

# How to travel by train or ferry from London to the Netherlands

## ▪ Option 1: London to Amsterdam by Stena Line train & ferry...

*Travel overnight in classic rail & ferry comfort.* Leave London at 7.32pm by train, sleep in a private cabin with shower, toilet & satellite TV on the luxurious Stena Line Superferry from Harwich to Hoek van Holland, then take a Dutch train to Amsterdam Centraal next morning, arriving 10:55. [Watch the video guide](#). One ticket covers both trains and ferry from £55 each way plus £35 for a single cabin or £46 per cabin for a 2-berth. There's a daytime service too, with cabins optional. [Click here for timetables, fares, and how to buy tickets](#).

Stena Line sell special *Rail & Sail* tickets from London or Any Greater Anglia station to Amsterdam or Any Dutch station, covering the train to Harwich, the Stena Line ferry to Hoek van Holland and onward trains to any Dutch station, all on one ticket for one inclusive price, from £55 plus a choice of cabins from £35.

You can leave central London by train at 7:30pm, sleep in a cozy private cabin with shower, toilet, Wi-Fi & satellite TV on the luxurious Stena Line Superferry from 21:00 to 08:00, and arrive Rotterdam at 9am or Amsterdam Centraal at 10:25am, without a 4.30am alarm call or 6:30am check-in at the airport! It saves an expensive hotel room in London or Amsterdam and it's an experience in itself, [see the video guide...](#)

The [Rail & Sail](#) service is run jointly by Stena Line, Greater Anglia & Dutch Railways (NS).

## ▪ Option 2, London to Amsterdam by direct Eurostar in 3h55...

*The fast direct option by high-speed Eurostar train.* Eurostar now runs direct from London St Pancras to Amsterdam in 3h55, two or three times a day. As fast and more comfortable than flying. Though currently it doesn't run direct in the inwards direction. [See the London to Amsterdam by Eurostar page for times, fares & how to buy tickets](#).

### **London to Amsterdam by high-speed train...**

From 4 April 2018, Eurostar runs one or two daily direct trains from London to Amsterdam taking 3h55, increasing to two or three per day from June 2019, [see details here](#).

Alternatively, you can take Eurostar to Brussels and either a connecting high-speed [Thalys train](#) or a slower but more flexible InterCity train to Amsterdam. This is hardly any slower than a flight, and a lot less hassle. It's a fast, comfortable and stress-free way to reach Amsterdam that beats flying, any day... [How much does it cost?](#) [How to buy tickets](#).

### **By direct Eurostar in 3h55**

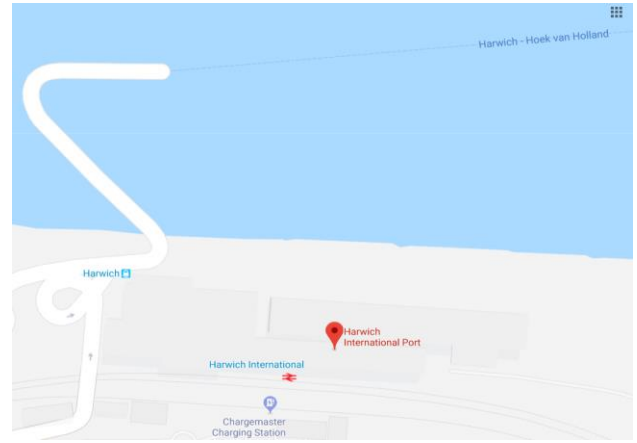
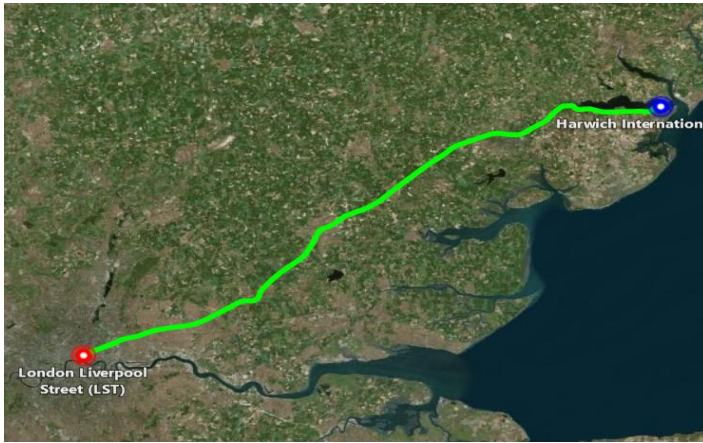
Eurostar launched direct trains from London to Amsterdam in April 2018, and now runs two or three direct Eurostars to Amsterdam every day taking just 3h55 with fares from £35, [see details here](#). They are also shown in the Eurostar+Thalys timetable below, shaded. However, for the [reasons explained here](#), until late 2019 or possibly 2020 these trains will only carry passengers between London and the Netherlands in the *outward* direction. In the return direction you need to change in Brussels, using one of the Thalys+Eurostar journeys.



## London Anglia station to Any Dutch station via Harwich - Hoek van Holland: *Stena Line Rail & Sail*

- **Step 1, travel from London to Harwich by train**, leaving London Liverpool Street Station at 19:32 on Mondays-Saturdays arriving Harwich International at 20:54, or at 20:00 on Sundays arriving 21:24. (Liverpool Street underground station has connections to the Central, Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines.)

You can check train times from any UK town or city to Harwich at [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) or [www.greateranglia.co.uk](http://www.greateranglia.co.uk).



The train to Harwich International leaves from London Liverpool Street station in the heart of the City of London, [see station location map](#).

There is no check-in, just board the train any time before it leaves. The departure board will tell you which platform it leaves from, staff will let you through the automatic ticket gates when you show your Stena Line e-ticket. The Stena e-ticket is all you need for this train journey.

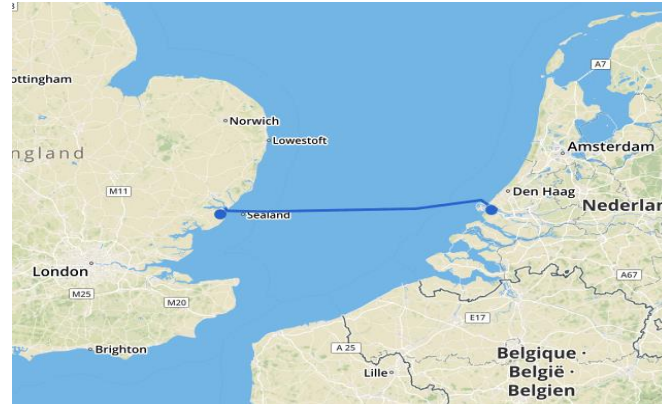
The train has free Wi-Fi & toilets. There are no reserved seats, you sit where you like, you'll have no problem finding a seat. Luggage goes on the racks or simply on the floor. It's just 82 minutes to Harwich, you can also board the train at Stratford, Shenfield, Chelmsford, Colchester & Manningtree.

*Tip 1:* On a weekday evening, Liverpool Street station is busy with commuters and the station bars can be hectic. A more peaceful place to wait with a coffee or beer is the *Eastway Brasserie* ([eastwaybrasserie.co.uk](http://eastwaybrasserie.co.uk)) or *1901 Wine Lounge*, both part of the [Andaz London Liverpool Street Hotel](#), formerly the historic Great Eastern Hotel. Go up the big escalators opposite platforms 1-4, exit the station and turn left along the station facade.

*Tip 2:* If you want to be first onto the ship at Harwich, sit at the rear of the train - although the front of the train will be emptier if you want to spread out.

*Tip 3:* Tickets are good for any train, not just the advertised ferry connections.

- **Step 2, sail from Harwich to Hoek van Holland overnight on Stena Line's luxurious Superferry *Stena Britannica***, sailing at 23:00 & arriving at 08:00 next morning. You can board from around 20:55 onwards, check-in closes at 22:15. All passengers sleep in private cabins with en suite toilet & shower, satellite TV & Wi-Fi, [see choice of cabins](#). The ship's restaurant will be open for dinner. Remember that Dutch time is 1 hour ahead of UK time.



At Harwich, the train arrives directly at the ferry terminal - you'll see the ship on your left as the train pulls in. Walk back along the platform towards the rear of the train, through the double glass doors at the London end of the platform straight into the ferry terminal and up the escalators to the first floor.

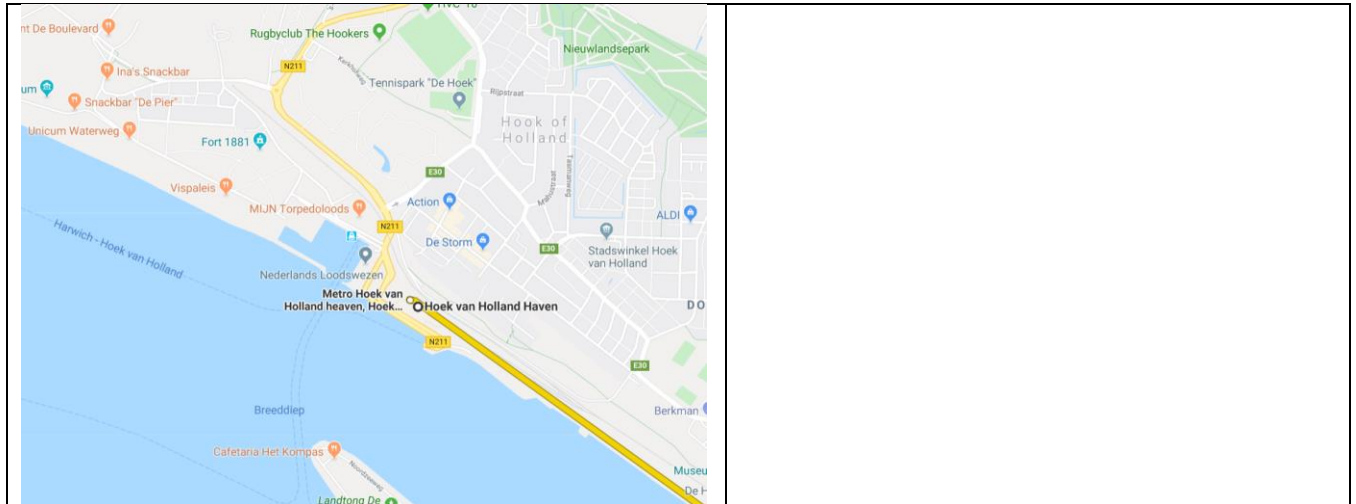
**Boarding the ferry:** Walk through the door marked *Departures*. Stena Line staff will check your ticket as you enter. Then you put your bags through the X-ray machine and walk through the metal detector, then have your passport checked by UK Border Force. You then get to the check-in desk where Stena Line staff scan the barcode on your e-ticket and print your cabin key and any meal vouchers. They'll give you your RET-NS Combi-ticket which is a disposable smartcard covering your onward RET metro & Dutch Railways (NS) train travel. If you're making a round trip, they'll give you a second ticket for the return journey. Now you walk up the passenger gangway onto the Stena Line Superferry. Outside peak periods it can take as little as 15 minutes from train to ship, a far more relaxed experience than any airport.

**On board:** You enter the ship on deck 7, go up the stairs or lift to deck 9 where all the passenger facilities are located including bars, restaurants, shop, lounges & the guest services desk. All cabins are on decks 10 & 11. There is open-air deck towards the stern on deck 9 for some sea air and a sealed & ventilated smoking lounge forward on deck 9 if you're a smoker. The small *Stena Plus Lounge* (day crossings only) has complimentary tea, coffee, red & white wine, snacks & newspapers - although I think it's better to pay for a private cabin rather than the lounge, even on the day crossing, as you can snooze, shower, watch TV, or just relax or work in privacy.

**Wi-Fi:** Wi-Fi is available on board on deck 9 and in cabins, free for the first 20 minutes, with packages for faster & longer access costing a few euros. You can use your normal mobile phone data while the ferry is in or near port.

**All-weather reliable, steady as a rock...** The Stena Line Superferries are 63,000 tons GT (Gross Tonnage), the largest Ro-Pax ships serving the UK, steady as a rock in almost all weathers. Indeed, I've crossed in winter as a 'named' Force 10 storm lashed the North Sea: Falling asleep before she sailed, I woke briefly in the night, felt some minor undulation, fell asleep again and woke at Harwich as we arrived spot on time. I've sailed to the Netherlands at Christmas watching BBC news on our cabin TV about Heathrow closed due of snow and all flights grounded - the Stena Liner sailed & arrived spot on time as always. This is the all-weather reliable route!

- **Step 3, take the metro from Hoek van Holland to Schiedam Centrum, downtown Rotterdam or Rotterdam Alexander.** Air-conditioned metro trains leave Hoek van Holland every 20 minutes weekdays, every 30 minutes at weekends from just outside the ferry terminal, taking 23 minutes to Schiedam Centrum, 30 minutes to downtown Rotterdam & 50 minutes to Rotterdam Alexander. There's usually one around 08:32 weekdays or 08:50 weekends. You can check metro times at [www.ret.nl](http://www.ret.nl).



**Disembarkation:** Foot passengers gather on Deck 9 near the guest services desk as the ship docks, when the gangway opens just after docking you simply walk off the ship along the gangway into the Stena Line terminal. Your passport is checked by the Dutch police, then you walk out of the terminal building through the automatic glass doors to the right straight onto the RET (Rotterdam Transit) metro platform. You can often be off the ship and onto a metro train in as little as 10-15 minutes.

**Now take the metro!** Remember to touch in for the metro by holding your RET-NS Combi-Ticket against the validator post on the platform until it beeps.

Hoek van Holland is the starting point for metro line B, trains run every 20 minutes weekdays, every 30 minutes weekends, taking 23 minutes to Schiedam Centrum, 30 minutes to downtown Rotterdam & 50 minutes to Rotterdam Alexander. The end destination of line B is *Nesselande*. Luggage goes with you, on the floor or in a special luggage area.

*Change at Schiedam Centrum* for mainline trains to Den Haag, Leiden, Haarlem, Amsterdam. Alight at a station such as *Beurs* for downtown Rotterdam.

*Change at Rotterdam Alexander* for mainline trains to Gouda, Utrecht, Amersfoort, Zwolle, Groningen & Leeuwarden. There are no ticket gates at Rotterdam Alexander, so remember to touch out from the metro & touch in again on the mainline platform with your RET-NS Combi-Ticket.


The Hoek of Holland-Rotterdam metro started running on 30 September 2019, after two years spent converting this mainline rail route to light rail. The metro runs above ground all the way to Schiedam, over a right of way that until the 1990s was used by expresses from Hoek of Holland to places as far afield as Copenhagen or Moscow, running in connection with the ferries. A historic link!

- **Step 4 for Delft, Den Haag, Leiden, Haarlem & Amsterdam**, get off the metro at Schiedam Centrum and take the intercity train leaving Schiedam Centrum platform 5 at 09:17 arriving Delft 09:24, Den Haag HS 09:31, Leiden Centraal 09:45, Haarlem 10:09 & [Amsterdam Centraal](#) at 10:25. These Intercity trains run every 15 minutes (every 30 minutes Sunday mornings), double-deck with free Wi-Fi. You can check times at [www.ns.nl](http://www.ns.nl).
- **Step 4 for anywhere else in the Netherlands**, check train times using [www.ns.nl](http://www.ns.nl). [Read the fare notes here](#).
- [How much does it cost?](#) [How to buy tickets](#) [The journey explained in pictures](#)

## About these fares...

- **Rail & Sail fares are valid from any Greater Anglia railway station**, including London Liverpool Street, Stratford, Cambridge, Colchester, Chelmsford, Norwich, Ipswich, Ely, Romford, Ilford, Bishop's Stortford. Simply check train fares & times to Harwich International using [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk). Allow plenty of time (at least 45 minutes, preferably more) to connect with the ferry at Harwich.
- **Rail & Sail fares are valid to any Dutch NS station**, meaning Amsterdam or almost any town or city in the Netherlands, using the RET metro from Hoek van Holland then trains operated by NS (*Nederlandse Spoorwegen*, Dutch Railways). Simply check train times from Hoek van Holland to anywhere in the Netherlands at [www.ns.nl](http://www.ns.nl).
- **Remember to touch in & out:** Stena Line give you a disposable smartcard called a *RET-NS Combi-Ticket* to cover the metro & Dutch trains. At stations where there are no ticket gates, you must touch in before boarding and touch out at the other end, by holding your RET-NS Combi-Ticket against the validator on the platform until it beeps - [see the video!](#) You must also touch in & out when interchanging between RET & NS.
- **Trains you can't use:** The RET-NS ticket is not valid on [Thalys](#) or [Eurostar](#), or on non-NS operators such as Arriva, Breng, Connexion or Syntus.
- **Trains for which a small supplement must be paid:** You must pay a few euros supplement at the station if you want to use the 200 km/h *InterCity Direct* trains between Rotterdam Centraal, Schiphol & Amsterdam via the high-speed line or [German ICE trains](#) on the Amsterdam-Utrecht-Arnhem route. However, there's no need to use these trains as regular Dutch trains link the same stations.
- **Adding dinner, breakfast or lunch to your booking** saves pounds compared to what you pay on the day on board.

## How to buy tickets starting in the UK...

- **Book online at [www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry-to-holland/rail-and-sail](http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry-to-holland/rail-and-sail).**  
This sells one-way or round trip Rail & Sail tickets from London or any Greater Anglia station to any Dutch Railways station in the Netherlands.  
It allows you to add a cabin & meals, and if you have a dog) reserve a kennel. Train tickets are included when booking Rail & Sail. Booking usually opens 12 months ahead.  
Anyone from any country can book Rail & Sail tickets starting in the UK this way.  
You print your own ticket, this .pdf ticket can be used to board the train in London (or any other Greater Anglia station), you collect your Dutch train tickets from Stena Line staff when you check in for the ferry at Harwich.  
*If you want a one-way or return ticket starting in the Netherlands, you must use [Stena Line's Dutch website instead, as explained below](#).*
-  **If you're from the USA** first try booking at [www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry-to-holland/rail-and-sail](http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry-to-holland/rail-and-sail), but Stena Line's credit card controls sometimes block US cards. If this happens, (a) create an account at the end of the booking process and it'll save your booking with a reference number, (b) call Stena Line on +44 343 208 1801 between 08:00 & 17:00 London time, quote your booking reference and they should be able to take your card details over the phone. [Feedback appreciated](#). The Stena website gives a toll-free US number to call, but this doesn't work, so use the UK one.
- **Buy tickets by phone:** Call Stena Line on 08445 762 762 (lines open 08:30-20:00 Mondays-Fridays, 09:00-18:00 Saturdays, 09:00-17:00 Sundays, all cabin & meal options can be sold) or from Greater Anglia on 0845 600 72 45 (lines open 08:00-22:00 daily, may not be able to offer all cabin types or on-board meals). A booking fee of around £4 applies to phone bookings.
- **Buy in person** at London Liverpool Street ticket office: You can buy tickets on the day, but places are limited and fares cheaper if you book in advance. It's also better to buy from Stena Line, as rail companies can only offer regular cabin, not Comfort or Captain's class.
- **The Man in Seat 61's top tips:** (1) Book a cabin on the daytime crossing even though it's optional, as cabins are half-price and it's somewhere to relax, freshen up, work, or watch TV. (2) Add a meal to your booking, this saves several pounds over what you pay on board and you'll find a reserved table with your name on it in the Metropolitan à la carte restaurant. (3) [Here are some suggested hotels in Amsterdam](#)

# TRAIN AND RAIL & SAIL TO HOLLAND

## TRAIN TO AMSTERDAM DIRECT FROM LONDON LIVERPOOL STREET

### DUTCHFLYER RAIL & SAIL IS THE EASIEST WAY TO GET FROM LONDON TO AMSTERDAM IN COMFORT AND STYLE

Stena Line's dutchflyer provides combined rail and ferry travel for passengers wishing to travel from Britain to Holland. Depart from any Greater Anglia station to any Dutch station from as little as £55 one-way.

Train services from Greater Anglia stations take you to Harwich International port where you can board one of Stena Lines two Superferries to Holland.

## DEPART FROM ANY GREATER ANGLIA STATION



Depart from any Greater Anglia station to Harwich International port where your Stena Line ferry will sail you straight across to Holland. Greater Anglia trains conveniently depart from London Liverpool Street, Ipswich, Colchester, Norwich and Cambridge. For a complete list of Greater Anglia stations, visit the [Greater Anglia Website](#).

## FAST TRAVEL WITHIN HOLLAND



Metro rail services are now available from Hook of Holland Port to Schiedam Centrum. The metro station can be found outside the front of the ferry terminal.

From Schiedam Centrum there you can access to the NS rail system, Amsterdam is under an hour and a half away, The Hague is just 30 minutes. For a complete list of NS stations in Holland, visit the [NS Rail website](#).

## TIMETABLE

The dutchflyer operates an "open" rail ticket which means that you can travel to the port at whichever time is most convenient to you. If you need help choosing which rail service will ensure a timely arrival at the port please view our recommended rail timetable.

# RAIL AND SAIL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

**Q: What is the Dutchflyer?**

**A:** A product that combines a Stena Line ferry crossing and train/metro tickets from the UK to Holland thanks to a partnership between Stena Line, Greater Anglia Rail, NS (Dutch Rail network) and RET (Rotterdam Public Transport).

**Q: How does it work?**

**A:** The Dutchflyer provides rail travel from any Greater Anglia station, a ferry crossing from Harwich to the Hook of Holland, and onward rail/metro travel to any Dutch city - all in a simple all-in-one ticket!

**Q: Do I have to print out my PDF e-ticket?**

**A:** Yes, please make sure you print a copy of the itinerary / e-ticket before the start of your journey. This will be accepted as a valid travel document for your rail journey on Greater Anglia rail services in the UK and for your ferry crossing. Our staff at Harwich will arrange for paper tickets to be issued to you for your travel on Netherlands Railways when you check-in for your outward ferry journey from the UK.

**Q: Where can I catch the train from/to in the UK?**

**A:** Any station that is part of the Greater Anglia network.

**Q: Where can I catch the train to/from in the Netherlands?**

**A:** Directly in front of the terminal you'll find the RET metro line to Schiedam Centrum. Once in Schiedam Centrum, interchange to the train service for travel to any station within the NS network.

**Q: What is meant by an 'open rail ticket'?**

**A:** This simply means that you can use it on any Greater Anglia, NS or RET service on the day you have purchased it - you are able to catch any train at any time.

**Q: Can I catch any train to the port or only the one I selected in my booking?**

**A:** The Dutchflyer rail ticket is an open ticket which means you can use it on any Greater Anglia, NS or RET service on your ferry travel date - you are able to catch any train at any time..

**Q: Can I change my Dutchflyer booking?**

**A:** Provided the origin and destination stations remain the same, changes to tickets can be made at least 14 days in advance of the outward travel date, upon payment of a £10 administration fee plus any increase in fare between the cost of the original journey and your amended travel dates. No refund will be made if an amendment results in a price decrease.

**Q: What if I need to cancel my booking?**

**A:** There is no refund value on any 'Dutchflyer' product, but in the event of the cancellation of the service on which the reservation has been made, you will have the option of a full refund (as set out in the National Rail Conditions of Carriage).