

House Hunting in ... Amsterdam

JULY 31, 2013



A FIVE-BEDROOM HOUSE ON AN AMSTERDAM CANAL

\$3,652,592 (2.795 MILLION EUROS)

From the front of this quintessential 17th-century Dutch home — looking across its canal, the Prinsengracht — you can see the [Anne Frank House](#) and the crowned spire of the 1620 Westerkerk bell tower. A 12-room building with landmark status, it was renovated and restored more than a decade ago. It has a new foundation, original wide floorboards and ceiling beams, and two fireplaces with large antique tile

Through the front door is a large entrance hall with an Italian marble floor. It connects with a hallway running along the left side to the kitchen, which is tiled in ceramic with a radiant-heated floor, white wood cabinetry, granite countertops, an oversized range and a breakfast area.

To the right of the entry hall is a parlor with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the canal. (Some corners of the room are sharply angled, to accommodate a bend in the canal.) Farther back is a vestibule housing the central staircase, beyond which is the formal dining room, which has an ornate ceiling medallion and decorative trim.

One flight up, the master suite has its own marble bathroom with a shower. Adjacent is a sitting room with a floor-to-ceiling 17th-century fireplace, wide planked floors and three tall windows with canal views.

The second level up has another living room with a fireplace, illuminated by another trio of tall windows. Two bedrooms are to the back.

To the front of the house on the third level up is a large antique-style bathroom with a mosaic tile floor, sloped wood-paneled walls, a claw-foot tub, a marble-topped double vanity, a walk-in shower with two shower heads and a wall of wooden wardrobes. To the rear is a library with a vaulted ceiling and a loft accessible via a ladder.

A lower level, partially below grade and opening onto the brick-walled garden, has a second kitchen, a bedroom, a bath and laundry facilities. A few steps down from that is a garden room with a patterned stone floor that continues outside, beyond French doors, to cover the garden terrace.

A parking space on the nearby Bloemstraat is for sale separately.

The canal house occupies a prime location in the desirable Jordaan neighborhood, known for restaurants, bars, galleries and markets along De Grachtengordel, Amsterdam's main canals. The area was recognized as a [Unesco World Heritage site](#) in 2010. Around the corner, the picturesque Nine Streets area is laden with boutiques, museums, theaters and restaurants. Easily traversed by bicycle or on foot, and also accessible to public transportation, the neighborhood is a people magnet.

MARKET OVERVIEW

“The prices in Amsterdam are extremely reasonable compared to other cities in Europe,” said Barbara van der Grijp, a managing partner at Engel & Völkers in Amsterdam, the listing agency. Cities like Berlin and London have seen real estate prices rise 10 percent in the last year, but Amsterdam's prices are generally “lower than five years ago and very interesting for investing,” she said.

Most residences in central Amsterdam are apartments, said Sander Wieggers, a broker and appraiser with Broeren & Wieggers, with prices from \$200,000 to \$6.6 million. “Whole houses are more rare to find and quite expensive.” Parking garages, which start around \$66,000, are even harder to find.

WHO BUYS IN AMSTERDAM

Foreign buyers, especially from Britain, France and Germany, and increasingly from Russia and China, are clamoring for exclusive properties in prime locations, Ms. van der Grijp said. Prices on the main canals — Prinsengracht, Keizersgracht, Herengracht and Singel — average about \$6,600 to \$12,000 per square meter, or \$613 to \$1,115 per square foot. They are on a par with prices in the museum quarter in the Old South part of Amsterdam, the site of the [Rijksmuseum](#), [Stedelijk](#) and [van Gogh](#) museums.

BUYING BASICS

Charles Grayson of 27 House Real Estate, says that mortgages in Amsterdam usually cover “not only 100 percent of the price of the property, but also most of the roughly 6 percent closing costs.” But for buyers who don't live, work or pay taxes in the Netherlands, “it is very difficult to get a mortgage here,” he said.

LANGUAGES AND CURRENCY

Dutch; euro (1 euro = \$1.32)

TAXES AND FEES

Property taxes are 759 euros or about \$1,007 a year.

Buyers and sellers each pay the 1.5 to 2 percent commission for their own real estate agents. The buyer is also responsible for a 2 percent transfer tax and the notary fee of up to 2.5 percent.

Correction: August 1, 2013

A previous version of this article carried an incorrect conversion for per-square-foot price averages in prime locations. They are \$613 to \$1,115 per square foot, not \$2,200 to \$4,000 per square foot.