



# A

## A is for Agenda

**The agenda rules the lives of the Dutch. Want to arrange a drink with a friend? Then take out your agenda. Want to arrange a dinner? Then take out your agenda and flip ahead three weeks. And then write down in your agenda to actually check your agenda.**



# B

## **B is for Bitterbal**

**A 'bitter ball' is a deep-fried blob of meat mélange. It's the quintessential 'borrelhapje' ('booze bite'). You dip it in mustard, crunch down and invariably burn your tongue - making speaking impossible for several minutes. It's one of the things that Dutchies miss most when living abroad, along with the iconic Dutch department store HEMA - famous for their 'worst' (also greasy, but whole other story).**



# E

## E is for Evacuate

**When Dutchies go on holiday, they bring everything from home. It looks less like a vacation than an evacuation. Some things such as 'hagelslag' (chocolate or candied sprinkles for on bread) or a favorite brand of 'pindakaas' (peanut butter) cannot be found elsewhere. But why do they insist on also bringing milk and potatoes? If you are camping in France and see the glow of a TV set from a tent, it's probably a Dutchie. Orange light bulbs on a caravan? Definitely a Dutchie.**



# F

## F is for Fashion Models

**The Dutch - along with a few African tribes - are the tallest people in the world. Therefore, many Dutch girls are primed to become models. Their down-to-earth nature also makes them popular to work with. It's theorized that the tallness comes from the insane amounts of milk the Dutch drink - casually tossing back a liter over lunch. Funnily enough, the pale Dutch legs of girls are often called 'milk bottles'.**



## **G is for Gay Pride**

**Once a year the Dutch celebrate their open-mindedness by letting all kinds of people on boats to cruise the canals and behave outrageously. Gays, lesbians, transgenders, bank executives, awkwardly dressed-up straight people, cops, toddlers etc. It's all very 'gezellig'. This unpronounceable word has no direct translation - but 'socially cozy' comes close.**





## I is for Ice-Skating

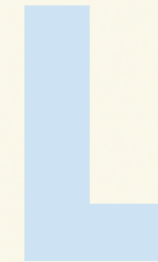
Skating is very, very popular in the Netherlands. Some Dutch can skate before they can walk - which explains all those Olympic gold medals. When it freezes for a few days, the Dutch get '11 Cities Fever' because they all want to skate a famous tour in the north. Sadly, the tour has only taken place a few times in the last decades. Damn you, global warming!



# J

## J is for Jenever

As the original gin, 'jenever' was invented around 1650 by a doctor in Leiden who came up with the process that infused juniper berries into distilled spirits. Within decades, the country was exporting 10 million gallons of the stuff, as a supposedly innocent cure for stomach and kidney ailments. We now know better. It's most dangerous form is the 'kopstoot' ('head butt') when a shot - charmingly served in a tulip-shaped glass - is paired with a glass of beer. 'Proost'!



## L is for Licorice

**'Drop' is Dutch for licorice. The Dutch eat 'drop' all the time in every flavor they can get: salty, sweet, very salty, extremely salty. Foreigners find it disgusting, but the Dutch say: 'Lekker, lekker!' This means 'Mmmm, tasty'. They also use this term to describe someone as attractive, or a goal by a Dutch soccer player as nice. Interestingly, if one puts a 'dan' behind 'lekker' then it means the opposite: not cool at all. 'Lekker dan'!**





# M

## M is for Music

**This country is famous for electronic dance DJs such as AfroJack, Hardwell, Martin Garrix, Armin van Buuren and Tiësto. But if you walk into a bar at 4am, you will encounter a whole other musical pastime: drunken tears-in-your-beer sing-alongs to the repertoire of André Hazes and his ilk. This is often a prelude to hitting a snackbar for a 'kroket' (essentially the elongated version of the bitterbal, see page B) or 'Patat mét' (fries with mayo - also starts with M).**