

—master

ward

recovered

About MENDO

MENDO is an Amsterdam-based publisher and bookstore that focuses on visual inspiration.

“In this big village, there is an immense lot of greatness to enjoy.”

Amsterdam Uncovered: a collection of places, people and pictures curated by MENDO. A portrait of a metropolitan village, compiled by a group of tastemakers, talented photographers and artists who contribute to this city's appeal. With in-depth stories, essays and interviews about all that Amsterdam has to offer. Because however tiny this village may be, there is still an immense amount of greatness to enjoy.

Table of contents

City-made man

A note written by editor Mikel van den Boogaard.
Page 10

A new current

Architecture in Amsterdam, photography by Dariusz Jasak.
Page 12

Cool waters and hot wheels

Amsterdam as seen from above, photography by Beemflights.
Page 34

Blue Village

A conversation with Jason Denham (DENHAM the Jeanmaker) and Menno van Meurs (Tenue de Nimes).
Page 44

Saturday morning

Noordermarkt and Lindengracht, photography by Willemskantine.
Page 50

The rose that grew from concrete

Mikel van den Boogaard on Johan Crujff, Amsterdam's greatest legend.
Page 62

31m²

Green in the city, photography by Rein Kooyman.
Page 66

A new photographic movement

Interview with Marina Paulenka, Artistic Director at Unseen, photography by Yeray Sabandar.
Page 82

Making new histories

New Amsterdam talent in the visual arts.
Page 86

Where stars were made

Soccer in Amsterdam, photography by Jermain Cikic.
Page 104

Dutch / Design

Conversation with Bas Beerens (WeTransfer), Mark de Lange (Ace & Tate) and Taco Carlier (VanMoof).
Page 116

Best seats in the house

The finest places to eat in Amsterdam, photography by Calvin Pausania.
Page 122

Best places to read a book

Six carefully curated places to read in Amsterdam, selected and illustrated by Eddie Stok.
Page 142

Rethinking Amsterdam's art world

Interview with Margriet Schavemaker, Artistic Director Amsterdam Museum, photography by Yeray Sabandar.
Page 144

An unexpected breeding place for cultural development

Amsterdam's cannabis culture, photography by Willem Sizoo.
Page 148

After hours

Mokum storefronts, photography by Roel Ruijs.
Page 164

Towards an inclusive and diverse nightlife

Interview with Shamiro van der Geld, Amsterdam's Night Mayor, photography by Yeray Sabandar.
Page 170

Like in the movies

Cinema in Amsterdam, photography by Sharon Jane Dompig.
Page 174

A moment to ponder

Life on the IJveer, photography by Niké Dolman.
Page 208

Small stage, big crowd

Bionda Sno interviews Faberyayo, Jarreau Vandal and Rimon, photography by Nick van Tiem.
Page 234

Newcomers

New Amsterdammers and their views on the city, photography by Willemskantine.
Page 248

Going out

Interpretation of Amsterdam nightlife, photography by Tom Biddulph.
Page 260

City-made man

By Mikel van den Boogaard

When I came to Amsterdam in 2012, I was just a boy. I wasn't ready for the world, I wasn't ready for the big city. I thought I was, but I wasn't. Before, I saw everything happening from a distance on the screen of my laptop that I had bought from the money I earned as a stock boy at Albert Heijn. I followed the bloggers, the artists, the photographers, the fashion, the DJs—it was all happening in Amsterdam. I had to be there.

But I wasn't ready. I was expecting a city with music, a vibrant city that would give me all I would need. I ended up in Geuzenveld, in a boring gray apartment above a Vomar, and I would spend more time in trams than anywhere else. The thought of traveling by tram is only romantic when it's not your everyday reality, and furthermore, there were no interesting bloggers, no artists, nor DJs to be seen.

I did see photographers, though - or at least people photographing. Tourism was approaching its peak, and I was there as a witness. I saw the I Amsterdam sign being climbed, I saw the line outside the Anne Frank House curl all the way around the Westerkerk, I saw a huge sling of ice cream and waffles stores pop up from Central Station all the way to De Pijp. Amsterdam was changing.

Amsterdam was changing, and not in the way I had envisioned. I thought I was ending up in a romantic city with canal bridges, crooked houses, Amsterdam swagger, *Jordaanse smartlappen*, and easy bike rides. I expected to find the spirits of André Hazes, Johnny Jordaan, Johan Cruijff and Sjaakie Swart. I expected the parties to go on until the morning, to be inspired by what people wore on the streets, to feel a creative energy flow through its canals.

In a way it did. But one of the things I've learned since first moving to Amsterdam in 2012 is that nothing is given here. You can see it in the way people use crosswalks and stop signs here. Right of way is never given, it's taken. It's not what the city can do for you, but it's what you manage to take out of it. I would later find out that if I was determined to make something out of this life in the big city, I had to make sure that I was going to get it myself. It wasn't going to come to me. I came to Amsterdam, that was a first step (a huge step), but it wasn't enough.

I was just a boy. Everything I thought I was held no value here. I believed in a version of Amsterdam that didn't exist anymore. And it was long gone before I was even born. Compared to other international metropolises it might feel like a village, but it's not. Like every other major city, it's moving fast, leaving everyone behind who can't keep up with its pace.

I could have known this, and perhaps I should have. For a city like Amsterdam, it would be ridiculous to always stay the same. It would have been impossible to not expand, to not grow, to not change; it's inevitable. In the 745 years of its existence, Amsterdam has always been changing. And although I've only experienced less than one percent of that history, even I have seen drastic transformations. I've lived in practically every part of the city since I came here, and all my former homes are now in different neighborhoods. When I told my fellow students that I lived in Amsterdam Oost, near

Beukenplein, they pulled disgusted faces as if I had told them that I was living in Middle Earth. "I heard it's dangerous there!" I didn't think so. Sure, it wasn't the prettiest neighborhood back then, but it's not like the houses are simply up for grabs anywhere you want in Amsterdam (like they were during the seventies and eighties).

If you go to Beukenplein now, which is right next to the renovated Oosterpark, you have to try hard to find anything dangerous. Rather, you'll find cool restaurants, rotisserie chicken places, and bars that serve craft beers with weird names. In less than a decade, a place like Beukenplein went from shabby to chic. And that transition is not unique to Amsterdam.

Noord is no longer that far-off village across the river. With places like Eye, the A'DAM Tower, FC HYENA, Skatcafé and Hotel de Goudfazant, it has become an intrinsic part of our city. Not to mention the Noord-Zuid Lijn that made its connection even more definitive. We've slowly come to realize that Zuid-Oost is one of the most interesting areas of Amsterdam. With new cultural initiatives like OSCAM, and its rediscovered nature and unique planning. Nieuw West is no longer too far to cycle to. The Sloterpas is one of the best places to spend your sunny Sundays after a long night at De School. "*Binnen de ring*" is no longer a need, but merely a "want" (for some). As our city is expanding, so are we, luckily.

I believe these initiatives are beneficial to our city. The word, "initiative" already stands for a certain assertiveness that a city like Amsterdam needs. An assertiveness I didn't have when I was just an inexperienced boy of eighteen years old. Looking back, it's funny to see how far we've come.

I use the word "we" because I strongly feel like I've grown along with the city. Even though it seemed unrequited for a young naive provincial boy at first, the love for Amsterdam has stuck. Even though our streets are flooded with tourists, even though it's impossible to find a decent place to live because everything is so expensive, even though I may get run over by a drunk cyclist or a crazy taxi driver, I still love this city very much.

This city made me a man. It made me ready for the world. It showed me that things don't always come to you, so you have to get what you want yourself. It showed me that change isn't always bad. And it showed me that if you look in the right corners, you'll find beauty everywhere.

A new current

— Photography by Dariusz Jasak

With a city center that is, almost in its entirety, part of UNESCO's world heritage list, one would almost forget how modern Amsterdam architecture can be. We love our canals, our bridges, our crooked houses, the selfie-making tourists, the angry cyclists, and the speeding taxi drivers—it's all part of the ecosystem that we're happy to be living in. But outside of Amsterdam's Canal Belt, maybe even outside of the circular A10 highway that runs around (and through) the expanding borders of our city, Amsterdam shows a different side. Like any metropolis in the world, Amsterdam has to keep up with the times, and it does so with style.

Amsterdam is no exception in the worldwide wave of gentrification, housing shortage, and nouveaux riche that changes the streets of many of the major cities in the world. This also results in extraordinary buildings creating a new skyline. A skyline one might expect in New York, or Rotterdam if you're looking for something a little closer, but not in Amsterdam.

Traditionally, Amsterdam has never been a city of high buildings. The first building that touched clouds higher than 100 meters was the Rembrandttoren (near Amstel Station), which

was built in 1995. Measuring 150 meters, it's still the highest building in Amsterdam, and one of only seven in the city that are higher than 100 meters. But as the city is evolving and expanding, so is the architecture. Even though the city's center maintains its idyllic character, outside the ring brick and mortar is replaced by steel and glass.

The Zuidas, our attempt to a version of lower Manhattan, consists of high-rise apartments and office buildings. It's where the banks, consultants, and insurance companies are located. It even has a WTC, and a few places to get a tall cup of coffee. De Pontsteiger building changed the IJ river for good, as does the A'DAM Toren on the other side. Our other river, the Amstel, is also becoming more and more overshadowed by high buildings every year, and since the pressure of a growing population is getting higher and higher, our buildings are getting higher and higher as well.

To capture all this, Dariusz Jasak went on a bike ride through Amsterdam. Creating images of a jungle of concrete and glass that doesn't fit our envisioned image of Amsterdam, but is becoming more apparent every day.







