

# Remarkable Journey: The Black Heritage

## Amsterdam Tour

The Black Heritage Amsterdam Tour has the goal of motivating and informing its numerous visitors about the relationship between the people that came from Africa and the Netherlands: how its culture and history have been, and continue to be, impacted by them. Jennifer Tosch is the tour guide. She teaches history from an Africa-oriented point of view, in her fascinating and particular journey. She unveils the invisible African influence that the expert eye can find in the art, historical buildings, city landmarks, museums, and more.



Jennifer Tosch, a Surinamese–American, is a graduate of Berkeley, University of California. She came to Amsterdam to attend a history course at the BESS (Black Europe Summer School). Once she arrived to Amsterdam she began researching about her mother, who spent many years studying in the Netherlands right after the World War II.

The motivation that fueled the tour came to her from two sources: first, from the life-changing period studying at the BESS, and second, from seeing how little she could find about the many positive influences that African culture brought to the Netherlands. She decided to talk to Ricki Stevenson. Stevenson started the Black Paris Tour, and is a good friend of Tosch. Tosch was now convinced that she could do a good job revealing the black influences in Europe. Black Heritage Amsterdam Tours was created just a few months later, with the help of Stevenson.



The National Monument, the very heart of Amsterdam, is where the tour begins. It's the best place to start. The canals offer the best perspective to get a feel of the history of this unique place. Boaters pass many pieces of African influence on Dutch culture that can be seen thanks to the expertise of the guide. Anton de Koms house, the Hermitage Museum, the Anne Frank House, the West India House and more can be seen from the boats.



Other landmarks of historical significance that the tour continues along include the Maritime Museum. A replica of a VOC cargo ship from the 18th century is docked there. A guided visit inside this ship is possible for those that participate in the extended tour. After the tour, participants can usually enjoy a visit to a local African restaurant and a trip to the Dappermarkt with Tosch. The Dappermarkt is a very old, famous and big open market in Amsterdam.

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