

DOUBLE DUTCH

As Amsterdam marks its 750th birthday, these stand-out stays capture the spirit of a new Dutch Golden Age

Words by NICOLE TRILIVAS



A fairy tale city of olive-hued waterways, romantic arched bridges, and dainty gabled canal houses, Amsterdam wears its age well, still glimmering with Golden Age grace. Nowhere is this enduring magic more palpable than in these three stays – the city's most captivating expressions of modern luxury and 750 years of history.

The freshman with top marks

Nothing says Amsterdam collegiate cool like the new Pillows Maurits at the Park. Nestled on the edge of the city's Canal Belt, within the serene green expanse of Oosterpark (Eastern Park in Dutch), this 88-room newcomer feels a world away from the hustle of the city centre, even though it's just a short walk (or tram ride) away. Housed in a former university building, the space has been reworked with sleek, modern sensibilities. Glazed-tiled hallways stretch into grand archways, while thick carpets cushion each step.

At the heart of the hotel is the Living Room, a book-lined guest-only hangout space, while the sun-splashed rooftop lounge is the place to be, come summertime. The hotel's airy, bright rooms are quiet luxury personified with handsome panelled walls, contemporary light features, and – if you book the top room, the Pillows Grand Suite – even a grand piano.

Overlooking the treetops on the hotel's theatrical first floor, the lofty VanOost is the property's top-class restaurant, dishing up internationally influenced signatures like well-spiced Indonesian langoustine served with pillowy Japanese milk bread and delicate Anjou pigeon, crowned with foie gras and flurries of black truffle. This will be one of the best – if not the very best – dinners you will have in the city. Save space for the epic cheese trolley, largely made of small-producer Dutch picks with great backstories (including one cow's milk cheese aged in a WWII bunker). Breakfast of cream-filled croissants and avocado toast is served on the ground floor, at the aptly named Spring, which tumbles directly into the park. pillowshotels.com

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Spring Café Brasserie at Pillows Maurits has become a gourmet destination for both hotel residents and locals alike thanks to its picturesque setting



The boutique bolthole in Dam Square

A true boutique hotel in every sense, Hotel TwentySeven is part of the prestigious Small Luxury Hotels of the World collection, and it is indeed small, with just 16 spacious suites – and undeniably luxurious – with textured wallpaper, silky draperies, and kingly furnishings. The vibe here is château chic meets goth grandeur, with a seductive, rock'n'roll edge. Metallics feature heavily, and photographic artwork can be kindly described as bonkers. Marble bathrooms are especially opulent, outfitted with deeply relaxing jet tubs, steam showers, and both Lanvin and Lalique products to choose from. Very spoiling.

Besides the dramatic design, it's the location that makes this intimate and private hotel stand out. Hidden in plain sight and tucked away on the upper floors of a townhouse tower on the city's main square, Hotel TwentySeven neighbours the neoclassical Royal Palace, the 15th-century New Church, and the imposing white stone pillar of the National Monument. Make no mistake: This is the central, tourist heart of the city (which may be a plus for some and a drawback for others). Other than the ritzy rooms, there's not much to this hideout, but don't miss the awarded restaurant, Bougainville, stationed on the hotel's third floor. While the 14-seat chef's table is the most inspiring with no-expense-spared bites of Irish Mór oysters and buttery Perle Imperial caviar, the hotel's breakfast of à la minute eggs and flaky house-made pastries doesn't disappoint – nothing about this bolthole does. ■ slh.com

Left: With 16 suites, HotelTwentySeven has classic vibes with a rock'n'roll edge
Below: Dating back to 1896, the De L'Europe hotel is owned by the Heineken family

The canal-side grande dame

De L'Europe is not *just* a hotel in Amsterdam, it's *the* hotel in Amsterdam. Dating back to 1896 and purchased by the Netherlands' famous Heineken family in the 1950s, there's no grander dame in the city. The thrill starts in the canal-front lobby, a study in old-world elegance with museum-quality oil paintings, gilded chandeliers, and oversized florals (tulips feature prominently).

The homespun elegance continues upstairs, where 107 rooms are divided into a cossetting old wing and the of-the-moment new 't Huys wing of 14 suites, collaboratively designed by some of the city's top tastemakers like Dutch jewellery designer Bibi van der Velden and filmmakers Daan & Bracha of Wolfi Pictures. There's even a *Harper's Bazaar* suite, curated by the Netherlands edition's Editor in Chief Miluska van 't Lam, which feels more like an apartment with framed magazine covers decking the walls, avant-garde sculptures, and a balcony over the boat-filled Amstel Canal. A rarity for Amsterdam, the hotel's dreamy spa has an indoor heated pool, as well as several saunas.

Dining is a pleasure at this landmark property, with several spots to choose from, including the fastidious and formal Restaurant Flore and the French-inflected Brasserie Marie, a buzzy, local favourite overlooking the Munttoren, a 15th-century tower once part of old city wall. A pre-prandial drink on the outdoor waterfront terrace at sundown is a quintessential joy. deleurope.com

