakes, rivers and canals. Most of The Netherlands is at or below sea level. The Kingdom of The Netherlands also has territory in the Caribbean known as the Dutch Caribbean.



## Population

The Netherlands is classified as a very densely populated country. Only Bangladesh, South Korea and Taiwan have both a larger population and higher population density. As of 2018, the population was at 17.01 million people and is equivalent for 0.22% of the world's total population. The population density is 507 people per km<sup>2</sup>.

## People and Culture

The Dutch are a mixture of Frisians, Saxons and Franks. There are other minority groups in The Netherlands as well due to immigration. At the beginning of the 21st century the government required that immigrants pass a test in their country of origin relating to Dutch language and culture before they could enter the Netherlands.

## Language

The official language of The Netherlands is Dutch sometimes referred to as Netherlandic. Frisian is recognized as a second official language in the northern province of Friesland. English is a mandatory course in all secondary schools. French, German and English are commonly spoken languages.



The Great  
Canadian  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Canada R3G 0V7

## Economy

Three major sectors of The Netherlands economy are manufacturing, horticulture and tourism. The Netherlands is a major exporter of flower and flower products worldwide. About 75% of all flower bulbs and 40% of fresh cut flowers traded worldwide originate here. Dairy farming is successful as well with the milk yield per acre of grassland and the yield per cow being among the highest in the world. The manufacturing industry employs about one-fifth of the labor force. Important components of the manufacturing sector include food and beverages, metal, chemical, petroleum products, and electrical and electronics industries. In 2017, the Netherlands were visited by 17 million foreign tourists, making it the 20th most visited country in the world. Popular places to visit include: Keukenhof the Garden of Europe, The Rijksmuseum, Anne Frank Museum, Van Gogh Museum, The towns of IJsselmeer, Kasteel De Haar Castle, Hoge Veluwe National Park, Alkmaar Cheese Market and Kinderdijk Windmills.



## Climate and Weather

The Netherlands has cool summers and mild winters. Daytime temperatures vary from 2°C-6°C in the winter and 17°C-20°C in the summer. There is little climate variation from region to region due to the small size of The Netherlands. Windy conditions and rain are also common weather occurrences here.

## Electricity

Voltage is 230V. Frequency is 50Hz. Two plug types are C and F.





The Great  
**Canadian**  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

### **Currency**

The currency of The Netherlands is the Euro (€). Euros are available in 7 denomination bank notes and 8 denomination coins. There are currency exchanges available in banks, post offices, exchange offices and many hotels.

### **Credit Cards**

All major credit cards are widely accepted but not everywhere. Visa, Mastercard and American Express are commonly accepted. These cards are also accepted at currency exchange offices.

### **Tipping**

In The Netherlands, Value Added Tax and service charges are included in your bill at hotels, restaurants, shops and taxis. Tips for extra service are always appreciated but not required. It is customary to give taxi drivers and waiters a tip of about 10 percent.

### **Banking and Business Hours**

Most banks and post offices are open from Monday - Friday between 9:00am and 5:00pm. Only major banks and post offices are open on Saturday. Most shops are opened every day around 9:00am until 5:30pm. On Monday mornings, shops often don't open until around noon. Most towns and cities have a shopping night when shops are opened until 9 p.m. This is usually on a Thursday. Every Dutch city has its own rules for shopping on Sundays.

### **Tourist Information Offices**

Most cities in The Netherlands have a tourist information office called VVV Tourist Offices. They are usually found in the local city center. They have local information on guided tours, attractions, restaurants and events as well as maps and admission tickets.

### **Telephone and Emergency**

The international dialing code for The Netherlands is +31. To dial to Canada or the United States dial 01- (area code)- (phone number).

### **Emergency Services (police, fire, ambulance) 112**

Non-emergent police 0900-8844



The Great  
**Canadian**  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Canada R3G 0V7

## **Health Information**

Health care in The Netherlands is comparable to the standards of Canadian health care. Travel insurance is recommended for all travel to The Netherlands. It is also recommended to bring all prescription medications and any over-the-counter medicine you may need with you while travelling.

## **National Holidays (2019)**

### **January 1<sup>st</sup> – New Year’s Day**

January 1 is the first day of the year, according to the Gregorian Calendar. Traditions in the Netherlands at this time of year include eating deep-fried dough balls known as oliebollen, watching fireworks and diving into the North Sea, lakes or canals. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

### **April 19<sup>th</sup> – Good Friday**

On Good Friday (goede vrijdag), Christians in the Netherlands remember the crucifixion of Jesus on the hill known as Calvary or Golgotha near Jerusalem. It is a day of prayer for observant Christians and a holiday for some people. Businesses have normal opening hours.

### **April 21<sup>st</sup> – Easter Sunday**

Easter Sunday is a festive, family orientated day in the Netherlands. People prepare festive breakfasts, brunches or lunches. They may also search for and eat chocolate eggs that are supposedly delivered by the Easter hare. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

### **April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Easter Monday**

The Monday following Easter Sunday celebrating Easter traditions. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

### **April 27<sup>th</sup> – King’s Birthday**

The King’s official birthday (King’s Day, Koningsdag) in the Netherlands is celebrated each year with parties, street markets, concerts and special events for the royal family on April 27. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.



The Great  
**Canadian**  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

#### **May 4<sup>th</sup> – Remembrance Day**

Remembrance Day (Dodenherdenking) is an annual observance in the Netherlands that remembers those who died during war and in peace-keeping operations. It is the day before Liberation Day. Businesses have normal opening hours.

#### **May 5<sup>th</sup>- Liberation Day**

Liberation Day (Bevrijdingsdag) is celebrated the day after Remembrance Day. It commemorates the end of the Nazi occupation during the Second World War. Businesses have normal opening hours.

#### **May 30<sup>th</sup>- Ascension Day**

Ascension Day in the Netherlands marks the time when Jesus ascended to heaven for the final time following his crucifixion and resurrection. It is the 40th day of Easter and is always on a Thursday. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

#### **June 9<sup>th</sup>- Whit Sunday**

Pentecost also called Whit Sunday is an important Christian holiday in the Netherlands. It marks the Holy Spirit's descent from heaven onto Jesus' followers. It is generally a normal spring Sunday and a popular time for outdoor music festivals, short breaks and longer vacations. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

#### **June 10<sup>th</sup>- Whit Monday**

The second day of Pentecost in the Netherlands is a popular day for outdoor activities, markets, sailing and other sports. It falls on a Monday seven weeks after Easter Monday. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

#### **December 5<sup>th</sup> - St Nicholas' Eve/Sinterklaas Eve**

A time of gift-giving and parties. It is the day before St. Nicholas' Day, but the big celebrations happen on December 5. Businesses have normal opening hours.



The Great  
**Canadian**  
Travel Group  
Inc.

1349 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3G 0V7

### **December 6<sup>th</sup> - St Nicholas' Day/Sinterklaas Day**

Saint Nicholas, also known as Sinterklaas, visits children and brings them presents. In the Netherlands, the main celebrations take place on December 5. Businesses have normal opening hours.

### **December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve**

Many people in the Netherlands celebrate Christmas Eve (Kerstavond) by attending a church service and getting together for a family dinner. December 24 is traditionally not a day to exchange gifts. Businesses have normal opening hours.

### **December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day**

Christmas Day is an important holiday in the Netherlands on December 25 each year. It gives people the chance to spend time with family and friends. Many people decorate their homes and visit Christmas markets prior to Christmas Day. They then prepare and eat a luxurious meal and may attend a special church service on Christmas Day. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

### **December 26<sup>th</sup> – Second Day of Christmas**

Many people in the Netherlands observe the second day of Christmas, which falls on December 26. It is a continuation of the Christmas holiday or a chance to spend time outdoors or with family or friends. It is also Saint Stephen's Day. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

### **December 31<sup>st</sup>- New Year's Eve**

Join in on festive New Year's Eve celebrations and toast a welcome to the New Year. City squares are often bustling with people who watch fireworks light up the night sky and cheer when the New Year arrives. Businesses have normal opening hours.