



The Netherlands Travel Guide

Description





“Much of the Netherlands lies considerably below sea level, as you well know. Through the process of building dikes to wall out the salty sea and through pumping the water into canals, the country of the ingenious, resourceful, and doughty Dutch has literally been born of the sea.”

Joesph B. Wirthlin

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Top Six Destinations In The Netherlands

1. **Amsterdam**, The capital city of The Netherlands, offers beautiful canals, historical buildings, world-class museums, rich history, and famous attractions like the Anne Frank House, Vondelpark, Bloemenmarkt, and the floating flower market.
2. **Delft** Is this unspoiled and progressive town with traditional canals, a Renaissance-style city hall in Market square, fascinating architecture, and a fun vibe. Ideal day trip to experience authentic Netherlands culture.
3. **Utrecht** Has a rich Middle Age history in the city's architecture and the inner canal wharf system. A highlight is the striking Gothic Cathedral of Saint Martin, built over 200 years beginning in the 13th century. There is a warmth and genuine welcome in Utrecht.
4. **The Hague** Is an extraordinary city by the north sea and is home to Dutch Royalty. There are historic districts and monuments, incredible art galleries and museums, the best shopping districts in the Netherlands, a spectacular panoramic view of the Scheveningen Sea, and a miniature city amid a thriving, dynamic city.
5. **Kinderdijk Windmills** is an iconic part of the Dutch landscape and a Unesco World Heritage site. Discover these beautiful windmills and see how the Dutch have controlled the waters for over 1000 years. Some windmills are active homes with children playing in the front yard.
6. **In the tulip fields of Holland**, From March to May, the countryside becomes a magnificent sea of daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, and other gorgeous flowers. Photos can never capture the pure explosion of color and scent, a must-see in person. Amsterdam's bulb zone stretches thirty miles from Haarlem, just outside the capital, to Leiden. A memory that will stay with you forever.

Did you know?

Netherlands stats

- Population: 17.2 million
- Capital City: Amsterdam
- Currency: Euro (EUR)
- Government type: Parliamentary Constitutional Monarchy; part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Ethnic groups: Dutch 76.9%, EU 6.4%, Turkish 2.4%, Moroccan 2.3%, Indonesian 2.1%, German 2.1%, Surinamese 2%, other 5.8%
- Languages: Dutch (official)
- Religions: Roman Catholic 23.6%, Protestant 14.9% (includes Dutch Reformed 6.4%, Protestant Church of The Netherlands 5.6%, Calvinist 2.9%), Muslim 5.1%, other 5.6% (includes Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish), none 50.7%
- US State Department Risk Level: 3 Due to Covid and threat of terrorism.
- Terrorist groups: Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS) (2019)

- Despite the capital being Amsterdam, the government seat is in The Hague.
- The Netherlands was one of the six founding members of the European Union.
- GDP \$886 billion.
- Orange is the national color of the Netherlands.
- The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe.
- Almost one-third of the country is below sea level, and 60 percent of the population lives 16 feet below sea level. It is said the Dutch are born of the sea.
- The highest point in the Netherlands is Vaalserberg, a hill with a height of 1,058 feet above sea level, and the lowest is Zuidplaspolder, 22 feet below sea level.
- Industries in the Netherlands include agricultural services, textiles, oil and natural gas, metal and engineering products, chemical, fishing, and electronic machinery.
- Inventions from the Netherlands: Stock market, Gin, CDs, DVDs, Blu-Ray, microscope, telescope, submarine, fire hose, chocolate bar, electrocardiogram, speed camera, and artificial kidney.
- The Netherlands is the world's biggest exporter of cheese at 8 billion dollars per year.
- There are 20 national parks in the Netherlands and hundreds of woods and lakes.
- Rotterdam has the largest seaport in Europe.
- The Netherlands was a founding member of the Euro, switching their "gulden" (guilder) to the Euro in January 1999.
- There are approximately 1000 museums in the Netherlands, 42 of them in Amsterdam.
- Life expectancy is 81 years old.
- Literacy rate 99%.

Funs facts

- The Netherlands national anthem is the oldest in the world.
- Using "Holland" to refer to the Netherlands is not acceptable. Holland comprises the Dutch provinces of North and South Holland.
- The Dutch have been making cheese since 400 A.D.
- The Netherlands is one of the happiest countries in the world.
- Dutchmen are the tallest in the world.
- The Dutch are the most physically active of the EU nations.
- The Netherlands has a strong and active Green energy agenda.
- Dutch electric trains are powered by wind energy.
- Tulips are not native to the Netherlands but come from Turkey.
- The Netherlands has one of the highest English proficiencies.
- Amsterdam has over 1,200 bridges.
- There are over 1000 windmills in The Netherlands.
- Amsterdam is now Europe's 5th-busiest tourist destination.
- The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage.
- The Dutch are known to have one of the healthiest diets in the world.
- There are more bicycles in the Netherlands than people.
- Around 80% of the world's flower bulbs come from the Netherlands.
- The Netherlands is the world's second-biggest beer exporter.

- The Netherlands is home to some of the world's biggest art museums, such as Rijksmuseum, Stedelijk Museum, and Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.
- The Dutch turned carrots orange
- Though it seems it would be Iceland, in reality, the Dutch eat more licorice than any other nation.
- In Groningen, you can find the biggest bar in Europe. The "Drie Gezusters" ("Three Sisters") fits 3,700 people.
- The famous tulip garden Keukenhof is the largest flower garden in the world.
- The current Dutch King is a pilot for KLM.
- Netherlands Healthcare is considered to be one of the best in the world.
- KLM, the Dutch national airline, is the oldest national airline in the world, founded in 1919.
- The Royal Palace at Dam Square is built on at least 13,659 wooden poles.
- In the Dutch language, the letter E is most often used.
- The current King, Willem- Alexander, is the first King in 123 years and was crowned in April 2013.
- Some of the world's greatest artists come from The Netherlands, such as Rembrandt and Van Gogh.

The Netherlands Map

Good to know before you go

- Tipping in The Netherlands is expected in restaurants for good service, around 5-10% of the bill. You could round up the bill or leave the change if the service was average. Give your tip to the server directly. Sometimes a service charge is already included, so check the bill. Hotels do not expect tips, as a service charge is often added to your bill. Tipping a taxi or car service in the Netherlands is not common, but you can round up the bill or leave 1 or 2 Euros for excellent service.
- The Netherlands accepts credit cards everywhere.
- Appearances are important to the Dutch, and they highly value cleanliness. Overall, clothing is stylish and well kept. The Dutch prefer casual, unpretentious, conservative, and subdued fashions. A traditional suit and tie are required only in particular business and government circles.
- The roadways in The Netherlands are some of the densest in the world. They have excellently maintained roads and are easy to navigate. If you are stopped and get a violation, you will have to pay the fine as a foreigner immediately. The Dutch are polite drivers and not aggressive.
- Do not call the Netherlands "Holland." Holland is a region within the Netherlands, and the Dutch may find that a bit disappointing if you don't know that.
- Greetings are usually a handshake at business and social meetings with everyone present, men, women, and children. It is important to make eye contact during these greetings. Shake hands again when leaving. Introduce yourself if no one introduces you. The Dutch feel it is rude not to identify themselves.
- The Dutch speak directly, make eye contact, and may appear abrupt or even too serious. No need to take offense; it is just their manner of communicating.
- As Dutch shake hands, they will say their last name, not Hi or Greetings. They answer the telephone by stating their last name.

- Smoking is prohibited in most areas. Always ask before lighting up.
- Stand when a woman enters the room.
- Don't chew gum in public.
- Seek out Dutch cheese and pastries. They make some of the best!!
- The country's traditional cuisine can be described as simple or "rustic," with little meat and various vegetables. Bread with cheese was typically eaten for breakfast and lunch, and meat, seasonal vegetables, and potatoes for dinner.
- The Dutch see the family as the foundation of their social structure. Families tend to be small, often with only one or two children. The Netherlands has the lowest number of women working outside the home in the EU.
- Keep your hands out of your pockets while talking to someone or shaking hands. Keep your hands visible during meals.
- The Dutch are disciplined, conservative, and pay attention to the small details. They do not boast or brag about material possessions.
- The Dutch are private and don't speak to strangers as a norm. They will wait for you to make the first move. Do so; you meet some wonderful Dutch people. Avoid personal questions.
- The Dutch are reserved and don't show much physical touch in public or display anger or extreme excitement.
- The Dutch have a reputation for not being good at standing in line. You even find yourself being pushed and shoved to board the subway. Just the way it is.
- When people refer to a coffee shop in Amsterdam, it is not quite as expected. A coffee shop is a place to buy cannabis; if you want real coffee, ask where a cafe might be.
- A myth is that the Dutch are all high due to their legalization of cannabis. The majority of the residents of the Netherlands do not partake in this extra circular activity.
- In the Netherlands, if you go to a bar with locals you may meet, it is customary to pay only for the drinks you had.
- On average, each person in the Netherlands rides their bike 300 times a year and cycles about 550 miles yearly. This is not a country for the non-seasoned rider. Bike traffic is significant and best for someone who knows the rules of the road.
- Dutch people are very down-to-earth. There is a Dutch saying, 'Doe maar normal, dan doe je al gek genoeg,' which means 'Just act normal, that's already crazy enough.'
- To get your server's attention, raise your hand, and make eye contact.
- Table manners are Continental – the fork is held in the left hand and the knife in the right while eating. Use a knife and fork to eat all food, including sandwiches and pizza.
- A popular Dutch snack is raw herrings topped with onions.
- A traditional Dutch breakfast has chocolate but not hot chocolate sprinkles on toast! YUM!
- Cannabis can't be sold to foreigners anymore as of January 2021. Recent laws to control the partying that has become problematic in Amsterdam reflect the locals are taking back their city. This is an example of the importance of sustainable tourism efforts.
- It seems everyone speaks excellent English because they do. More so than any other EU nation. Learn the basics to show respect.
- It is a very safe country.

The Netherlands Essential Info

US Consular Emergency

The 24-hour number from a US Phone is 1-888-407-4747
Outside of US 011-202-501-4444

US Embassy Amsterdam

Museumplein 19
1071 DJ Amsterdam
Telephone +(31) (0) 70 310 2209
Emergency +(31) (0) 70 310 2209
Fax +(31) (0) 20 575 5330
Email AmsterdamUSC@state.gov
Website [U.S. Consulate General Amsterdam](#)

Emergency Numbers

GENERAL 112

Country Code

+31

Time Zone

UTC+1

Driving

Right side

Adaptors

“Standard” Euro plug
Type C or F

Tourism Office

[The Netherlands Tourism Office](#)

When to go to The Netherlands

The best time to visit The Netherlands would be in spring. Late spring, in particular, is a great time to go as the weather is warming up, there's less chance of rain, the tulip season is in full bloom, events are increasing, and there are fewer tourists.

July and August are peak months for visitors in all of The Netherlands. It will be very crowded, and hotels can be expensive and hard to get. The weather can be hot and humid, but many days can be mild. The bonus of traveling in summer is all the significant events and outdoor activities like cycling, boat rides, and wandering by the canals. You'll also have the longest days to be out sightseeing for an extended time.

Fall is the closest you'll get to the off-season in The Netherlands, which will be especially quiet. This is an excellent time to visit if you want to avoid the crowds, save costs, and get into any place you wish without lines.

Winter will be cold in The Netherlands, but December is a great time to go due to the beautiful Christmas markets.

- Summer 52-72 °F (11-22 °C)
- Spring 37-64 °F (3-18 °C)
- Fall 40-66 °F (4-19 °C)
- Winter 34-44 °F (2-7 °C)

Our Favorite Netherlands Resources

This resource section contains some Amazon affiliate links. If you use these links to buy something, we may earn a small commission at no additional cost to you. Thank you!

Travel Books/Guides

The Netherlands was part of our 2018 seven-country trip. We flew home from there, so our last days were based there. It was a place we wish we had made more time for. There is a lot of offer in the Netherlands, especially outside Amsterdam. We found a couple of great travel guides and used the internet extensively for our research.



Lonely Planet's The Netherlands (Country Guide) by Lonely Planet

A passport to the most relevant, up-to-date advice on Amsterdam and the Netherlands' highlights has to offer and what hidden discoveries await you. Stroll the intricate canals of Amsterdam, visit the fascinating windmills, and enjoy endless flowering tulips in South Holland. Great photography and lots of details to aid in planning. [Discover this travel guide here.](#)



Rick Steves Amsterdam & The Netherlands (Country Guide) by Rick Steves

We are huge Rick Steve's fans; it will be rare to recommend one of his wonderful guides; this guide is no different. Rick's love of this part of Europe is obvious in this guide. We love his travel style and perspective. His off-the-beaten-path approach and his independent travel philosophy match well with how we travel. The guides never disappoint. This book cut into our suitcase and was a fantastic resource. [Find this must-have guide here.](#)

Our favorite websites

1. [The Netherlands tourism site](#)

2. **US Department of State: Bureau of Consular Affairs The Netherlands Country Info**

We cannot encourage you enough to visit this website as you plan and prepare for your trip. This is the US Federal Government addressing the safety, security, travel risk, entry, exit, visa documents mandates, emergency US and Embassy contacts, health, local laws, special circumstances, threats, traveler vulnerabilities, government warnings, and transportation In Luxembourg. This is your best and most reliable resource for all this important info. Check back often before you go, as things can change quickly. Being prepared is essential in all travel, but especially internationally.

[The Netherlands International Travel Information \(state.gov\)](#)

3. **The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travelers Health Resource**

This CDC travel resource provides essential health info for your specific destination. Using their tool, you can determine which vaccines, medications, and health advice recommendations are needed for The Netherlands.

[CDC's Travelers Health Page for The Netherlands](#)

Our favorite maps



Michelin Netherlands Map 715

Easy-to-read maps with practical road and travel information. Practical road and travel information. Major sites and landmarks are well-marked. Mapped road network with distances and designations for major highways to the off-the-beaten-path roads. Though we default to Google Maps, this came in handy when service was poor or during construction detours. [Find this essential map here.](#)

Our favorite apps

Google Maps Trip and Holiday Organizer. Enter any address, landmark, or city in the app, and it will instantly display all your travel options and booking info, along with accommodation providers and things to do. We love it when using public transportation, it is spot on! Find it on your local app store.

Rome2rio: Trip Planner Trip and Holiday Organizer Enter any address, landmark, or city in the app will instantly display all your travel options, and booking info, along with accommodation providers and things to do. Find it on your local app store.

Rick Steves Audio Europe This app includes a vast library of Rick Steve's audio content. Get cultural and travel info. Includes self-guided tours of top attractions and historic walks. Amsterdam options. A

must-have. Find it on your local app store.

Duolingo-Language Lesson Audio lessons that help improve your listening and speaking skills. Find it on your local app store.

Google Translate We used this often to practice proper pronunciations of Dutch words. As we always encourage, it is essential to learn the basics of greeting and thanking people in the local language. Google Translate was an easy app to use. If needed, you can enter text in English, which will speak back in Dutch to aid in communicating with locals. Furthermore, it came in very handy to translate text into images instantly.

Do you have a favorite Netherlands travel resource? Share your favorites in the comments section at the bottom of this page or

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Posts from The Netherlands



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[Delft Netherlands: The South Holland Delight](#)

Delft Netherlands is a delight and a must-do during any visit to South Holland....

April 5, 2022

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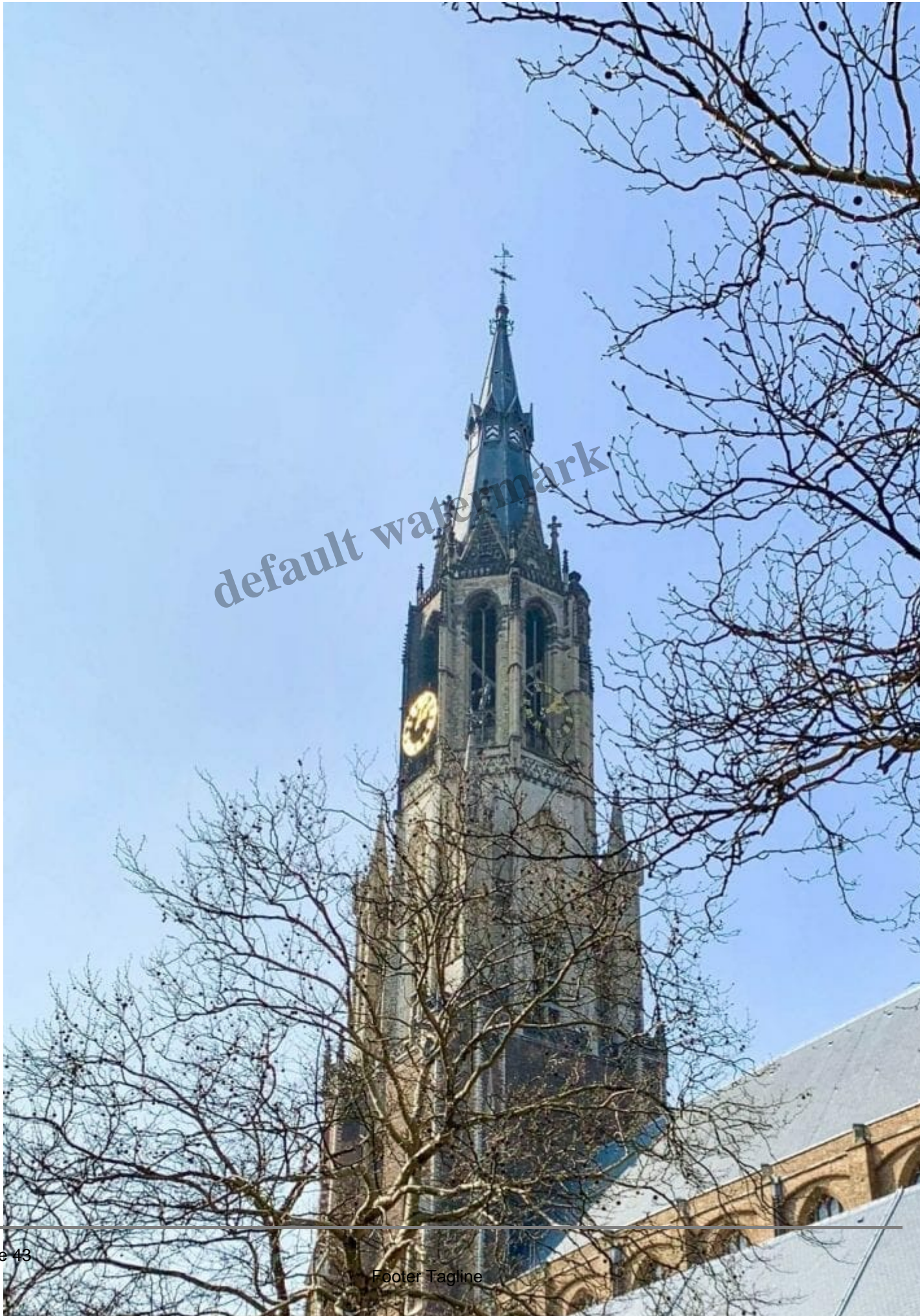
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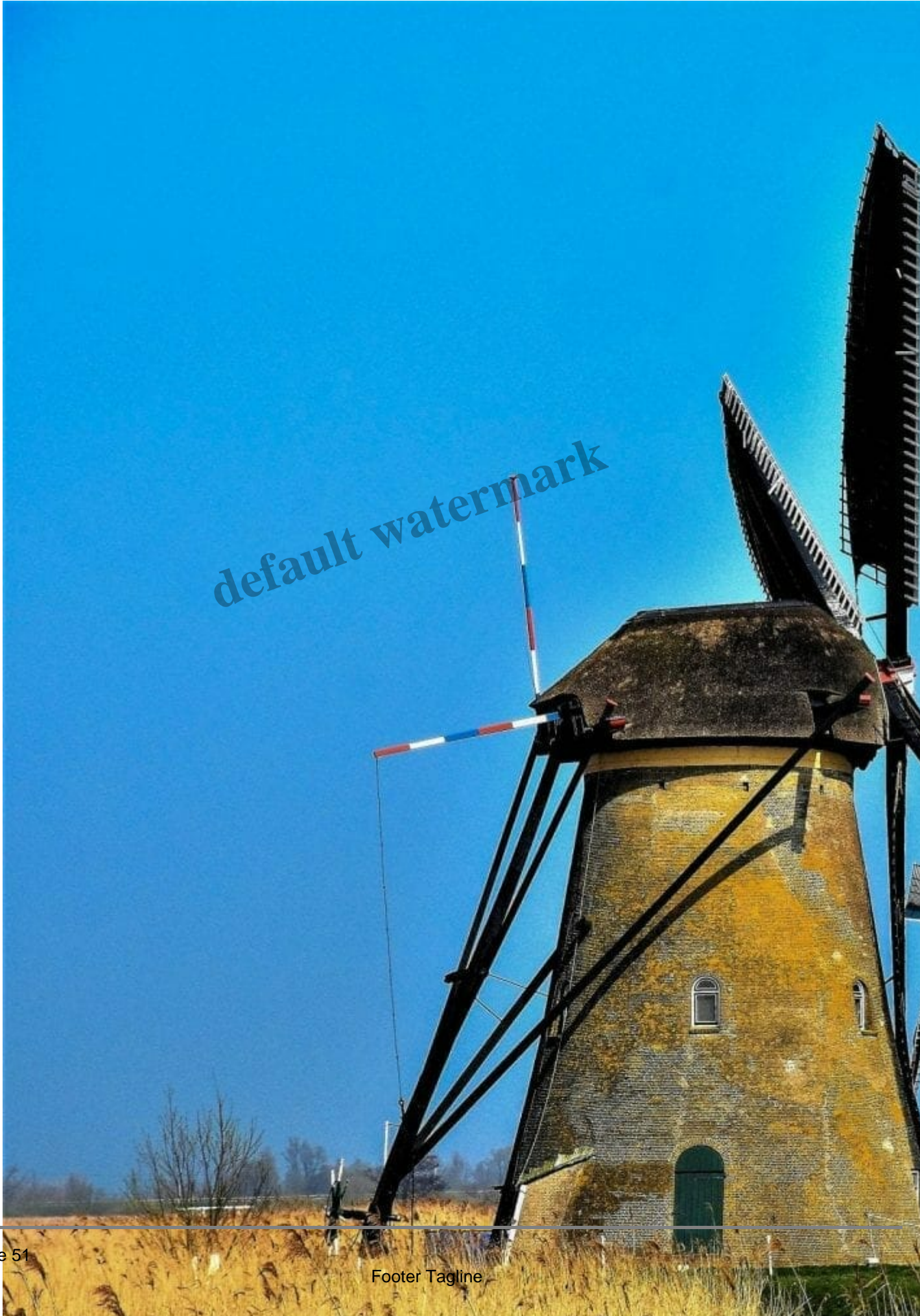
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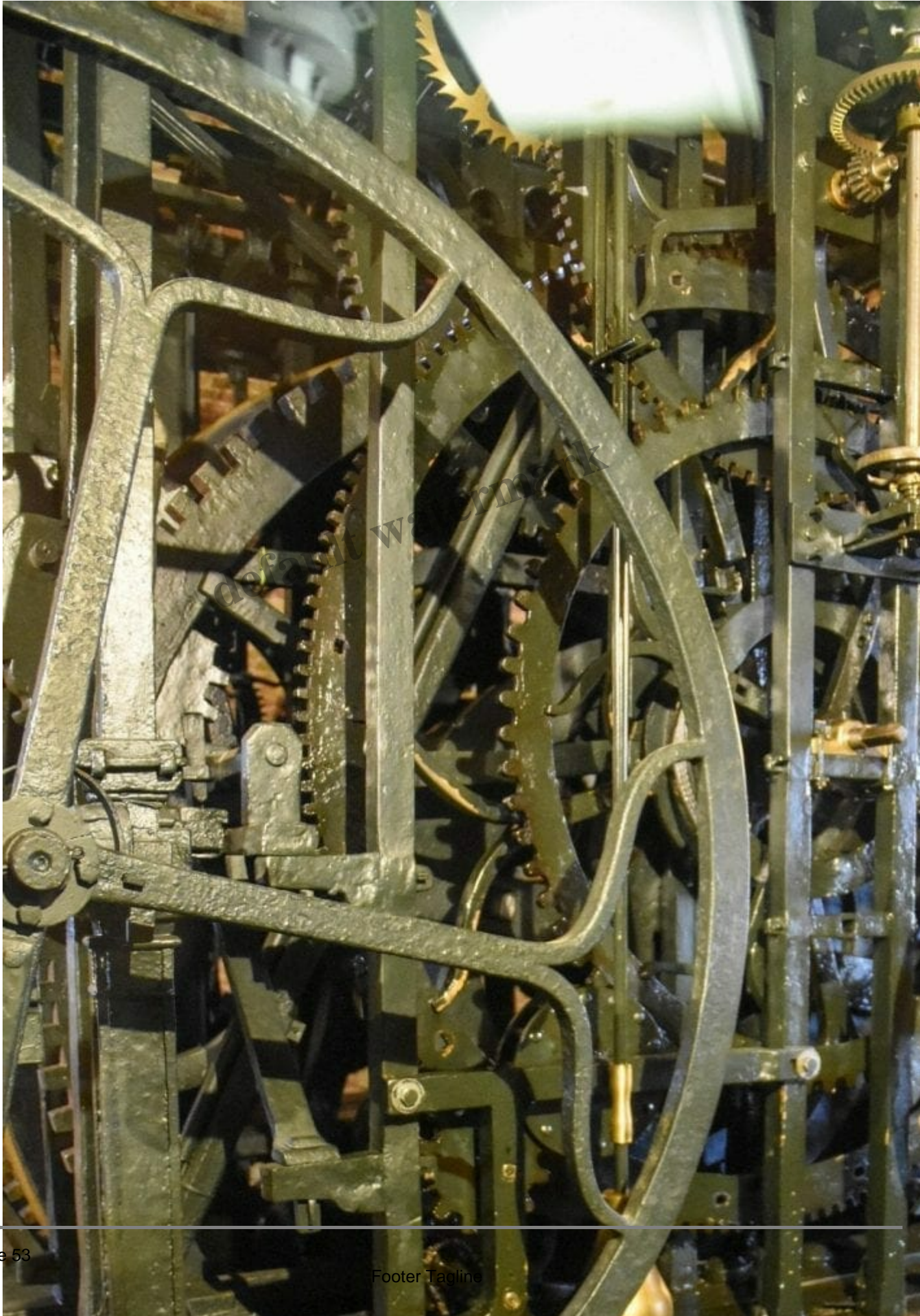
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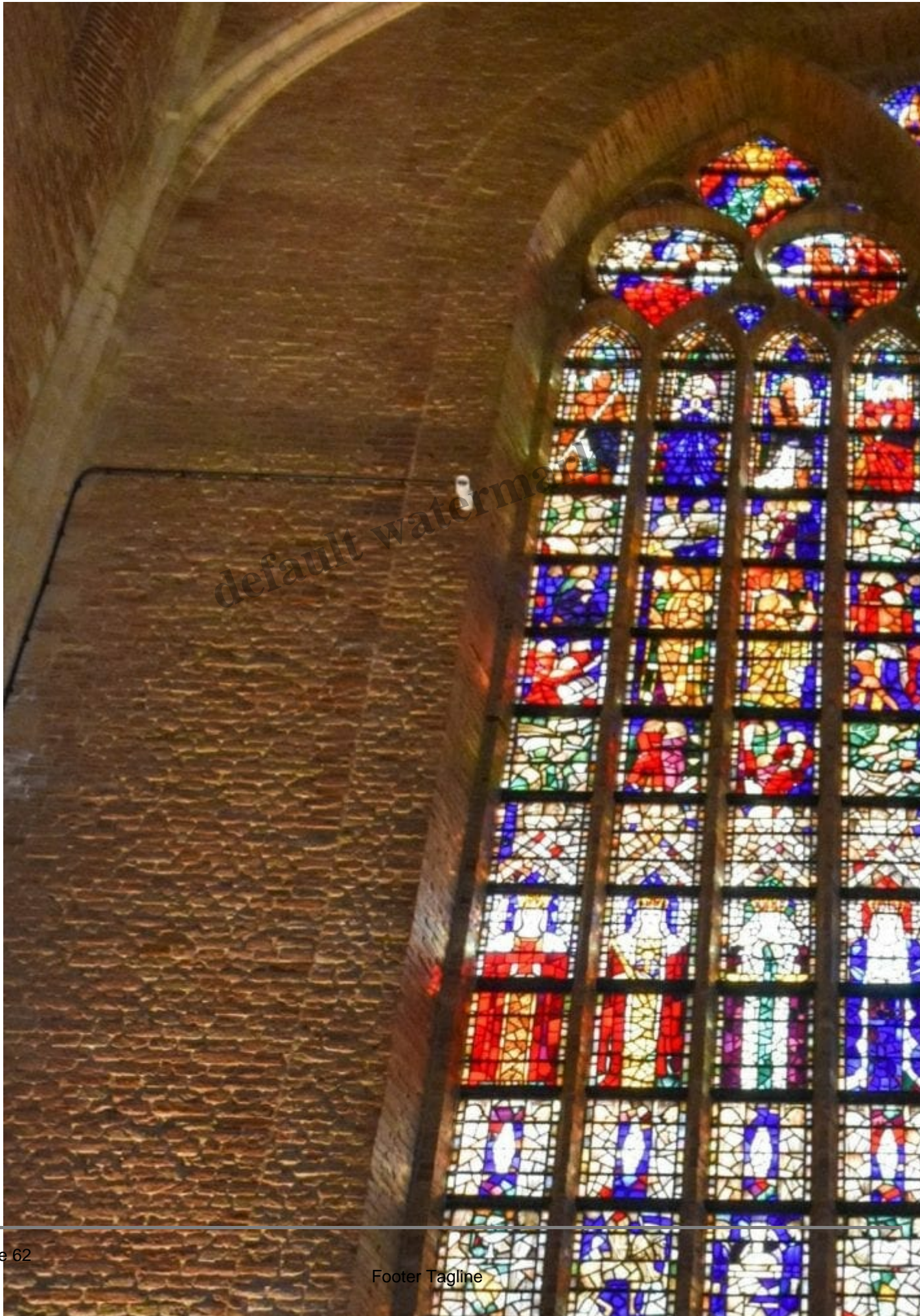


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Our Top Recommended [Travel Products and Resources](#)

[Squaremouth.com](#)

Our favorite travel insurance site!

If you book a trip, don't forget to get travel insurance within 14 days of your first booking. We could not be stronger advocates of being well-insured. Not just for the little stuff but the big things like medical emergencies. We never leave home without it. Over the years, we have used many sites but have now found our go-to place. [Squaremouth.com](#) does a fantastic job; it has a user-friendly interface, uses top-rated and reputable insurance carriers, and most policies cover COVID-19 medical issues and cancellations. They also mediate on your behalf if you have problems with your policy.

To empower you as a consumer, we suggest you read our [blog post](#) on the importance of travel insurance and how to get the best coverage from top-rated companies for an affordable price.

[MedjetAssist](#)

Medical transport back home from anywhere in the world

They are the premier global air medical transport. One caveat to travel insurance is that medical evacuation usually gets you to the closest facility to care for you. Medjet gets you back to the U.S. to the hospital of your choice once you are stable enough to fly. They cover COVID-related transport as well.

[Medjet](#) carries its own policies. These policies are only for transport and do not cover other aspects of travel insurance. They have individual trip policies starting at \$99 and annual policies for around \$300. Most of their policies limit the age to 74 and younger. Prices are not based on age below that.

To learn more about how Medical Evacuation membership with Medjet Assist works, check out our [blog post](#) for a more detailed review.

[Expedia.com](#)

Hotels, home rentals, BNBS, flights, and other transportation & tours

[Expedia](#) is a US-based company whose mission is to power global travel for everyone and everywhere. Whether planning a family vacation, booking for business, or organizing the trip of a lifetime, they are a fantastic resource. Wanderers Compass focuses on independent travel, and using sites like [Expedia](#) makes that possible. Every aspect of travel you need, from airfare, accommodations,

rental car, and cruises to activities to do at your destination, can be booked on [Expedia](#).

[Booking.com](#)

Hotels, Home rentals, BNBs, Flights, and other Transportation & Tours

[Booking.com](#) connects millions of travelers to memorable experiences, various transportation options, and incredible places to stay – from homes to hotels and much more. It is one of the world's largest travel marketplaces for established brands and entrepreneurs of all sizes.

We always check Expedia and Booking.com to verify prices. At times, one is sold out of rooms while another at the same place has rooms. We also often find some European hotels, especially smaller ones, on Booking.com but not on Expedia. It could be they are a Europe-based company. Try both before booking accommodations.

[Vacation Rental By Owner \(VRBO\)](#)

Are you traveling with a family or having an extended stay at your destination?

With over 2 million bookable vacation rentals, [VRBO](#) connects homeowners with families and vacationers looking for something more than a hotel for their trip. The [VRBO](#) community offers families or groups various rental property types such as condos, cabins, lake rentals, beach houses, etc.

[VRBO](#) is now under the Expedia group's ownership, which many were worried about, but it hasn't panned out to be a concern. It is a massive network with access to all lodging forms should issues arise. Joelle has used VRBO for many years with her family and has had no problems with it.

[Viator](#)

As the leading marketplace for travel experiences, [Viator](#) believes that making memories is what travel is all about. And with 300,000+ experiences to explore—everything from simple tours to extreme adventures (and all the niche, interesting stuff in between)—making memories that will last a lifetime has never been easier.

With industry-leading flexibility and last-minute availability, it's never too late to make any day extraordinary. This one site has it all and has experiences throughout the world. We use them often during our travels, especially for food tours. We especially take the time to read the reviews provided.

[Amazon.com](#)

An excellent source for travel essentials and guides

We now have our own Amazon Storefront with all our favorite travel accessories and gear in one place. Check out our travel store at the link below.

[Wanderers Compass Amazon Storefront](#)

Amazon is one of the most comprehensive online shopping sources in the world. Teams worldwide provide lower prices, better selection, and rapid delivery on behalf of customers. They offer a vast inventory, and their 1.7 million small and medium businesses worldwide selling on Amazon.com offer extensive options to customers.

We buy most of our travel books, accessories, and luggage from Amazon. We have ordered up to two days before travel and get what we need.

[HYDAWAY](#)

This is not your ordinary drinkware company. The **HYDAWAY** difference is what their products do when you're not using them. Practical and portable, HYDAWAY doesn't take up unnecessary space in your already-packed life or pile up in landfills. We all know that trying to pack light while being environmentally conscious can be difficult. Having the right items can make a world of difference.

[HYDAWAY](#) provides that.

We have used their collapsible water bottle, carrying case for the water bottle, and collapsible insulated drink tumbler. They are all lightweight and durable. A conservation-focused product you can be proud to buy.

Use our Promo Code. WANCOM15, at checkout for 15% off your Hydaway order

[Welcome Pick-ups](#)

(Airport and sightseeing service)

A global leader in ground transportation for travelers. They help hundreds of companies worldwide enhance their services and boost their revenue with our 5-star ride experiences and hassle-free automation.

Founded in 2015 in Athens, Greece, [Welcome Pick-ups](#) goes above and beyond the standard transfer service as the first company to deliver a holistic, in-destination travel experience. From the moment a traveler arrives at a new destination until they return home, Welcome accommodates all their travel needs (transfers, travel products, things to do, information) as the easiest, friendliest, and most personalized solution.

[PhotoAiD](#)

Do you feel like you are wasting time visiting an on-site photographer only to be embarrassed by the photo? Would you like control of the final product? Get the perfect VISA or passport photo online with PhotoAID.

When traveling, you often need to apply for official documents such as a passport, ID, and different kinds of licenses or cards. Those applications require a picture that must meet specific conditions to be

accepted, depending on the country. Now, it is possible to take this picture at home without the help of a professional photographer. PhotoAiD allows you to take the perfect biometric photo you approve without leaving home.

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Date Created

January 14, 2021

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