

TRIP TO THE NETHERLANDS 2017



My photo that symbolizes the trip

Amsterdam

Bikes

Typical houses

The *Amstel*

Bridge

High Houses



I think this picture is the one that best symbolizes the trip. It was taken in Amsterdam, the capital of The Netherlands and the most important day of the trip. We can see some bikes and in the Netherlands everybody has one, it's one of the emblem of this country and a very popular means of transport. In the background there are typical houses: high and leaning. Bikes are locked on a bridge below which the *Amstel* River (that gives its name at Amsterdam) flows. Here are the reasons why I find that this is the best photo to epitomize the trip.



The Dutch school's lifestyle



Their school is very different from ours: there is no cafeteria, students must bring their lunch box every school day. They also have a soup distributor, how Original! There are “stewards” to maintain property on the lunch room. Students come by bike, there is no school bus, some have more than 1 hour of biking! They spend 6 years in this school: from 13 to 18 years old. Classrooms have windows on the corridor side, you can see the students working. Before going into the classrooms they must put their coat on hangers at the entrance, so strange! School hours are 8.45am to 3pm, it's much shorter than us! One lesson lasts 45 minutes. They have sports fields among the classrooms with very big windows and the other students can watch them practising sport.

Life at home and Dutch Routine



During school week, students wake up at 7am, take a shower before dressing up. They eat and prepare their lunch box. They ride their bike to school, they stay over there from 8.45am to 3pm then they go back home to do homework or to practice sport. At 6.30pm the family take the diner and before sleeping they watch TV.

During the week end they wake up and wait until 12.30 to have a brunch. They usually nibble a lot between meals.

In the rooms there are no shutters, just curtains. They always let the lights on even if nobody need it. At the table they don't have drinking glasses because they don't drink during the meal. There is no French bread or baguette.

On the streets



For each birth, families put signs on the streets to let people know a child was born , I think it's really funny and it's a good idea to decorate and animate streets!
The road signs light up the night, it is so convenient! Streets' name are written on the street lamp. You can find bike paths everywhere. Red lights are black and white and bigger than in France. They really celebrate carnival with flags and decorations everywhere around houses but also with kid musicians and kid dancers. I saw it and it's very festive, parents and children like to participate or watch it. They take videos and photos. They are very proud of this tradition. There are only mail boxes on the doors you can't find them in the street. In the villages there are "Zone 60", in France we just have "Zone 30"
They have giant roundabouts with giant objects on it, it's really impressive!

Architectures



In the neighbourhoods, the houses are all the same! It's really surprising! You must leave neighbourhoods to find different houses. Their houses are tall but not very large. In Amsterdam, they are leaning houses on the boat we learnt it's because the staircases are really narrow on the houses and when inhabitants want to move, thanks to a pulley system installed at the top of each facade, they can remove their furnitures easier through the windows. But it's also to shelter from the rain and because the ground is soft (because of the water)

Various



Dutch fashion is approximately the same as ours but more expensive.

Musics that the Dutch listen to are a lot of English songs, not a lot of Dutch or French songs

They have 6 channels in Dutch, the others are in English subtitled in Dutch. That's why they are so fluent in English !

It's was a very cold and rainy time in the Netherlands. It's too bad because it's a nice country!

My favourite day of the Trip

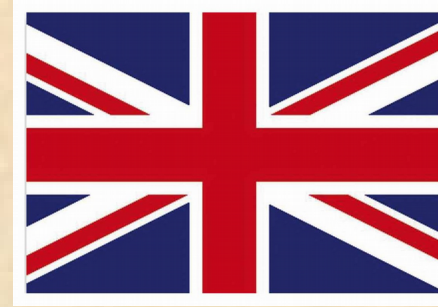


My favourite day was Sunday 12th, November, the family-day because I've never been in The Netherlands and I discovered a very different lifestyle...

On Sundays, my host-family just eats at noon not before, they must wait. I ate a typical brunch with bacon, eggs, different breads with raisins, corn.. and a lot of special spreads: duo penotti, speculoos, peanut butter.. But, it was my favourite day because my host-family (Emily, her brother Alex and her parents Hans and Angeli) took me Bowling, we played 2 games, we laughed together and I did one strike! It was a very funny activity: we encouraged one another. The atmosphere was very colourful and musical: music videos were broadcast on the wall and we were in the night and only lighted by coloured lights. During the bowling party, we ate "Bitterballens" a Dutch specialty: it's hot balls with beef cream in and it was really really nice! I ate it a lot of them. After bowling, with Emily and Alex, I played billiards ! It was very funny because they didn't know the rules ! Then, we went back home and Emily offered to take me to Uden's town center, I accepted and we went by bike! We parked our bikes and she showed me the town center. As the weather was cold, we went into the coffeeshop where she works. I took a Chocolate with cream and we discussed a long time, more than one hour, I enjoyed this moment 'cause we just talk in English, it allowed me to choose the right tense, agreement.. a good time to learn! We talked about our points in commons, our love stores, families, habits.. She has a really good accent and she speaks English very well, I understood almost everything. I think she improve my English during this week. The time passed quickly and we went back home to eat at 6.30pm. At table, my family host was very open minded with me, we talked about my city, my department, how and when we eat.. They asked good questions to me and wanted to learn more things about me. We ate a typical soup (my family wanted me to taste some different specialities during the week). Their typical soup is composed by little pieces of meat, carrots, tomatoes, and leek on a hot broth. I liked this appetizer so much! The dish was salmon with potatoes and cooked corn (I've never tasted it and I liked it). After the dinner with Emily, we watched a movie "Mean Girls" in English with French subtitles. And we went to bed but we didn't sleep, we again talked a lot of our lives.

It was my favourite day because it was the first day on The Netherlands but also because I could talk and discover where they lived and an other lifestyle. I enjoyed a lot the fact that my host-family chose a family activity where we could chat (Emily's mother told me it was her goal). Moments at the table were very nice, we talk about our lifestyle. I really appreciated my host-family and my penpal. I found a family who liked talking with me and I spent a very good time with Emily, we talked a lot together, I've never spoken so much in English in one week!

Dutch words that I've Learnt



Hallo = *Hello*

Welkom= *Welcome*

Vermoeiend= *Boring*

Tien= *Ten*

Kies = *To choose*

Zwarte= *Billard*

Chocolademelk= *Milk Chocolate*

Trekken= *To pull*

Duwen= *To push*

Portemonee= *Wallet*

Huis= *House*

Paraplu= *Umbrella*

Dragen= *To wear*

Aap= *Monkey*

Doei= *Bye*

Dankjewel= *Thank you*

Sorry= *Sorry*

Struisvogel= *Ostrich*

Zult= *To must*

Maatschappijleer= *Social studies*

Voor= *In front of*

Achter= *Behind*

A typical Dutch Lunch at School



Dutch students don't have a cafeteria at their School, they must bring their sandwiches. Most of the time, they prefer sandwiches with spread to ham/butter. It's very particular. The bread that they prefer use is brioche, raisins bread not real bread like in France. What's more, they drink just juice and not water. With that, they take little cookies.

Stamppot : A Dutch specialty



Stamppot is THE TYPICAL DUTCH SPECIALITY! It's a mash with potatoes, kale and chard. Habitually, you eat it with smoked bacon and smoked sausage.

I tasted it and I found it was really good ! My buddy's mother cooked it specially for me so I could taste it before my departure at 11 pm! I am very grateful, it was DELICIOUS!

Stamppot's recipe

Ingredients:

700 g potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
225 g smoked bacon, diced
2 onions, diced
450 g kale and chard
1 tablespoon whole-grain mustard
1 large knob of butter
1 splash milk
Salt and pepper
½ smoked sausage per person



Procedure :

Boil the potatoes in salted water in a large pot until cooked through; drain and return to the pot. While the potatoes are cooking, fry off the bacon and onion in a little oil until lightly browned.

Add the kale and the chard to the still steaming-hot potatoes and roughly mash everything together – the steam from the potatoes will wilt the greens. (If you are using kale instead, you may want to boil it for a few minutes before adding it to the potatoes as it takes longer to cook.) Then add in the fried bacon and onions, mustard, butter, milk and a good pinch of salt and pepper to taste.

Cook the smoke sausage according to the packet instructions and serve with the stamppot.

The Dutch *Beret* !



The Dutch students taught us their Dutch Beret !
There were two teams : French and Dutch students.
We played Football, BasketBall, Hockey and Ball to prisoners in turn.
It was a very funny game, even if the Dutch students won, we surpassed ourselves !
We had to play Hockey while we don't knew the rules, or girls had to play football against real Dutch Soccers, they did everything to defend their Goal! I liked this game that I didn't know ! And I did what I could for the team especially in football, it's my little personal pride because I don't like it !

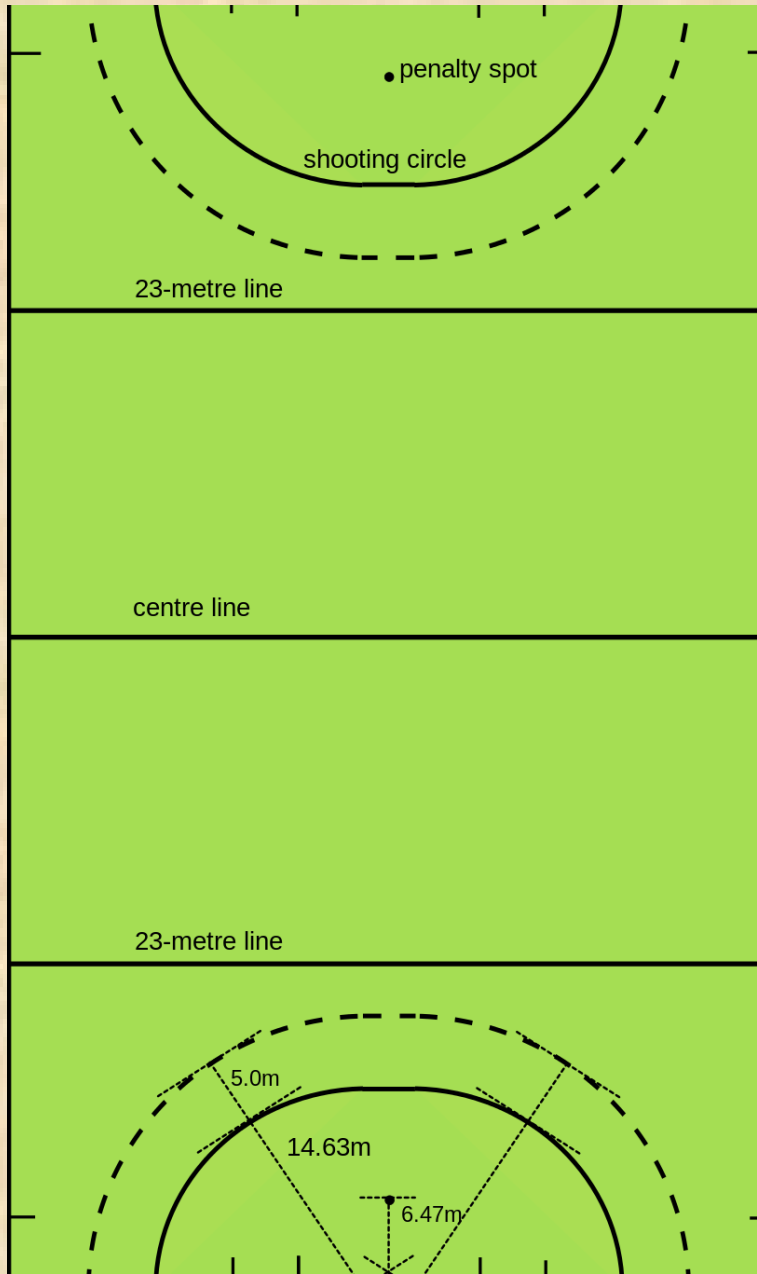
Hockey Field : a typical Dutch Sport



One team is composed of 11 players.

Basic Rules: You have to push the ball as far as possible with your Stick in the opposite team's goal. You must only use the inside face of your stick and not your feet to shoot, otherwise you make a fault. The ball can go in the air or stay on the ground. If you want to score, you can't pass behind the shooting circle or the goal will be refused. One match lasts 90 minutes. The official Dutch colours team are orange and white (like royal family !)

I tried it with my Pen Friend, I find it's a very difficult sport because you must shoot very strongly at your partners or in the goal and you can use just one face of your stick, you mustn't be mistaken. But it was Funny ! It takes years of practice to know how to play perfectly!



The official hockey grass Field



The official Hockey Grass equipment