

The Mouth

Cultural lessons for tourists

Pannekoekenpaviljoen De Carrousel
Tweede Weteringplantsoen 1, 625 8002
Open Mon-Fri 11.00-21.00, Sat-Sun
10.00-21.00
Cash, PIN, credit cards

Tourists are like sponges. They're eager to learn everything there is to know about Amsterdam. My philosophy? If there's a chance to explain something from a local point of view—go right ahead. It doesn't matter if it's true.

So it is with our latest visitor. Partner-in-nothing-devious thinks we need to introduce him to that wonderful Dutch tradition—pancakes and beer. I think it's a perfect opportunity for a lesson in traditional pancake-eating.

Practically overlooking the Heineken Headquarters, Pannekoekenpaviljoen De Carrousel is the perfect place for our cultural experience, but it is a little precarious. Everything about the place is designed to make your head spin. The restaurant is built in the shape of a carousel. From inside, its glass walls give a perfect view of the trams and bikes careening around the Weteringcircuit. The hot pink and white striped walls, mirrors and bright lights don't help. But we like to live on the edge. (Although we sit near the centre, not noticing the child-friendly carousel horses next to our table. Luckily, there are few children dining—or riding—today.)

Our first step in this cultural enlightenment? Beer. The Heineken Extra Cold comes in two sizes (€4.50/€2.50). Our Tourist



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want to give your rolled-up pancake a light dusting.’ ‘But it’s bacon and egg flavoured,’ he reminds me. ‘Do it,’ I say. He does. ‘Now you need just a squirt of syrup across the length.’ No objections this time.

‘Go ahead and eat,’ I say. He digs in, smiles and orders another beer. Not a bad combination, even if lunchtime has begun to feel a little like a craft project. But I know that *pannekoeken* always taste better this way. I’ve been rolling my own since I was a tourist a decade ago—and someone taught me how to eat a pancake ‘the traditional Dutch way.’

By Nanci Tangeman

opts for the larger, as we walk him through the menu. All the usual pancake flavours are here, from apples and cinnamon to, um, chile con carne. Eventually Tourist decides on a pancake topped with egg and bacon (€6.50). Partner and I get our usual ham and cheese *pannekoeken* (€6.50).

Despite the name of the restaurant, you can also train your foreign visitors in the Dutch way of eating hamburgers (€6.50); or wiener, chicken or fish schnitzel (€10); *poffertjes* (from €5); *appelgebak* (€3.50) or sweet Brussels waffles (€4-€8). Or, if you’re really feeling industrious, teach them how to eat a proper English breakfast—Dutch-style (€8.50, available until 13.00).

Eventually, our attentive waitress delivers the goods. Tourist marvels at the circumference of his pancake, as well as its thinness. A perfect start to the lesson. ‘First,’ I tell him, ‘you roll up your pancake, burrito-style.’ I demonstrate, as Partner digs right in, ignoring our lesson. Tourist follows my lead.

Next I show him the shaker of powdered sugar on the table. ‘Now you