

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS IN THE NETHERLANDS (dec. '22)

The University has a Christmas closing

The university has bridging days between 27 December and 31 December. Although the university is open until 23 December and again from 2 January, most employees are on leave from 23 December to 9 January - the period when there are no classes and many students leave campus.

A lot of buildings at the University will be closed or only have limited opening hours. You can find more detailed information about that via:

- [Opening buildings and activities during the winter holidays \(utwente.nl\)](https://www.utwente.nl/en/services/department-of-communications/2022/12/01/Opening-buildings-and-activities-during-the-winter-holidays)
- [Adjusted opening hours Service Desks and catering locations during Christmas Holidays \(utwente.nl\)](https://www.utwente.nl/en/services/department-of-communications/2022/12/01/Adjusted-opening-hours-Service-Desks-and-catering-locations-during-Christmas-Holidays) (incl. info on catering)

Next to the above social media channels will be used to share activities which will be organized during the winter holidays. Currently the Student Union and associations are in the process to decide if/what they want to do. <https://su.utwente.nl/en/services/student/unionbuildings/bastille/>

Christmas in the Netherlands

Christmas Day in the Netherlands is celebrated on December 25 and 26 and is referred to as 'Eerste Kerstdag' (*Christmas day*) and 'Tweede Kerstdag' (*Boxing day/second Christmas day*). Christmas Eve is of lesser importance, but some families already gather for a Christmas dinner. Christmas Day is a quiet day in The Netherlands, with (for some) a church service and family meal.



On the second day people tend to visit their families and big shops are also often open on Tweede Kerstdag. Many people in the Netherlands have a Christmas tree in their houses. Note that many stores have special opening hours around Christmas time.

Watch a fun video about how the Dutch celebrate Christmas: https://youtu.be/5uFxJeES_xw

Dutch New Year

Dutch New Year (*Oud en Nieuw*) consists of *Oudejaarsavond* (New Year's Eve) on December 31st and *Nieuwjaarsdag* (New Year's Day) on January 1st. The latter is a public holiday.

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is usually spent with friends and family or going into town to see open-air concerts and the fireworks around the city. Fans of loud banging noises will have a field day, as overzealous children of all ages set off crackers. The red cracker papers turn the streets bright red. The tradition of setting off fireworks and crackers has something to do with old pagan customs of driving away demons so that the New Year could begin with a clean slate. At the stroke of midnight, firework displays brightly color the sky and the cacophony of people wishing each other a *Gelukkig Nieuwjaar* (Happy New Year) can be heard all around.

The alternative, carbid shooting, is a tradition that was added to the Dutch national cultural heritage list in 2014. It is something that happens in the north and east of the Netherlands, but not commonly in the west. Calcium carbide used to be blown up in a milk churns can but nowadays a football is used.

During the carbideshooting, an explosive reaction forms in the milk can, causing the lid or ball to shoot off with enormous force. That explosion causes a gigantic bang. So don't try this at home.

For an impression, see this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbqI2ExwG54>

Even though it is not allowed to set off fireworks you can already hear bangs of fireworks several weeks before New Year's Eve from people setting it off illegally.

Oliebollen

Oliebollen are a traditional Dutch delicacy eaten around the time of Christmas and New Year. Oliebollen, literally translated as 'Oil Balls' are also known as Dutch Doughnuts which consist of deep-fried dough balls. The Dutch usually eat them with powdered sugar on them. If you like raisins, you can try the version with raisins in them. It is a custom for Dutch to have oliebollen on New Year's Eve, which explains the extra long queues at most of the oliebollen *mobile* stalls setup on various spots around the city. An oliebol generally costs a little more than 1 euro each and with a discount if you buy in bulk. A lot of families also make oliebollen themselves. They start baking early during the day to have enough oliebollen to share with their guests. Want to try to bake oliebollen yourself? Here's a recipe: [Dutch Donuts \(Oliebollen\) Recipe - Vega Recepten](#)



New Year's Day

In the Netherlands the 1st of January is traditionally celebrated with a new year's dive ('Nieuwjaarsduik'). No matter how cold it is, at least 25.000 people plunge into the freezing water each January. There are over 60 locations in the Netherlands where you can jump into the sea or a lake. The largest dive is held at the beach of Scheveningen, where well over 10.000 people plunge into the sea each year. The Dutch tradition started in 1960 in Zandvoort when a swim club decided to start the year fresh with a plunge in the sea. The new year's dive received national attention after a big soup brand decided to sponsor it. From that moment on, the number of participants and locations has increased every year.

For people living around Enschede the closest Nieuwjaarsduik is at Hulsbeek in Oldenzaal: [Nieuwjaarsduik 2023 - Het Hulsbeek - 1 jan 2023 - Tourist Info Oldenzaal \(uitinoldenzaal.nl\)](#)

The New Year dive starts on the 1st of January at 13:00 (address: Oude Almeloseweg 11, Oldenzaal). Be there in time to register and pick up a diving cap! After the dive, there will be the opportunity to recover in the hot tub or under a hot shower. Pea soup, hot smoked sausage sandwiches and hot drinks will also be available!

<https://outdoorchallengepark.nl/nieuwjaarsduik/> (watch the movie - only in Dutch)



Closing times of stores:

Please note that stores will be closed on Saturday the 25th and some of them on Sunday the 26th of December because of Christmas. Most stores will close earlier on the last day of the year and most of the stores are closed on January 1st.

Winters are cold in the Netherlands

As you might have experienced already, wintertime can be really cold in the Netherlands. Therefore, it is very important to protect yourself against the cold by wearing a good coat, mittens (instead of gloves), a scarf and a hat.

[How to survive the Dutch winter: weather, clothing, and more – DutchReview](#)

How to deal with the negative effects of winter

In winter time people are more often sick and a bit gloomy. This is also caused by the fact that it is darker outside and our skin is producing less vitamin D. In addition, the bad weather conditions like cold, rain, snow, fog and the moisty air are having an effect on our resistance. Therefore, it is quite normal that people are more often sick during wintertime.

What can we do to get through winter as healthy as possible?

1. **Gloom**

It is very important to have regularity in daily life. Go to bed at a normal time and do not get up too late and get dressed. Try to eat three meals per day at set times. See to it that you get the right vitamins and minerals (iron, zinc, magnesium and vitamin B) in order to prevent a winter dip. Also, see to it that you relax enough.

2. **Exercise and daylight**

It is important to go outside every day to get enough vitamin D. Many international students from countries with a warm climate do take extra vitamin D pills to prevent a lack of vitamin D. A lack of vitamin D can cause a general feeling of fatigue and lethargy and weakening of the muscle functions.

3. **Prevent getting the flu by eating healthy**

Eating many vegetables is essential for a stronger immune system.

(Broccoli, cauliflower and chicory are winter vegetables we eat in the Netherlands).

In the Netherlands, we eat many “stampotjes” (stamps) like kale stew, stew sauerkraut or stew carrots and unions. In addition, the use of honey is very good to support your immune system. You can use it in hot milk, in your coffee or tea.

4. **Last but not least, it is very important to eat enough fruit.** Especially citrus fruit (orange, lemon and lime) is very important because it contains vitamin C.

Recipes for Dutch winter food:

Mashed potatoes and kale (Boerenkool):

[Dutch Boerenkool Recipe: Mashed Potatoes With Kale - Vega Recepten](#)

Sauerkraut-Potato Puree with Crispy Bacon:

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/zuurkoolstampot-recipe-sauerkraut-1128831>

Dutch Pea Soup (Erwtensoep):

<https://stuffdutchpeoplelike.com/2015/03/15/dutch/>

Hutspot:

[Hutspot - Traditional and Authentic Dutch Recipe | 196 flavors](#)

Dutch beef & Onion Stew (Hachee):

<https://www.daringgourmet.com/hachee-dutch-beef-onion-stew/>



TOP2000

We are approaching December which means that the Top2000 is in sight! Every year people can vote on their favorite songs. The final Top 2000 list of this year is announced on Friday, December 3. Traditionally, the Top 2000 is non-stop broadcasted from Christmas Day (December 25 at 00.00 am) to New Year's Day (December 31) with the number 1 song ending right before the New Year. Last year (2021) 'Bohemian Rhapsody' from Queen was the number 1 song followed by 'Roller Coaster' from Danny Vera and 'A Whiter Shade Of Pale' from Procol Harum.



If you are a music enthusiast this list would be interesting for you to follow! It will be broadcasted on television (NPO 2) and on the NPO Radio 2 website: <https://www.nporadio2.nl/top2000>
Top2000 list of 2021 on Spotify: [Spotify – Top 2000](#)

Serious Request

This year, 3FM Serious Request, together with "het vergeten kind (The Forgotten Child)", will take action for children growing up in families with severe problems. These include mental disorders, addiction or large debts. As a result, these children are neglected or abused. Sometimes the situation is so unsafe that they are placed out of home. The traumas leave deep marks. As a result, children feel unwanted, unloved and lonely. In the week before Christmas (from 18 to 24 December) live radio is broadcasted 24 hours a day. Three DJ teams go into lockdown in Amersfoort, to raise money for "het vergeten kind". They make live radio 24 hours a day. You can also request a record or donate directly. All this with one goal: to collect money for "het vergeten kind".

Became curious? Check this website:

<https://www.npo3fm.nl/nieuws/3fm-serious-request> (text is in Dutch)

THINGS TO DO AROUND AND DURING CHRISTMAS

ENSCHEDÉ/HENGÉLO

9th of December / 8th of January: **Winter Wonderland**

In the City of Enschede you can visit the Magical Winter Wonderland. The city is nicely decorated and there are small fairs. It is being organized from the 9th of December up until the 8th of January. You can have closer look at the following website: <https://www.uitenschede.nl/winter-wonderland> (text is in Dutch).



During the Winter Wonderland you can go **ice skating** “indoors” at the Oude Markt.

[Schaatsbaan - Uit in Enschede](#)

Entrance fee is €5 and on site you can rent skates for €2.50. Daily from 09.30-22.00.

Starting the Sunday morning sporty? Go breakfast and slide. The breakfast table is set at 9:30 a.m. and before you start your egg, slide a lap around the ice rink. Breakfast is buffet style, hot drinks, juice and milk are also included! Breakfast & slide is available on December 11 and 18 and January 8 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. There is a maximum of 50 spots per day. You can breakfast and skate for € 14.95 per person. You get to skate as long as you want.

Make a reservation via: [Zondags ontbijten & glijden - Goodgoan bie de ijsboan Tickets, Meerdere data | Eventbrite](#)

What could be better than skating around and finishing with a delicious Dutch stamppot!

On December 11 and 18 and January 8, you can enjoy the stamppotten buffet for € 19.95 including ice skating. The table is set from 18:00 to 20:30. And you may stay and skate until closing!

Make a reservation via: [Zondags stamppot & glijden - Goodgoan bie de ijsboan Tickets, Meerdere data | Eventbrite](#)

Enschede Lights Up

Thursday 15 – Sunday 18 December, from 17.00 – 22.00

A light art route through downtown Enschede: Enschede Lights Up. During this free route you will walk through a light experience in Enschede in the evening from Thursday, December 15 to Sunday, December 18. Through different technologies, you won't know what you're seeing at different locations in the city center. Characteristic buildings and locations in Enschede will be provided with special artistic light, laser or video projections and music support. Think of a Christmas carousel, a unique interactive underwater world and a mega pinball machine. There will also be a live performance by Maarten de Groot in a landscape of sound, laser and light. The projections are made with different lighting techniques.

Starting point + route booklet: Come to Tourist Info Enschede on Thursday, December 15 through Sunday, December 18 between 17:00 - 22:00.

[Uit in Enschede - Enschede Lights Up](#)

Stadsherberg Enschede – 21 to 23 December, from 08.30 – 16.30 with free entrance

[Uit in Enschede - Stadsherberg Enschede](#)

In the Civic Hall of City Hall, there will be atmosphere around Christmas with music, workshops and stories.

The Midwinterhoorn

The midwinterhoorn can be heard in the border region between the Netherlands and Germany. It is blown in the Advent season. The melody that is played is called de Oale Roop, in English the 'old call'. Blowing the midwinterhoorn is just a fun hobby for some people, while others believe it drives away the darkness in the winter and calls on the light and for many others it is about announcing the coming of Jesus.

You can watch/hear this in the Ledebouerpark (next to the campus) on Sunday 11-12-2022, Sunday 25-12-2022 and Sunday 01-01-2023, on these days between 14.00 - 16.00. On Sunday 18-12-2022 you can go for a walk, start between 10.00 - 14.00 at Hoge Kamp plein – University of Twente: Tradition, culture and nostalgia come together during this beautiful route. Come walk and enjoy the sounds of the midwinter horn, provided by some 27 blowing groups scattered along the route. At the start you choose between 2 routes: long route of 12 kilometer, short route of 5 kilometer.



You can also visit:

Enschede – **Rijksmuseum Twente**: this museum hosts different exhibitions which tell the story of the city of Enschede and various painters of the Netherlands.

Free entrance for UT-students (you must show your student card and reserve a timeslot in advance).

[Rijksmuseum Twente - Het kunstmuseum van Enschede](#)

Enschede – **de Museumfabriek**: this museum focuses on life and work in Twente and especially the textile sector. You can also see a natural history collection.

Free entrance for UT-students (you must show your student card and reserve a timeslot in advance).

[De Museumfabriek – Het familiemuseum van Twente - te Enschede](#)

Hengelo – **Techniekmuseum Heim**: a technical museum for young children and grown-ups as well. The museum consists of 3 floors with a variety of different machinery to be seen and interacted with.

[Oyfo Techniekmuseum](#)

Haaksbergen (Boekelo) – **Museum Buurtspoorweg**: a historic railway company and museum, with special attention to local (light) railways in Nederland

[About us - Museum Buurtspoorweg](#)

Enschede – **Iceskating**

Near the campus: UFO-like dome with a long track for competitive or amateur ice skating, skate rental & cafe dining.

Before you go: check the calendar for opening hours (openingstijden).

[Welcome at Ijsbaan Twente - Ijsbaan Twente \(ijsbaan-twente.nl\)](#)

Check for a discount this website: [Iceskating Twente \(utwente.nl\)](#)



Enschede – **Glowgolf**

How cool is it to play mini golf in the dark? That is possible at GlowGolf in Enschede!



Enschede/Hengelo – **Movies**

Go with a discount to the movies in Enschede: [Kinopolis with a discount \(utwente.nl\)](#)

Check the programme of movies at the website: [Films | Kinopolis Nederland](#)

Kinopolis Enschede is at Go Planet – near to the University

Cineast Enschede is located in the city center

Movie Unlimited Hengelo

During the movie, you will have your own little table with a red push button on it. When you press it, the service staff will come and take your order during the movie. You can choose from a variety of snacks and drinks. This way you can enjoy yourself while the film is running. The screenings are shown without intermission.

Also, Movie Unlimited has a discount on all movies every Tuesday

[Bioscoop Hengelo - Movie Unlimited | Movie Unlimited Hengelo \(movieunlimitedbioscopen.nl\)](#)

Enschede – walking and cycling route - **streetart**

The walking and cycling route takes you along the most beautiful outdoor works of art that Enschede has to offer. History comes alive through unique stories. Read more about the artists and discover the stories behind the works. Pick up the walking route at the Tourist Info in the city center and view the cycling route online and discover the beautiful street art in the city.

Start & end point street art routes:

Walking: Tourist info, Langestraat 41, Enschede. The walking route is 3.4 km and takes

about 40 minutes to walk. [Street art walking route - Out in Enschede \(www.uitinenschede-nl.translate.google.com\)](http://www.uitinenschede-nl.translate.google.com)

Cycling: Soendastraat between nr. 21 and 23, Enschede. The cycling route is 41 km and takes about 2.5 hours to cycle. [Street art cycling route - Out in Enschede \(www.uitinenschede-nl.translate.google.com\)](http://www.uitinenschede-nl.translate.google.com)



Enschede – **eat at the Twentsche Foodhal**

Foodies find exciting menus from every corner of the world at Twentsche Foodhal. It is located at the Oude Polaroidfabriek, east of the city centre. At the Twentsche Foodhal you can enjoy delicious food and drinks. Enthusiastic entrepreneurs have arranged 8 different kitchens for you to choose from on an area of 1000m2. Honest dishes based on local products are prepared in front of you. The 8 kitchens prepare delicious dishes from all over the world. The menus are updated regularly.

Good to know: at the Twentsche Foodhal you can only pay by debit card.

[Twentsche Foodhal | Echt eten bij 8 wereldkeukens in Enschede](#)

Hengelo – Drienerstraat – **The Drienerstraat Winter Festival**

On Saturday, December 17, the Drienerstraat is hosting the Winter Festival. The theme is Winter Wonderland.

Keep an eye on the Three Streets' facebook page for the program: <https://www.facebook.com/driestraatjeshengelo>

OTHER (elsewhere)

[Light Festival Amsterdam 2022/2023 - Winter Festival Amsterdam](#) - December 1, 2022, until January 22, 2023 - In this eleventh edition, the event takes you to the world of imagination with the theme "Imagine Beyond". Come and enjoy the works of light art on, along and in the canals of Amsterdam. During this edition it is finally possible again to experience the artworks from the water with a Light Festival canal cruise through the Amsterdam canals.

Zwolle – **Ice Sculpture festival**

From 17 December 2022 to 05 March 2023.

The best ice sculpting artists in the world come to Zwolle where they work in a large ice hall (De IJsselhallen) with 275,000 kilos of ice and 275,000 kilos of snow. They will be translating the theme "WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD" into a magical and spectacular world of snow and ice sculptures of up to 6 metres tall.

This year, time slots will be used to avoid long queues.

When ordering your tickets, you decide on the date and time that suits you best. If a selected timeslot is full, you can select a different time or date. This means that you'll be assured of an admission ticket on the date and time of your choice.

[Dutch Ice Sculpture Festival Dutch Ice sculpture Festival \(ijsbeelden.nl\)](http://ijsbeelden.nl)



[Amigos app](#)

Find spontaneous company

You are always surrounded by people who are looking for company, just like you. But how do you find them? Download Amigos and tap what you are up for. Like-minded people will now invite you and send you a message. You can find each other through the map.

[Doloris Meta Maze](#) – Tilburg

Doloris invites you to enter her Meta Maze, an individual walkthrough art experience with over 40 rooms of surreal art, designed and built by the creators of Karmanoia. In the realm of Doloris, you immerse yourself in a world beyond ours. As you follow oblique pathways, slip through hidden loopholes, walk through walls and encounter mysterious objects, time becomes fluid.

More sources:

- [IAmExpat – Christmas in the Netherlands – The best Dutch Christmas markets](#) (always check the source of organization if it is not cancelled)
- [Christmas in Holland](#)

And finally:

Student well-being on UT social media: #LonelinessAwarenessWeek

The Information & Communication team makes sure that about every 2 weeks a well-being related post is produced for UT/SU social media (Instagram, Tiktok). The team makes use of a content calendar that includes international and nationwide days/weeks related to well-being and noticeable days/weeks in the academic calendar of the UT (i.e. start of the exam weeks). Sometimes the post is accompanied by an activity. A recent example is the [yellow roses action during LonelinessAwarenessWeek](#).

Confidential Contact Persons for Students

The introduction of the Confidential Contact Persons for Students unfortunately was a bit delayed but now the website [Coaching and counselling | Confidential Contact Persons | Home SACC \(utwente.nl\)](#) is up-and-running: all volunteer students present themselves on the site. Students can be in touch with a CCP by just leaving their mobile number.

See also the website of the Student well-being improvement programme (SWIP):

[Student well-being improvement programme \(SWIP\) | Service Portal | University of Twente \(utwente.nl\)](#)

Goodhabitz: all kinds of online training (e.g., digital skills, communication and languages, management and teamwork, personal power, etc.)

[GoodHabitZ online training | e-learning for everyone](#)

Enjoy Your Winter Break!



Happy Holidays!

