

# Dutch Flevoland – The Largest Man-Made Island

Flevoland, a province in the center of Netherlands, was established in 1986. Lelystad is the capital of the country's twelfth province, which is home to 400,000 inhabitants. Thanks to its massive earthworks people say about the Netherlands that the world was created by God, but Holland was created by the Dutch. They drained lakes and seas in order to create Flevoland, the largest artificial island in the world.



## History of Polders

For more than 2,000 years, the Dutch have been striving to hold back as well as reclaim land. The Frisians, the first settlers in the Netherlands, started building terpen (dikes) to safeguard their land from the North Sea. In 1287, the terpens failed, causing a flood in the country and formation of the new bay Zuiderzee over the farmland.

The Dutch worked consistently for a few centuries to slowly push the water out of Zuiderzee and built dikes and created polders, pieces of reclaimed land. After building the dikes, the water was pumped out to keep the land dry.

A flood in 1916, gave the Dutch the impetus to close the Zuiderzee, the inland sea. The work was started in 1920 with the building of a dike that closed off the shallow bay in northeast Netherlands. Over the years, the bay was drained in stages in order to create Flevoland, the land of polders. Flevopolder, referred to as the land combined by two polders that were created in the 1950s and 1960s, is separated by a dike and is kept dry by operating diesel and electric pumps. If one part of the Flevopolder gets flooded, the other part will be protected by the dike.



The architects have left a stream of water between the new dry land and the old coastline to provide access to the sea. Unlike the other islands around the world, the Flevopolder has not been raised above the sea level.

## Things to Do in Flevoland

There are many recreational attractions in Flevoland. You can visit Aviodome or Walibi Holland if you want to have fun or an adrenaline rush. If you are interested in history, then you can visit the 17th century ships in Bataviawerf shipyard. They will tell you the story of the golden days of the Dutch India Company.



On the other hand, the Nieuw Land Erfgoedmuseum will tell you as to how the Flevoland was created. Yet another site for history enthusiasts is Schokland, the Netherlands' first UNESCO site.

If you love to shop, then you must visit Bataviastad, the Netherlands' largest fashion outlet. A visit to Almere cannot be avoided, if you are a connoisseur of architecture.

You will need to spend more than one day if you really want to explore Flevoland – e.g. a couple of great nature reserves like the Natuurpark Lelystad and Oostvaardersplassen.

Date: 2014-04-28

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-flevoland-worlds-largest-artificial-island-article2372>