



HOLLAND STORY ROUTE

Walking around De Haar Castle



WALKING
TOUR OF
2H45M (11 KM)

Dutch
**Castles &
Country Houses**



The Netherlands, land of castles and stately homes

The Netherlands has around 600 castles, stately homes and country estates, many of which remain well-kept secrets. These typical Dutch historic houses and beautiful gardens were mainly inhabited since the 17th century by merchants and the nobility. They originated from the same wealth and luxury that gave rise to the world-famous paintings in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Mauritshuis in The Hague. It's about time for these opulent castles and stately homes to receive their share of the limelight. Collectively, they tell the story of impressive gardens, historic interiors with valuable collections and their famous residents. They are an ode to the rich country life of the Netherlands through the centuries. For more information about Dutch castles and stately homes, go to:

www.holland.com/castles



Brigitte Bardot, Roger Moore, Coco Chanel and many others visited De Haar Castle.

Around De Haar Castle in a semi-rural area

This unmarked circular walk starts and ends at Vleuten station and takes you along the green outskirts of the city of Utrecht. De Haar Castle is the absolute highlight of this journey and a visit to it and the gardens is a definite must. The route mainly consists of footpaths that are unpaved as much as possible, which makes the route unexpectedly attractive. Enjoy a relaxed journey through the greenery along the outskirts of the rapidly growing Leidsche Rijn neighbourhood and a semi-rural walk through the foothills of the Maxima Park along the Thematervelden, a new nature reserve on the edge of the Haarrijnse Plas. This lake and wetland area is home to reed beds, water birds and an old cherry orchard. The Landgoed Haarzuilens estate has a lot of exclusive footpaths meandering between hedges and old fields, on which traditional crops such as rye, oats, flax and alfalfa are grown and with flowers planted along the borders. There is also a pretty good chance that you'll see hares hopping around the fields. The back-and-forth journey to De Haar Castle gives this walk an extra special dimension. On the way back to Vleuten you can see the Hamtoren, the remnants of Den Ham castle. Although it is not accessible to visitors, it's a real landmark in the distance.

Largest castle in the Netherlands

De Haar Castle is the largest castle in the Netherlands and is located just outside Utrecht in the picturesque village of Haarzuilens. It has everything you would expect from a castle: towers and battlements, moats, gates and drawbridges. With its lovely gardens and many art treasures, De Haar Castle is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful castles in Europe. Commissioned by Baron Etienne van Zuylen van Nijvelt, the famous Dutch architect Pierre Cuypers built a new castle between 1892 and 1912 on the existing remains of the old run-down medieval castle. During the 1960s, it was where the Van Zuylen van Nijvelt family hosted the international jet-set, from Brigitte Bardot and Coco Chanel to Maria Callas and Roger Moore. A visit to De Haar Castle feels like a trip back to the glory days of the 20th century.



Practical information

De Haar Castle and the gardens can be visited separately and it is recommended to book a ticket for your visit at www.kasteelhaar.nl/en. Additional activities such as scavenger hunts, guided tours and exhibitions take place throughout the year, so there is always something going on to suit visitors of all ages. The Museum Card is valid for visiting the castle. Check the website for opening hours and the current activity and events schedule. *De Haar Castle, Kasteellaan 1, Haarzuilens (Utrecht)*

Dogs not allowed

Part of the route covers an area that does not permit dogs, so please be aware that dogs are therefore not allowed. However, man's best friend is welcome in the park of De Haar Castle.

Duration of walk

At an average walking pace, the route takes about 2 hours and 45 minutes (11 km). Please note that the walking route is not signposted but is easy to follow using the accompanying text description and map. Unfortunately this walking tour is not suitable for visitors with disabilities.



Start and end point

The route starts and ends at Vleuten station. You can plan your trip at www.ns.nl. If you're travelling by car, you can park free of charge at the P+R site on Hanekampstraat in Vleuten, which is within walking distance of the station. You can also start and end the route at De Haar Castle's car park, which is also a tourist transfer point (TOP). There is a €6 parking charge, and you will need a parking token to leave. This token can be purchased at the ticket counter of De Haar Castle. If you begin at De Haar Castle, please go to point 4 in the route description to link up with the route.

Enjoy a lunch fit for royalty

Stop at Koetshuis de Haar (www.koetshuisdehaar.nl) to enjoy a delicious lunch, high-tea and/or a drink. The Koetshuis is accessible without a ticket and is located in the courtyard to the left of the castle's entrance.





Experience merchants opulence and grandeur of Logement aan de Vecht

A princely overnight stay

Combine the walk with an atmospheric overnight stay and make it an unforgettable weekend. There are two special places offering accommodation within a 10-minute drive:

- Logement aan de Vecht (logement.aandevecht.com) in Breukelen: unique accommodation with seven luxurious rooms located in one of the gorgeous stately homes to which the river Vecht owes its fame. This is one of the jewels in the crown of stately homes that originated here centuries ago.
- Logement Swaenenvecht (swaenenvecht.nl) in Oud-Zuilen: a luxury stately home that offers accommodation and breakfast. The inn is located in a national monument dating from 1678 and sits along the river Vecht. It has nine lovely rooms, each with its own special historic touches.

Utrecht castles and stately homes region

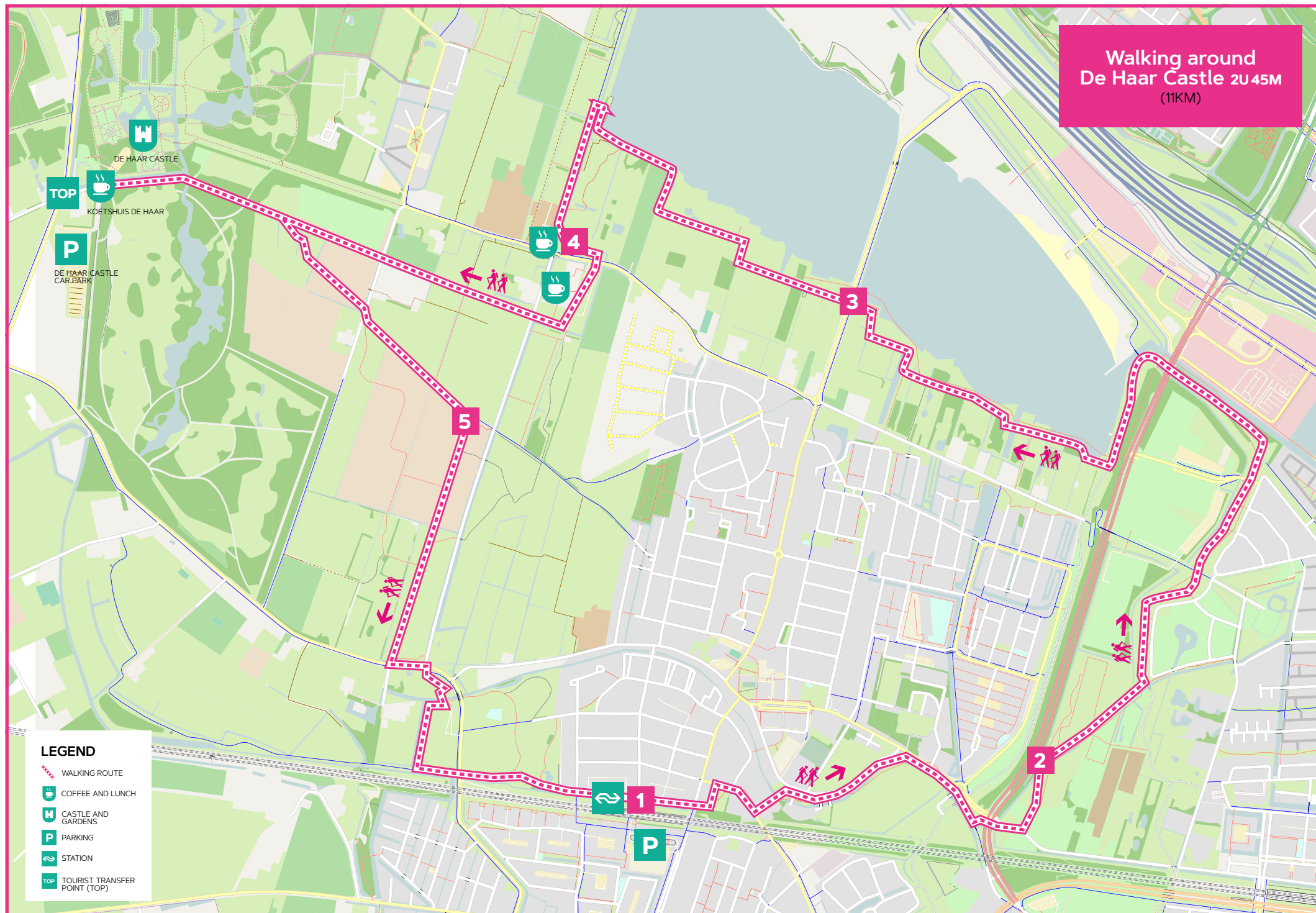
The Utrecht region has several beautiful castles and stately homes that are well-known throughout the Netherlands. The lavish showpieces of power and opulence are set in the most beautiful locations in the landscape. Enjoy the authentic Dutch countryside with the loveliest castle museums and gardens at these historic locations. You can spend the night at one of the attractive country estate hotels, B&Bs and stately homes. The locations are all within a short travel distance of one another and perfect for visiting by bicycle. You can enjoy the tranquil natural surroundings and the opportunity to immerse yourself further in the Dutch history of the castles and stately homes.

visitutrechtregion.com



The beautiful lodging Swaenenvecht houses unique historic rooms

Walking around
De Haar Castle 2U45M
(11KM)



Walking route description

1 If arriving by train from Utrecht, go down the stairs and turn right. If travelling from Woerden, go down the stairs and turn left under the tracks. Turn right at the intersection of walking junction 39, parallel to the tracks (Prof. Titus Brandsmalaan).

At the next intersection head straight along a small brick road and follow the bend to the left behind the garages. Turn right at the end. Head straight when you reach the three-way and then follow the bend to the right, the Stationsstraat. Take the first road to the left, the Bottensteinweg. After the bridge and right before the bus stop, turn right onto the asphalt path with the water to your right. Go straight at the intersection then take the bend to the left and turn right at the road over the footpath. After house number 43, continue along the shell path along the water to the right. Further ahead at the roundabout, go straight along the cycle path and ignore the bridge on the right. At the bicycle sign, turn left towards Utrecht Centrum (Centre) and cross the Haarrijnse Rading dual carriageway. Continue straight on, cross the bridge and turn left at the first brick road. You will pass De Buitenplaats on your left and continue straight ahead past a wooden barrier and sign for Maxima Park, along a semi-paved road.

2 Cross the Dam and continue straight, ignoring all side paths. You will pass another wooden barrier and turn left onto a wide grassy path with the water to your left just before an asphalt path with wooden bike racks. At the intersection with the asphalt path, head straight along the unpaved path next to a wide asphalt path. Cross the Componistenlaan and continue straight along the unpaved path. Take the bend



left, keeping the water to your left. Further along parallel to the asphalt. Go under the viaduct and follow an unpaved path to the left. You pass several benches on the right with a view of Haarrijnse Plas and then a wooden jetty on the right. Then turn right onto a wide grass track along the lake at junction 42 at the end of the hedge on the right. You will pass a wooden barrier and follow the footpath along the lake (dogs prohibited). Continue following the path and go straight at the Y-junction onto a bit of paved road past a small, wooded grove on the left, which turns back into a grass path. Walk between two ditches and continue straight at the intersection. At the end, turn right onto a wide grassy path. Turn left at the crossing before the lake. Follow the bend to the right before the ditch and then left at the edge of the lake. Turn right over cycle path after the cattle grid on the road and junction 44.

3 Take a quick left and cross the road. You will pass a wooden barrier, cross the cattle grid and continue on the grassy path keeping slightly to the left. At the bridge on the left, go straight ahead keeping the ditch on the left. Follow the bends to the right and then left. You will pass a bird hide on the right. Take the bend to the right further along at the information sign about the cherry orchard. Take the bend to the left before the lake, onto the wide path. Pass a mesh fence and go straight ahead on a grassy path along the water. Immediately



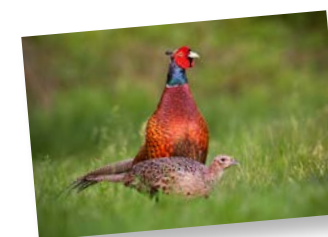
turn right and turn left over the wooden bridge and again turn left on the asphalt road. You arrive at Hoeve Wielrevelt with catering facilities.

4 Turn left diagonally here, onto concrete footpath. At the end, follow the bend to the right and cross the road at junction 86 then go straight ahead. Turn right at the car park and then left onto a wide asphalt path before Geertjeshoeve. Now turn right at the first concrete footpath and immediately follow the bends. Ignore the path to Geertjeshoeve on the right. Go straight at the intersection with asphalt path onto a semi-paved path between hedges and fields. Go straight ahead at the swing gate on the left and follow the path between the hedges. At the end of the hedges go through the swing gate and continue on an unpaved path. You pass the orchard on the right. Go through two swing gates and straight ahead between the posts on an asphalt road at the intersection of junction 82. Further on, you walk under a 'wooden' bridge and follow the road between beech hedges. Again between posts and straight ahead and you will pass De Haar Castle on the right.

5 Turn around at the castle's entrance gate and return the same way. Pass under the bridge and then take the first semi-paved path diagonally to the right, through the swing gate and past the 'Landgoed Haarzuilens' sign. Go right on the asphalt road at junction 83. Turn left at 't Eikshuisje



house, take the semi-paved path and keep to the left at the junction with the 'Landgoed Haarzuilens' sign, onto a wide semi-paved path along a hedge. Pass a bench on the right. Turn right at a bench on the left, onto the path between the fields towards Hamtoren. Ignore the side paths and keep going straight ahead. Just before the road, take the bend to the left and at the end turn right onto the asphalt road. Go straight across the priority road and cycle path and turn left across the car park. At the end of the car park go between the posts, onto the paved footpath. Turn right at the three-way and cross the bridge. Turn right onto the semi-paved path after the bridge. Follow the bend to the left. Cross a bridge and take an immediate left onto the semi-paved path with the water on the left. This comes out onto a cycle path, go straight over the bridge. Cross the Parkweg and head straight onto the asphalt footpath, keeping the hills to the left. At the three-way, turn right parallel to the railway tracks. Keep to the right at the next three-way onto the semi-paved path. Cross the bridge and continue parallel to the railway tracks where you will end up at a bend in the road. Go straight ahead to Prof. Titus Brandsmalaan. At the crossing, turn right to the station.





The most beautiful castles and stately homes in the Netherlands

De Haar Castle is part of the story of castles and stately homes, a selection of the most beautiful castles, country estates and stately homes in the Netherlands. Try one of the other castle walks or cycle tours available in English or German: holland.com/castles



Colophon

An initiative of NBTC Holland Marketing;



NBTC
Holland Marketing

www.holland.com/castles

Ontwikkeld door Trage Tochten:

t-r-a-g-e- - - -
t-o-c-h-t-e-n

Financing and/or content made possible by:



Images: Jan Bijl, Koetshuis de Haar, De Haar Castle, Logement aan de Vecht, Logement Swaenenvecht

Design: De Boer & van Dorst, Typetank.

Trage Tochten previously published this route as Stadse Tocht. The route has been compiled with the utmost care. The organisation does not accept any liability should the information contain errors or require adjustments.