

Report# 4
Bargain Buys In The Netherlands
By Wan-Ju, Li (Judy Li)

Living in the Netherlands is definitely not cheap! Hence, I think it is important to provide tips on how to do bargain buys in the Netherlands. Some tips are only useful for Rotterdam, but some tips are useful for living in the Netherlands.

1. Bank - Before you do all the bargain buys in the Netherlands, you need to make sure you get your Dutch bank account ready first. Because most of companies only accept money by Dutch bank account. As I mentioned on my previous report, ING bank is a good choice.
2. OV Card – Once you have your Dutch bank account opened, you can apply for personal OV card. This is a very important card for you in the Netherlands. You can pay for all the public transportation (train, tram and metro) by this card. <http://www.ov-chipkaart.nl/aanvragen/>. It takes 2-4 week to receive the card; I strongly recommend you apply for this OV card once you have your bank account ready. NOTE: You need to have your pic in PDF form ready for applying this card.
3. 40% Discount On Train – Once you receive your personal OV card, please do order 40% discount package online. The package name is Dal Voordeel <http://www.ns.nl/reizigers/campagnes/nieuwe-abonnementen>. You only pay EUR 50 per year and you get 40% off on all your train tickets. Another good thing is you can bring up to 3 friends to travel with you and enjoy this 40% off discount. If you wanna know how to buy the card online, please go to Facebook and join this group “台灣人在荷蘭” and you will find an file named 荷蘭火車打折卡資訊 by Sisi Chan.
4. Albert Heijn – You can find Albert Heijn supermarkets (AH) everywhere in the Netherlands, it costs more compared to other supermarkets. But if you get a DISCOUNT CARD/ MEMBER CARD from any AH stores (ask any cashier that you wanna a member card), you will find yourself different good bargains every week. Make sure you check your mail box every Sunday or Monday, they usually deliver special promotion booklet to every house’s mailbox. Or you can check their website <http://www.ah.nl/>

5. Bas Supermarket – I personally shop 80% of my grocery at Bas. Different from AH store is you do not have to get a discount card/membership card, you will get the discount price automatically. They also have weekly promotion items which you can also find it through your mail or their website <http://www.dirk.nl/>
6. Kruidvat – Do get a DISCOUNT CARD/ MEMBER CARD (ask any cashier that you wanna a member card), and register yourself ONLINE. You will find yourself different bargain EVERYDAY. They will send you the daily bargain by e-mail after you register online. <http://www.kruidvat.nl>
7. Locks For Your Bike – You can find very nice bike locks at Blaak market (In Rotterdam) and price can be very cheap. Tips: Do walking around all the stands first to check which stand offer cheaper price, sometimes different stands can have price difference up to EUR 5. I paid my own lock for only EUR 7.
8. Chinese Supermarket WAH NAM HONG B.V. – It has locations in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague. However, I personally do not think their price is good. I usually only buy Asian instant noodle or sauces from there. For other items like coconut milk, Vietnam style noodle or soy sauce, AH stores actually sell cheaper price. <http://www.erva.nl/wahnamhong.htm>
9. Cheap Grocery Shopping – Every Tuesday and Saturday, there is a market at Blaak station in Rotterdam. You can find many fresh vegetables and fruit there. You can also find meat stand but I personally do not think they are cheap.
10. Meat – You can go to meat store near Chinese Supermarket WAH NAM HONG B.V. There are a few meat stores there and their prices are reasonable and cheaper than AH stores.
11. HEMA – This is the store you can find cheap items for your house. They also have different promotion items every week. Sometimes they sell DAY TICKET for train which you can do unlimited travel in the Netherlands for EUR 13.5-EUR 16.50 per day. <http://www.hema.nl/>
12. Electronic Items – Go to Media Market which also has different promotion

items every week. Their camera prices are reasonable.

<http://www.mediamarkt.nl/>

13. Blokker – Sometimes they sell DAY TICKET for train which you can do unlimited travel in the Netherlands for EUR 13.5-EUR 16.50 per day.

<http://www.blokker.nl/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/Homepage?storeId=10001&langId=-104&catalogId=10002>

14. Furniture / Bedding – You can find pillows, bed sheet or blanket at Blaak station market. But I personally think it is best to buy from IKEA. Better quality and good price.

15. 9292.nl – You can find out how to travel from your house to any destinations in the Netherlands by using www.9292.nl

16. Traveling – Take advantage of budget airlines like Ryanair and easyjet if you wanna travel. For EUROPASS, I personally do not think it is really cheaper. Here is the list of all the budget airlines in Europe. To sum up, Ryanair (Biggest) and easyjet (2nd largest in Europe)

www.ryanair.com

www.easyjet.com

<http://www.etn.nl>

17. Resident Permit – Make sure you have your resident permit valid if you wanna apply for any visas in the Netherlands. For my own experience, the consul of Turkish embassy refused to issue a visa for me because my resident permit is not valid any more. Just a very stupid excuse because people often add more destinations while traveling, then how do these people apply visa? Anyway, make sure you have resident permit valid.

18. Tips – Do not rush to buy stuff too fast after you arrive in the Netherlands. Take advantage of checking out all the discount information deliver to your house every week, or check their own company website. Sometimes the promotion price is only 50% of the original price; it is worth of your time and money to wait a bit.

I hope the above information will be useful for your bargain buys in Rotterdam!