

# Delft

For other uses, see [Delft \(disambiguation\)](#).

**Delft** ([ˈdɛlft]) is a city and a municipality in the Netherlands. It is located in the province of [South Holland](#), where it is situated north of [Rotterdam](#) and south of the [The Hague](#).

Delft is known for its historic town centre with canals, [Delft Blue](#) pottery, the [Delft University of Technology](#), painter [Johannes Vermeer](#) and scientist [Antony van Leeuwenhoek](#), and its association with the royal [House of Orange-Nassau](#).

## 1 History

### 1.1 Early history

The city of Delft came into being beside a canal, the 'Delf', which comes from the word *delven*, meaning delving or digging, and led to the name Delft. It presumably started around the 11th century as a landlord court.

From a rural village in the early Middle Ages Delft developed to a city, that in the 13th century (1246) received its charter. (For some more information about the early development, see [Gracht](#)).

The town's association with the [House of Orange](#) started when [William of Orange](#) ([Willem van Oranje](#)), nicknamed [William the Silent](#) ([Willem de Zwijger](#)), took up residence in 1572. At the time he was the leader of growing national Dutch resistance against Spanish occupation of the country, which struggle is known as the [Eighty Years' War](#). By then Delft was one of the leading cities of [Holland](#) and it was equipped with the necessary city walls to serve as a headquarters.

After the [Act of Abjuration](#) was proclaimed in 1581 Delft became the *de facto* capital of the newly independent Netherlands, as the seat of the [Prince of Orange](#).

When William was shot dead in 1584, by [Balthazar Gerards](#) in the hall of the [Prinsenhof](#), the family's traditional burial place in [Breda](#) was still in the hands of the Spanish. Therefore, he was buried in the [Delft Nieuwe Kerk](#) (New Church), starting a tradition for the [House of Orange](#) that has continued to the present day.

### 1.2 Delft Explosion

The [Delft Explosion](#), also known in history as the [Delft Thunderclap](#), occurred on 12 October 1654 when a [gunpowder](#) store exploded, destroying much of the city. Over a hundred people were killed and thousands wounded.

About 30 tonnes (29.5 long tons; 33.1 short tons) of gunpowder were stored in barrels in a magazine in a former [Clarissen convent](#) in the [Doelenkwartier](#) district. [Cornelis Soetens](#), the keeper of the magazine, opened the store to check a sample of the powder and a huge explosion followed. Luckily, many citizens were away, visiting a market in [Schiedam](#) or a fair in [The Hague](#). Artist [Carel Fabritius](#) was wounded in the explosion and died of his injuries. Later on, [Egbert van der Poel](#) painted several pictures of Delft showing the devastation.

- [Delft in 1652](#) ([Blaeu](#))
- [Egbert van der Poel: A View of Delft after the Explosion of 1654](#)
- [View of Delft by Johannes Vermeer, 1660–1661](#)
- [The Gemeenlandshuis and the Old Church in \(1877\) by Cornelis Springer](#)

## 2 Sights

The city centre retains a large number of monumental buildings, whereas in many streets there are canals of which the borders are connected by typical bridges,<sup>[5]</sup> altogether making this city a notable tourist destination.<sup>[6]</sup>

Historical buildings and other sights of interest include:

- [Oude Kerk](#) (Old Church). Buried here: [Piet Hein](#), [Johannes Vermeer](#), [Anthony van Leeuwenhoek](#).
- [Nieuwe Kerk](#) (New Church), constructed between 1381 and 1496. It contains the Dutch royal family's burial vault, which between funerals is sealed with a 5,000 kg (11,023 lb) cover stone.
- A statue of [Hugo Grotius](#) made by [Franciscus Leonardus Stracké](#) in 1886, located on the [Markt](#) near the [Nieuwe Kerk](#).
- [The Prinsenhof](#) (Princes' Court), now a museum.<sup>[6]</sup>

- City Hall on the Markt.
- The Oostpoort (Eastern gate), built around 1400. This is the only remaining gate of the old city walls.
- The Gemeenlandshuis Delfland, or Huyterhuis, built in 1505, which has housed the Delfland regional water authority since 1645.
- The Vermeer Centre in the rebuilt Guild house of St. Luke.
- The historical “Waag” building (Weigh house).
- Windmill De Roos, a tower mill built c.1760. Restored to working order in 2013.<sup>[7]</sup> Another windmill that formerly stood in Delft, Het Fortuyn, was dismantled in 1917 and re-erected at the Netherlands Open Air Museum, Arnhem, Gelderland in 1920.

### 3 Culture



*Delft blue is most famous but there are other kinds of Delftware, like this plate faience in rose*

Delft is well known for the Delft pottery ceramic products<sup>[6]</sup> which were styled on the imported Chinese porcelain of the 17th century. The city had an early start in this area since it was a home port of the Dutch East India Company. It can still be seen at the pottery factories De Koninklijke Porceleyn Fles (or Royal Delft) and De Delftse Pauw.

The painter Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675) was born in Delft. Vermeer used Delft streets and home interiors as the subject or background of his paintings.<sup>[6]</sup> Several other famous painters lived and worked in Delft at that time, such as Pieter de Hoogh, Carel Fabritius,

Nicolaes Maes, Gerard Houckgeest and Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet. They all were members of the Delft School. The Delft School is known for its images of domestic life, views of households, church interiors, courtyards, squares and the streets of Delft. The painters also produced pictures showing historic events, flower paintings, portraits for patrons and the court, and decorative pieces of art.

### 4 Education



*TU Delft buildings*



*Site at business park “Delftechpark”*

Delft University of Technology (TU Delft) is one of three universities of technology in the Netherlands. It was founded as an academy for civil engineering in 1842 by King William II. Today well over 16,000 students are enrolled.

The UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, providing postgraduate education for people from developing countries, draws on the strong tradition in water management and hydraulic engineering of the Delft university.

## 5 Economy

In the local economic field essential elements are:

- education; (a.o. TU Delft Delft University of Technology) (As of 2007 14.299 students, 2.712 scientists and 1.859 researchers),
- scientific research; (a.o. “TNO” ( Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research), Stichting Deltares, Nederlands Normalisatie-Instituut, UNESCO-IHE Institute for water education.
- tourism; (about one million registered visitors a year),
- industry; (DSM Gist Services BV, (Delftware) earthenware production by De Koninklijke Porceleyne Fles, Exact Software Nederland BV, Topdesk, Ampelmann)
- retail; (Ikea ( Inter IKEA Systems B.V., owner and worldwide franchisor of the IKEA Concept, is based in Delft), Makro, Eneco Energy NV).

## 6 Nature and recreation

East of Delft a relatively vast nature and recreation area called the “Delftse Hout” (“Delft Wood”)<sup>[8]</sup> is situated. Apart from a forest, through which bike-, horseride- and footpaths are leading, it also comprises a vast lake (suitable for swimming and windsurfing), narrow beaches, a restaurant, community gardens, plus campground and other recreational and sports facilities. (There is a possibility to rent bikes at the station).

Inside the city apart from a central park there are also several smaller town parks, like “Nieuwe Plantage”, “Agnetapark”, “Kalverbos” and others. Furthermore, there’s a Botanical Garden of the TU and an arboretum in Delftse Hout.

Delft was the birthplace of:

### Before 1900

- Michiel Jansz. van Mierevelt (1567–1641), painter
- Willem van der Vliet (c. 1584–1642), painter
- Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), lawyer who laid the foundations for international law
- Adriaen van de Venne (1589–1662), painter
- Daniël Mijtens (c. 1590–1647/48), painter
- Leonaert Bramer (1596–1674), painter
- Martin van den Hove (1605–1639), astronomer and mathematician

- Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet (1611 or 1612–1675), painter
- Daniel Vosmaer (1622-1666), painter
- Willem van Aelst (1627–1683), painter
- Antonie van Leeuwenhoek (1632–1723), father of microbiology and developer of the microscope
- Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675), painter



*Michaëlla Krajicek*

### After 1900

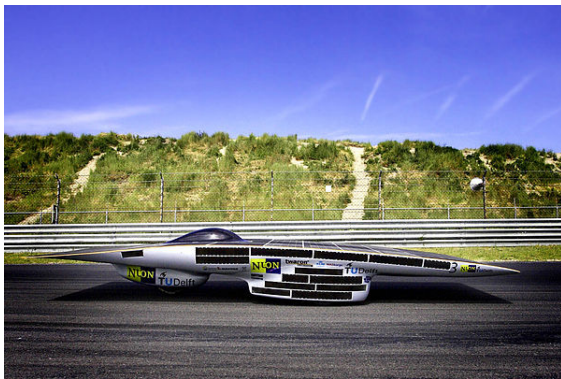
- Vincent de Moor (1973), producer, remixer (Trance)
- Nico Haak (1939-1990), singer <sup>[9]</sup>
- Stien Kaiser, former speed skater
- Michaëlla Krajicek, professional tennis player
- Atzo Nicolai (1960), politician
- Alexander Pechtold (1965), politician
- Arantxa Rus, professional tennis player
- Ria Stalman, former discus thrower and shot putter
- Peter Tetteroo (1947-2002), singer and musician of Delft band Tee Set <sup>[10]</sup>

### Otherwise related



- Kader Abdolah, writer
- Martinus Beijerinck (1851–1931), microbiologist and discoverer of viruses, lived and worked in Delft
- Jody Bernal, singer <sup>[11]</sup>
- Ferrie Bodde, football player
- Ken Monkou, football player
- Jan Timman, chess grandmaster, raised in Delft

## 7 Miscellaneous



One of the 6 different Nuna cars

- Nuna is a series of manned solar powered vehicles, built by students at the Delft University of Technology, that won the **World solar challenge** in Australia five times, of which four in a row, (in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007) and one in 2013.
- The so-called "Superbus" project aims to develop high speed coaches capable of speeds of up to 250 kilometres per hour (155 mph) together with the supporting infrastructure including special highway lanes constructed separately next to the nation's highways; this project was led by Dutch astronaut professor Wubbo Ockels of the Delft University of Technology.
- Members of both Delft Student Rowingclubs Proteus-Eretes and Laga have won many international trophies, among which Olympic medals, in the past.<sup>[12]</sup>

## 8 International relations

See also: List of twin towns and sister cities in the Netherlands

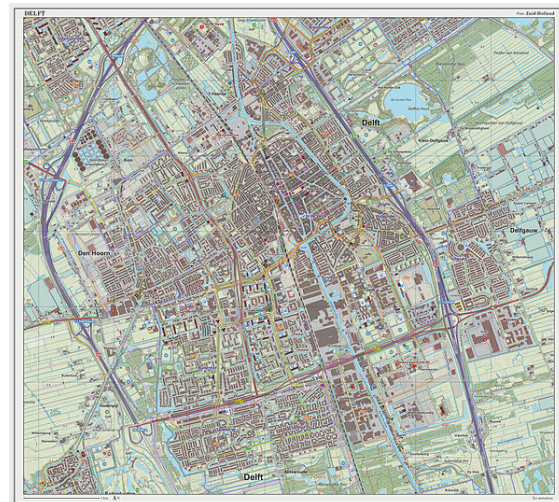
## 8.1 Twin towns — Sister cities

Delft is twinned with:<sup>[13]</sup>

## 9 Transport



Delft, two churches in town center (de Nieuwe Kerk and de Oude Kerk)



Dutch Topographic map of Delft (city), Sept. 2014. [Click to enlarge.](#)

- Delft railway station; (in February 2015 a new station has been taken into use).<sup>[15]</sup>
- Delft Zuid railway station

Trains stopping at these stations connect Delft with, among others, nearby cities of Rotterdam and The Hague, up to every five minutes, for most of the day.

There are several bus routes from Delft to similar destinations. Trams frequently travel between Delft and The Hague via special double tracks crossing the city. One of those two lines (19) is still under construction inside Delft

and is meant to connect The Hague with a science park, which being developed on the southern (Rotterdam) side of Delft and is a joint project by the Delft and Rotterdam municipalities.<sup>[16]</sup>

## 10 See also

- Delftware
- Dutch Golden Age
- List of films set in Delft
- RandstadRail
- Tanthof

## 11 Notes

- [1] “Maak kennis met...” [Meet...]. *Burgermeester Verkerk* (in Dutch). Gemeente Delft. Retrieved 18 July 2013.
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- [4] “Bevolkingsontwikkeling; regio per maand” [Population growth; regions per month]. *CBS Statline* (in Dutch). CBS. 26 June 2014. Retrieved 24 July 2014.
- [5] Bridges in Delft
- [6] Martin Dunford (2010). *The Rough Guide to The Netherlands*. Penguin. p. 169. ISBN 978-1-84836-882-8. Retrieved 24 November 2011.
- [7] “Delft, Zuid-Holland” (in Dutch). Molendatabase. Retrieved 22 October 2014.
- [8] "Category:Delftse Hout". Retrieved 6 May 2015.
- [9] *Nico Haak, Meisjes pas op (het is zo weer zomer)*. *YouTube*. 4 November 2010. Retrieved 6 May 2015.
- [10] *YouTube*. Retrieved 6 May 2015.
- [11] *Jody Bernal - Que Si, Que No*. *YouTube*. 25 July 2009. Retrieved 6 May 2015.
- [12] List of trophies won by Proteus-Eretes members
- [13] (source: Delft municipality guide 2005)
- [14] “List of Twin Towns in the Ruhr District” (PDF). © 2009 Twins2010.com. Retrieved 2009-10-28.
- [15] "Category:Spoorzone-project". Retrieved 6 May 2015.
- [16] “Nieuwe tram -en buslijnen” [New tram and bus lines]. *Traffic and Transit* (in Dutch). Haaglanden Urban Regio. Retrieved 16 March 2013.

## 12 Further reading

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- “Delft”, *A Handbook for Travellers on the Continent* (8th ed.), London: John Murray, 1851
- “Delft”, *Belgium and Holland* (6th ed.), Leipsic: Karl Baedeker, 1881
- W. Pembroke Fetridge (1885), “Delft”, *Harper’s Hand-book for Travellers in Europe and the East*, New York: Harper & Brothers

### Published in the 20th century

- “Delft”, *Belgium and Holland* (15th ed.), Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1910, OCLC 397759
- “Delft”, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed.), New York: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1910, OCLC 14782424

### Published in the 21st century

- Vermeer: A View of Delft, Anthony Bailey, Henry Holt & Company, 2001, ISBN 0-8050-6718-3

## 13 External links

- Municipal Website of Delft
- Radio Netherlands: The day the world came to an end
- National Gallery, London: A View of Delft after the Explosion of 1654

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