

## Fortified Towns of the Netherlands: Historic Importance, Modern Intrigue

In addition to the windmills, canal houses, and grand palaces of the Netherlands, other icons of built heritage stand as a testament to Dutch history: fortified towns.

Just southeast of Amsterdam, [Naarden](#) stands out as arguably the best-preserved fortified town in the Netherlands and all of Europe. Although the strategic garrison town was first built in the 14th century, its characteristic star-shaped defenses were not built until the 17th century.



Naarden is just one of a smattering of former garrison towns and defense infrastructure that comprise the [Dutch Water Defense Lines](#). These lines, built between 1815 and 1940, stretch 200 kilometers southeast of Amsterdam. The Dutch utilized their intimate knowledge of waterways and water management for defense purposes.

Valuable stories and hidden gems lie within these off-the-beaten-path walled towns. While Naarden and others are important historical landmarks, they're also contemporary hubs of culture, cuisine, and modern attractions. From cozy cafes that line the narrow streets to Medieval reenactments, there's definitely something to discover for all!

### **An engaging mix of past and present with the ease of a private tour**

Just a 25-minute drive away from Amsterdam, Naarden is easily accessible as a day trip. At Dutch Tours, we can round out a fully customizable, private excursion for you, combining a visit to Naarden with nearby fortified towns Weesp and Muiden. For those looking for more activity, these three towns can also be connected with a bike tour.

Let your imagination run wild and tap into historical intrigue on this exciting outing—inquire via email at [travel@dutch-tours.com](mailto:travel@dutch-tours.com).

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