





The Jordan, 17th
century and formed
by the western edge
of a hemisphere of
concentric canals:

Herengracht

Keisersgracht

Prinsengracht.

Its houses, founda-
tions reclaimed by the
best Dutch engineers
– world masters at
cheating the seas and
taming the polder –
are tall and narrow.

Which meant tiny
stairways.

Which meant head-
aches for those paid
to move oak table
and horse-hair sofa as
a burgeoning middle
class (those who
hadn't traded their all
for a single tulip
bulb) moved up the
property ladder.

Which meant
ropes and iron
hooks, high
above canal and
herring-boned
path, to swing
the big stuff
through kingsize
windows.

Turning my back
on a queue that
snaked back two
hundred metres
from the Anne
Frank house on
Prinsengracht, I
opted for bar
studies and street
snapography.





























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LAURIERSTRAAT
(CENTRUM)



Flea markets are magnets for any self-respecting street snapper. The *Noordmarkt* (North Market) is no exception.

It's on every Monday, the most interesting section overlooked by the handsome *Noordkerk* (yup, North Church) and held in place by a triangle formed by Prinsengracht and two streets lined with the most friendly and atmospheric bars and coffee shops in Europe.













I'm confident
nobody viewing
this is making
lazily stereotypical
and politically
incorrect
assumptions
about what the
dude in furs
might be up to.
That would be
very bad.





Watch the pair on this and
the next two slides,
pretending not to know one
another. My camera never
lies. At the very least they're
having an affair, but may
even be buying and selling
atomic secrets.





seriously furtive look







Getting an
acceptable rendition
of what I *saw* as I
took this backlit shot
called for a fair
degree of Photoshop
dabbling.







classy

endearing





Back at the Anne Frank House, this Costa Rican had first asked me to catch her with her own camera.



ANNE
FRANK
HUIS

Anne could not
in a million
years have
foreseen this
but the whole
world wants to
be snapped
here. Especially
the young and
beautiful.



ANNE
FRANK
HUIS

... with some of the
photographers just
as tasty. If this one
isn't Israeli I'm a
Dutchman.





ANNE
FRANK
HUIS

It's not for me to
judge or decry but
from a certain
standpoint you
have to say this is
all pretty fucking
bizarre.



You also have to
say that, in
contrast with
the Danes,
Dutch
complicity
bordered on the
downright
eager.

KOFFIE HUIS

DE H

But who are we,
baby boomers
untested by
history, to judge?





So that's my
favourite
European city,
as caught in
the dying
hours of 2014.



dank je