

# Hostelworld Guide for Amsterdam

Your Complete Customised Guide



Known as the 'Venice of the North', Amsterdam is a city built on a cobweb of canals that boasts one of the most picturesque settings in the world. True, it is a city full of hazy coffee shops where stoners smoke all day and where prostitutes standing in red-lit windows try to lure in prospective customers, but there is much more to the Dutch capital than hookers and hash. It boasts world-class museums, great architecture and a buzzing nightlife making it the perfect city for a few days break.

## In this Guide...

Useful Information  
After Dark  
Places to Eat  
Top Attractions  
Budget Tips  
Internet Cafés  
Where to Shop



## The Essentials

### Local Currency Rates

CAD	EUR	CAD	EUR
1	0.68	10	6.81
2	1.36	20	13.61
3	2.04	30	20.42
4	2.72	40	27.22
5	3.4	50	34.03
6	4.08	60	40.84
7	4.76	70	47.64
8	5.44	80	54.45
9	6.13	90	61.25
10	6.81	100	68.06

### Getting There

**By plane:** Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport is 15km southwest of the city. An express train service connects it to Centraal Station. The journey takes 20 minutes and costs €3.30.

**By train:** Centraal Station in the city centre is where all trains arrive. There can be some shady characters around it so have your wits about you at all times.

**By bus:** Buses going to Amsterdam from around Europe go to Amstelstation which is 3.5km southeast of the city centre. It is connected to Centraal Station via metro.

### Getting Around

**On foot:** Using Centraal Station as your focal point, places such as Dam Square and the Red Light District are within walking distance.

**By tram:** You'll need to use trams to get to other major places such as the Leidseplein and the museums. They are easy to use and most routes leave from Centraal Station.

**By bicycle:** By far the most enjoyable mode of transport is the bicycle. One in every two people in the city owns one. You can rent them for about €9 for the day.

## Climate

Amsterdam experiences cool winters and mild summers. The coldest months of the year are January and February when temperatures can drop below 0°C. In some instances the canals can freeze up in these months, although it doesn't happen too frequently. The average temperature takes a considerable jump in March, and by April the days begin to get mild, although can still be chilly enough in the evening. During the summer the weather is quite warm, with temperatures rising to an average of 22°C although they can climb to 27°C.

### Average Monthly Stats

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
C	2	3	5	8	12	15	17	17	14	11	6	3
MM	69	48	66	53	61	71	76	71	66	74	81	84
☀	3	3	4	5	7	7	6	6	5	4	3	2

C: Average Temp Centigrade  
MM: Average Rainfall  
☀: Average Hrs Sunshine

## Useful Information

**Language:** Dutch  
**Currency:** Euro  
**Electricity:** 220 Volts, AC/50Hz  
**Area Code:** +31 (Netherlands) 020 (Amsterdam)  
**Emergency Codes:** Ambulance/Fire/Police 112  
**Time Zone:** Central European Time (GMT + 1)  
**Central Post Office:** Singel 250-256 at Raadhuisstr  
**Main Tourist Office:** VVV Office, Stationsplein 10 (in front of Centraal Station)

## Embassies

**USA** – +31 (0)70 310 9209  
**UK** – +31 (0)70 427 0427  
**Canada** – +31 (0)70 311 1600  
**Australia** – +31 (0)70 310 8200  
**South Africa** – +31 (0)70 392 4501  
**Ireland** – +31 (0)70 363 0993  
**Germany** – +31 (0)70 342 0600  
**Spain** – +31 (0)70 364 3814  
**Italy** – +31 (0)70 302 1030  
**New Zealand** – +31 (0)70 346 9324  
**France** – +31 (0)70 312 5800

*Unless stated, all embassies are in The Hague.*



## Cheap Eats

**Ah to Go, Damrak 89–90** There's nowhere to sit in this sandwich bar/deli at the end of the Damrak but there is a fine selection of baguettes and sandwiches to choose from. Eating them in Dam Square is particularly enjoyable. A great place for lunch on the go. *Open Mon–Sat 8am–10pm, Sun 12 noon–10pm; average baguette €2.50.*

**'t Blauwe Theehuis, Vondelpark 5** A sandwich here is a tad more expensive than in your average sandwich bar, but the setting is worth the extra couple of Euro. Overlooking Vondelpark, if the sun is shining you can't beat a couple of hours relaxing here, watching the rollerbladers zoom through the park. *Open daily from 9am–1am.*

**The Pantry, Leidsekruijsstraat 21** It is a crime to travel to a country and leave without trying out some native dishes. So if you fancy a Dutch culinary delight come here. Located just 5 minutes from Leidseplein, the staff are friendly and the meatballs are particularly tasty. *Open Mon–Fri 5pm–11pm, Sat & Sun 12 noon–11pm.*

### In the words of Vincent Vega...



At the beginning of 'Pulp Fiction', Vincent Vega talks to his partner in crime Jules about the little differences between the Netherlands and the USA. One of them he mentions is how the Dutch drown their French fries in mayonnaise. He wasn't lying. All over the Dutch capital are fast food outlets where you can get burgers, kebabs and such fare. If you get chips and you're asked whether or not you want mayo, be warned – they really do drown them in it!

**FEBO, various locations** No matter where you are in the Dutch capital, you will never be far from a FEBO outlet. For around €2 you'll be able to get yourself a burger of some description.

## After Dark

**Escape, Rembrandtplein 11** Located on the vibrant Rembrandtplein in the city centre, Escape is Amsterdam's number one club. Holding over 2,000 people, the biggest night is 'Chemistry' which is on every Saturday. Dress to kill if you plan on fitting in with the rest of the city's clubbers. *Open Thurs–Sun 11pm–4am (7am on Sat); admission varies.*

**Boom Chicago, Leidseplein Theatre, Leidseplein** Since opening twelve years ago, Boom Chicago has become an Amsterdam institution. Every night this improv–comedy group entertains packed audiences with their formula of scripted material and improvisation comedy. *Open daily from 12 noon–1am/3am; shows nightly at 8.15pm; tickets €12–€20.*

### Gay / Lesbian Amsterdam

Amsterdam is one of the gay capitals of Europe – fact. While there are gay bars and clubs all over the city, there are four main areas.

The **Warmoesstraat** area is the most central and also the most daring as this is where the 'leather bars' are located. The

**Reguliersdwarsstraat** area is the trendy gay area. Close to the Leidseplein, the **Kerkstraat** area is the oldest gay area, while around **Rembrandtplein** and the Amstel is also popular with the gay community.

**Red Light District, Oudezijds Achterburgwal** No visit to Amsterdam is complete without a trip to its infamous Red Light District after dark. There is no denying that it is an extremely seedy part of the city, but it is a tourist attraction in its own right and the Dutch capital is as well-known for its hookers as it is for its canals. Keep in mind though that it can be an intimidating place at the best of times, and while it is safe enough due to all the tourists, avoid walking through it alone at night.

**Melkweg, Lijnbaansgracht 234** Just minutes from Leidseplein, Melkweg has been around for a long, long time and has something for everyone. Not only does it play host to some of the world's biggest DJs and live acts, but it also doubles up as a cinema and art gallery. *Open nightly from 9pm–4am; admission varies.*

**Leidseplein/Rembrandtplein** These two squares are the liveliest in the city and are fringed by a wide host of busy bars and clubs. During the summer months both squares get very busy, particularly Leidseplein where everyone sits under canapés.

## Don't Miss

**Anne Frank House, Prinsengracht 267** A visit to the house where Anne Frank hid from the Nazis for over two years is an extremely emotional experience, yet also a very enjoyable one. The museum tells the history of the eight people in who hid there between 1942 and 1944 and those who helped them during their hiding. *Open daily from 9am–7pm; admission €7.50.*

### Amsterdam's largest museum



**Rijksmuseum, Jan Luijkenstraat 1** The Rijksmuseum is regarded as one of the ten principal museums in the world and is acclaimed for its collection of Netherlandish paintings from the 15th to the late 19th century. Its most famous painting is Rembrandt's *Nightwatch*. *Open daily from 9am–6pm; admission €9.*

**Van Gogh Museum, Paulus Potterstraat 7** With over 1.3 million visitors in 2004, the Van Gogh Museum is the Dutch capital's most popular museum. It houses a permanent collection of over 200 paintings and 500 drawings by Van Gogh and tells the story of the eccentric Dutch artist. *Open 10am–6pm (10pm Fridays); admission €10.*

**Heineken Experience, Stadhouderskade 78** Divided into 19 different rooms, this self-guided tour is surprisingly enjoyable and the combination of nostalgia and modern technology work particularly well. *Open Tues–Sun 10am–6pm; admission €10.*

**Lindbergh Canal Cruise, Damrak 26** To fully appreciate Amsterdam's architecture you need to get a canal cruise around the city. Lasting an hour, they tell the stories behind some of the city's most famous buildings. *Tours depart every 15 mins from 10am–4.30pm/6pm (April to September); tickets €6.*

## Mark Your Calendar

**February/March – Ice skating in Dam Square** Every year in front of the Royal Palace on Dam Square, a huge ice-rink is set up to allow locals don their skates for another year.

**March – Stille Omgang** This silent procession through the streets of Amsterdam commemorates the 'Miracle of the Host' from 1345 where a dying man vomited after being given his last rites!

**April – Queen's Day** Over 1 million people take to the streets on April 30th for the year's biggest party. The whole city goes into overdrive for the day when everyone wears orange and has boot sales.

**May to August – Vondelpark Summer** Amsterdam's answer to Central Park is awash with activity during the summer months. On the open-air stage in the middle of the park you can catch concerts along with dance, theatrical and dramatic performances.

**May – Liberation Day** Shortly after Queen's Day, Liberation Day (5th) is celebrated throughout the country to mark the end of World War II. Street parties take place all over the city and live music can be heard everywhere you go.

**June – Holland Festival** This annual festival is the biggest arts festival on the Dutch calendar and lasts more than three weeks. Over 80,000 people attend theatrical, musical and other types of performances.

**August – Canal Parade** Part of 'Amsterdam Pride' which occurs every August, this parade sees thousands of Amsterdam's gay community take to the canals for the year's most outlandish parade.

**September – Flower Parade** Not as risqué as the aforementioned canal parade, this one involves flower floats which parade from the flower auction at Aalsmeer to The Dam in the city centre.

**October – Canoe Tour** Over 500 illuminated canoes and kayaks light up the city's canals for this annual event making the city look prettier than ever.

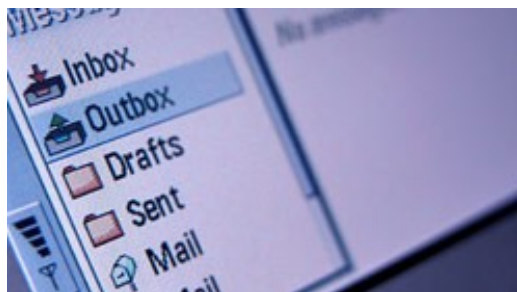
**November – Cannabis Cup** Definitely one for the stoners, different coffee shops compete for such coveted awards as 'Best Import Hash' and 'Best Seed Company (Sativa)'.

**December – New Year's Eve Celebrations** If you are lucky enough to ring in the New Year in the Dutch capital make your way down to Dam Square.



## Get Connected

**easyInternetcafé, Damrak 33** The second easyInternetcafé to open in Amsterdam, this one is the most central, only 5 minutes from Dam Square. There are over 140 terminals so you won't have a problem finding a free one. *Open daily from 9am–10pm; €2 per hour; minimum purchase €1.*



**The Internetcafé, Martelaarsgracht 11** While the proprietors of this cyber café didn't wrack their brains when trying to come up with a name, they did find a wonderful location as this place is only 100 meters from Centraal Station. *Open Sun–Thurs 9am–1am, Fri & Sat 9am–3pm; €1 per half hour (plus compulsory drink).*

**Cyberlounge, Elandsgracht 144** Located in between Leidseplein and the Anne Frank House in the middle of Amsterdam's beautiful Jordaan area, Cyberlounge is an internet café which enjoys a cosy lounge setting. Internet access is speedy thanks to a broadband connection. *Open Mon 10am–7.30pm, Tues–Fri 9am–7.30pm, Sat 10am–6pm; €2 per half hour, €3.25 per hour.*

**Softland, Spuistraat 222** This internet café attracts a strange sort as, not only does it supply the facility to write emails home, but they happen to be one of the city's many suppliers of soft drugs. *Open daily from 12 noon–midnight; €3 per hour.*

**Bulldog Sports Café, Leidseplein** Perfect for a quick mail when you're having a beer as this popular bar has some terminals out back. *Open Mon–Thurs/Sun 9.30am–1am, Fri & Sat 9.30am–3am; €1 per 10 mins.*

### www.

[www.underwateramsterdam.com](http://www.underwateramsterdam.com)  
[www.boomchicago.nl](http://www.boomchicago.nl)  
[www.amsterdamtourist.com](http://www.amsterdamtourist.com)

## Retail Therapy

**Magna Plaza, Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 182** Magna Plaza, located just behind the Royal Palace, is an old restored 19th century post office which was later transformed into a shopping complex. There are over four floors here, with shops specialising in everything from clothes to jewellery. *Open Mon 11am–7pm, Tues–Sat 10am–7pm (until 9pm Thurs), Sun 12 noon–7pm.*

**Leidsestraat** This street between the Leidseplein and Spui is jammed with shops which cater for everybody. It's only downfall is that you have to be careful not to get run over by the many trams which travel up and down it!

**Kalverstraat** If you don't find somewhere to do some damage to your flexible friend in Magna Plaza or Leidsestraat, chances are you will here. Running parallel to Rokin, it is lined with shops selling jeans, trainers, music and much more.

### Albert Cuypmarkt



Located ten minutes the city centre via tram, this market is worth a visit if nothing else but to get out of the inner city for a while. Over a hundred stalls line each side of the market. Every type of cuisine under the sun can be sampled but you can also pick up everything here from cheap toiletries to cut-price portable stereos. *Open Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm.*

**Nieuwendijk** Similar to Kalverstraat, this pedestrianised street is the closest shopping street to Centraal Station and has all the usual culprits – clothes, trainers and music shops.

**Bloenmarkt (Flower Market)** This market along the 'Singel' canal is popular with tourists thanks to its tulips and clogs on offer. A stroll past it is an extremely enjoyable experience.

## Budget Tips

**Catch a free concert (1)** Every Wednesday afternoon (Sept–June) you can catch a free concert in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw which is located at Concertgebouwplein 2–6. The concerts take place at 12.30pm and doors open at 12.15pm.

**Chill out in Vondelpark** Just south of the city centre, Vondelpark is Amsterdam's answer to Central Park. Stretching for around one and a half kilometres, it has numerous paths, lakes and open green areas. It also has a restaurant/bar which is perfect for people-watching.

### Rent a bicycle for the day



**Rent a bike for the day** Without question, the best way to get around Amsterdam is on the trustworthy bicycle. They say one in every two of the city's inhabitants has one. You can rent out a bike, either for the day for around €6.50, or for 24 hours for around €9. You will definitely get your money's worth if you go for the latter option.

**Catch a free concert (2)** The Boekmanzaal, which is part of the Muziektheater (Opera House), hosts free concerts every Tuesday afternoon at 12.30pm (September to May). Performed by either Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, the Choir of the Netherlands Opera or the Netherlands Ballet Orchestra, they shouldn't be missed.

**Get to North Amsterdam for free** The 'Buikersloterwegveer' (the ferry that leaves from behind Centraal Station and goes to North Amsterdam) is free. While it isn't the most adventurous of journeys, there is a nice view of the harbour behind the station.

**Buy 10-journey travel strips** Valid for 2 days, buy a 10-journey 'strippenkaart'. This way you'll save money, rather than buying 10 separate tickets.

## A Day in Amsterdam...



Before doing anything, go and rent out a bike for 24 hours. They are the best way to get around the city.



To avoid the queues visit the Van Gogh Museum early. This is presently the most popular museum in Amsterdam.



Not far from the museum is the Albert Cuypmarkt. Here you can pick up everything from toiletries to personal stereos for €20.



Cycle up to Damrak, park your bike, grab your lunch somewhere and sit down in Dam Square to watch life go by for a while.



Make your way to the Damrak 26 and get a cruise around the city's canals. Lasting an hour, they are a great way to see the city in its entirety and learn about its architecture.



After the canal tour, relocate your bike and cycle down to Vondelpark. Full of lakes and greens, it's a great place to chill out.



Another unmissable museum is the Anne Frank House in the charming Jordaan area. Explore it for an hour or two.



Dotted around the Jordaan are brown cafés and many restaurants. For a taste of real Amsterdam dine out here.



Park your bike back wherever you are staying and go down to Leidseplein, home to numerous bars.



After a few beers, finish the night off in one of the city's best clubs such as Escape or Melkweg.

**International Budget Hostel, Amsterdam**  
Leidsegracht 76, Amsterdam 1016 CR

**Map & Directions**

**Your Booking Details**

**Booking Ref. 619-4702232**  
**Confirmed: WED 31 MAY 2006 15:56**

**PH** + 31 20 624 2784

**FAX**+ 31 20 626 1839

**EMAIL** info@internationalbudgethostel.com

**DATE**

**BEDS**

**ROOM DETAILS**

TUE 6 JUN 2006

1

4 Bed, Mixed, Shared Room

WED 7 JUN 2006

1

4 Bed, Mixed, Shared Room

THU 8 JUN 2006

1

4 Bed, Mixed, Shared Room

You have paid **US\$10.54** as part of your deposit.

Upon arrival at the hostel the **BALANCE OF EUR 75.60 IS PAYABLE**

**About International Budget Hostel**



The International Budget hostel is in the centre of Amsterdam close to all major tourist attractions, museums, Leidseplein and the busy nightlife area. The location of the hostel is on a quiet, beautiful canal – the Leidsegracht.

The hostel has a cosy lounge facing the canal where one can relax and socialize and meet other fellow travellers. Breakfast is not included in the room price but is available in the lounge between 9am and 12noon. The lounge has vending machines, a television, an internet station and a public phone.

Rooms are shared quads with 4 single box spring beds. There is 1 padlock accepting locker per bed which is big enough for 2 backpacks. Each hallway has showers and wc's and all rooms have smoke detectors. There is video

security in all public areas.

The hostel has no curfew, but reception closes at 11.00pm so please contact reception if you are arriving after this time.

We do not accept stag groups and children who are younger than 5 years old.

All credit cards incur a 5% surcharge

**CANCELLATIONS** are required to be faxed (or sent by email) to the International Budget Hostel 24 hours prior to arrival date. Failure to do so will result in a one night no show fee which will be charged to the given credit card number. Upon arrival, payment for accommodation is to be made in advance. Cancellation on arrival will result in full payment for the first night and 50% for the remaining nights accomodation. Prepaid cancellations made during stay subject to 100% charge.

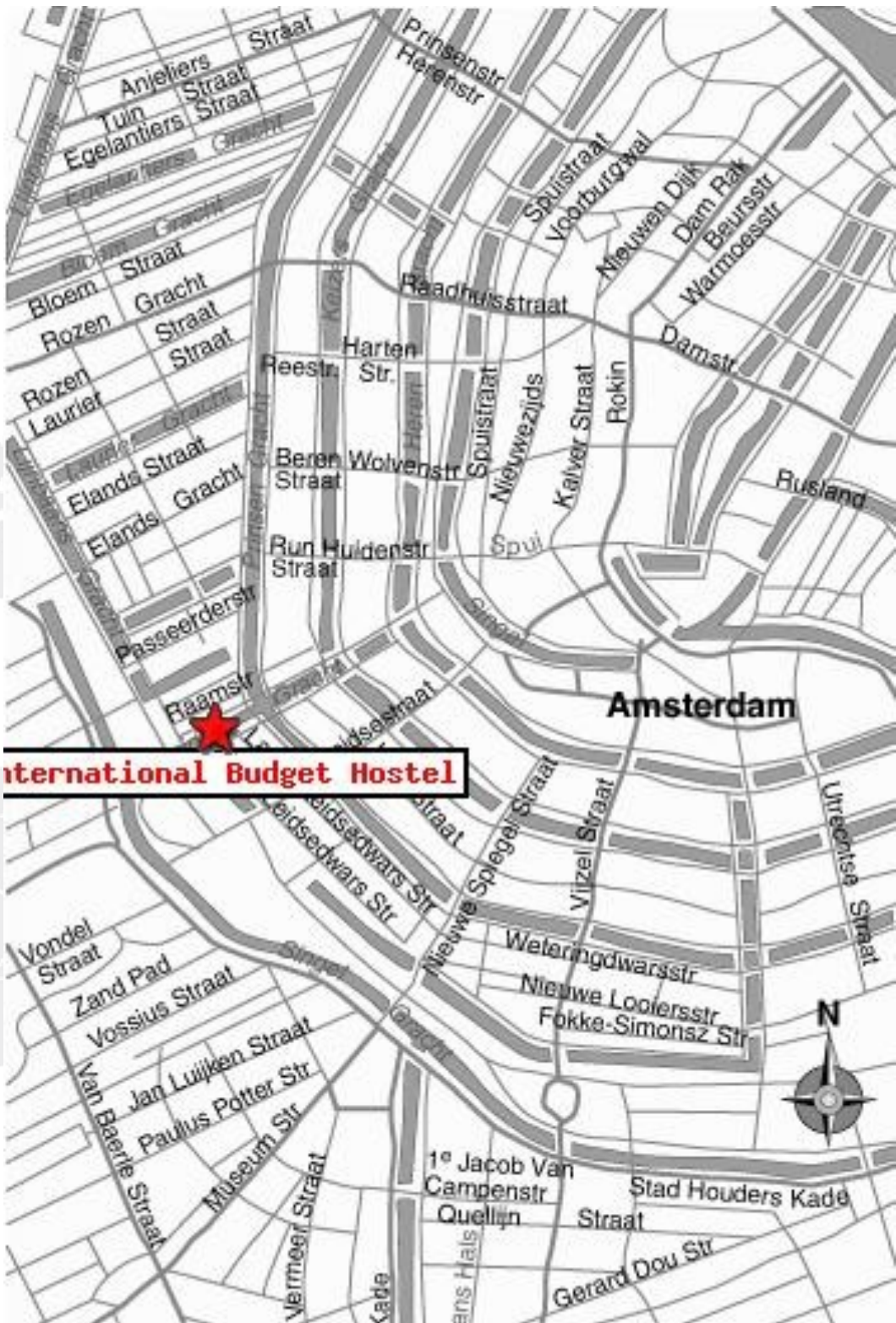
**Booking conditions for the holidays:** all cancellations are required to be faxed or e-mailed to the International Budget Hostel 1 x week prior to arrival date. Failure to do so will result in a 50% fee, which will be charged to the given credit card.  
Upon arrival payments must be in advance. Cancellation upon arrival will result in full payment.  
All reservations will be held until 23.00 p.m. unless arranged differently with reception. The reservation will be terminated if the hostel does not get authorisation on the credit card.

**WEEKEND RESERVATIONS**

We have a minimum stay of 2 nights over the weekends (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Weekend reservations are subject to a TWO NIGHT cancellation fee should the 24 hours notice not be observed.



IMPORTANT !!!  
The booking fee and the 10% deposit is charged by Hostel World and it is not refundable.  
\* We ask authorisation on the given credit card, the reservation will be terminated if there is no authorisation.



CANCELLATIONS: are required to be faxed (or sent by email) to the International Budget Hostel 24 hours prior to arrival date. Failure to do so will result in a one night no show fee which will be charged to the given credit card number. Upon arrival, payment for accommodation is to be made in advance. Cancellation on arrival will result in full payment for the first night and 50% for the remaining nights accomodation.

Booking conditions for Easter holidays:

All cancellations are required to be faxed or e-mailed to the International Budget Hostel 1 x week prior to arrival date. Failure to do so will result in a 50% fee, which will be charged to the given credit card.

Booking conditions for the May Bank holiday: All cancellations are required to be faxed or e-mailed to the International Budget Hostel 1 x week prior to arrival date. Failure to do so will result in a 50% fee, which will be charged to the given credit card.

Upon arrival payments must be in advance. Cancellation upon arrival will result in full payment.

All reservations will be held until 23.00 p.m. unless arranged differently with reception. The reservation will be terminated if the hostel does not get authorisation on the credit card.

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