

1. Station

When Vincent came to Amsterdam in 1885 to visit the Rijksmuseum, he painted two cityscapes from the temporary train station. The present Central Station was just being built then. The view in this painting is still recognisable. Hear more about it in the audio stop.



Vincent van Gogh, *View of Amsterdam*, 1885
Collection P. and N. de Boer Foundation, Amsterdam

2. Schreierstoren (‘Weepers’ Tower)

On his many walks through the city Vincent often passed the Schreierstoren. It was built around 1487 and used to be part of Amsterdam’s city wall. Vincent found the old tower, with the rest of the city in the background, picturesque. He wrote to his brother Theo: ‘Can’t tell you how beautiful it was there in the twilight.’

3. Kattenburgerbrug (Kattenburg Bridge)

Vincent walked across this bridge daily. It connected his Uncle Jan’s house, where he was staying, with the city centre.

4. Uncle Jan

Vincent lived with his Uncle Jan at the city’s naval dockyard. Hundreds of labourers worked there building boats. To Vincent, the sound of their footsteps was ‘something like the sound of the sea.’ A plaque on the building, on the left corner next to the National Maritime Museum, recalls Vincent’s stay here. Feel free to walk through the gate and take a look.

Front: Vincent van Gogh, *The De Ruyterkade in Amsterdam* (detail), 1885, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

5. Oosterkerk (East Church)

The Oosterkerk was the church closest to Vincent’s lodgings and he visited it regularly. He wrote about the view from the Kattenburgerbrug to the church: ‘this morning I looked towards the Zuiderzee from the bridge. There was one white stripe on the horizon with dark grey clouds above it, standing out against this was the long row of houses with the Oosterkerk.’

6. Maurits Mendes da Costa

To pass his entrance exam in order to study theology, Vincent had to learn Greek and Latin. He was tutored in these subjects by the classicist Maurits Mendes da Costa. Unfortunately, the house where he lived no longer exists, but it was on this spot, bordering the old Jewish neighbourhood.

7. Rembrandthuis

(Rembrandt House Museum)

Today, the building where Rembrandt once lived is home to the Rembrandt House Museum. During one of his walks, Vincent walked past the house of the old master. He wrote about it to his brother: ‘I found the house in Breestraat where Rembrandt lived.’

8. Zuiderkerk (South Church)

Vincent often attended services in the Zuiderkerk. On Whit Monday 1877 his uncle, Reverend Stricker, preached there. Vincent found it: ‘a very beautiful, warm address.’

9. Museum van der Hoop

In Vincent’s time, this was where the famous collection of banker Adriaan van der Hoop was exhibited. It included wonderful works, with paintings by Rembrandt and Johannes Vermeer. Vincent visited the museum together with Theo.



Oudemanshuispoort, c. 1900, City Archives Amsterdam

10. Arti et Amicitiae

(Art and Friendship)

This building still houses the artists’ association Arti et Amicitiae, as was already the case in 1877. Vincent wrote about the society in his letters to his brother, but it is not certain whether he ever visited an exhibition or took part in an art review session there.

11. Palace on Dam Square

In 1877, as now, the Palace functioned as a place where the king received guests. Vincent never actually went into the palace himself. However, his Uncle Jan and Uncle Cor did. As director of the naval dockyard and an important art dealer, respectively, they were prominent citizens of the city.

12. Waalse Kerk (Walloon Church)

The services in the Waalse Kerk were held in French. The language presented no problem for Vincent, for he had lived in Paris for nearly a year. The church is still in use and its appearance has hardly changed.

13. Trippenhuis (Trip House)

The Trippenhuis was home to the Dutch national collection until 1885. Vincent often went there to look at art. The building’s exterior has remained virtually unchanged, but the collection moved to the current Rijksmuseum building in 1885.

14. Uncle Stricker

Uncle Stricker, a minister, lived at this address. Vincent admired his uncle’s passion and visited him regularly.

15. Oudezijdskapel (Old Side Chapel)

Today this chapel is no longer in use as a church, but when Vincent lived in Amsterdam he regularly attended services there. The characteristic streets around the church have hardly changed in all these years.

This is the end of the walk. Would you like to know more about Van Gogh? Then visit the Van Gogh Museum. Various trams depart from Central Station and take you to Museumplein (Museum Square) in 20 minutes.

Discover more about Van Gogh’s time in Amsterdam at: vangoghroute.com



Vincent in Amsterdam

Vincent arrived in Amsterdam in May 1877. At that time he had no plans of becoming an artist. Vincent wanted to study theology in order to become a minister like his father. He had never finished his secondary education and came to the city to prepare for a state grammar school examination. He lived with his Uncle Jan at the naval dockyard. From early morning to late at night he studied Greek, Latin, geometry and algebra. In his spare hours he strolled through the city, visited one of the churches or museums and paid his relatives a visit.



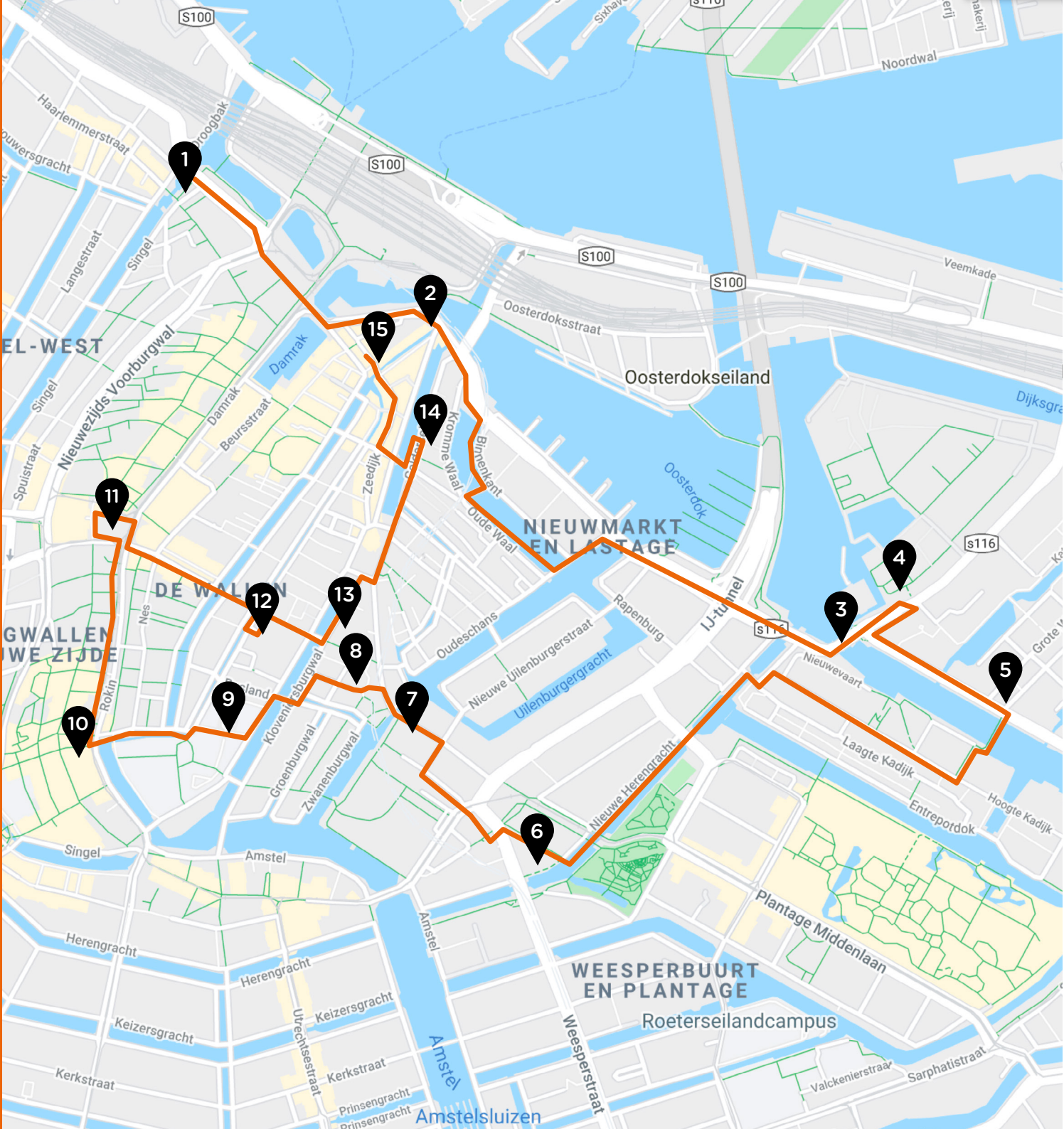
Naval dockyard and residence where Vincent stayed, 1899, Amsterdam City Archives

In the end, Vincent failed to successfully complete his studies in Amsterdam. Disillusioned, he left the city in July 1878 for his parents' house in Etten. He only came to the capital for some short visits in 1881 and 1885.

In this city walk and audio tour you will discover places in Amsterdam that were important to Vincent. Whether there is an audio stop for each address is indicated with this symbol. 

Have fun!

Scan the QR code to open the audio tour



Location

- 1 Station**
Corner Droogbak / Prins Hendrikkade
- 2 Schreierstoren ('Weepers' Tower)**
94/95 Prins Hendrikkade
- 3 Kattenburgerbrug (Kattenburg Bridge)**
- 4 Uncle Jan**
3 Grote Kattenburgerstraat
- 5 Oosterkerk (East Church)**
1 Kleine Wittenburgerstraat
- 6 Maurits Mendes da Costa**
Jonas Daniël Meijerplein (historical address)
- 7 Rembrandthuis (Rembrandt House Museum)**
4 Jodenbreestraat
- 8 Zuiderkerk (South Church)**
72 Zuiderkerkhof
- 9 Museum van der Hoop**
Oudemanhuispoort
- 10 Arti et Amicitiae (Art and Friendship)**
112 Rokin
- 11 Palace on Dam Square**
Dam Square
- 12 Waalse Kerk (Walloon Church)**
159 Walenpleintje
- 13 Trippenhuys (Trip House)**
29 Kloveniersburgwal
- 14 Uncle Stricker**
77 Geldersekaade
- 15 Oudezijds Kapel (Old Side Chapel)**
2 Zeedijk

Duration of the walk: approx. 2-3 hours