

Post



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# Amsterdam - May 5, 2022

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Today promises to be a quiet day. We do not have a lot planned... a lunch and an amusement ride, that that's about it. For our morning we just relax in our room. We have coffee but forgo any kind of breakfast. Mike and Liz are going to the Rijksmuseum and they'll meet us at the lunch spot. On the way to lunch we just barely miss one tram and then don't get on the next one, second guessing whether we're going the right direction or not. Eventually we're on the right tram, headed to hook up again with Mike and Liz.

Lunch is at a restaurant Karen found in a National Geographic coffee table book titled Food Journeys of a Lifetime. Some of the 'Journeys', like this one, are simply going to a particular restaurant. This restaurant is called De Kas. It sounds like the dutch word for cheese, but we don't know the real origin of the name. The history of the restaurant, that we know a little bit about. The key part of eating here is that 80% or so of what you'll be eating and drinking was raised in the restaurant or on their private farm not far from away. What is now the huge greenhouse for the restaurant used to be something else. It fell into disuse and disrepair. The restaurant owner ended up buying the rundown facility from the city of Amsterdam... for one euro!

Now the place looks amazing. Open and airy. The walls and ceilings are glass. It is very spacious. One our way in we walked through the orchard outside and through the greenhouse growing produce inside. It was impressive. The food was expertly prepared and artfully presented. The flavors were very fresh and well balanced. It wasn't cheap, but it was worth it. We all had the tasting menu, so we had small amounts of many different dishes. We are glad we went and would recommend it to anyone.

After lunch Mike and Liz had reservations to yet another famous Amsterdam museum, the Van Gough museum. We say our goodbyes (for now) and they hop on a tram to see starry nights and whatever else they might have there. Karen and I walk. Firstly we are heading for a liquor store to buy a bottle of Dutch Jenever. I'd had it the night before and thought it'd be something fun to have on hand at home. Due to so many canals and even more construction it was a long walk. Once there we don't find the brand we want, but a 'good' bottle is only 10 euros, so we buy a small one.

From there we head to the Netherlands' Maritime Museum. It's a fair walk, but hey walking is good for you, right? Along the way we see a very tall windmill that has a beer brewpub inside. Well, they don't actually brew beer there, but they serve it, so it all works out. It turns out the windmill is the tallest wooden windmill in Holland, so we get a beer.

Post-beer and some more walking we get to the museum. It's closing in an hour, but how much do we need to learn about Dutch ships and shipping? Ticket purchased and audio guide in hand we head to the exhibits. The first, and most exciting, is an old, amazingly refurbished ship from many 100s of years ago. It's huge. We get a feeling for what it would have been like to have worked on such a ship. Not fun or easy, but lots of fresh air.

The ship is outside and everything else is inside. The organization and guidance of what's where left a lot to be desired. We finally find more stuff to look at, but alas it is just art about dutch ships, and battles, etc. Yawn. The next section is more interesting, all kinds of model ships, from row boats to galleons to racing yachts. That is interesting. Next is figurines from old ships. A figurine is successful if it's the slightest bit female, and has breasts. Some of these figurines were scary looking, but by the above rule for successful figurines, it met the minimal criteria. Lastly were the maps and navigation equipment. Also interesting.

By now, time has run out. We 're due to meet Mike and Liz soon, and so we head to the meeting point. We realize we'll never get there in time on foot. We hop on a bus and find Karen's card doesn't have enough money. We hold up the bus and the line paying for a single ride with a credit card.

Finally reunited with Mike and Liz we do an indoor amusement park ride where they 'fly' you over all of Holland. It's hokey but fun. We see many places and things we've actually seen, but also see others that maybe we'll see on some future trip. It being Cinco de Mayo we find a local Mexican restaurant and have an acceptable dinner. We briefly walk the neighboring streets, which we think is near the red light district. It seems like a frat party collided with a bachelorette party. It isn't for us. We slink off towards our hotel. Tomorrow is our last full day in the Netherlands and we're doing Haarlem!

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