

## Amsterdam City Tour

### Reading List

#### **Amsterdam: A History of the World's Most Liberal City**

by Russell Shorto

**An endlessly entertaining portrait of the city of Amsterdam and the ideas that make it unique, by the author of the acclaimed *Island at the Center of the World***

Tourists know Amsterdam as a picturesque city of low-slung brick houses lining tidy canals; student travelers know it for its legal brothels and hash bars; art lovers know it for Rembrandt's glorious portraits.

But the deeper history of Amsterdam, what makes it one of the most fascinating places on earth, is bound up in its unique geography—the constant battle of its citizens to keep the sea at bay and the democratic philosophy that this enduring struggle fostered. Amsterdam is the font of liberalism, in both its senses. Tolerance for free thinking and free love make it a place where, in the words of one of its mayors, "craziness is a value." But the city also fostered the deeper meaning of liberalism, one that profoundly influenced America: political and economic freedom. Amsterdam was home not only to religious dissidents and radical thinkers but to the world's first great global corporation.

In this effortlessly erudite account, Russell Shorto traces the idiosyncratic evolution of Amsterdam, showing how such disparate elements as herring anatomy, naked Anabaptists parading through the streets, and an intimate gathering in a sixteenth-century wine-tasting room had a profound effect on Dutch—and world—history. Weaving in his own experiences of his adopted home, Shorto provides an ever-surprising, intellectually engaging story of Amsterdam from the building of its first canals in the 1300s, through its brutal struggle for independence, its golden age as a vast empire, to its complex present in which its cherished ideals of liberalism are under siege.

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#### **In the City of Bikes: The Story of the Amsterdam Cyclist**

by Pete Jordan

Pete Jordan, author of the wildly popular *Dishwasher: One Man's Quest to Wash Dishes in All Fifty States*, is back with a memoir that tells the story of his love affair with Amsterdam, the city of bikes, all the while unfolding an unknown history of the city's cycling, from the craze of the 1890s, through

the Nazi occupation, to the bike-centric culture adored by the world today

Pete never planned to stay long in Amsterdam, just a semester. But he quickly falls in love with the city and soon his wife, Amy Joy, joins him. Together they explore every inch of their new home on two wheels, their rides a respite from the struggles that come with starting a new life in a new country.

Weaving together personal anecdotes and details of the role that cycling has played throughout Dutch history, Pete Jordan's *In the City of Bikes: The Story of the Amsterdam Cyclist* is a poignant and entertaining read.

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### **Amsterdam: Lost in City Guide**

by Uwe Hasenfuss

Artist studios in churches, a hidden bar in a burger joint, hippie beaches in the center, a restaurant in a greenhouse, thrilling views from the old docks... Get lost in Amsterdam. Getting lost in the city is not about throwing away the map. It's about surrendering yourself to the essence of the place. The sights, smells, flavours and sounds that make it unique. The photography, the art, the creativity that provide its individual inspiration. Getting lost is diving headfirst into what makes each city its own.

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### **Rick Steves Amsterdam & the Netherlands**

by Rick Steves, Gene Openshaw

You can count on Rick Steves to tell you what you *really* need to know when traveling in Amsterdam. With this guide, immerse yourself in the culture of Amsterdam as you stroll along canals and saunter through the red light district. Bike through historic streets to grand museums where you will marvel at the works of the great Dutch Masters. For dinner, sample fine fresh seafood, or stop at a coffee shop for some extra local flavor. Rick's candid, humorous advice will guide you to good-value hotels and restaurants. He'll help you plan where to go and what to see, depending on the length of your trip. You'll get up-to-date recommendations about what is worth your time and money. More than just reviews and directions, a Rick Steves guidebook is a tour guide in your pocket.

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### **The Time Between: Love, loyalty and betrayal in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam**

by Bryna Hellmann-Gillson

This historical novel depicts three young Jewish women, Pam, Jo and Hannah, and their family and

friends during the physically, psychologically and morally difficult years of the German occupation, 1940-1945. They print illegal newspapers and false documents, hide Jewish children, commit sabotage and murder.

Their lives come together through Adrian, a young man risking his life in the resistance. He is Pam's brother, Jo's first infatuation and Hannah's lover. "Isn't this the between time?" he asks. "One day real life stopped, when the Germans came, and some day real life will start again." For some of them, it did.

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