

VISIT GUIDE 2026

the Mauritshuis Museum

The Hague · From 21€

https://mauritshuis.visit-tickets.com/en/ : Skip-the-line tickets & rates



History & experience

ORIGIN & HISTORY

From Royal Residence to Temple of Art

GOOGLE 4.7 ★★★★★ 20 253 reviews

TIQETS 4.7 ★★★★★ 1 227 reviews

Built between **1636 and 1641**, the Mauritshuis was originally the residence of John Maurice of Nassau, cousin to the Stadtholder. This neo-classical building, designed by Jacob van Campen and Pieter Post, is distinguished by its strict symmetry and rare architectural elegance for the time. Initially, it housed four private apartments and a large hall, reflecting the prestigious status of its owner in the heart of The Hague, then the political center of the Dutch Republic.

The history of the site has been marked by a major drama: in **1704**, a devastating fire destroyed the entire interior, including the iconic dome. The restoration, which took place from 1708 to 1718, redefined the interior space we know today. This reconstruction allowed the building to survive the centuries while retaining its late Baroque soul, gradually becoming a symbol of Dutch architectural heritage, ranked among the country's hundred most important sites.

In 1822, the museum opened its doors to the public, housing the Royal Cabinet of Paintings. The collection, initially dispersed or sequestered by the French in 1795, was gradually reunified. In 1995, the Mauritshuis became a non-profit foundation, managing both the building and the works entrusted to it by the State. This modern structure ensures the rigorous preservation of the canvases in a controlled environment, guaranteeing their long-term physical and chemical stability.

World War II offers an unexpected facet of the edifice. Between 1940 and 1945, the museum served as a **refuge from the Nazis** for civilians avoiding forced labor, hidden in the attics and cellars despite the occupying presence. Simultaneously, the collection was saved through clever storage in a bunker beneath the museum, then transferred to the caves of St Pietersberg near Maastricht. This dual protection allowed masterpieces such as *Girl with a Pearl Earring* to be preserved intact, testifying to Dutch cultural resilience.

THE EXPERIENCE

From the very entrance, the visitor is drawn into an atmosphere of **contemplative intimacy**. Unlike the vast halls of major national museums, the space here is confined, creating an immediate proximity with the canvases. Natural light, filtered through high windows, bathes the portraits in a soft glow that highlights every nuance of color and every detail of the brushwork. One does not view the works from a safe distance; one contemplates them face to face, as if invited into the private salon of a 17th-century nobleman.

The route is short but dense, offering total immersion without physical fatigue. Each room seems to breathe history, where silence often reigns, broken only by the discreet murmur of visitors. It is a unique sensory experience, where art is not merely displayed but lived within a temporal bubble that suspends everyday life. Emotion arises from this absolute concentration on a few absolute masters of the Dutch Golden Age.



PREPARE YOUR VISIT

Practical information

ADDRESS

The Hague · Tram: Station Den Haag Centraal (Lines 2, 10, 17) or Vijverberg stop (Line 2), 5 min walk.

OPENING HOURS

Closed on Mondays and Dutch public holidays. Hours vary by season, please check before your visit.

FEES

Free child entry depending on age (check variants)

VISIT DURATION

Allow 45 to 60 minutes for a complete linear tour. The restricted space allows for a dense immersion without major physical fatigue, unlike large encyclopedic m

PHOTOS

Photography is allowed without flash. Tripods are generally prohibited to avoid obstructing traffic in the narrow rooms. Check specific rules during temporary e

AUDIENCE

Ideal from 8-10 years old if interested in art. Wheelchair accessible (one main level). Children must be calm; there is no specific playful route, so it is best

HOW TO GET THERE

Access & transport

Metro

: Den Haag, Centrum — 3 min à pied

Cafe de la Gare (7 min) · The Hague, Central Station (7 min)

Bus

: City Center — 4 min à pied

Cafe de la Gare (10 min) · The Hague, Central Station (10 min)

Car

Cafe de la Gare (5 min) · The Hague, Central Station (5 min)

Bike

Cafe de la Gare (4 min) · The Hague, Central Station (5 min)

LOCALISATION

Où se trouve the Mauritshuis Museum ?



📍 Plein 29 — 2511 CS The Hague

🌐 52°4.826′ N, 4°18.859′ E



ORGANIZATION

A Linear and Compact Route

Level 0 (Ground Floor)

This level houses the main rooms dedicated to the great masters of the Golden Age. It features iconic portraits by Rembrandt and Vermeer, arranged in quiet spaces that encourage prolonged contemplation. The linear layout naturally guides visitors toward the collection's masterpieces.

Level 1 (Upper floor)

The upper floor features complementary works and landscape or genre paintings, enriching the understanding of the artistic context of the era. The rooms are smaller, creating a dynamic of progressive discovery. It also includes elements related to the history of the building and the royal family.

Modern Extension (Tunnel)

Since 2014, an extension connected via a tunnel under Korte Vijverberg has provided additional spaces for temporary exhibitions. This modern section contrasts with the classical architecture of the main building. It allows for more visitors to be accommodated while maintaining the comfort of the permanent collection.

ACCESSIBILITY

♿ **Disabled Access**

Easy access on a main level, with a few discreet stairs for annexes.

👨‍👩‍👧 **Families**

Recommended from ages 8-10 for curious children; quiet required.

🎧 **Audio guide**

French, English, Spanish, Italian, German



Must-sees

SELECTION

The Treasures of the Golden Age

01 JOHANNES VERMEER Main Hall

Girl with a Pearl Earring

Often nicknamed the 'Mona Lisa of the North', this work embodies the genius of **Vermeer**. The young woman's direct gaze and the pearl's luster immediately captivate the viewer. The chiaroscuro technique is brought to its peak here, creating remarkable psychological depth.

> 💡 During World War II, this canvas was hidden in a **bunker** beneath the museum, then in the caves of St Pietersberg, ensuring its miraculous survival.

02 JOHANNES VERMEER Main Hall

The Goldfinch

This early study already demonstrates the artist's mastery of light. The subtle interplay between the bird and the boy, as well as the silky texture of the clothing, testify to keen observation. It is a window into **Vermeer**'s creative process before his major masterpieces.

> 💡 Painted very early in the artist's career, it already reveals his exceptional talent for rendering matter and light.

03 JOHANNES VERMEER Main Hall

View of Delft

Considered the first urban panorama in art history, this work offers a breathtaking aerial view of the city. Its topographical precision and soft color palette make it a unique piece. One admires how **Vermeer** captures the tranquil essence of his hometown.

> 💡 This painting has inspired numerous studies on the urban geometry of 17th-century Delft.

04 REMBRANDT VAN RIJN Main Hall

The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp

An absolute masterpiece of **Dutch Baroque**, this canvas depicts a public dissection. The staging of the scene, with gazes turned toward the corpse, creates intense narrative tension. Rembrandt uses light to sculpt the faces and underscore the scientific importance of the event.

> 💡 The anatomical model, Jan Aertsz, was a criminal sentenced to death, which adds a layer of raw reality to the composition.

05 REMBRANDT VAN RIJN Main Hall

Self-Portrait with Two Circles

In this late self-portrait, Rembrandt explores the duality of the human being. The two circles may symbolize life and death, or the soul and the body. The introspective expression on his face reflects a profound artistic and spiritual maturity in the master.

> 💡 It is one of the last known self-portraits by Rembrandt, painted just before his death in 1669.

06 JACOB VAN RUISDAEL Landscape Room

The Mill

This work exemplifies the early Romanticism of Dutch landscapes. The mill tower dominated by a stormy sky expresses the power of nature. Van Ruisdael excels in depicting atmospheric effects, making the air almost tangible.

> 💡 The mill tower depicted actually existed in Zaandam, a place dear to the artist.

07 VINCENT VAN GOGH Temporary/rotating room

The Potato Eaters

Although less well-known than his post-impressionist works, this painting shows the decisive influence of Dutch folk art on Van Gogh. It depicts the daily life of peasants with realistic tenderness. This piece highlights the artist's deep roots in the local tradition.

> 💡 Van Gogh copied this work several times, showing his admiration for the social realism of his predecessors.

08 PAULUS POTTER Animal Room

Flamingo

Painted when the artist was only 15 years old, this canvas is a prodigy of animal realism. The texture of the flamingo's skin is rendered with incredible precision. Potter demonstrates an observational ability that far exceeds his young age.

> 💡 Paulus Potter tragically drowned at the age of 20, leaving behind a major work of animal painting.

TIPS

Prepare Your Visit Well

TIMING

Be sure to choose the 9:30 AM slot or right after opening. Crowds are minimal and natural light is ideal for appreciating the details of the paintings without being disturbed by the crowds.

TICKET

Book your ticket online in advance; it is strongly recommended, or even mandatory, during peak hours. This saves you from queues in front of the historic building and guarantees your entry.

TOUR

Follow the proposed linear route. It lasts approximately 45 minutes and eliminates any major physical fatigue. Do not try to rush; take your time to contemplate each work in logical order.

PHOTO

Take photos without flash, but avoid using a tripod as it can obstruct traffic in narrow rooms. Make the most of the soft light from the windows to capture portraits, especially Girl with a Pearl Earring.

BREAK

The in-house café is small, perfect for an espresso. For a more substantial lunch, head to the cafés around the Hofvijver or Vijverberg, just a few minutes' walk away.

CHILDREN

Recommended from ages 8-10 if the child shows an interest in art. There is no specific playful tour, so patience and calm are necessary to fully enjoy the atmosphere.

AUDIOGUIDE

The audioguide is available in French and is worth the cost to deepen your understanding of the techniques and historical contexts. It is recommended for complex works, such as those by Rembrandt.

COMFORT

Come with a light bag. Large bags and suitcases are often refused or require a paid deposit due to the building's limited space. Comfortable shoes are recommended for walking around the museum.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

Do I really need to book in advance?

Yes, booking is highly recommended, even mandatory at peak times, to avoid queues in front of the historic building. In high season, morning slots go quickly. Book online to guarantee your access and save precious time.

How long before can I cancel?

This ticket is neither cancellable nor refundable once the reservation is confirmed. Carefully check the date, time slot, and number of participants before paying, as no changes are possible afterwards.

Is there a current promotion?

Occasional offers may appear on the official website, particularly for audio guides or guided tours. Keep an eye on the 'Offers' section regularly. Standard rates remain stable, but premium options sometimes benefit from

Can I buy my ticket on site?

It is possible, but risky because daily stock is limited. Without prior booking, you risk waiting 30 to 45 minutes or leaving empty-handed. Online booking remains the safest method for a smooth experience.

How long does the visit take?

Allow approximately 45 minutes to tour all the main rooms. The route is linear and compact, allowing for dense contemplation without rushing. Take the time needed to appreciate every detail of the Masters of the Golden A

DID YOU KNOW?

Anecdotes & curiosities

The secret shelter of the war

Between 1940 and 1945, the museum served as an unexpected refuge. People avoiding forced labor hid in the attics and cellars, despite the Nazi presence in the building. This discreet story testifies to the **resilience** of The Hague's residents during the occupation.

Rescue by the caves

To protect the collection, including *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, the works were stored in a bunker beneath the museum, then transferred to the caves of St Pietersberg near Maastricht. This extreme precaution allowed the national heritage to be safeguarded for two full years.

The Founding Fire

In 1704, a fire destroyed the interior of the building before a complete restoration between 1708 and 1718. This drama shaped the current interior architecture, giving the museum its present appearance as an art gallery rather than a private residence.

State property

Although related to the royal family by name, the museum is a property of the Dutch government and not of the current royal domain. It houses the Royal Cabinet of Paintings, an honorary distinction that underscores its historical and cultural importance.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

Located in the heart of The Hague, the museum benefits from a rich historical setting. Right next door, the **Binnenhof** stands with its Gothic majesty, serving as the seat of the Dutch government and offering a fascinating architectural contrast. For a contemplative break, the **Hofvijver**, a large artificial pond bordered by royal gardens, is ideal after the visit. The cafés around Vijverberg offer lively terraces, perfect for a quick coffee before heading out. Further away, the Royal Naval Museum completes the immersion into the maritime history of the Netherlands. The neighborhood is pedestrian-friendly and pleasant, allowing you to leisurely stroll along Korte Vijverberg, a picturesque square connecting the museum to the city center.



Leaving the Mauritshuis means carrying with you a **pure and lasting emotion**. It is not merely a museum visit, but an intimate encounter with the soul of Dutch painting. In this small jewel box in The Hague, time slows down and art takes on its full human dimension. Depart with the image etched in your mind of these eternal faces, silent witnesses to an era of artistic glory.