

20 tips

for bike touring in the Netherlands.



Hello! We're Friedel and Andrew.

We hope this little book of tips will inspire you to come cycling in the Netherlands.



We've lived and cycled here since 2009.

In our opinion, it's one of the world's best places to explore on two wheels.

For even more bike touring inspiration, check out our website...

WWW.TRAVELLINGTWO.COM

P.S. While you're there, download another free bike touring book:

www.travellingtwo.com/biketouringbasics



1. Visit The Hoge Veluwe National Park.

This beautiful nature reserve is set between the eastern towns of Appledorn and Arnhem. You can spend hours darting over open moors and through forests. With a bit of luck, you might spot one of the wild boar, deer or badgers living in the park. No visit is complete without stopping to see the *Kröller-Müller* museum. Its collection of paintings by van Gogh, Picasso, Mondriaan and other famous artists is as impressive as anything you'll see in the big museums of Amsterdam. www.hogeveluwe.nl



A close-up photograph of a field of tulips. The tulips are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The colors are primarily shades of pink and light yellow, with some darker pink accents. The background is a soft-focus field of more tulips, creating a sense of depth. The lighting is bright and even, highlighting the delicate texture of the petals.

2.

Tour The Tulip Fields.

If you're here in mid April or early May, cycle inland between The Hague and Amsterdam for an amazing view of the tulip fields. This is one of Holland's biggest flower growing regions and home to the stunning Keukenhof Gardens. Depending on when you come, you might also see miles of daffodils, hyacinths and other colourful flowers. www.travellingtwo.com/5425

3.

Ride Along The North Sea.

A 300km bike route traces the North Sea coastline from the Belgian border up to the northern tip of the Netherlands. It's a rolling ride, over the crests of the endless sand dunes. None of the hills are particularly big but this is a good ride to challenge the notion that Holland is entirely flat, and you can stop at the beach any time you like! This is part of the North Sea Cycle Route. www.northsea-cycle.com



4. **Explore Texel.**

This island in the north of the Netherlands is easy to access (a short train ride and ferry trip will get you there from Amsterdam) and offers everything from national parks to seal sanctuaries and lighthouses. You can see a lot in a weekend before heading back to the mainland or catching a ferry to another nearby island like Terschelling and Vlieland. These islands are very busy in the summer so you may want to make reservations for hotels and ferries.



5. **Cycle The Fietserpad.**

Perhaps no one journey gives a better impression of the Netherlands than the Fietserpad; a 500km route that crosses the country from top to bottom. It parallels the popular Pieterpad walking track, on quiet country roads and bike paths, from Sint-Pietersberg in the southern province of Limburg all the way north to Pieterburen on the Wadden Sea. On the way, you pass through picturesque little towns, alongside Dutch windmills and past plenty of history, including ancient burial sites and WWII monuments. There are many downloadable GPS tracks and maps of this route online.



6

Go Free Camping.

There are about 40 free tenting sites across the Netherlands which are only accessible to non-motorized travelers. They're fairly rustic (no toilets and often no potable water) but they tend to be set in peaceful nature reserves and small forests - and you can't argue with the cost! www.travellingtwo.com/5233



7. Stay At A Nature Campsite.

Natuurkampeerterreinen are small campgrounds that combine quality facilities with a natural, peaceful atmosphere. They save spots especially for cyclists. You will not be turned away if you arrive before 7pm. You must be a member to stay at these campsites. One membership costs €14.95 a year, is good for up to 4 people and includes a guide to all the campground locations. Become a member in advance online or buy a membership when you arrive at the first campsite.
www.natuurkampeerterreinen.nl





8 ■ Safely Park Your Bike.

Wondering where to keep your bike so you can do some sightseeing during the day, before you reach your hotel or campground for the night? The answer is a *bewaakte fietsenstalling* or guarded bike parking lot. It's the perfect place to keep your bike safe while you're at a museum or having lunch. They're usually found at bigger train stations and in city centres. Often they're free. If there is a charge, it's quite small: between 50 cents and €2 a day.

9.

Use The Bike Signs.

Red and white signs generally mark the shortest distance to nearby towns and villages. You'll see them on poles like these, and also as little 'mushrooms' on the ground. Either way, getting around by bike is easy because there's always a sign showing you which way to go.





11.

Go Cycling By Numbers.

Knooppunt routes mark each intersection with a number. Frequent maps placed along the path help you decide which number to follow next. If you see the letters *LF*, then you're following a long-distance bike route. And if you want all of this on your GPS, download the free *OpenFietsMap* for turn-by-turn directions on bike paths across the country. <https://sites.google.com/site/openfietsmap>



12. Prepare For Rain.

It's a relatively wet country. Don't forget your rain gear, even in the summer! Alternatively, you can easily pick up a cheap poncho and a funky saddle cover from any bike shop in the country.

A close-up photograph of a bicycle's front wheel and fork. The wheel has a black tire and silver spokes. The fork is black with a red and white logo. In the background, a yellow and blue train is visible, slightly out of focus. The scene is set in what appears to be a train station.

13.

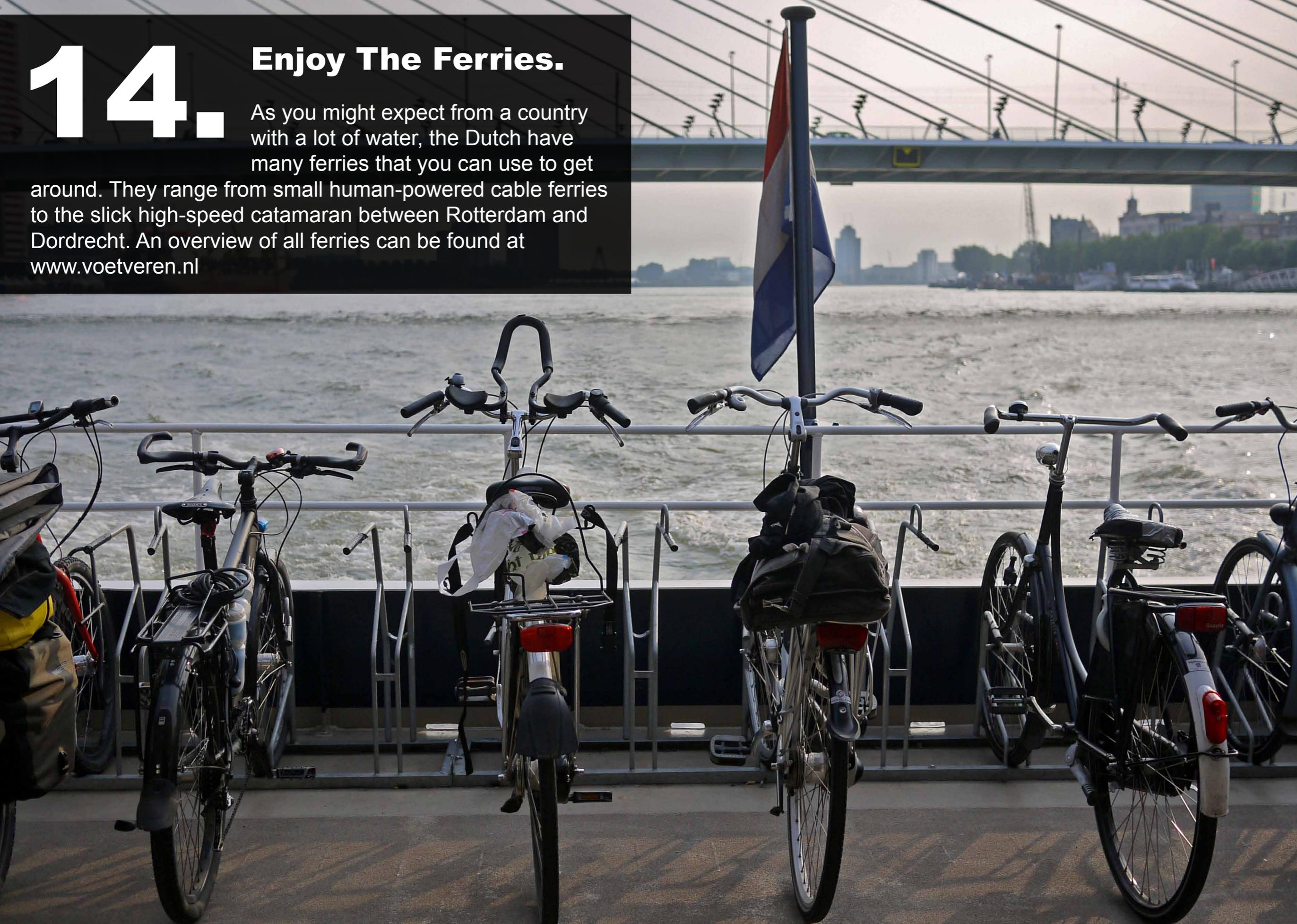
Put Your Bike On The Train.

No one said you had to cycle every mile. It is very easy to take your bike on the train in the Netherlands. All trains have a bike carriage and all but the smallest stations have elevators so you don't have to lug your bike up a flight of stairs. You do have to buy a ticket for your bike (€6 per day) and you must avoid the morning and evening rush hours. Folding bikes travel free at any time.

14.

Enjoy The Ferries.

As you might expect from a country with a lot of water, the Dutch have many ferries that you can use to get around. They range from small human-powered cable ferries to the slick high-speed catamaran between Rotterdam and Dordrecht. An overview of all ferries can be found at www.voetveren.nl





15. Indulge In Apple Cake.

This is our favourite Dutch treat. Layers of apples, piled high in a pastry shell and topped with whipped cream. You can't go wrong! A cup of coffee and a slice of *appelgebak* will set you back €3-4.



16. Eat Herring Like A Dutchman.

For a truly Dutch experience, you must try the herring. These raw fish are preserved with salt. They're then cleaned and served at fish stalls around the country with raw onions and pickles. To look like a local, pick the herring up by the tail and let it slide into your mouth. You can also ask for a *broodje haring*. It's served in a bun for a more filling snack. A shot of *jenever* (gin) is the perfect accompaniment.



17.

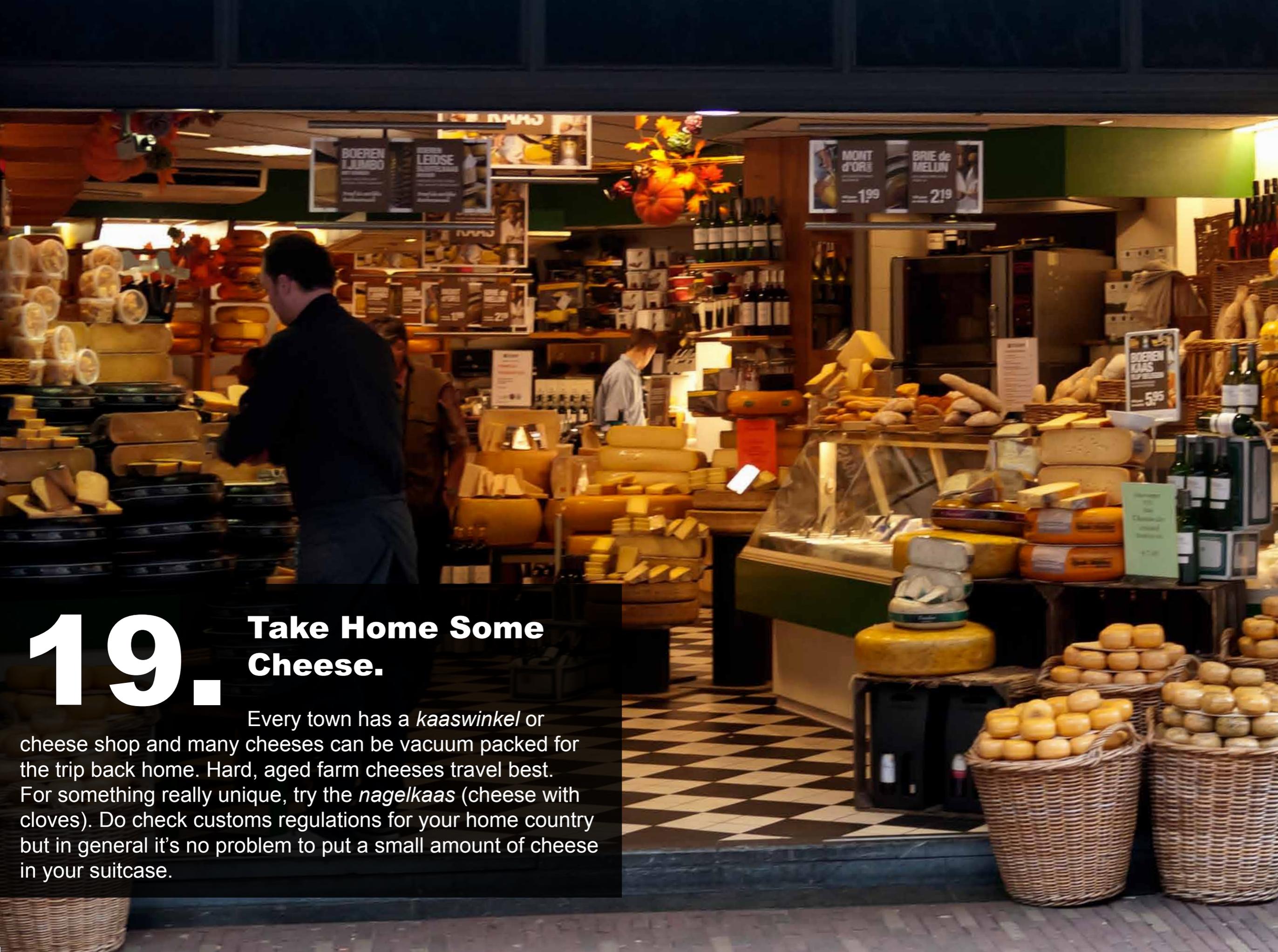
Try A Pancake.

Dutch *pannenkoeken* are halfway between a thin French crepe and a fluffy American pancake. They're the size of a dinner plate and served with various toppings. Perhaps the most traditional topping is *spek* (bacon) with a thick sugar syrup called *stroop* drizzled on top. It's a lovely combination of salty, sweet carbohydrate-filled goodness.



18. **Fill Up With An Uitsmijter.**

For a filling and good-value lunch, you can't go wrong with the *uitsmijter*. It's an open-faced sandwich of 3 fried eggs (sunny side up), served on top of ham, cheese and bread. It often comes with a small salad on the side and rarely costs more than €6-7.



19. Take Home Some Cheese.

Every town has a *kaaswinkel* or cheese shop and many cheeses can be vacuum packed for the trip back home. Hard, aged farm cheeses travel best. For something really unique, try the *nagelkaas* (cheese with cloves). Do check customs regulations for your home country but in general it's no problem to put a small amount of cheese in your suitcase.



20.

**Sit Back And Watch
The Scenery.**

When you're cycling in a country that's so in love with the bicycle, there's always something interesting to see!

Want to know more?

This mini book of tips is a preview of what's coming in our full bike touring guide to the Netherlands.

We plan to release it later in 2012. Want a free preview, when it's ready? Just sign up here:



WWW.TRAVELLINGTWO.COM/DUTCHBOOK

When you sign up, you'll also receive our free Bike Touring Basics eBook. It's packed with handy tips about travelling by bicycle.