

Gastronomy

History of Food

When the Americas and Eurasia got into contact with one another, Europe learned about potatoes, tomatoes, cacao and peppers and the Americas found out about apples, pigs, chickens and rice. This was part of the so-called the Columbian exchange. In the northwestern part of Europe, people were poor and also in the Netherlands, most people were vegetarian. Not by choice but because meat was expensive. Food was fuel.

Only after the second world war, with many food shortages, did food become something more than fuel. Six decades afterwards, there are three themes that are of importance for the Dutch peoples food choice: health, convenience and exotism.

The 'schijf van vijf' warns about fatty foods and this consumer guide constantly alarms people with quality tests and currently people crave their superfoods and ready meals. The Dutch love their convenience, as much as they love exotic (be it adjusted to the Dutch market) products.

Labels

Twelve top quality labels that have been chosen by the independent educational organisation Milieu Centraal and other experts in the Netherlands. These labels are the most reliable and transparent choices when it comes to the environment, animal welfare, people and work but they do not rate whether or not fish was caught in a sustainable way or if chicken had a 'better life' or even if a product is fair trade. You can check out the 'label guide' where you can check out how reliable a label is by checking out the different categories or brands and names. <https://keurmerkenwijzer.nl/> Adding some sort of 'sustainability' label seems to benefit producers as many consumers are willing to spend more money when they see a label.

Traditional Dishes

Each region and city has its own typical specialties, such as the Bossche bol from Den Bosch or the Frisian sugar bread. Traditionally, some dishes are mainly eaten in a certain season, such as asparagus from Limburg and mussels from Zeeland. Here's an overview of what is typical for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We'll start of with a typical Dutch breakfast: a sandwich with peanut butter and/or chocolate sprinkles. For lunch, most people take a lunchbox to work, containing a few sandwiches with cheese and cold cuts and milk or buttermilk is often drunk with this. A traditional evening meal in the Netherlands is stamppot. Usually vegetables such as sauerkraut, endive or kale are mixed with boiled potatoes. They are mashed together and served with smoked sausage and bacon or meatballs. For dessert, people like to eat something called a 'vlaflip': custard, yogurt and a dash of lemonade.

Modern Menu

Nowadays the Dutch are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of sustainable food. They try to prevent waste by using sustainable and reusable packaging material. In Dutch cuisine we are more aware of the earth by eating more plant-based foods: following the 80/20 principle: 80% vegetables and 20% meats. Seasonal products, 'no waste food' and fairly produced products must be visibly present on the plate.



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Best practices: Festival 'Lowlands'

Lowlands is one of the best-known and largest festivals in the Netherlands. The festival takes more and more responsibility for the organization of a sustainable and environmentally friendly festival.

Every August, thousands of Lowlanders descend on Biddinghuizen for 'A Campingflight to Lowlands Paradise', a three-day festival packed with music, theatre, film, comedy, literature, street theatre, science and visual arts. Lowlands offers no less than twelve stages for 250+ acts and performances, where both headliners and young dogs invariably draw full tents. https://youtu.be/cquVg_pRVaI

Lowlands is active in a number of areas to make its business operations as sustainable as possible: transport, energy, waste, water and catering: <https://lowlands.nl/green-clean/>

For example, Lowlands has built the largest solar carport in the world. The solar park was built on the parking areas of Lowlands and covers an area of 35 hectares. The solar carport has been operational since 2022 and consists of 90,000 solar panels that produce about 35,000,000 kWh of electricity annually, which means that about 10,000 households can be supplied with green electricity. This is equivalent to the power consumption of about 100 Lowlands weekends per year. <https://youtu.be/qCG6o0gcmKc>

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If we zoom in on the catering/gastronomy section, Lowlands is a frontrunner when it comes to the innovation of backstage and public catering. It strives for the largest possible range of organic and fair-trade products. A growing number of smaller, specialized caterers offer organic and fair-trade products. The great success of these providers at Lowlands encourages the large caterers to also switch to some extent. In this way, responsible food and drinks are available everywhere on the site.

Best practices: Michelin Green star

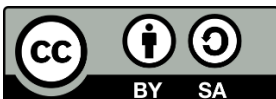
Another example of a way to value and promote sustainability is the green star created by MICHELIN. The MICHELIN Guide has created the Green Star to put sustainability on the map. But what exactly does that award entail?

The Green Star is an annual award that highlights examples of sustainability. The star honors restaurants and chefs who hold themselves accountable for their ethical and environmental standards. They work with ethical suppliers and manufacturers to avoid waste and are committed to eliminating plastic and other non-recyclable materials from their supply chain.

What do restaurants with a Green Star do?

Many chefs work in close collaboration with growers, farmers and fishermen. They go foraging in the woods, have their own animals and grow their own fruit and vegetables. Several chefs also have an eye for regenerative agricultural methods and, for example, are working with food forests.

A good example can be found in the following link: <https://youtu.be/4wvRy2TP3Uo>



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