

Utrecht Region: even more beautiful when explored by bicycle

If you really want to get to know Utrecht Region, there's only one thing to do: get on your bike. It will bring you closer to our rich history, allow you enjoy nature, castles and country estates even more, and is the best way to explore the canals of our bustling towns and cities. Bikes can be rented everywhere, the cycle paths are of high quality, and the routes are already marked out for you.

Bicycle culture

The figures speak for themselves: there are around 908,000 cyclists in the region, who can easily find their way around thanks to a 1500-kilometre network of cycle paths with over 400 cycle nodes and 300 kilometres of long-distance routes. Nine more long-distance cycle routes will be created in the coming period. These routes will connect villages, towns and cities so that cyclists can ride along smoothly, without running into too many obstacles. There are also numerous routes to choose from, such as the Burgundy Cycle Route, the Architecture Route or the Waterworks Route. The region is renowned for its cyclist-friendly infrastructure, with cycle paths, cycle lanes, cycle streets, and dedicated bridges and tunnels, in addition to numerous e-bike charging points. Furthermore, a lot of thought has gone into cycle parking. Many towns and cities provide secure garages where you can leave your bicycle, e-bike or racing bike for 24 hours free of charge. In Utrecht, you'll even find the largest bicycle garage in the world, with space for 12,500 bikes.

Utrecht cycling trilogy

As a cyclist in Utrecht Region, you're in esteemed company. The professional riders of the Giro d'Italia, the Tour de France and the Vuelta a España have raced over this tarmac. In fact, Utrecht is the only city in the world to have hosted stages of all three Grand Tours!

The sportier cyclist is sure to find plenty to enjoy here. On the Utrecht Hill Ridge, for example, you'll find no less than 110 kilometres of mountain bike routes. The Amerongse Hill, the highest point in the region is a favourite among recreational and racing cyclists. The undulating forests around Soest are also great for a more adventurous ride. And there are plenty of local amenities in the area to enjoy a well-deserved break.

Dive into the past

Utrecht Region is dotted with castles and country estates. From the fairytale De Haar Castle in Haarzuilens to the centuries-old châteaux of Slot Zeist, Slot Zuylen and Amerongen Castle, there's plenty to explore. You can even find one on the Oudegracht in the centre of Utrecht: the mediaeval Oudaen Castle. After a bike ride, what better place to order a glass of beer than the in-house brewery! Ride along the very first cycle path in the Netherlands; the Maliebaan, which has been in use as a cycle path since 1885!

The Dutch Water Defence Lines are a testament to the Netherlands' ingenuity. They tell the story of the military defence of our country with water as an ally: both in the past, present and future. Scattered around the countryside, you'll find many forts and bunkers that have been preserved. Nowadays, several of them provide a place to camp, have lunch, hike or go sailing. In total, there are eight forts in the Kromme Rijn region and they are truly fascinating to visit.

Even older are the remains of the Limes, the frontier of the Roman Empire. Here, we find three of the best preserved Dutch castella (forts).

The more recent past is highlighted at Camp Amersfoort. This national monument to World War II prisoners is now a poignant museum.

For culture vultures, there is also plenty to discover by bike. Follow the De Stijl route from Amersfoort to Utrecht to marvel at the legacy of the painter Piet Mondrian and the furniture designer and architect Gerrit Rietveld.

It is worth noting that the Limes, the Rietveld Schröder House and the Dutch Water Defence Lines are all UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

A cyclist feels less like a tourist

Bikes can be hired from many of the local hotels, B&Bs and bike hire shops. From sturdy city bikes, cargo bikes and touring bikes to swift e-bikes, mountain bikes and tandems. You can even rent children's bikes and child seats. That's not surprising, as it's the perfect way to get to know Utrecht Region. People of all ages love to cycle here. And that is perhaps the very best thing about cycling. A cyclist feels more like a local than a tourist; freer and more at home. Welcome to Utrecht Region!