



Tour of the Netherlands

Summer holidays in your own country

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On 25 July 2020, we set off in the St. Omer. for our first sailing holiday with our new Linssen! Mathijs and Sophie were still a little sad about the Henri Mer but, fortunately, they gradually came around during the holiday.

We had arranged to meet the 'Op Dreef' in Well on the Leukermeer Lake. The plan was to sail together for a week and then each go our own way.

We didn't have a detailed plan, but the goal was to reach Friesland and our final destination was Zeeland, Marina Port Zélande, because St. Omer. had to remain there for additional photography.

When we departed Maasbracht, there were 36.7 hours on the clock and we arrived in Well at around 9.00 p.m.

We have a drink with the 'Op Dreef' and 'Be-you-tiful' crews and go to bed early. Starting the holiday with colleagues does leave traces of fatigue...

The next day, we take the children to the beach for a swim, some SUPing and, of course, a visit to the Aquapark. The award for the highest flight went to Dex!

On 27 July at 9.30 a.m. we cast off, our neighbour and the boys have boarded and sail with us for a day and spend the night on board. They have never sailed on the Waal, so it is quite an experience. The same goes for Op Dreef. Not every crew member was happy about it.

Around 5.00 p.m. we check the possible destinations and arrival times on PC Navigo and decide to sail to Loowaard.

We arrive there around dusk in a tiny harbour with an extremely friendly harbourmaster. We receive a warm welcome and are allowed to use a cosy 'tent' on the jetty, equipped with all conveniences and even party lights. We decide to fire up the COBB BBQs and drink an 'Omerke'. The kindly gentleman has a big fishing net and keeps all of the children entertained. A nice, relaxing evening for us!

The next morning, our neighbour takes our guests

off board and brings us some delicious fresh rolls and croissants and a load of meat, since the freezer needs replenishing after the previous night's BBQ.

Limburgse Roots

We wave goodbye to our guests and leave for our next destination at around 10.45 a.m. We are heading to Hattem (IJsseldelta Marina). When we register by phone, we find out that the owner has Limburg roots, which - chauvinistic as we are - immediately leads to a nice Limburgish conversation. We are given restaurant tips on arrival and the children are allowed to grab a present, success guaranteed.

Limoncello spritzer in Giethoorn

On 29 July at 10.15 a.m., we set sail for Giethoorn, one of the destinations on our 'must see again' list. We moor in Giethoorn at 2.30 p.m. and are surprised to find a berth on the Beukersgracht. The men and children hop in the Pirelli and take a tour of the Giethoorn canals. Carla and I go shopping but decide on the way that a limoncello spritzer on the terrace would be nice as well.

We stay in Giethoorn for 2 more days and behave like tourists; we rent a punt, have a delicious meal at Fratelli's and enjoy a terrace every now and then. We cast off again on the 31st, on our way to Blokzijl. But first we anchor for a few hours on the Giethoornse Lake. It's sweltering hot, so we go for a swim. At

around six o'clock we continue sailing and arrive at the lock a little later. There is quite a lot of traffic. We think we can fit alongside another boat, but her skipper thinks otherwise... We decide to be magnanimous and sail away. We moor behind a houseboat right behind the inner harbour on the Vollenhover Canal. We decide to light up the COBBs again and have plenty of room to BBQ.

Richting Lemmer

On 1 August, we take a stroll through the town, do some shopping and leave Blokzijl just before noon. We set sail for Lemmer. When we arrive, they immediately tell us at the lock that we can fit side by side, no problem at all. The owners of 'Nostris Navis' are already standing by to take a rope, what a difference from the boat in Blokzijl!

We moor in the centre of Lemmer and make a toast to this beautiful place with an Omer. Since the children are having fun amusing themselves, we decide to get something to eat. We discuss what to do next over dinner. Should we cross the IJsselmeer tomorrow or go to Sneek first? We all have a soft spot for Sneek and decide to go and visit Sandra and Sven at Sanzi.

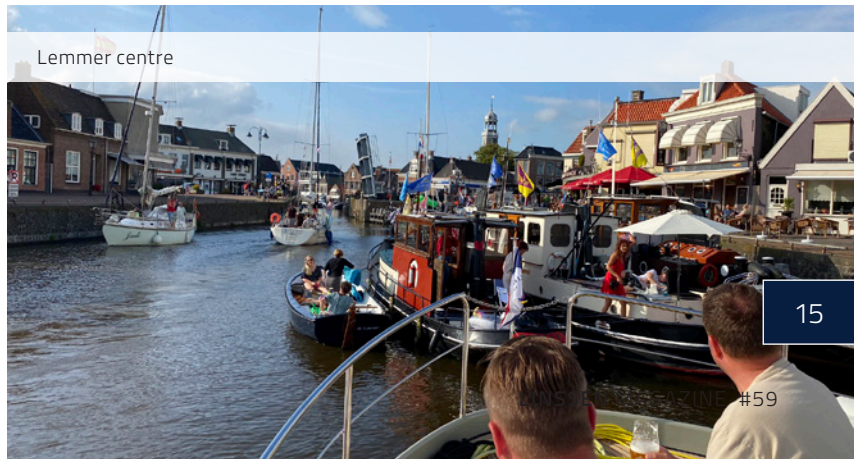
With the sloop through Giethoorn



Crabbing in Bruinisse



Lemmer centre





Sneek centre

Sanzi Yacht Charter in Sneek

The next morning, we go for a walk to the shop with the children and then we leave for Sneek. A nice trip on the Frisian waterways, some hairy moments as we navigate through the traffic in the centre of Sneek, but also great fun! We moor in front of Sanzi at about 3.00 p.m. There's plenty of room because all the yachts are rented out. Sandra lets us use the terrace, so we sit down with the iPad (okay, yes, and an Omer...) to watch Formula 1. The children are ecstatic that they FINALLY have Wi-Fi (ha ha) and are delighted to be connected to the real world again. They have video calls with grandparents and friends and can watch and play what they like on the iPad again. The youthful crew also don't mind at all when we tell them we will be staying in Sneek for another day...

3 August is a changeover day at Sanzi. What a well-oiled machine! Rennie and I chat with the returning and departing customers and have some nice conversations. In the evening, we go for a meal with Sandra and Sven at 't Vaticaen in Sneek... this restaurant with this company? It's guaranteed to be a riot! Unfortunately, we can't reveal anything more about that....



Open waters

On Tuesday 4 August, we continue our journey, not too early, but around noon, after a few good strong coffees. The Sanzi crew waves us goodbye and we continue in the direction of Stavoren, where we enter the open waters of the IJsselmeer.

We make the crossing on calm water with not a ripple in sight, to Enkhuizen and arrive there at half past five. The 'Infinite' comes sailing in as we're having a drink on the jetty. We dine in the Mastenbar and then have a drink together with the crew of the Infinite on board the St. Omer.

The next day, in the afternoon, we leave via the Markermeer and head towards Volendam, but the weather has worsened and there is a strong wind and some waves.

When the St. Omer crew put on their automatic life jackets in the lock (drilled into them by Alexander), the female crew of the Op Dreef turn white and wonder

what on earth they are doing there... they weren't prepared for that...

We arrive in Volendam at around four o'clock and solemnly swear that we will NEVER do that again.

Nice spot in the heart of Volendam

We find a nice spot in the heart of Volendam and, of course, head out for a stroll. We wander through the town and have a drink on a terrace. Then it's back on board for a nice, cosy dinner.

The next day, we're on our way to Amsterdam! But first we need to find a nice place to anchor.

We find it on the Buiten-IJ, near Durgerdam. We have a lovely swim because it's warm.

After a few hours, we sail on to Amsterdam. We go to the NDSM wharf, 'our' old Hiswa spot and of course because we fancy a nice steak from Loetje! We find a spot in the harbour and moor there at 7.30 p.m. We order from Loetje and eat a delicious steak Bali on board.

Through the heart of Amsterdam

Since 'Amsterdam' is on the programme and then sailing up the Amstel to eventually reach Rotterdam, we decide to leave early for once.

We set sail at 9.00 a.m. and head for the Dutch East India Company shipping museum, which is a wonderful place to sail past. We sail under the Kortjewantsbrug bridge onto the Nieuwe Herengracht.

When the Walter Süskind Bridge finally opens after a long wait, we turn onto the Amstel and find ourselves in the heart of Amsterdam. We sail through the open Amstel locks past the Amstel Hotel towards Uithoorn, Gouda and via the Hollandse IJssel towards Rotterdam. After a lovely, long day of sailing from 9.00 a.m. to 7.45 p.m., we moor at Watersports Association IJsselmonde on the Nieuwe Maas. Erwin and Wendy visit us at around 8.00 p.m. with a new supply of Omer. They stay the night and will sail with us to Willemstad the next day. We celebrate Wendy's birthday at midnight (the children make a beautiful birthday crown and use a bit too much confetti).

The next morning, we leave at 9.45 a.m. for Willemstad. It promises to be another nice trip through the port area of Rotterdam (Nieuwe Maas) and via the Oude Maas and Spui towards Haringvliet. The Nieuwe Maas is beautiful but a bit bumpy, as we also hear later from the Op Dreef crew members, who were bounced around a lot.

At the Hellegatsplein recreation area (Ooltgensplaat) in Hollands Diep, we drop anchor to swim for a while





before heading for the harbour. After firing up the COBB again (luckily we have a freezer on board!), we sail to the Batterij in the dark.

On the morning of Sunday 9 August, we all have breakfast and, unfortunately, after 2 weeks, we have to say goodbye to the crew of Op Dreef. They are sailing back to Limburg and we are continuing to Zeeland. Saar, Dex, Mathijs and Sophie think it's stupid and don't agree.

We talk to Paul-Michiel of Dutch Yacht Rentals, who is also very busy with the fleet and has to give an instruction class. We go shopping in Erwin's car (replenishing stocks) and try to figure out how to get their car to Bruinisse so they can sail with us for another day. We call Henk, who is always happy to help, and it turns that he is in Bruinisse. He comes to Willemstad with Lidwien and after we all have a coffee together, they leave for Bruinisse in 2 cars.

At 1.00 p.m., we wave goodbye to Op Dreef, and St. Omer. sets sail for Bruinisse alone.

We arrive at Bruinisse at 6.15 p.m. and invite Henk and Lidwien for dinner in the harbour as a way of saying thank you. Mathijs and Sophie barely sit down at the table; they are too busy catching crabs and building sandcastles with their new friends from the harbour. We decide to stay another day in Bruinisse, as there is plenty to do.

The next day, our guests leave and we set sail for Scharendijke. Not to Ouddorp just yet, because that is our final destination. We anchor on the Grevelingen for a while and go for a swim, even though we can see (too) many big jellyfish. At around 8.30 p.m., we find a spot on the jetty of the small passers-by harbour on the Brouwersdam inner side (West Report).

On 12 August, we decide to stay another day in Scharendijke and go to the beach. We walk under the Brouwersdam to the North Sea beach and spend another hot day on the sand, sunbathing, swimming, building sandcastles and with Mathijs catching jelly-fish. At around five o'clock, we walk to meet Alexander, Sasja and Florentine with whom we have a nice dinner at Da Roberto in Scharendijke.

One day later (13/8) and the time has come... We slowly make our way to our final destination. But not before one more circuit of Grevelingen and some anchoring, swimming and SUPing.

We moor at 6.00 p.m. in front of Jonkers Yachts in Marina Port Zélande, next to... The Be-you-tiful! In the harbour, we are welcomed with open arms aboard the 'Stoffel', a Beneteau Oceanis 45, owned by Peet and Yvonne (and Chevy). They know how to do drinks on board there too We have a lovely evening. We stay in Marina Port Zélande for a few more days and celebrate my birthday there on 15 August, pay

another visit to 'A Seal' and finish off with a delicious dinner at Roberto and Tanja's.

The final sailing day... We enter the Grevelingen and anchor at Ossehoek. Still enjoying ourselves. We have a final dinner with friends. And then it's really over... Our final night on St. Omer. followed by some cleaning, saying goodbye and taking the car home. It was a wonderful summer... We're already making plans for 2021!

Total travelled: 22 days / 670,1 km. / 81,3 hours

Maasbracht – Well – Loowaard – Hattem – Giethoorn – Lemmer – Sneek – Enkhuizen – Volendam – Amsterdam – Rotterdam – Willemstad – Bruinisse – Scharendijke – Ouddorp.

