

## ISHAM NEWS | 19 MAY 2017

### ARE YOU READY FOR AMSTERDAM?

One of the first things visitors to The Netherlands always ask is: what is your special dish? Food in Amsterdam is quite international, but let's focus on things that are considered as 'typically Dutch', i.e. that you normally don't eat at home. What about this menu. As a starter, I recommend **raw herring**. Actually it is not exactly raw, but it is a bit fermented, and without the head so that you can be sure at the very least it's dead. Dip the fish in onions and pickles, take it by the tail, bend your head backwards, mouth wide open – and let the fish swim vertically into your throat. Instructions can be found [here](#). Delicious!

As main course: **hutspot**. That is a stew of cooked potatoes, onions and carrots, served with meatloaf in a creamy vinegar mustard jus. This type of food was standard for poor farmers in wintertime in the 19th century, when there was not much else left to eat; remember the kind of depressive scenery that was pictured by Van Gogh. Not particularly fun-eating, but actually it tastes quite good.

Obviously this is historical poor men's food. Nice to eat in wintertime, when it's snowing outside and everybody is depressed. But today we eat differently. Close to the ISHAM congress center you will find restaurants from all continents. For centuries Amsterdam has lived on international trade, and thus daily food for most people is a mixture of French, Indonesian, Thai, Italian, and many more. Try this one <https://www.bolenius-restaurant.nl/> for example, a restaurant that takes its fresh vegetables from small gardens between the skyscrapers near the congress center.



This looks more like the sunny side of life, isn't it?

Deserts can be real pieces of art, but we go for something simple: the **stropwafel**. Two thin slices of cookie glued together with caramel syrup, originating from the town of Gouda – the town of the Gouda cheese. At markets they are hand-made, producing a delicious sweet smell.

Another Netherlands specialty is **genever** a distillate similar to gin and made according to centuries-old recipes, containing up to about 40% alcohol. Genever has become very trendy again in Amsterdam, but traditionally it is often taken together with a beer, as a **stelletje**. But for that part of the even better visit one of the 1000 cafes in Amsterdam, several of which are specialized on beer, serving 100 or more different kinds. Enjoy!

