

Where are windmills found

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The Dutch landscape is pretty much unimaginable without windmills and that's why when visiting the Netherlands, windmills should be on your bucket list. Read further to find out which are the best places to see windmills in the Netherlands.

The first windmills in the Netherlands appeared somewhere in the 12th century along the coast. They were used for grinding grain. Later on, in the 15th century there appeared the first polder mills that were used to drain the water from marshlands or lakes so that land could be reclaimed. Much later on, there appeared saw mills, oil-production mills, paper mills, and dye mills among others.

Today, there only about 1000 windmills left in the Netherlands, but in the heyday of the windmills in the 19th century, there were about 9 000 windmills in the country.

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When you travel in the Netherlands, you will spot for sure a windmill or two, but there are two places that are famous for their windmills: Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the windmill village of Zaanse Schans. At least one of these places should be on your bucketlist.

Here is map with the best places in the Netherlands where you can see windmills:

I won't exaggerate if I say that Kinderdijk is perhaps the most popular and most visited attraction in the Netherlands after Amsterdam, of course. Contrary to what most would think, Kinderdijk is not that close to Amsterdam. It's closer to another lovely Dutch city – Rotterdam. Still, with an hour and 15 minutes from Amsterdam, the windmills at Kinderdijk make it a great day trip from the Dutch capital.

Kinderdijk is the place to go to admire the outstanding water-management skills of the Dutch. This is also why Kinderdijk is included on the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list. The system of 19 windmills built in the beginning of the 18th century has been used to pump out water from what once was a bog.

Zaanse Schans is a small open-air museum village, where one can see how life was in the 18th and 19th centuries in the Low Lands. The village was created in the 1960s-70s, when lots of historical buildings and windmills have been transported there from other parts of the Zaan area.

At only 20 km from Amsterdam, Zaanse Schans is the easiest day trip from Amsterdam to see windmills. Each museum/windmill has its own paid entry, but you can buy a Zaanse Schans Card for 23,50 EUR, which will give you access to most of the attractions.

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The 11 remaining polder windmills in the Schermer (De Schermer) area are part of one of the greatest projects of the Dutch to reclaim land from the water. For 3 years the Scher Lake (Schermeer) was pumped out with the help of 52 polder mills and in 1635 the lake disappeared completely.

Today, you can visit The Museum Mill in Schermerhorn, which is a part of a complex of 3 polder windmills. The polder mills could pump out up to 60 000 l of water per minute, which is absolutely amazing. You can visit the miller's home in the mill and climb all the way up to the ridge to see from very close how the mill is actually working.

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