



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM



Digital  
magazine for  
exchange  
students

UvA Study Abroad

# Exchange Express

December 2019

[www.uva.nl/ambassadors](http://www.uva.nl/ambassadors)

We are 

# INTRODUCTION

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To go on an exchange, is to go on a big adventure. As you might guess by the name an exchange entails change, which although endlessly exciting, can sometimes also seem scary. This is why we, a group of enthusiastic exchange students, have worked hard over the past few months to create this magazine for you. It is on one hand an attempt to give you an insight into what it means to be on exchange (with all its highs and lows), even though the true scope of the experience could hardly be expressed in words. And on the other hand it is a guide. So that you know what to expect and may be well prepared when you decide to go on an exchange (as we are sure you will after realising what an invaluable and life-changing experience it is).

Of course we have also included some great suggestions on things to do while in Amsterdam, for all the incoming students and all those considering it!

We hope that this magazine helps you in making the right preparations for your exchange, so that you can make the absolute most of your time abroad!

ON BEHALF OF YOUR GLOBAL AND ERASMUS AMBASSADOR TEAM,  
JASMIN & CLEMENTINE

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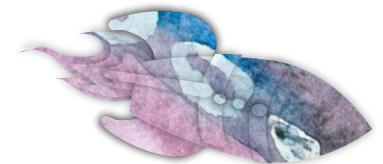
Food | Social | Fashion | Student

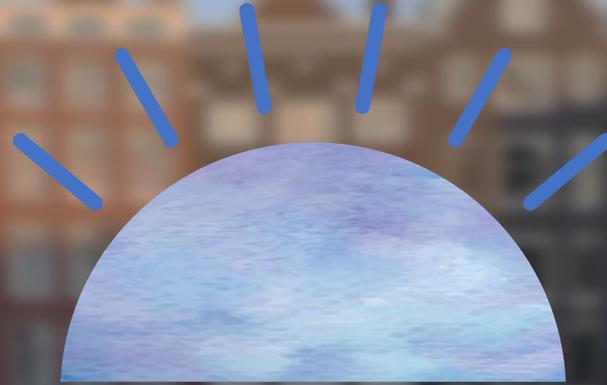
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# LIVING IN AMSTERDAM

## 101



# 01 BIKES

As you may already know, Amsterdam is a small city, to some people, it is a rather crowded city. The advantage of having a bike in a small city like Amsterdam is that you can easily reach everywhere! It is for this reason; there is another name for the Netherlands, which is “The Kingdom of the Bicycles.”



While the Netherlands is a very bike-friendly country in which you could enjoy the wide roads made just for the cyclists, you also have to be very careful of the bikes when you are walking, cycling, and driving in Amsterdam!



*Some typical image of the Kingdom of the Bicycles.*



One of the exchange ambassadors is here to share with you why you should beware of the bicycles in Amsterdam!



## **The speed of the cyclists is crazy!**

At first, you might get surprised at the biking speed of the Dutch people! When this happens, you should always keep to the right, so that you are not blocking their ways, and you will be safe as well. Taking your own time biking on the right will be one of the smartest things to do when you first got here!

## **Biking in the city center gives me a headache! (possibly bruises as well!!)**



In the city center, it is the place where you have to cross small bridges and narrow streets along the canals. Therefore, stay vigilant, and stay cautious! The safest thing to do is always let others pass before you do! (Advice from someone who hit a BMW while crossing a tiny bridge on the second day after getting her bike).



## **Always remember to give hand signals!**

Dutch people are friendly and helpful, but the easiest way to make them angry is when you do not bike properly, or you block the bicycle path. To not be shouted at, remember to give hand signals every time you want to change directions! Make sure to provide time for the other cyclists behind you to react. And remember, do not ever walk on the bicycle path!

# O2 WEATHER

Weather in Amsterdam is unpredictable. It is sunny one moment and there's a storm the next moment. Knowing and preparing for the weather is very important in Amsterdam, where it rains **A LOT**.



It has an average of **100 minutes** of precipitation every day and the country has numerous words for different kinds of rain. So it's safe to have a **rain coat or umbrella** when you go out every day. Rain coats are generally better as the wind is very strong when it rains; it's hard to hold the umbrella straight which will result in you ending up soaking wet. Also, biking every day is very common in Amsterdam; you can bike in the rain if you have your rain coat on.

Having **weather apps** is also a good idea when you prepare for your day. Weather apps such as Weeronline and Buindradar are frequently used by people in Amsterdam. Some apps warn you about sudden showers; it's very useful. Look for which app is most suitable for you and have them on your phone when you come to study in Amsterdam!

The temperature of Amsterdam is typically between **1°C(34°F) and 21°C(71°F)**. Although it is rarely above 27°C(81°F), the summers of Europe are getting hotter and hotter. In 2019, Amsterdam's summer reached 40°C(104°F). Look at the **climates and temperatures of the previous year**; it will help you decide what clothes to bring!

Even though it does rain a lot in Amsterdam, Amsterdam is a very beautiful city. It is breathtaking with the blue sky and fluffy clouds reflecting on the canals of Amsterdam. You can see a lot of tourists lining up on the canals' bridges to take a picture of the beautiful view. Go for a cruise tour in a sunny day and you won't regret it!



▲ This is a screenshot of the weather forecast one day in October from the app Buienradar.

# 03 MEDICAL

*New system alert!!!*

When studying abroad, sometimes it is not avoidable to end up in hospital. The challenging part is the medical system can vary more or less in different countries. Then we as exchange students may need to adapt to the new medical system in a short time. Luckily, most of host universities would provide associated service on healthcare.



In some countries, students are also expected to get some required vaccines, such as varicella and measles, before they can start their semester. Those strict and mandatory requirements actually prevent the spread of virus and protect students from serve disease as exchange students may not aware of the physiological environment in the country they go. If you want to go on an exchange to countries that have potential health threat, do remember to check the entry requirements and prepare them in advance, otherwise you may need to receive three to four vaccines in a single day, apart from adapting to the new medical system within the first few weeks before the classes begin.

The Dutch health care system is quite effective in comparison to other western countries. The healthcare in the Netherlands can be divided in several ways: firstly in three different echelons; secondly in somatic versus mental healthcare; and thirdly in "cure" (short term) versus "care" (long term). Home doctors (huisartsen in Dutch) form the largest part of the first echelon. Being referred by a first echelon professional is frequently required for access to treatment by the second and third echelons, or at least to qualify for insurance coverage for that treatment. The link for UvA exchange students to find health service is pasted here: <https://student.uva.nl/en/content/az/doctors/doctors.html>

To receive better health service and timely and sufficient help when needed, it is important to get ourselves insured during the semester(s) abroad. Some host universities may provide mandatory insurance plan, but we can also check our home insurance coverage to see whether we are covered in the host country. The website for useful information on study abroad insurance is pasted here:

<https://studyabroad.uva.nl/practical-matters/insurance/insurance.html>



# 04 LANGUAGE

Are you interested in learning Dutch as one of your unique experience when go on an exchange to the Netherlands? There are different options to give you the opportunity to maximise your Dutch. As a beginner, UvA offers two courses: Dutch Language Skills 1a (6 EC) and/or Dutch Language Skills 1b (6EC). Register during the course registration period for these courses. An obligatory intake after registration checks if your level matches the course level. More information about the courses can found here: <https://student.uva.nl/eco/content/az/dutch-language-course/im-a-bachelors-student/bachelors-student-eb.html>



▲ Something to start with

# Getting Around Netherlands



The City of Amsterdam is famous for many interesting things that will make your study abroad experience a memorable one. The following attractions and places are highly recommended if you are looking to enrich your study experience in Amsterdam; Anne Frank House, Vondelpark, Rembrandt Plein, Heineken Experience, Museum Plein, Dam Square, Red Light District, Amsterdam Carnal ring, De Pijp (pronounced: the pipe) and many other interesting sites.

#### Where to go: Dam Square

To give you a brief idea about having fun in Amsterdam, we describe one attractive site close to the city center of Amsterdam: Dam Square.

Dam Square is one of the most well-known locations in Amsterdam, it is about 5 minutes walk from the city center and is notable for its magnificent buildings and the many activities that happen there.

#### Transportation

From the UvA campus, you can take the metro system (3 stops) the city center and the walk about 5 minutes to Dam Square.

#### What to do

There are many activities that you can engage in when you are in Dams Square. The place is surrounded by many museums, shopping centers and it is a walking distance from the famous red-light district of Amsterdam.



Besides hanging around within Amsterdam city centre, we have some suggestions on how to spend your weekend in some other places in the Netherlands!

# 1. ROTTERDAM

The bombing during World War II did not beat the city down. Instead, it took up the challenge and opportunity to transform into a young and vibrant city with bold, modern, and interesting architecture.

## What to do there:

Take a look at Yellow Cubes houses, pencil house, and the Rotterdam central library, be at the Erasmus Bridge that connects the north and south parts of Rotterdam, feel the vibes at Witte de Withstraat, enjoy the night view from the observation deck of Euromast

## Transportation:

- By intercity train, a day return ticket price ranges from 29 to 34 euros
- By bus, return trip cost around 10-16 euros

Recommend level: ★★★★★



A small city that holds great authorities in the Netherlands, the parliament building and all the embassies are located here.

## What to do there:

Visit the Binnenhof complex, which is the seat of the Dutch parliament and Noordeinde Palace which is the king's workplace. The UN's International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, located at the Peace Palace are also must-go in the Hague. Get impressed by the power of art at the Mauritshuis Museum, which is the home for Vermeer's masterpiece "Girl with a Pearl Earring". Besides, enjoy the view of the Scheveningen beach and take a look at the 19th-century panorama Mesdag, a 360-degree painting of Scheveningen beach resort. You can also look at the cute miniature models of the famous Dutch buildings at Madurodam park.

## Transportation:

- By intercity train, a day return ticket price ranges from 29 to 34 euros
- By bus, return trip cost around 10-16 euros

Recommend level: ★★★★★

# 2. THE HAGUE



This place has one of the iconic representations of the Netherlands – windmills! Besides historic windmills, it has distinctive green wooden houses that look just like those in an 18th – 19th-century Dutch village. It is located in the town Zaandam which has fun and interesting buildings too.

#### What to do there:

Get into one of the windmills, Visit the cheese factory and museum, visit Albert Heijn museum shop, enjoy the vibrant and bold architecture near the Inntel Hotels Zaandam area.

#### Transportation:

By bus, get day ticket from Amsterdam Central Station at 11.50 euros, which includes a round trip to Zaanse Schans by bus 391 and hop on hop off within Zaanse Schans and Zaandam area all day.

Recommend level: ★★★★★



This peaceful village has often been referred to as the “Little Venice” of the Netherlands, because of its numerous waterways and beautiful canals. You shall get the fairy-tale vibe when you see the picturesque wooden bridges and farmhouses with traditional thatched roofs.

#### What to do there:

Take a boat trip (punter or electric boat or tour boat) on the canals, See the thatched farms on the many peat islands

#### Transportation:

With 26 euros, you can get a day ticket which covers transportation from Amsterdam to Giethoorn and a 1-hour boat ride in Giethoorn

Recommend level: ★★★★★

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An authentic fishing village just north of Amsterdam where you get to see traditional and colorful village houses at the beachside.

What to do there:

First, take a little sweet time to wander through Het Doolhof and Oude Kom. Then, spend some time visiting museums like Volendam museum, Palingsound museum (eel smokehouse) and Cheese Factory Volendam to learn more about the history, clothing and cheese of Volendam. Besides, hop aboard the Volendam Marken Express to the village of Marken. Last but not least, try the fresh catch!!

Transportation:

Get the Waterland day ticket at 10 euros for unlimited bus trips between Amsterdam, Edam, Volendam, Marken, Monnickendam, Purmerend, and Broek! What's better is that you get a 10% discount when you get your tickets online!

Recommend level: ★★★★★

The Cheese Capital of the Netherlands and is well-known for its traditional cheese market and rich culture. It is also home to the professional football team AZ (Alkmaar Zaanstreek).

What to do there:

It's all about cheese! Witness the reenactment of uniformed "cheese bearers" pile their trade at the cheese market. This is a traditional process since at least 1593 that you wouldn't want to miss. Be aware that this is only available on Fridays, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. from April to September. However, you can still visit the Dutch Cheese Museum if you come some other time. Besides, you can visit the Beatles museums loaded with their paraphernalia and the Grote Kerk, a medieval church with two widely celebrated organs: the Van Covelens and the Hagerbeer-Schnitger organ.

Transportation:

It only takes less than 45 minutes to reach Alkmaar by train from Amsterdam Central and the ticket for a round trip only cost 14 euros.

Recommend level: ★★★★★

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## 7. KEUKENHOF

If you are in Amsterdam in the right season, which is Spring, do not miss out on the breathtaking scenery of 7 million blooming flowers in the largest flower garden in the world! The theme of the park in 2020 is "A world of colors" and it will be opened daily from March 21 to May 10, from 08:00 until 19:30.

### What to do there:

You can simply immerse into the sea of blossoms, cycle around and take colourful pictures! Or you can take a closer look at the tale of tulipomania, the Tulip mania exhibition at the Juliana Pavilion, where you can christen your own tulip, see how the tulips are cultivated, and get advice and tips from experts about the use of flower bulbs in your own garden.

### Transportation:

The cheapest and fastest way to get here is by Combiticket, which costs 32.50 euros for an adult traveling from Amsterdam. It includes the entrance ticket and returns bus ticket on that day. You will be dropped off right outside or near to the main entrance of the garden and you would not need to queue for tickets! With this package, all you need to do is get to the departure points located at Europaplein metro station and Hoofddorp.

Recommend level: ★★★★★



**EXTRA TIPS!!**

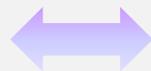
With the Amsterdam & Region Travel Ticket, you can enjoy unlimited travel by bus, tram, metro, and train in Amsterdam and surrounding areas (including Volendam, Edam, Marken, Zaanse Schans, Haarlem, Zandvoort and Keukenhof etc) with 19.50 for 24 hours and you pay less when you go for more days at a go. Prices can be checked online! Save more when you plan your trips beforehand!



# SWITCH STORIES



*"Our biggest tip to future exchange students  
would be to build their  
home away from home"*



## Marriane Pabot

### Outbound

When did you realise that you wanted to go on an exchange? (did something happen to you, that made you take that decision)

I went to the information session at the beginning of my second year in order to learn more about the options that I had for my third year. I quickly made up my mind on going on an exchange because I wanted to experience the study experience in another country than the Netherlands and discover a new culture.

Where did you go? when? and why did you choose that country?

I decided to go to Madrid, Spain, in the first semester of my third year because I always had a big interest for the Spanish culture as well as the language. I had Spanish classes both in highschool and university and I wanted to continue improving my Spanish. In my opinion, there is no better way to learn a language than to go live in the country for a couple of months and really integrate within the culture. Also, the weather is a massive plus.

How did you feel when you knew you were going to Spain?

I was really excited but at the same time anxious as I would have to leave my comfort zone here in Amsterdam and adapt to a whole new different city, culture and educational system. I actually planned my trips in advance before I left to Spain and in the first place I really wanted to see the Canary Islands, it just looked so beautiful and having 25 degrees during Christmas is honestly just great.

## Maria Jose Deniz

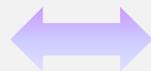
### Inbound

Tell us a little bit about yourself and what made you decide to (go studying abroad):

My name is Maria and I am a law student from the Canary Islands but I study in Madrid, Spain. I am a very introvert and rather shy person at first, so I was really not sure if Erasmus was for me as I knew it would take me a lot of effort to open up to people and adapt to a new environment. What really helped me to determine whether to go or not, is that I made a list of pros and cons, and I realized that there were so many more pros than cons. Deciding to go abroad does take a lot of courage but the idea of getting out of my comfort zone and dive into it was a really exciting.

Why did you choose to study in the Netherlands, and why specifically Amsterdam?

First I was concerned about learning another language, Italian, and Amsterdam was only my fifth option. But then I realized that Amsterdam was one of the best university for law and it would be a good opportunity to improve my English which would be very beneficial for a future career in law. I chose Amsterdam because I wanted to live in the capital which would also give me a bigger cultural experience and would make me really go out of my comfort zone as much as possible.



Tell me 4 things that you learned about Spanish culture

1. The first thing that I immediately noticed is the difference regarding time. In Spain, it feels like everything is happening a little bit later than here. People are not in any rush, they have lunch around 3pm and dinner at 9pm, which is unthinkable here in the Netherlands. Also Spanish people never show up to a party before midnight.
2. Spanish people like to party and not only on the weekends. In Madrid, everyday there is a reason, or not, to party and they go full in.
3. I learned that real tapas are free and come when you order drinks.
4. When you order "un cafe con leche" and they ask you "¿y como quieres la leche?" they are not asking you what type of milk you want but whether you want it cold, moderate and hot. And cafe con leche in Madrid is an institution, trust me.

What did you gain during those months, and how has your life changed since then?

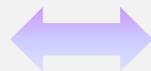
The exchange experience undoubtedly taught me a lot about myself and others. It showed me that going out of your comfort zone is probably the best thing you can do for yourself as it makes you grow and do things you would not have done otherwise. It showed me that I could follow up courses in another language and keep up with them like the other native students. It is very challenging but extremely rewarding at the end. After coming back from my exchange I became much more tolerant and open minded towards other people as I realized that we all come from different backgrounds and that it is really important to try and accommodate each of us. And of course I made friends that I still talk to everyday and that is the whole point of an exchange in my opinion, to create your "home away from home".

What were your main expectations about a study abroad before you arrived? did you know what an ERASMUS was?

I had heard about the Erasmus experience from friends at my home university and all the people I have talked to that have been on exchange before. Everyone told me that it was the best experience they have ever had and that I should totally do it. Before coming to Amsterdam I had pretty high expectations for the multicultural environment I was going to surround myself by and I was also excited as I have never been to Amsterdam before. So far they have all been met on every level!

When you arrived, what was your first thoughts about the city and the university? Did you experience a strong culture shock?

When I arrived, I did not expect this city to be so amazing. On my first day here I took the tram to go to the city center and I walked around by myself and I was overwhelmed directly by how many people there are in the streets and how much is happening here, no matter the time of the day or night. I would say that I had a small culture shock, especially concerning the lifestyle of people here compared to the one Spanish people have. Here, people seem so free to do whatever they want. Although I do not live in the city centre, I can feel that constant environment. Anyway I feel really safe everywhere I go and free to do and be whatever I want without the fear that people will judge me. By the way, I found my accommodation by "DeKey" which offers good delays for temporary rooms.



Did you have any inconvenient? If yes, how did you cope with it and what advice will you give to future exchange students?

I would say the main challenge I encountered was the language barrier, both at university and in everyday life. Some courses I followed were only taught in Spanish but it really encouraged me to push myself and learn the language to a next level. I tried to speak and communicate in Spanish as much as possible and eventually you just dive into it. My advice would be to not say no to anything and take things as they come to you, without fearing that you will fail. Even if you mess up some words, at the end you always learn much more by trying.

Do you wish you had done something different?

Overall I am really grateful and happy about my exchange, maybe I just wish I had more time to travel even more to different cities in Spain but I will definitely go back some time!

What are the main differences between Spanish and Dutch people? How would you say that Amsterdam is different from Madrid?

They are very different, in Spain people are super outgoing. What I miss about Spanish people is how warm-hearted they are, even if you are not from Spain, they will always help you with any issue you have. Dutch people are a bit colder when it comes to internationals and they are less outgoing. Madrid is much bigger than Amsterdam and I am used to taking public transport only to go to university in Spain whereas here you can take the bike everywhere and you can really appreciate the city in a different way. When you bike in Amsterdam, you start feeling like a Dutch person yourself. Concerning the nightlife, it is very vibrant here as there are so many exchange students like me.

What are the challenges you had so far?

The biggest challenge for me while being on an Erasmus is to combine my study life and social life. Principally I came to this University to study. UVA is one of the best universities in Europe for studying law, so I have to be concerned about my grades, studies and courses. However, having fun in this city is way too tempting and easy. You sometimes forget why you are actually here. So I guess my main concern is to attend class, and not miss any tutorial while going out and having fun with my friends. But, so far, I have been doing great. It is not impossible to do both, you just have to plan your week and make sure that you have time for everything.



## Ida Raffaghello

*Outbound*

*Host University: Università degli Studi di Milano*

Tell us a little bit about yourself and what made you decide to (go studying abroad):

I'm half Swedish and half Italian and I grew up in Luxembourg. I decided to do my exchange in Milan in order to improve my Italian and have a real experience of the country that I am actually from (as I have never lived in Italy).

Why did you choose to study in Italy, and why specifically Milan?

I expected to learn more about the different education systems and get more of a sense of how it is to live in Italy. As I was considering doing my masters in Milan, I wanted to experience it before in order to take such a decision.

When you arrived, what was your first thoughts about the city and the university? Did you experience a strong culture shock?

When I first arrived in Milan I did not experience a culture shock as I had already visited the city many times. However, the university system is very different (organisation wise), and it took me a while to get used to it. In Amsterdam I was used to more technology dependent resources, while Milan has more traditional teaching systems.

## Giorgia Laguzzi

*Inbound*

*Home University: Università commerciale L. Bocconi*

If you had to give a brief description of yourself, what would you say?

Hi! My name is Giorgia and I'm a 20 (soon to be worldwide legal eheh) student from Milan, Italy. Back home my bachelor is International Politics and Government but here at UVA I was given the great opportunity to join the PPLE department. In my free time I love to go to the gym and create jewels, I find it a way to express my creativity.

Why did you decide to go on an exchange?

My situation is a bit peculiar, since in my faculty it is compulsory to go abroad one semester in the third year of Bachelor. I'm extremely happy of this because being very close to my family I don't know whether I would have had the gut to leave Milan. But now, I cannot imagine missing this amazing experience that is Erasmus.

Why did you opt for a European city?

As I mentioned before I'm really close to my family and I've never lived alone so I was a bit scared to go too far. Moreover I study politics and I think that European Universities are ideal especially French and Dutch ones. Last but not least living abroad is expensive and the Erasmus scholarship was quite an incentive to chose Europe!



## What are the main differences between Milan and Amsterdam?

Amsterdam differs quite a lot from Milan. The biggest difference is the weather, as the weather is warmer in Milan, and there is more light and less rain in winter. While people living in Amsterdam tend to be more efficient with their time, Italians don't mind taking a bit more time to complete a task. The night life is also quite different in Milan as most people hang around in little bars or on the streets, while in Amsterdam the nightlife consists of going to clubs/pubs mostly.

## What did your stay abroad teach you about yourself and others? Did your stay meet your expectation?

In Milan I learnt how to be more independent and get to know and learn from people with different mindsets than me. As I mentioned above, I also learnt to study in a more traditional system which has many pros and cons. My exchange did meet my expectations and I would never take back this experience.

## How was your first reaction to Amsterdam?

I've been very lucky because when I arrived the weather was amazing!!! In general I was so impressed by the level of English that people have here. Even kids can understand and speak fluently. Another thing that impressed me is the number of bikes that there are in the city. In Milan there aren't many bicycle lanes and most of the people opt for public transport. Here on the contrary, you even have a sort of incorporated stroller to carry your kids around and provide them with the necessary protection even when it rains, it is truly amazing!

## Do you ever miss home?

All the time. Especially at the beginning it was a real struggle. I have a younger brother and in my house there is always a lot of chaos while here, in my room, is always so silent. During the first week I missed family so much that I found myself crying few times all of a sudden. But I guess that it is normal, in particular if you are used to live with your parents. It gets better eventually, especially when you start meeting people and making friends. The sadness of the first days was totally worth the experience!

# The Dutch VS The World



# JUSTAS SATKUS

Lithuania

How would you compare the food culture in the Netherlands with your home country?

First of all, I would say that the food portions are larger and cheaper in Lithuania. The types of food people commonly eat are also very different. Back home, potato is just as much eaten as people in the Netherlands eat bread. In the Netherlands, people would buy bags of bread and have that as a snack or meal, while in Lithuania, you would see people eat in that way with potatoes. Relative to Lithuania, I would say that Dutch food culture is more innovative and expanding; I'm seeing foods from different countries/cultures coming in. Things I would say are similar, is that both cultures don't really have a prominent cuisine- like Japanese with sushi. Not many variety but growing.

# MACYN SCHOLZ

Canada

Interviewee

2

## What do you think about the Dutch party culture among students? Is it any different then where you're from?

In Vancouver (where I am from), students are always downtown or celebrating at the same places; whether that may be the same club scene, or a bar around the central areas in the city. Here, I would say people move around throughout the night, and enjoy a different scene. For example, they would start pre-drinks and little parties in student residence, and afterwards, there are always so many places to go. I've only been to a place for a second time once! There are so many cool events for students like boat parties, parties that are put on by the student hotel, etc. Another thing that I would mention is that "party" is very different from my home university as well. It of course consists of going out to clubs and bars, but greek like and fraternity parties are also a huge part of my home university's drinking/party culture.

# CHINGEE MENDEE

Canada

## Do you think Dutch students look different, fashionably speaking, compared to students at home?

The fashion between Canada (Vancouver) and what I see in Amsterdam are very different. In Vancouver, people dress a lot more "posh". Brands like Aritzia and Hypebeast brands are fairly popular. You would see girls in really nice sweaters, trousers, and boots in Vancouver. There are also many people who wear high-end clothing from well-known brands as well. In Amsterdam, most people are wearing vintage and more "hipster" pieces. Old school brands and styles are a lot more common here. Many guys here dress like Mac DeMarco!! But I see similarities in both countries with the popularity in athleisure clothing (like joggers and sweatshirts/hoodies), and unique/rare sneakers.

# MATHILDE KAMER

Netherlands

Interviewee

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What do you think is the most striking difference between Dutch students, and students from your exchange university?

I moved to Amsterdam from a small town in Drenthe in 2016, and studied abroad in San Francisco in 2018-2019. I went for two semesters at San Francisco State University. I think the most striking difference between Dutch students and SF State is how politically active people are on campus. As a political science student, I'm used to my friends being politically engaged, but at SF State your major didn't matter. Everyone was involved, whether it be protesting on campus when an anti-abortion organization stopped by, participating in a silent protest to show that undocumented students were welcome and safe at SF State, or striking in remembrance of the first Student Strike in 1968-1969. SF State was the first university in America to establish an Ethnic Studies department, which really shows the heart of SF State: a very politically active, progressive university. The UvA can learn from that in terms of student participation!

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Clementine



Daan



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Giorgia



Jasmin



Jin Wen



Maria



Marianne



Yifan



Yijung



Yi Yu

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**Ready?  
Get Set.  
Go!**

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