



*Tour Information*

*The specialists in designing individualised European travel experiences.*

**Free sightseeing in major European cities**

**Many of the famous sites, landmarks, galleries, neighbourhoods, museums, markets and events can be visited for free.**

**Take a look at the many options you have in Amsterdam, Florence, London, Paris and Rome that don't cost a cent.**





*Planning Your Trip*

*Amsterdam Travel Information*

## Landmarks

Visit the Dam Square near the Royal Palace, the Nieuwe Kerk and the War Memorial and enjoy the vibrant and free entertainment on the square.

The Bloemenmarkt is the world's only floating flower market and stroll from houseboat to houseboat and delight in the abundance of colours. Tulip bulbs, a colourful souvenir, can be purchased very reasonably at this market.

The **Begijnhof** is a hidden courtyard with cottages built in the 14th Century as a sort of convent. You will find a tiny village complete with a small medieval church. Look for house number 34 which is one of only two remaining wooden houses in Amsterdam, dating back to 1475.



## Markets

At the 100-year-old, open air Albert Cuyp Market on Albert Cuypstraat (open Monday to Saturday) you can find everything from fruit and vegetables to chocolate and cheese, flowers and plants, jewellery, shoes, accessories, fabrics.

Spui Square (between Kalverstraat and Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal), a pretty and peaceful place, invites you to relax and browse the stalls. It has a book market on Fridays and an **art market** on Sundays where local artists sell their work at affordable prices.



Another superb art market, specializing in modern and abstract visual art, can be found on Sundays at Thorbeckeplein, between Rembrandtplein and Herengracht.

The largest flea market in Amsterdam can be found at Waterlooplein. You can browse the stalls and find upmarket collectibles as well as kitschy and funky items. Open Monday to Saturday.

A popular antiques market takes place on Sundays at Nieuwmarkt in the Old City Centre.

## Neighbourhoods

Amsterdam's most famous and fun neighbourhood would have to be the The Jordaan. Once a working-class neighbourhood it is now the preferred hang-out for artists, students and professionals.

In the Museum District & Vondelpark you will find Amsterdam's three major museums, the Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh Museum, and the Stedelijk Museum, as well as the Concertgebouw (a superb concert hall), many restaurants, Amsterdam's most elegant shopping streets (Pieter Cornelisz Hooftstraat and Van Baerlestraat), and the city's best-known park, Vondelpark.



The Canal Belt is the semi-circular, multi-strand 'necklace' of man-made waterways, Herengracht, Keizersgracht, and Prinsengracht, that was constructed around the old heart of the city during the 17th Century. Stroll along the many tree lined canals and enjoy the views of elegant gabled mansions, little bridges and thousands of bicycles whizzing by.



## Museums and Galleries

Just inside the Kalverstraat gate to the **Amsterdam Historical Museum** is a glass-roofed walkway that houses impressive 17th Century portraits that are on display to the public at no charge.

## Parks, Gardens & Canals

The Renaissance and baroque gardens of the Rijksmuseum Gardens are open to the public at no cost. Pick up the free printed guide that provides you with background information on the impressive statues, fountains, ponds and five centuries of salvaged Dutch architectural pieces -- including Gothic pillars and the 17th Century city gates.

The Vondel Park has acres and acres of landscaped gardens, ponds, waterways and grassy fields traversed by meandering footpaths.

Catch a free boat ride across the IJ channel for a great view of Amsterdam and the oldest part of this city's port. Then take a walk along the North Holland Canal past the canal's entrance basin where you can watch the ships waiting to enter the locks. The ferry to Buikdersloterweg departs from the ferry landing behind the Centraal Station.



## Free music, street performers and events

During summer, the **Vondelpark** Open Air Theater offers free dance, music and cabaret performances from Wednesday to Sunday. Watch jugglers, fire-eaters and other entertainers in the small amphitheatre on the island near the centre of the park.

Oosterpark is home to the free, open-air portion of the **Amsterdam Roots Festival**, a world music festival held every June.

The **Concertgebouw** (Wednesdays) and the **Muziektheater** (Tuesdays) have free 30-minute rehearsal concerts once a week (most weeks) from 12:30-1 p.m. Listen to international orchestras and soloists, the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra and the Choir of the Netherlands Opera.

The annual Amsterdam Canal Festival, in August, stages more than 70 classical music concerts along two of the city's main canals. Check with the **tourism bureau** for further information.



## Guides

Pick up your free walking guide and map at the information counter at City Hall. The walking route takes you to 24 historical and contemporary places of interest

Walk along the old port district, visit medieval public houses, centuries-old churches or even the largest temple in Europe. Stop by at cosy lunchrooms, cafés and special museums. The walking route also leads you through a shopping area where you can find collectors' items, curiosities, fashion, design and nostalgic hand-made products.

<http://www.amsterdamoldtown.nl/free-mini-guide>





*Planning Your Trip*

*Florence*

*Travel Information*



## Landmarks

Visit the **Piazza della Signoria**, Florence's historic centre. Admire the fountain in the square and the free open-air sculpture exhibition in the Loggia della Signoria that holds among others a **copy of Michelangelo's David**.

Stroll across the **Ponte Vecchio - Old Bridge**, built in 1345 and the only surviving bridge from Florence's medieval days. The bridge holds row upon row of shops, mainly selling gold and silver jewelry.

Walk or take bus 12 or 13 from Piazza Poggi to **Piazzale Michelangelo**, a large terrace atop a hill providing you breath taking views over the rooftops of Florence.

## Museums, Galleries and Churches

The Renaissance Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore (**Il Duomo**), with its **bell tower** (campanile) and **baptistry** (battistero) are the most visited attractions in Florence.

Many of the smaller churches in Florence do not charge any admission fee but contain some magnificent art works. Visit **Orsanmichele**, **San Miniato al Monte** and **San Marco**.

Entry to the Galleria Accademia is free of charge from 7pm to 10pm every Thursday. There is usually no queue and you can spend some 'quality time' with David without the crowds.



## Neighbourhoods

Visit the **Santa Croce** neighbourhood and admire the façade of the medieval Santa Croce Basilica, the largest Franciscan church in the world. Close to the church you will find the Scuola del Cuoio, leather fabrication school, where you can watch the artisans at their work.

Head 'off-the-beaten-path' across the river to the neighbourhoods of Oltrarno/San Frediano and Santo Spirito and you will find typical Florentine buildings, little squares and markets and artisan workshops. Don't miss the 15th Century Santo Spirito Church with its wealth of art work.



## Markets

The **San Lorenzo Market - Florence's Central Market** - should be a 'must-see' during your visit in Florence. The large variety of local Tuscan foods is a gourmet heaven and a feast for the eyes and ears as well. Walk through the Piazza dell Mercato and the stalls outside selling leather goods to get into the San Lorenzo Market. There are inexpensive eateries inside this market as well.



## Free Music, Street performers and Events

Florence has many free events and festivals. From May through October you will find outdoor music performances and street performers. Ask at the tourist information office for details.

The Feast of John the Baptist takes place in mid-June. During 'Calcio Storico', in June, a football match is played in 16th Century costumes. The day ends with noisy firework display and even more noisy partying in the streets.

## Parks and Gardens

The **Giardino del Bobolino** garden is on a slope and displays beautiful flowerbeds and ponds. Stroll up to the very top for a beautiful view over Florence.

## Guides

Download a **self-guided walking tour of Florence**.





*Planning Your Trip*

*London*

*Travel Information*

## Landmarks

Walk along the River Thames on the South Bank and you can see many of London's landmarks. Download free walking tours from **Walk This Way**.

Soak up the atmosphere at Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus, two of Britain's greatest visitor attractions.

Westminster Abbey can be visited by people who want to worship. Visit the Abbey during Evensong services when the Abbey choir sings. Evensong is at 5pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and at 3pm on Saturdays and Sundays.



## Museums and Galleries

While admission to all major museums in London is free there is at times a fee charged for special exhibitions.

Visit the **Museum of London** and learn about the history of London from Roman times to the present.

Don't miss the **Tate Modern** and **Tate Britain**, the **National Portrait Gallery**, **National Gallery**, **British Museum**, **Victoria and Albert Museum** and the **Museum of London's Docklands**.

## Guide

Download your free **audio walking guide** to London, Westminster and the West End.

## Parks and Gardens

There are 8 **Royal Parks** in London and all worth a visit, each one with its own distinct design and special features.

St. James's Park offers the best view of Buckingham Palace.

Not to be missed are Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens with Speakers corner, Peter Pan's Statue and the Diana Memorial Playground.



## Free Music, Street Performers and Events

The **Changing of the Guard** takes place daily in the forecourt inside the gates of Buckingham Palace at 11:30am in summer and every second day in winter.

Watch the proceedings in the most famous criminal court in the world, the **Old Bailey**, from the public galleries from 10am, Monday to Friday.

Be entertained in the afternoon by quality acts in the West Piazza of Covent Garden Market. On weekends stroll along the South Bank outside the National Theatre and you will be able to listen to some of England's quirky and upcoming hot performers.

For free music treats attend the Monday lunchtime recitals at the Royal Opera House, (book online [here for your free ticket](#)). Listen to one of the regular free lunchtime concerts at St. Martin-in-the-Fields or enjoy a free foyer concert at the National Theatre and various performances at the Southbank Centre.

Check out the **Notting Hill Arts Club** and enjoy the music till 8pm free.

St. James Church, Piccadilly, has free lunchtime recitals at 1:10pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays that last 50 minutes.

## Street Markets

Browse lively stalls to find vintage and designer clothes, accessories, art and collectables while sampling regional delicacies at **London markets** in Petticoat Lane, Portobello Road and Greenwich.





*Planning Your Trip*

*Paris*

*Travel Information*

## Landmarks

The 12th Century **Notre Dame Cathedral**, arguably the most famous of all Gothic churches, is a must see. Not to be missed is the **Sacre Coeur Basilica in Montmartre**. From the steps of the Basilica you have sensational views of the city.

See some of the best 13th Century stained glass windows in **Sainte-Chapelle** on the Ile de la Cité not far from Notre Dame.

If you are a Dan Brown fan then you won't want to miss **Sainte Sulpice church**, an important location in the *Da Vinci Code* novel.



## Museums and Galleries

The **Louvre** and the **Musée d'Orsay** have free admission on the first Sunday of every month.

If you want to learn about Paris's fascinating history then visit the **Musee Carnavalet – Museum of Paris History**.



See the exciting contemporary art in the **Musee d'Art Modern de la ville de Paris** and afterwards take in the spectacular view of the Eiffel Tower from the outdoor terrace of the **Palais de Tokyo**, where this museum is located.

Visit the **house of Victor Hugo**, the author of 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' and '*Les Misérables*'.

## Street markets

Paris has the famous 'Marche Bastille', the best of Paris's many open air markets. Every Tuesday and Sunday 7am – 2pm. (Metro station Bastille) The Paris Flea Market 'Marche aux Puces de Montreuil' (Metro station Porte de Montreuil) has 500 stalls and is selling quality second-hand designer clothes and accessories.

## Neighbourhoods

Explore some of the atmospheric neighbourhoods of Paris on foot.

The **Louvre & Tuileries Neighbourhood** was the centre and former seat of royal power in Paris and is now a hub for fashion, museum-going and souvenir shopping.

The **Champs-Élysées Neighbourhood** with its tree-lined streets towards the Arc de Triomphe remains the heart of romantic Paris.

The **Saint-Michel Neighbourhood**, a historically charged section of the Latin Quarter, is one of the city's most popular areas with tourists today.



The **Saint-Germain-des-Prés Neighbourhood** used to be the trendy 'hang-out' for artists and writers and is today a centre for fashion, gallery-going and shopping for fine art objects.

The **Latin Quarter** oozes ambience and has a lot of intellectual history.

The **Ile de la Cité** is one of two islands on the Seine River and the historic centre of Paris. It houses important monuments including the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Palais de Justice.

The **Marais arrondissement** has historic roots stretching to the medieval period. Include a visit to the Place des Vosges, one of Paris's most beautiful squares, and the Rue de Rosiers and historic Jewish quarter.

## Parks and Gardens

The Jardin du Luxembourg is an elegant and formal **Paris garden**, perfect for a romantic stroll.

The Jardin des Tuileries, just west of the Louvre, is an equally enchanting garden, steeped in history and stretches from the Louvre to the Arc de Triomphe. Enjoy the sensational views of the river Seine from the terrace at the south end of the garden.

The Bois de Boulogne was used by the French nobility as a hunting ground and has inspired great masters like Van Gogh and Monet.



## Events

During 'European Heritage Days', usually mid-September, hundreds of historical buildings are open to the public, including the Presidential Palace.

Bastille Day celebration, 14th of July, features fireworks displays, colourful parades and street parties.

## Free music and street performers

The Paris Music Festival on 21st of June has hundreds of musicians performing in the streets, bars and cafes and playing everything from jazz, blues and rock.



## Free audio guided walking tours

Download a free audio walking tour of the colourful **Le Marais** area. The four tours include Marais and Place des Vosges; Le Marais' restaurants and boulangeries; Le Marais Past and Present; and The Heart of the Marais, discovering the Jewish quarter and its history in Paris.

**Cityzeum** provides a free downloadable audio tour for the main attractions of Paris, including the Eiffel Tower, Louvre Museum and Sacre Coeur.

**Da Vinci Code** fans can download the **Walking 'The Da Vinci Code' in Paris** free audio tour. Discover the 'palace of symbols' known as the Paris Opera, the beautiful royal square, Place Vendome, the magnificent Tuileries Gardens and much more. A printable map is also available on that website.





*Planning Your Trip*

*Rome*

*Travel Information*

## Landmarks

St. Peter's Basilica charges no entry fee but you will have to queue around a block or two for several hours to get in if you have not opted for a pre-paid guided tour.

Throw some coins into the **Trevi Fountain** to ensure that you will one day return to Rome and admire the Baroque waterworks of this magnificent fountain.

Climb the **Spanish Steps** for great views of Rome.

Visit the **Pantheon** and the **Piazza Navona**, which really comes to life in the evening.



## Parks and Gardens

The gardens of the **Villa Borghese** are accessible free of charge.

## Museums and Galleries

A visit to the Vatican Museum is free on the last Sunday of the month. If you are in Rome on a Wednesday you can attend an audience with the Pope but you have to book ahead **for a reservation**.

See the works of Raffaello, Canova, Van Dyck and many others great masters at the **Galleria Nazionale Di San Luca** free of charge.

No admission is charged on the last Sunday of the month at the **Capitoline Museum** (Musei Capitolini).

## Neighbourhoods

The most atmospheric and 'Italian' neighbourhood in Rome is undoubtedly Trastevere. The narrow and winding streets more often than not will lead back to the Piazza Santa Maria, home to one of the oldest churches in Rome and heart of Trastevere.

To sample some traditional Roman cooking head to the old district of Testaccio.

## Events, free Music and street performers

During **White Night**, or La Notte Bianca, one night in September, all museums in Rome stay open all night long and charge no admission fees. In addition, the streets turn into an all-night party.



Not to be missed are the performances on Sunday afternoons at the Piazza di Campo de Fiori market. The evenings get really lively and the atmosphere is vibrant.

Various churches have **free concerts, choir performances and other cultural events**.

If you happen to be in Rome on the 1st of May then head for the Piazza **San Giovanni** where a world class music festival takes place that is televised throughout Italy.

## Markets

At the medieval **Campo de Fiori market** you can purchase just about anything. Here you can absorb the true Roman culture and witness the daily life of the Romans.

The Piazza Vittorio is very large, full of bargains and has an exciting atmosphere.

You might also like to check out the Ponte Milvio Market along the River Tiber.

The biggest and most famous market in Rome is at Porta Portese and takes place on Sunday until 2pm.

The outdoor market at Piazza Fontanella Borghese is quite small, but it is crammed full of interesting goods, such as prints, old books, Roman souvenirs and many other curious objects.

## Free Guides

Download your free **walking guides, maps and destination information on Rome**.

**Disclaimer:** The information is provided in good faith and without any obligation.

