

 NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

ENTER OUR
PHOTO CONTEST

Page 92

23RD
ANNUAL

TRAVELER

ALL TRAVEL, ALL THE TIME | April 2011

80 HOTELS YOU'LL LOVE

Discover the True South America:
Culture, Authenticity & Fresh Experiences

[4TH ANNUAL STAY LIST] Page 52

A VERY PERSONAL NEW YORK

INSIDERS OFFER
THE KEYS TO THEIR
NEIGHBORHOODS

Page 73

VOLCANIC ICELAND

INTO THE HEART
OF A WILD LAND

Page 62

48 HOURS IN AMSTERDAM

Page 34

BEYOND MESA VERDE

Page 84

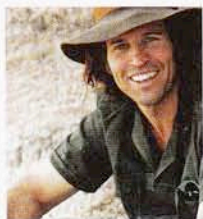
ROAD TRIP CONNECTICUT'S RICH RAMBLE

Page 40

\$4.99US \$6.99CAN



traveler.nationalgeographic.com



THE COLUMNS

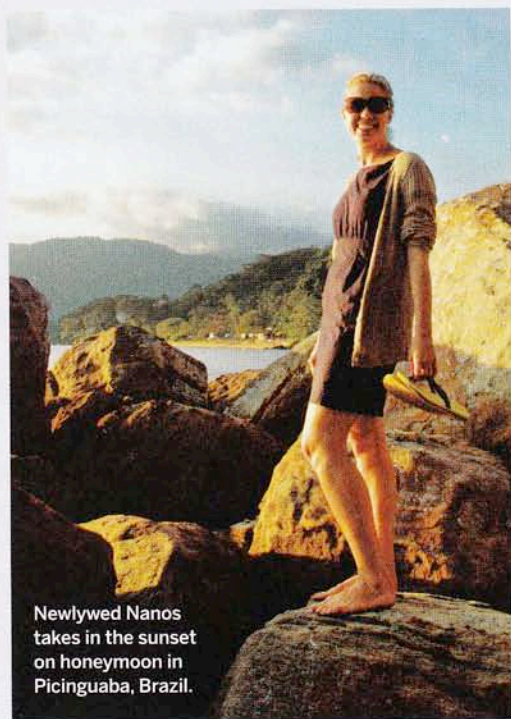
- 13 **REAL TRAVEL** Want to powerfully capture the essence of a foreign land? Just inhale through your nose.
- 14 **UNBOUND** Boyd Matson stays in the Tundra Buggy Lodge amid polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba.
- 18 **ONE ON ONE** Editor Keith Bellows chats with outfitter Ralph Bousfield (*left*) about reinventing the African safari.
- 20 **THE INSIDER** Christopher Elliott explores why more U.S. airports aren't accessible via mass transit.
- 24 **TALES FROM THE FRONTIER** In Mongolia, local tour operators face off against international mining companies.

“I can take you up over the volcano! This is a unique opportunity in human history! We will fly down into the new ice canyon like a slalom.” —Life Atop a Cauldron, page 62

BACKSTORY

My Big Fat Brazilian Honeymoon

During my honeymoon on Brazil's Costa Verde last year, two of the places where my new husband and I stayed were such hidden gems that I had to share them once I got back to the office. *Traveler* contributing editor Daisann McLane ended up visiting both the Casa Turquesa in Parati and the pousada in Picinguaba as part of this year's "Stay List: Our Favorite Hotels in



Newlywed Nanos takes in the sunset on honeymoon in Picinguaba, Brazil.

South America" (page 52). The pressure to find the perfect post-wedding escape had hung heavy on my shoulders, until I realized that the idea of what constitutes romance isn't universal. Several days on a sailboat wouldn't float for my groom, who is prone to turn green when out at sea. And the thought of sipping mai tais all day left me bored. But our rich-in-culture Brazilian getaway turned out to be just what we were looking for. We watched Crayola-colored boats bob in a harbor, ate grilled fish at tiny beachside restaurants, and strolled the cobblestone streets, chatting with the locals who waved from their windows. It was our version of bliss. —Janelle Nanos, assistant editor

DEPARTMENTS



38
Turku riverside.

- 10 **Our World**
- 12 **Inbox**

28 **Smart Traveler**

Marking the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, from **Washington, D.C.**, to **Charleston**... Top five European summer music festivals... Authentic Hawaiian leis... 48 hours: **Amsterdam**... Go now: **Turku**... Classic American sandwiches... Driving the **Connecticut** coast... Family-friendly **France**... Rafting the **Grand Canyon**... **Cappadocia's** caves... & more.

96 **The Traveler 20**

102 **Your Shot/Travel**

Wisconsin's Brule River State Forest.



34
Art in Amsterdam.



Experience A dive with hundreds of sharks near Costa Rica's remote Cocos Island is a reminder that the ocean is a destination in itself. Page 47

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: DAVID ROSS/UNCHARTED AFRICA SAFARI COMPANY; JAM PETER ROHRING/ZENIT/AM/REDOX; CATHERINE KANROW; EDUAR HERRERO; TIMOTHY COMA



Still life: Boats line the Groenburgwal, one of Amsterdam's quieter canals.

48 HOURS

Dutch Masterful

Amsterdam buffs up its historic charms. Is the Netherlands' capital entering a new Golden Age? | By **RAPHAEL KADUSHIN**

WHEN UNESCO named Amsterdam's central Canal District a World Heritage site in July 2010, the recognition helped rebrand the city. Too often reduced to a racy punch line, Amsterdam has suffered for decades from its loose reputation as Europe's happiest hooker and bachelor-party central. But the UNESCO shout-out has invigorated local conservators and dragged the spotlight back to the grand canals that Rembrandt knew well. Now

flush with newly renovated historic attractions and the kind of ateliers, galleries, and boutiques that the city's original burghers would have appreciated, Amsterdam's recovered heart is more Dutch master than party girl.

WHAT TO DO To appreciate the sheer grandeur of the Canal District's watery loop, hop on one of the tourist boats that navigate the area's four major canals (the Singel, Herengracht, Keizersgracht, and Prinsengracht). You'll glide past gabled 17th-century canal houses crowned by stone milkmaids, mermen, swans, and sea monsters.

Then step off near the Singel's venerable **floating flower market**, where vendors still bob on moored barges and bouquets sprout every tulip imaginable (even the dark purple Queen of the Night).

Café Heuvel, a popular "brown cafe," draws in a lively local crowd for Dutch beers. *Above, right:* A room in Hotel de l'Europe features a detail from Vermeer's "The Milkmaid."



Head northwest along the Singel and you'll come to the **Spui**, one of the city's brainiest squares, partly because it draws students from the neighboring University of Amsterdam. The square itself is framed by a jumble of cafés and bookstores, including the venerable **Athenaeum** (the choice shop for Dutch art and history titles), but its real surprise is an easy-to-miss doorway leading from the busy plaza into a hushed, secret garden. This is the **Begijnhof**, a leafy, pastoral courtyard surrounded by medieval houses designed as a refuge for the city's unmarried and widowed women.

The **Foam museum**, one of Europe's most creatively curated small galleries, features revolving exhibits of documentary, fine art, and historic photographs. If that sounds a little sedate, the Dutch taste for the cutting edge means that the works of a few under-30 wunderkind photographers and provocateurs are usually thrown into the mix as well.

The 17th-century **Canal House museum** (www.hetgrachtenhuis.com), the Canal District's newest star attraction, has just been restored by a team of artists, architects, and cultural historians. Interactive technology helps to depict the evolution of the house and of the surrounding canal district. Life-size images of Amsterdam's Golden Age burghers are projected onto interior walls, like costumed specters reclaiming their finally refurbished house.

The burghers would probably have gone shopping once they settled back in, and you should too. The surrounding area is defined by the **Nine Streets**, the narrow cobbled lanes that link the grand canals and feature Amsterdam's quirkiest one-theme boutiques. Stop off at the **Pompa-dour** bakery for a heavenly peach tart or some green-tea bonbons.

Fashion-forward locals head to **Margriet Nannings's** side-by-side men's and women's boutiques and to **Adrian**, which sells

menswear and shoes in exuberant colors and patterns.

The **Otherist** salvages curiosities such as bins of big gold keys—so even if you can't afford a canal house you can still unlock the door to one. You'll just never know which one. The **Frozen Fountain** is a showcase of contemporary Dutch designers like Marcel Wanders, whose ceramics recycle and fondly subvert classic Delft motifs. Next door at **Prinsheerlijk Antiques**, the artful displays of everything from old Dutch sleighs to baroque chandeliers seem to have dropped out of the portraits lining the walls.

WHERE TO EAT The beamed dining room of **Vinkeles**, in The Dylan hotel, is still punctuated by the three brick ovens that once produced bread loaves for 18th-century paupers. Now the alms have given way to Michelin-starred chef

Dennis Kuipers's roasted langoustines and poached pheasant breast.

Local favorite **Bordewijk** juggles haute French and homey Lowlands flavors in dishes like *pâté of foie gras* paired with

Amsterdam pastrami.

Back south on the Keizersgracht the more casual **Café Walem** draws Amsterdam's artsiest crowds to dine on goat cheese melted over brown bread.

Save room for the Indonesian cuisine, a legacy of Holland's former colony, at **Restaurant Long Pura**, where the rijstafel includes sample plates of every signature Indonesian dish, from sweet (chicken in Balinese sauce) to spicy (pork crowned with tomato and chili sauce).

WHERE TO STAY At **Hotel de L'Europe** (from \$457), centrally perched on the Amstel River, the 23 suites of the new Dutch Masters Wing each have a highly magnified detail from one of the Dutch paintings from the Rijksmuseum. (You could post a shot online of you posing beside, say, Rembrandt's night watchmen.)

The recently opened, 23-room **Canal House** (from \$276) opts for an intimate purple and black color palette and a blooming private back garden anchored by its own garden house, designed for romantic dinners.

The classic canal house hotel, the **Ambassade Hotel** (from \$253) offers peerless



views down the Herengracht from the preferred upper floor rooms. A favorite spot for authors on book tour, the **Ambassade** also features a library filled with signed volumes left behind by guests like Salman Rushdie, Jonathan Franzen, and Isabel Allende.

While more spartan, the eight-room **t Hotel** (from \$157) still lets you stay in a 17th-century canal house; just don't expect any 21st-century elevators.

The **Seven Bridges Hotel** (from \$151) boasts the view of seven bridges lined up in a row outside several windows. ■



Clothing shop Adrian.

[ON FOOT]

UP CLOSE IN THE CANAL DISTRICT

A lived-in vibe makes this an authentic Amsterdam walk.

If you only have time to explore a pocket of the Canal District, head toward the northwestern end. Anchored by the Prinsengracht canal and merging with the Jordaan, an old bohemian working-class neighborhood, this canal-seamed corner is dense with classic Amsterdam landmarks and actual Amsterdammers (they're the ones whizzing by on bikes).

1 WESTERKIRK > Amsterdam's most recognizable monument, this 17th-century Dutch Protestant church contains the unmarked tomb of Rembrandt, who died a pauper, and a 278-foot tower you can climb (just don't count the 186 steps) in summer for the best view of the city. Be forewarned: The top sways a bit in high winds.

2 ANNE FRANK HOUSE > Despite daily

troops of visitors, the annex where the Frank family hid for two years before being betrayed to the Nazis still evokes the loss of a life cut short. Anne's salvaged red-and-green checked diary is now on display in the museum's new diary room, inaugurated by Queen Beatrix in 2010.

3 CAFÉ T'SMALLE > This double-decker brown café—named for the cocoa-colored patina built up from years of tobacco smoke and age—fittingly started life as an 18th-century distillery and still dispenses its signature jenever (juniper-flavored Dutch gin) under a Vermeer-worthy brass chandelier.

4 NOORDERMARKT > The Jordaan's sprawling square draws local bohemians to its two weekly alfresco attractions: the Saturday morning farmers market featuring

wheels of Dutch cheese that could double as spare tires and the Monday morning market that proffers Indian saris, Delft tiles, and much more.

5 HOUSEBOAT MUSEUM > This public houseboat on the Prinsengracht lets you sample the claustrophobic yet heady sensation of living life moored to the canals.



Pooch friendly: A stroll in the Noordermarkt.