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MUSEUMPLEIN

Stretching out in front of you is the atmospheric Museumplein – that's Dutch for Museum Square. Originally there were plans to build exclusive homes here, but on 2 December 1891 the Rijksmuseum architect Pierre Cuypers argued against these plans at a council meeting. And in 1902, the local authorities at last decided that the square should be left mostly intact. Back then, the square would be packed with ice skaters in winter and in summer time it was the place to be for celebrations, protests and demonstrations. And it still has the same functions to this day. Did you know that this square was only officially named Museumplein in 1903?

5

VAN GOGH MUSEUM

The Van Gogh Museum is actually two buildings: the main building, and the new wing that was opened in 1999. The national government building agency commissioned the famous Dutch architect Gerrit Rietveld to design the museum in 1963 and '64. The new wing was designed by the Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa. Did you know that as well as being an artist, Vincent Van Gogh was a passionate letter writer?

6

THE CONCERTGEBOUW

The Concertgebouw has got the best acoustics in the world. But what a lot of people don't know is that the garden behind the building has a history of its own. It was laid out in 1888, six months after the grand opening of the Concertgebouw itself. Back then, a music temple, partially covered seating, an outdoor buffet, 'rest areas' and two cabins for doormen made this the ideal venue for garden concerts. Nowadays, part of the garden is being used as a kitchen garden. The homegrown herbs and vegetables cultivated here are used by the chefs at the café in the Concertgebouw. Sounds delicious, don't you think?

7

STEDELIJK MUSEUM

Visitors used to enter the Stedelijk Museum through the entrance of the original building on Paulus Potterstraat. In 2012, the entrance was moved to the new wing that opens onto Museumplein. The architect of this new building, Mels Crouwel, completely integrated the internal design of the two buildings, but from here we still have a splendid view showing the mix of old and new. The nickname for the new building is the Bath tub. Can you see why?

8

CONSERVATORIUM HOTEL

This architectural icon of the city was designed by the Dutch architect Daniel Knuttel. Originally built for the National Post Office Savings Bank, it became vacant in 1978. After it had

stood empty for five years, Amsterdam's music academy the Sweelinck Conservatorium moved in, converting some spaces into acoustic classrooms. In 2008, The Set Hotels bought this wonderful building and restored it to its former glory with the help of award-winning designer Piero Lissoni from Milan. Psst did you know that Madonna and Justin Bieber had stayed here?

9

THE VONDEL BRIDGE

Not many people would realise this, but you're now standing on top of a former air raid shelter. In 1968 it was converted into a small music venue, and renamed Route 3 Beat Basement after the tramway running over its roof. None other than Pink Floyd performed here live on stage. It closed down after barely a year, though. Since then, the old bunker has been used for lots of different things, including rehearsal spaces for bands. In 2011 it became the Vondel Bunker, 'A free space for exhibitions, film and debate nights, and other creative and activist projects.'

10

PC HOOFSTRAAT

PC Hooftstraat is one of the top ten most exclusive shopping streets in the world. It used to be a regular residential street, with just a few local shops. When that other major shopping street Kalverstraat became rather run down in the 1970s, lots of luxury shops moved to this street. Slowly but surely, PC Hooftstraat transformed from a regular local street into a centre for luxury international fashion brands. The street is named after the Dutch historian, poet and playwright Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft. It's worth exploring even if only for the beautiful buildings.

11

DIAMANT MUSEUM AMSTERDAM

This literally dazzling museum was founded in 2007 by Ben Meier, who was himself once a renowned diamond cutter – he polished the diamonds for a watch owned by Her Majesty Queen Juliana. He had a profound passion for his craft and believed that education was the best way of keeping it alive. And that conviction lies at the heart of this museum, where one of the things you can discover is what it's like to be 'inside' a diamond. Pretty brilliant, don't you think?

12

THE ICE RINK

Did you know that people first started skating here way back in 1891? It even had its own ice skating club. In wintertime the entire square would be transformed into an enormous ice rink. And in 1893, Dutchman Jaap Eden won the first official ice skating world championship here. So it's no surprise we're keeping this tradition alive. So, do you fancy getting out on the ice, or would you prefer some hot chocolate milk?

Museum
Quarter
Winter
Wonder
Walk

Scan the QR code for the wonderful free audiotour by Willem de Ridder – the famous Dutch storyteller (English spoken).



MUSEUM
QUARTER

WINTER WONDER WALK

Welcome to Amsterdam's Museum Quarter. On the Winter Wonder Walk you'll see all the wonderful things this area has to offer. The whole family will enjoy this route. It lasts from about 45 minutes, but feel free to take your time! There are plenty of shops and café's, and lots of secret stories and facts to discover.

Just enjoy everything you encounter along the way.

Oh, and don't forget to scan the QR code, for the wonderful audio tour by Willem de Ridder - the famous Dutch storyteller - it really brings the whole area to life.

We wish you a lot of fun on your walk!

1

HOPE

This optimistic artwork was made by Pieter Ceizer, a famous Dutch artist who's had a special connection with Museumplein since his early youth. His love for graffiti and skateboarding started here, when there was a skating half-pipe on the square. It was a magnet for skating legends such as Clyde Semmoh - he'd be here every day practicing his skills. HOPE stands for new beginnings. Maybe it's a nice idea to take a moment to think about that. What are you hoping for? We'd love it if you share this moment via @museumquarteramsterdam #winterwonderwalk.

2

THE RIJKSMUSEUM

The museum building was designed by the famous Dutch architect Pierre Cuypers. He mainly built churches, chapels and monasteries, so no wonder people have called the Rijksmuseum "Cuypers' Cathedral". Cuypers followed the example of the master builders who designed medieval cathedrals and included an image of himself in the decorations on the outside of the building. It's a sculpture of Cuypers and it's still there to this day. Can you find it? If you'd like some help... look up to the right, above the cycle tunnel.

3

THE PASSAGE

This grand cycle tunnel running right through the Rijksmuseum was built as a gateway between the old city and newly developed areas. What not many people know is that there's a mysterious 'slot' in the roof above the entrance to the south end of the tunnel. This is the secret emergency exit for The Night Watch. In 1939, with war looming, this world-famous painting by Rembrandt was taken to safety through this escape route. The slot was last used in 2013, when The Night Watch was hoisted into its new permanent position. Take a look up there. Can you see it?

MUSEUM QUARTER

