

AT LEAST
70% OVER
UNPAVED
PATHS

HOLLAND STORY-ROUTE

Walking tour around **Hernen** Castle



DURATION
2HRS - 4HRS
(8 OR 16 KM)



The castles and country estates storyline

It is a well-kept secret that the Netherlands is home to over 600 castles, country estates and manor houses.

These typical historic Dutch houses and beautiful gardens were mainly inhabited by 17th and 18th-century merchants and nobility. They stem from the same wealth and extravagance that produced the world-famous paintings in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Mauritshuis museum in The Hague. It is about time to shine the spotlight on these gorgeous castles and country estates. Collectively they tell the story of impressive gardens, historic interiors with valuable collections and famous residents. They're an ode to the rich country life of the Netherlands through the centuries. For more information about Dutch castles and country estates:

www.holland.com/castles



Hernen Castle

Go on a journey back in time at Hernen Castle. The tower dates back to the 14th century. The castle has a long history and was owned by a number of noble families over the years. Hernen Castle is well-preserved and is the only castle in the Netherlands that has covered parapet walkways. In 2002, archaeologists found the remains of 14th-century brick kilns near the castle. This is where the stone and bricks for the castle were fired. The castle is located in a varied and watery landscape with forests and tree avenues, grasslands and ancient river courses. Up-to-date visitor information about the museum can be found at hernen.glk.nl/plan-je-bezoek/openingstijden-entree/

Beech avenues, forest and rivers

The walk around the castle takes place in the Land van Maas en Waal between the villages of Leur, Hernen and Bergharen. The route forms a series of small loops. Where the tributaries of the Maas river used to wind, we now walk along a gently rolling landscape of small forests, tree avenues and grasslands on old river dunes. It's a region of great cultural history brimming with country estates with castles, manor houses, farms, tower windmills (beltmolen) and church paths. The route starts at the

imposing Hernen Castle, a medieval castle best known for the Dutch television series *Floris*. Brick kilns were found behind the castle and were used to fire the bricks for the construction of the castle in the 14th century. The first loop takes us along the beech avenues of the Hernen estate and between the fields along the water of the Leurse and Nieuwe Wetering towards the village of Bergharen and then back to the castle. In the village of Hernen we pass the Neo-Romanesque church Saint Judocus, the patron saint of pilgrims, farmers, bakers, the sick as well as fruit. On the other side of the motorway lies the pleasantly surprising Hernen forest, with heathland, a large fen and the Hernen grain mill located on a hill and dating from 1745. The route continues between the fields with a view of the Hernen Lake, created by a river breakthrough, and past Meerenburg care farm to the park forest of the Heerlijkheid Leur estate. This park forest was partly constructed in the formal style in the 18th century and expanded over the course of the 19th century in the English landscape style, with winding avenues, groups of trees and meadows. The Heerlijkheid has been privately owned since 1748. After passing Huis te Leur, a classic manor house dating back to 1778, we stroll through the idyllic hamlet of Leur via the church path. Past the medieval church with a motte (a fortification wall), a bakery with info centre and the 't Hof farm. On the way back, we take other paths through the Leur and Hernen forest back to the castle.



Practical information

The castle is owned by the Geldersch Landschap & Kasteelen Foundation and has been opened as a museum. The first mention of the ‘Lords of Hernen’ dates back to 1247. A century later, the lordship was in the possession of the Van Driel family and then the Van Wijhe family from 1406 to 1646. After that, it was passed down through inheritance to several southern Dutch families.

Explore the castle with a ‘talking’ lantern as your guide. The guide tells the special stories about the castle, seen through the eyes of the castle lord himself or – for the children – as a little mouse. What happens when you want to adapt a 16th-century castle to the needs of your own time?

Hernen Castle, Dorpsstraat 40, Hernen, hernen.glk.nl/

Duration of walk

At an average walking pace, the route takes around 2 or 4 hours (8 or 16 km) to complete. Because the route is made up of two loops, it is easy to choose between the longer or the shorter version. Where the route crosses the highway, you can choose to do the shorter version. Please note

that the walking route is largely unmarked (parts of it pass along posts with red markings) and can be easily walked with the accompanying text description and map.

Start and end point

Car park of Hernen Castle, Dorpsstraat 40 in Hernen. You can safely park your car here free of charge.

Public transportation

Bus stop Broekstraat, line 563 to/from Wijchen station, Monday to Friday only. Check departure times on www.ov9292.nl.

Catering along the way

Snackpoint Hills, Stompendijk 9, 6617 KH Bergharen, hillsbergharen.nl/
Cafeesterij De Toekomst, Dorpsstraat 20, Hernen, www.cafeesterijdetoekomst.nl/
Bakhuys Info Centre, Van Balverenlaan 1b in Leur, www.glk.nl/landschappen-kastelen/locatie/bezencentrum-land-van-de-heerlijkheden (limited opening times)
De Leurse Hof, Leurseweg 4, 6615 AJ Leur, deleursehof.nl/





Wonderful overnight stays in a castle atmosphere

Combine the walk with stylish overnight accommodation and make your stay in the Land van Maas en Waal a truly unforgettable experience. There are two special places to stay within a 10 or 30-minute drive:

Doddendael Castle in Ewijk

This charming small castle hotel has beautiful gardens and is just a stone's throw from the Waal River. It is a peaceful oasis in the middle of the Land van Maas en Waal.

Doddendael Castle is ideally located for a bike ride through this vast region and the lovely orchards.

Doddendael Castle, Binnenweg 2, Ewijk, www.doddendael.nl

B&B Koetshuis Kasteel Ammersoyen

Would you like to wake up in the morning to a beautiful view of a medieval castle and the Bommelerwaard countryside? Then book a stay at the B&B in Ammersoyen Castle's coach house. It offers stylishly decorated rooms with spacious beds and each room

has an en-suite bathroom equipped with a fantastic shower.

B&B Koetshuis Kasteel Ammersoyen, Kasteellaan 3, Ammerzoden, www.koetshuis-kasteel-ammersoyen.nl

Exciting castles in the Rivierenland region

It's not just the beautiful landscape that is characteristic of the Land van Maas en Waal; there are also several striking and impressive castles. In addition to Hernen Castle, some

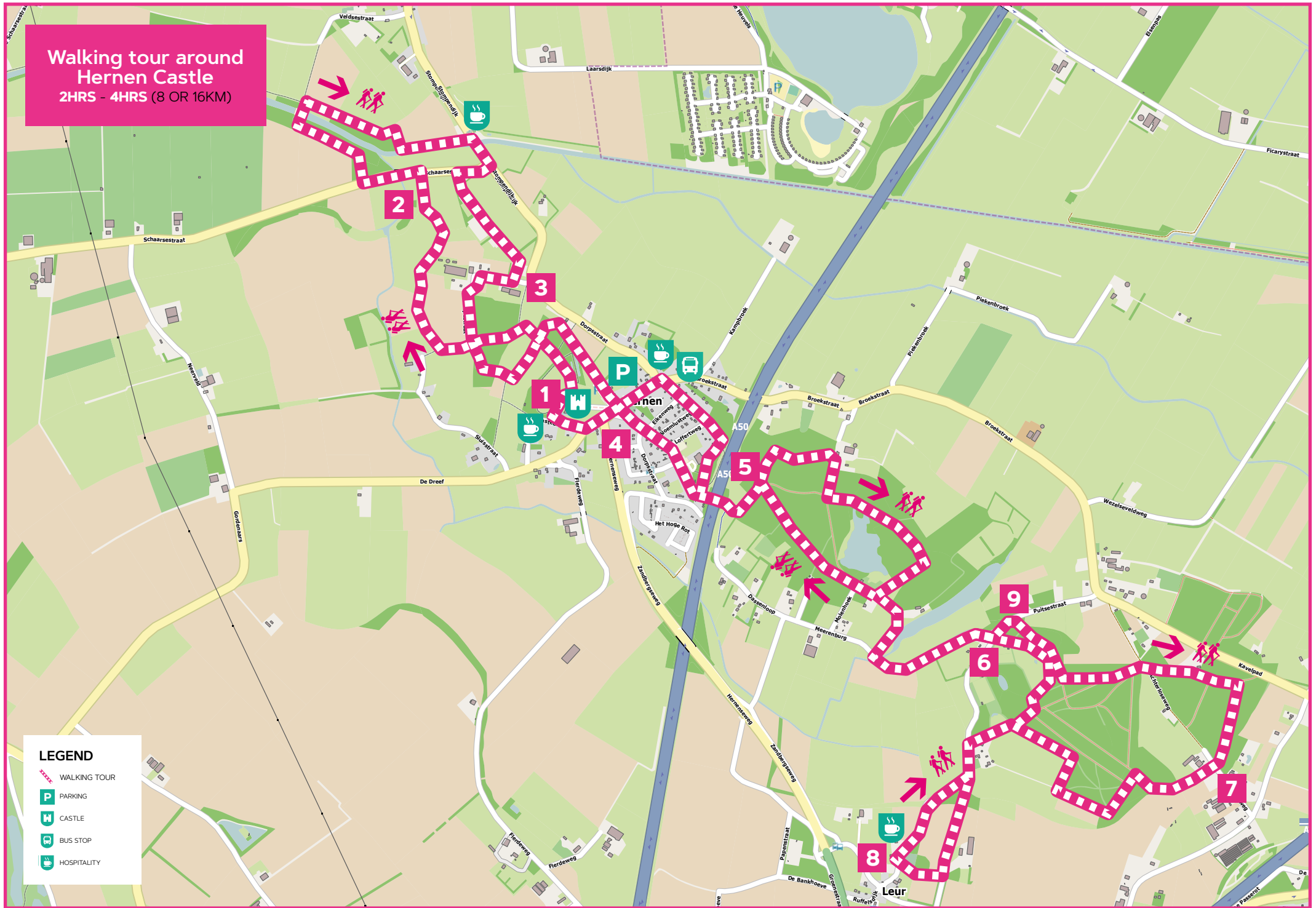
other highly recommended examples include the castle museums of Loevestein Castle (known for the historic escape of Hugo de Groot) and Ammersoyen Castle. Stadskasteel (city castle) Zaltbommel, Neerijnen Castle, Waardenburg Castle and Soelen Castle are all reminders of a rich history, but they are not open to the public. The Heerlijkheid Mariënwaerd estate in Beesd is highly recommended as a great place to take a walk, or visit the restaurant or the shop. For the latest information on the castles in this region, please visit: www.rivierenland.nl/spannende-kastelen/

Walking tour around Hernen Castle

2HRS - 4HRS (8 OR 16KM)

LEGEND

-  WALKING TOUR
-  PARKING
-  CASTLE
-  BUS STOP
-  HOSPITALITY



Directions for the walk

1 In the car park near the castle, you take the unpaved path on the right, past a hedge on your left. Continue walking along the hedge. Slightly further uphill along the edge of the forest. At a crossroads, go straight ahead and then straight again immediately after the next crossroads. You will pass by an info panel about brickyards on your right and continue to follow the path as it bends. Turn right at the crossroads at the edge of the forest. At the next crossroads, turn left past a sign that reads 'honden aan de lijn' (dogs must be kept on leash). Follow the bend to the right, then a beech avenue. At the junction with a wooden barrier, continue straight ahead onto a wider unpaved path. Ignore a path to the right and go straight ahead. At the junction, turn right along a wooden barrier and a 'Landgoed Hernen' sign, onto a wide grassy trail. Continue to follow this path as it bends between the fields. You cross a bridge and walk past a reed bed on your left.

2 Turn left at the paved road. Then take the first forest path to the right - past a wooden barrier and a 'Welkom op Bergharen' sign. Continue to follow the path in and along the edge of the forest. Further along, follow the bend to the right and a little after that cross a bridge. Turn right immediately after the bridge at the intersection with a picnic bench, with a wide grass path along the water on your left. Follow the bend along the grass path to the right, away from the water. Then follow the bend to the left, through a hinged gate and continue on the wide grass path, now along a wide waterway on your right. Go through another hinged

gate and continue straight on to the paved road and Snackpoint. There you turn right over the bridge. Now take the first road on the right, Schaarsestraat. Quickly take the first brick road on the left and past a sign 'Sportpark Schaarweide', Sportlaantje. You pass fences and at the buildings keep to the right over gravel and over a tile path along the terrace. After the building, continue along the brick road towards fences. Follow this brick road as it bends to the right.

3 At the end, in front of a farm, turn right onto a paved road. Continue to follow this road as it bends around a horse ranch. Where the pavement stops, go straight past the fences and, immediately after the intersection with a wide grass path, head straight past a pink picnic bench to a grass path past an 'Opengesteld' sign with the edge of the forest on your left. At an intersection cross diagonally to the left and head to a path along the edge of the forest, near a post with a red top and yellow-red marking. Follow the bend to the right and ignore a path to the right that heads over the field, so continue following the edge of the forest. Follow the bend to the left, then a tree avenue. You exit the forest and continue following the path between the fields. At the end, turn left at a crossroads and continue between the fields. Now take the first path to the right along the edge of the forest on your left. You pass a bench. Continue to follow this path along the edge of the forest. Ignore a path to the left and continue straight ahead at the junction, on a beech avenue in the direction of the castle. Turn right at the crossroads in front of the wall. Keep right and at the end turn right at the crossroads. Follow the bend to the left past the castle. Keep to the left at a crossroads,



continue on a small oak avenue past the castle. Continue until you reach the bend of the paved road near the church.

4 Keep left here, on a half-paved path on the right side of the Dorpsstraat past the church on your right. At the crossroads, keep right at the signpost and immediately after that turn right, onto the Batavierenweg. Ignore side roads and go straight ahead to a dead end. At the end of the brick road, head straight onto a forest path. Immediately follow the bend to the right and ignore a path to the left. Follow the bend to the right, uphill and then keep left, stay on higher path. Ignore a path that heads down and to the right. At a Y-junction, keep right and shortly thereafter keep right at the crossroads and follow it down. At the paved path, turn left through the tunnel. After the tunnel, turn left past a Geldersch Landschap wooden gate and a 'Landgoed Hernen' sign, onto a trail along the forest edge.

5 Turn left at the intersection near a bench, onto a forest path. Follow the bend to the right. Ignore a path to the left and continue straight ahead. Follow the bend

to the right and when you are level with a farm on your left, you walk along a beech avenue. Turn left at the first intersection. You walk over heathland with a fen on your right. Then back into the forest. Ignore a path diagonally to the left (vulnerable area). Follow the bend to the right. Follow the path in the direction of the mill. Continue past the white gate to the road. Turn left on the paved road. Continue to follow this road with a bend to the right between the fields. Turn left at the end. Follow the road to a crossroads at the Meerenburgh. Keep right here in the direction of Woezik and at a crossroads immediately after that continue straight ahead past a wooden barrier and a 'Heerlijkheid Leur' sign.

6 Immediately after that, keep to the left at the crossroads, on a beech avenue along an open field on your right. After the open field, ignore a path to the right and then follow the bend along to the right. Ignore a path diagonally to the left from behind. Then take the first wide forest path at a right angle to the left. You will arrive at a double beech avenue; keep left here. Continue to a metal gate.



Immediately after that, turn right on the wide half-paved road and then immediately turn left diagonally along an 'Open' sign, a forest path that runs slightly uphill. Continue further along the edge of the forest. At the crossroads near a house, follow the bend to the right past a fence made of mesh on your left. Further along head back into the forest. Ignore a path to the right and go straight ahead. Now take the next path to the right. Continue to the paved road.

7 Cross here and go straight ahead on a double beech avenue past a sign reading 'Heerlijkheid Leur'. Now take the first path to the left. Ignore paths to the right. Further on with a bend to the right, later you enter the edge of the forest with open field on your left. You end up on a different forest path. Turn left here and shortly after that, at the corner of the open field, turn right along the edge of

the forest. At a junction turn left, onto a path in the edge of the forest. Continue to a wide semi-paved road. Turn left here. You pass Huis te Leur on your right-hand side. Turn left at the paved road. Where the road bends to the right, go left past a wooden barrier and onto a forest path. At a Y-junction, keep to the right. You will cross a wooden bridge. Follow the path until you reach the paved road and keep left there. You pass the 'Leur' sign and walk in the direction of the church. Continue straight ahead past the church and the information centre of Geldersch Landschap in the Bakhuis.

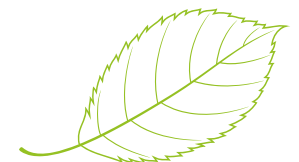
8 At the junction at De Leurse Hof turn around and head back to the church. Opposite the Bakhuis, take the first forest path to the right. You end up on a two-lane concrete path. Turn left here and then immediately keep diagonally to the left in front of the farm, on a narrow



forest path. You go over a plank bridge without handrails and then turn right at the crossroads. Past a barrier and turn right on the paved road. Now you take the first half-paved road right once again past Huis te Leur. Then go straight ahead at the crossroads, on a wide forest path. At a junction, turn left. Now take the first path to the right. You walk past an open field on your left and end up on a beech avenue. Here head briefly to the left and then immediately diagonally to the right, on a narrow forest path. At a crossroads with a path to the right, go straight ahead. At the next crossroads, turn right at the end in the direction of a wooden barrier and paved road.

9 At the road, turn left. Keep to the right at the Y-junction and immediately after that keep right again, on the Meerenburg. Now continue to house number 8 and turn right there, on the Molenhoek.

Further along, follow the bend to the left in the direction of the mill. You pass the mill and go straight past house number 2. A little after that, where the road bends to the left, go straight ahead past a white gate, on a wide forest path. Ignore paths to the right and continue straight ahead. Follow this to the intersection at a bench and turn left there. Continue further along the edge of the forest. Follow the bend to the right past a white gate and turn right at the paved road. Go through the tunnel and straight ahead. The road becomes a brick road, the Tunnelpad. Ignore side roads and go straight ahead in the direction of the church. Continues as the Loffertweg. Keep going straight ahead at the crossroads with the Dorpsstraat. At the bicycle signpost after the church, cross the road and head back to the castle.





The most beautiful castles and country estates in the Netherlands

Hernen Castle is part of the castles and country estates storyline, a selection of the most beautiful castles, estates and manor houses in the Netherlands. Try one of the other castle walks or castle bike tours: go to www.holland.com/castles



Colophon

An initiative of NBTC:



The route has been developed by:

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Trage Tochten has compiled the route with the utmost care. The route is part of a series of castle walks commissioned by Geldersch Landschap & Kasteelen. The organisation cannot accept any liability for inaccuracies in the information or if adjustments are necessary.