

**TRAVELOGUE**

I amsterdam

I never expected to see what I saw in Amsterdam on the first of my many trips.

Starting to write in this way, about most of the cities I have visited so far, makes me wonder if it does not make me sound a little naive. If it does, then be it, because there never would be a better way for me to view anything new in life, if not through the eyes of a new born.



I believe a part of you is born with every new tick of a land explored. So induced with a bit of a baby Columbus' spirit, I set forth on what was to become a very hazy recollection of a city called Amsterdam.

As we trundled our way out of the airport to be greeted by an overcast, misty day outside, the red and white letters, spelling out "I amsterdam", stopped us in our tracks.

Even without the spirit of the child within myself, I bet that sign seals everyone else's first trip to this city with a promise of wonder and amazement as well.

Accepting it as a good luck talisman, we kicked off in those wee hours of the morning in profoundly high spirits! You need not wander too far from the

Amsterdam Centraal Station to have the city's second best natural airing to waft through your nose, and at the same time awaken your senses, only to have them thrown into a deep, trance-like state. This city and its citizens could be titled as the epitome of responsible behaviour. While you have that picturesque setting of the perfect serenity to your left, you also have the little 'coffee shops' with their early customers getting a little more than caffeine as a staple breakfast item, to your right.

Within the first few hours of our excursion, my fellow companions and I had discovered the joy of having established the basic difference between a "cafe" and a "coffee shop" in Amsterdam. Oh the joy!

Amsterdam's natural beauty is perhaps enough to leave you breathless for more than one reason alone. There is a stark contrast that runs through the veins and arteries of the hidden alleyways and cobblestones - a tight-lipped secret that instead of making the surroundings feel ominous has quite the opposite effect.