



Hostels are primarily for teens and twenties on tight travel budgets. However, those bargain inns also welcome senior sojourners who seek informal, inexpensive places to sleep.

Additionally, many older guests look forward to socializing with the younger ones, for swapping stories and giving sage senior advice. One of the best cities for hostels is the very friendly, hip and tolerant Amsterdam.

Of course, hostel room rates are usually considerably less than those of hotels, averaging about \$40 a night in Amsterdam, with some including free breakfast. If your European wandering plans involve some Dutch roughing it, consider some examples.

Stayokay Amsterdam Vondelpark: Stayokay Vondelpark, Zandpad 5, 1054 Amsterdam, Netherlands, phone +31 (0)20 624 68 32 , stadsdoelen@stayokay.com One of half a dozen Stayokay hostels in and around Amsterdam, this most centrally-located inn offers double and quad rooms and dorms, some with flat-screen TVs, Wi-Fi and private baths. In a stately former merchant's house, the comfortable hostel is steps away from transportation, restaurants, taverns, shops and museums. For getting around the city's canal systems, this Stayokay hostel is just a short walking distance from several landing areas. Within the hostel is its charming brasserie Bite and Drink, that offers full-service meals and drinks. Free breakfast snacks are provided daily.

The Bulldog: Soudezijs Voorburgwal 220, 1012GJ, Amsterdam, Netherlands, phone 0031 (0)20 620 38 22, bulldoghotel.co m. In a picturesque 18th Century mansion alongside the canal, the five-star Bulldog offers singles, doubles and apartments with private baths and kitchenettes. The dorms have access to communal baths.

The Bulldog Lounge Coffee Shop offers attractive food and drinks. Nearby is the Dam District, with scores of parks, museums, shops, cafes and bars.

The Flying Pig Downtown: One of three Flying Pig Amsterdam hostels, this one at Nieuwendijk 100, 1012 Amsterdam, Netherlands, phone 31 (0)20 - 428 49 34, flyingpig.nl . Dorms and communal baths, with some private rooms

This centrally-located hostel is near the main canals, restaurants and bars. Nearby are Dam Square, the Royal Palace and the Anne Frank house. It attracts a very young anything-goes

crowd. One recent Canadian backpacker summed up his stay at the Flying Pig with, “If you don’t like pot, loud music and crazy fun people from all over the world, try somewhere else.”

Hostelboat Anna Maria II: Oosterdok t/o 4, Pier 4, 1011 Amsterdam, Netherlands, phone +31 648780064, hostelit.com/.../amsterdam/hostelboat_anna_maria_ii . The floating hostel is near Waterloo Square and moored alongside the Amsterdam Canal. It has ten small cabins, each with four bunk beds. There are also three shared shower/bath compartments. Because of strict fire regulations, the boat is non-smoking.

Amsterdam’s Central Train Station is just a 10-minute walk away from the Anna Maria II. There are also the Van Gogh Museum and Rijksmuseummuseum, as well as coffee shops, restaurants, flower markets and theaters, all within easy biking or strolling.

Hostel Cosmos: Nieuwe Nieuwstraat 17, 1012 NG, Amsterdam, Netherlands, phone +31206252438, hostelcosmos.com . It’s close to the city canals, train station, Anne Frank House, Rembrandtsplein and Van Gogh museum. It’s also within scenic walking or short tram distance from the city’s restaurants, bars, shops and in the center of the famous Amsterdam night life and live music.