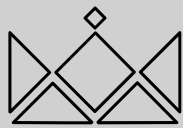


DUTCH GOTHENBURG

Learn more about the Dutch history of Gothenburg! When the town was founded, merchants, farmers and engineers from the Netherlands were important players. The Dutch possessed necessary skills, capital and access to markets, while Sweden wanted to strengthen its ties with western Europe and the global economy.

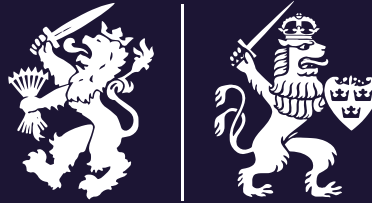
In the city center, you will find a dozen signs highlighting this interesting history. If you scroll down, there is a clickable map of Gothenburg in the next panel. Click on a site, and the sign will appear together with additional information.



INNERSTADEN GÖTEBORG

- 1 Kungsportsplatsen
TWO GOTHENBURGS
- 2 Kungsgatan 31-33
KING'S STREET
- 3 Kyrkogatan 30
NARROW LOTS AND HOUSES
- 4 Kyrkogatan 26
WOOD AND FIRE
- 5 Drottninggatan 13
DUTCH STREET
- 6 Södra Hamngatan 1
GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE
- 7 Stenpiren
NEW SWEDEN MONUMENT (No physical sign)
- 8 Norra Hamngatan 16
THE GERMAN CHURCH
- 9 Postgatan 17
HERRING STREET
- 10 Köpmansgatan/Torggatan
A PRETTY DUTCH TOWN
- 11 Lejonbron
THE PORT OF GOTHENBURG
- 12 Södra Hamngatan 31
SAINT JOHN'S STREET





TWO GOTHENBURGS

The statue of King Karl IX on horseback was unveiled in 1904. 300 years earlier, the same king wanted to attract merchants from Netherlands. The Dutch had access to capital, know-how and a global trade network, with a potential to promote the export of copper, timber and other Swedish raw materials.

A new town, Gothenburg, was founded. Foreign merchants who settled could trade in the Baltic Sea toll-free. Domestic transports from the Baltic to Gothenburg were legally exempt from the Danish dues in the Sound. Not surprisingly, the Danes viewed the new Swedish town as a loophole for exports.

In 1611, Danish forces burned Gothenburg to the ground. They also occupied the surrounding land, demanding a huge sum for its return. In order to raise the enormous amount, Sweden turned to lenders in the Netherlands.

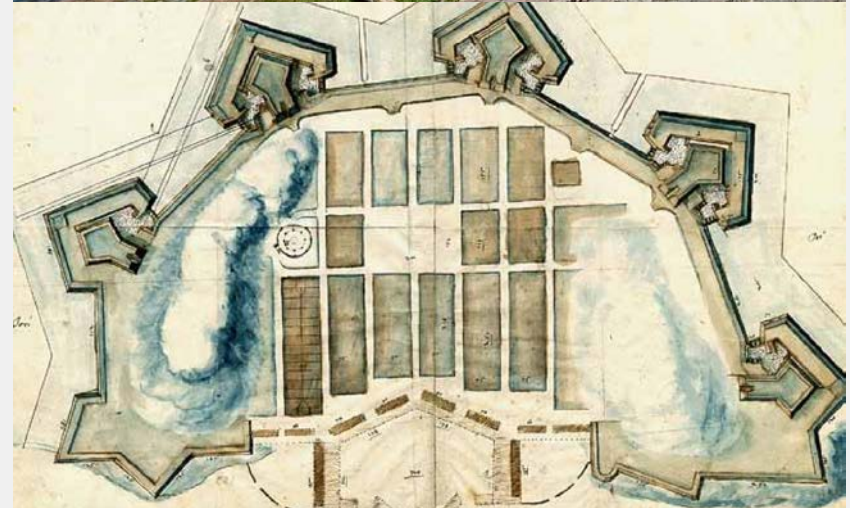
The ransom was finally paid in 1619. King Gustavus Adolphus, son of Karl IX, chose a safer location further upriver and founded present-day Gothenburg. Like his father, he wished for merchants from the Netherlands to settle in Sweden. The privileges for both towns were largely negotiated to accommodate Dutch interests.

TWO GOTHENBURGS

The first town named Gothenburg was founded at the mouth of the Göta river. On the photo of the bridge, you can see a wooded hill to the north — the site of the old town. It was closer to the ocean, but also more vulnerable to attacks from the sea. ▶



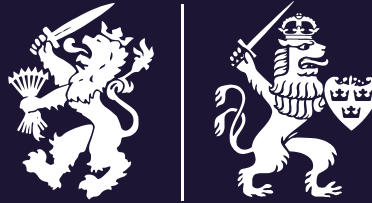
Fortifications were planned, but were still in the making when the town was burned by the Danes in 1611. The old drawing also shows a protected harbour to the south. It was never built, instead a wooden jetty linked the river with the town. ▶



300 years after King Karl IX founded the first Gothenburg, local inhabitants contributed to a bronze monument. The statue was unveiled in the presence of King Oscar II of Sweden. ▶



BACK TO MAP



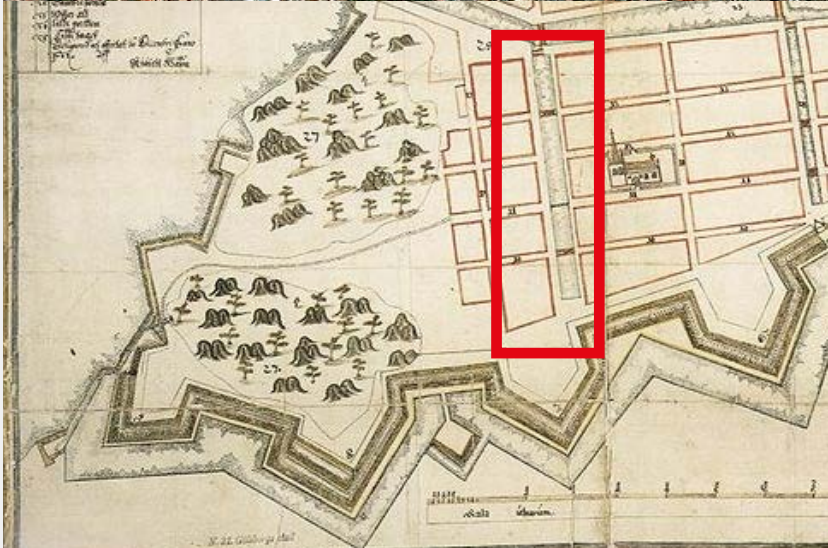
KING'S STREET

In old Gothenburg the widest street was Kungsgatan, named after the king. The same street name appears in many Swedish towns, but Kungsgatan in Gothenburg is the oldest. It was probably modelled on Dutch "Koningsstraat", a street that was laid out when the important trading city of Amsterdam underwent a large expansion in the late 16th century. Many new canals were also added at the time.

In Sweden, King Gustavus Adolphus was inspired by the flourishing Dutch trade. Gothenburg was founded with the assistance of merchants and experts from the Netherlands, who strongly influenced the new town. If you look to the right, the crossing street is Västra Hamngatan. Originally it was a canal, used for transport of goods. When Gothenburg was first built, the canal also drained the wet ground.

During the 17th century, the Dutch established a global network of trading posts, such as today's New York in North America, Jakarta in Indonesia and Cape Town in South Africa. In Swedish Gothenburg, merchants from the Netherlands were represented in the city council and Dutch was an official language for half a century.

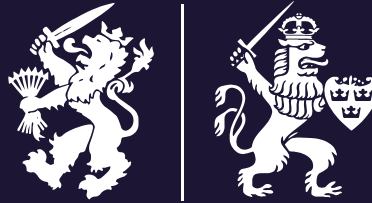
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KING'S STREET

- ◀ The trading city of Amsterdam (photo, left) underwent a large expansion in the late 16th century, creating many new canals and streets.
- ◀ Goods were most easily transported on water, explaining the vast number of canals. In central Gothenburg, the harbour canal and Fattighusån remain to this day, in addition to the moat. On the old map from 1644, you can see that Västra Hamngatan was originally a canal.
- ◀ The photo to the left displays the same waterway. It was discontinued in 1903. When the harbour expanded and railways were built, the canals became less important. Due to increasing street traffic and bad smell, the smaller canals were filled, covered and paved.

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NARROW LOTS AND HOUSES

This house was built in 1805, using the type of yellow brick that Gothenburg has become known for. A signature building from the same period is the large cathedral across the street. However, in the oldest days, bricks were low in both demand and supply. Wood was the preferred building material.

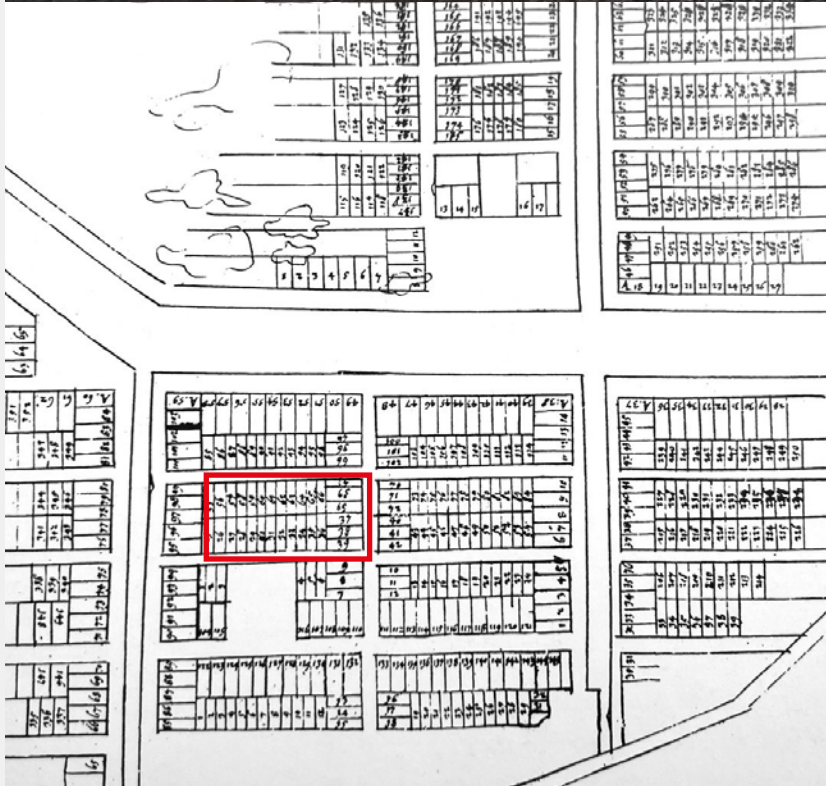
Shortly after the town was founded in 1621, Dutchman Pieter à Naaldwyck started producing local bricks. The quality was poor and customers preferred bricks from the Netherlands, often imported as ballast on ships.

Like many houses in the trading city of Amsterdam, this building has a very narrow front. Homes were often combined with warehouses or businesses, making it important to provide access to streets and canals for as many houses as possible. In Gothenburg, the costs of building and maintaining the streets also fell on the adjacent property owners. A narrow lot minimized the responsibility for the area in front of the house.

Over time, lots have been joined to make room for larger buildings. The properties at Kyrkogatan 26 and 30 have kept their original size from the 1600s, illustrating the scale of lots when the town was first settled.

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NARROW LOTS AND HOUSES

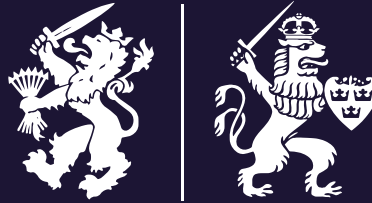


- ◀ The photo shows houses in modern-day Amsterdam. Historically, the local property tax was based on how much space the front of the house occupied. A more narrow house meant lower tax.

Amsterdam was expanding heavily in the 16th century, with a high demand for lots. City planners wanted to make the most of streets and canals. More merchants with canal access equalled a stronger economy.

- ◀ Initially, Gothenburg had the opposite problem. The design to the left shows how lots were planned, reminiscent of Amsterdam. But during the first decades, the challenge was to attract merchants to settle the new town.

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WOOD AND FIRE

Kyrkogatan 26 and 30 are built on lots that have kept their 17th century size. The original structures were probably small single-storey houses facing the street, with outhouses in the back.

The shape of lots was a consequence of the strong Dutch influence. Planners and settlers from the Netherlands wanted a familiar appearance. However, the Dutch design was here proven inconvenient and even dangerous. In Sweden, most houses were made of wood — not stone or brick. Even the Dutch who settled built wooden houses, an abundant and cheap material. Unfortunately, the risk of fires was obvious.

Watchmen patrolled the streets at night and every home owner was instructed to keep a barrel of water. Still, Gothenburg burned many times. The canals prevented fires from spreading and were also sources of water to put out the flames. In the wintertime, holes in the ice were maintained to provide quick access.

After a fire in this area in 1757, the small street of Lilla Kyrkogatan was added for safety reasons, in order to separate the buildings.

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WOOD AND FIRE

The upper photo shows typical brick houses in Amsterdam, built close to each other. ▶

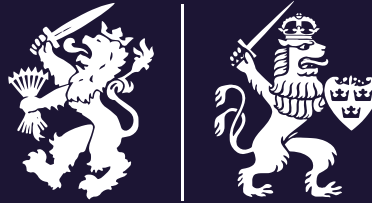


In Gothenburg, not many old buildings have survived. Wooden houses were cheaper and more light-weight. But when fires raged, hundreds of homes could be destroyed at the same time. ▶

One of Gothenburg's oldest wooden houses can be found just outside the city center (photo, right). It was completed in 1767 and gives you an idea of what the buildings used to look like.



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DUTCH STREET

You are standing on Drottninggatan, which got its present name in 1666. However, even long after the official name change, it was commonly known as "Dutch Street".

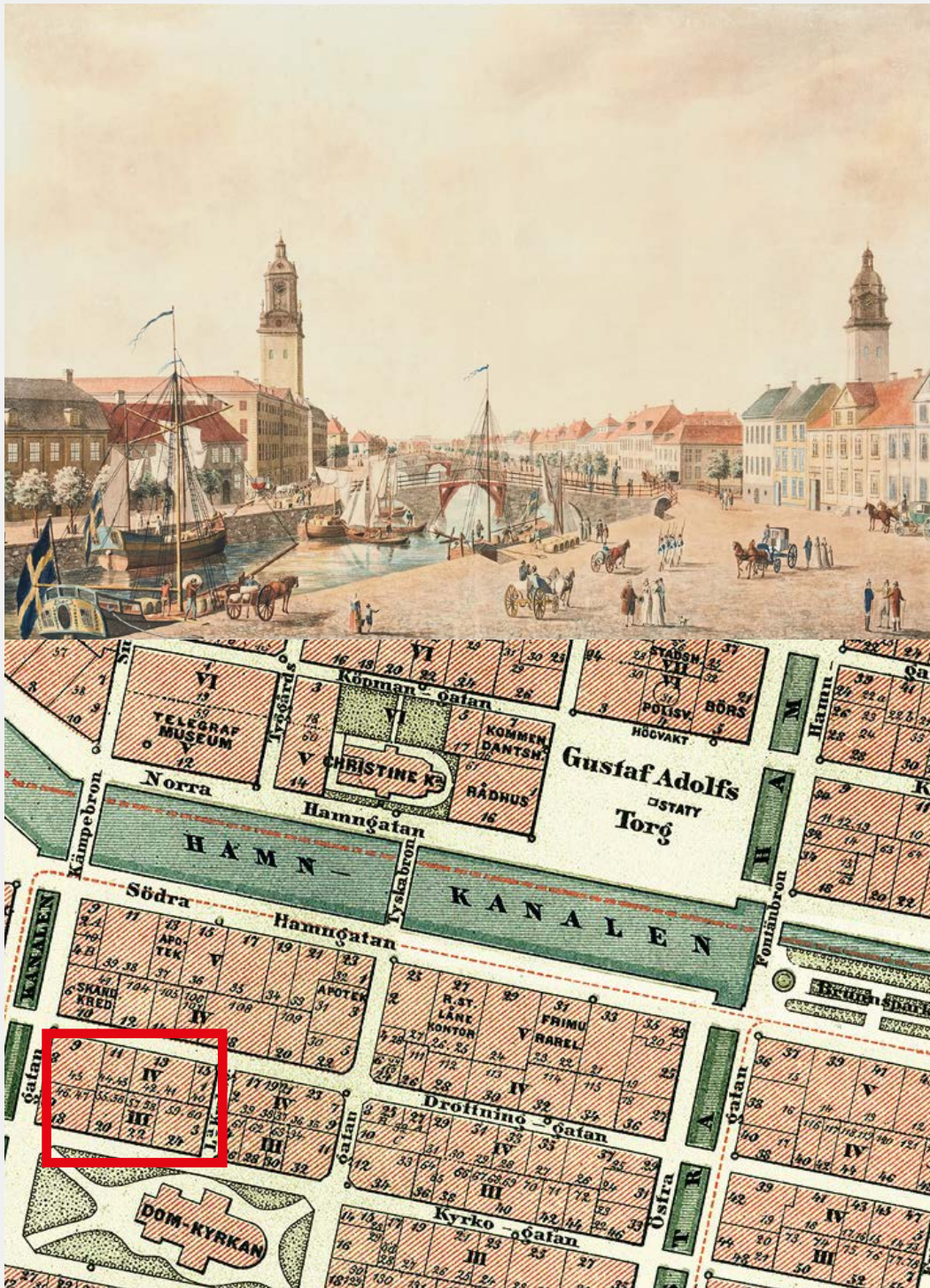
When Gothenburg was first built in the early 17th century, attracting Dutch merchants was a priority. For this reason, settlers from the Netherlands were allowed to choose the best lots in the new town to build homes and warehouses. The most valuable locations were of course found close to the harbour commerce.

Swedish merchants complained about foreigners being given their lots for free, while Swedes had to pay. The various favours granted to the Dutch sometimes led to local animosity and envy. Being well connected to the European markets, the Dutch merchants were also aware of their own importance for the new town.

The strong Dutch influence in Gothenburg waned after a few decades, but the old part of town is still full of memories. To commemorate the merchants from the Netherlands, who helped establish Gothenburg, this particular block of houses has been named "Dutch Quarter" — Kvarteret Holländaren in Swedish.

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DUTCH STREET

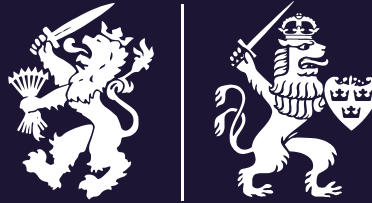


- ◀ "Dutch Street" was found close to the old harbour. The painting to the left depicts late 18th century Gothenburg, before a series of fires transformed the town. The houses on the south side of the main canal were made of wood.

After a particularly devastating fire in 1802, the new buildings were made of brick and stone.

- ◀ Holländaregården was built in 1805 for a merchant and his family. The house has retained much of its original features. There is a vaulted cellar and an old iron door leads to the attic.

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GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE

Since 1700 the county governors have resided in this building, which was acquired by the Swedish state in 1682. It was erected in 1648—1650 by Field Marshal Lennart Torstenson and his wife Beata de la Gardie. Their coats of arms can be seen above the entrance. The beautiful portal, today partially restored, was made in Stockholm.

Being one of the oldest houses in town, it is a reminder of the multicultural environment that characterized 17th century Gothenburg. The two-storey palace with its vaulted cellar was constructed on the muddy riverbank by German builder Casper Wolter. Timber piles were driven into the moist ground to stabilize the foundation, just like in the Netherlands. The location was prominent, overlooking Gothenburg's historic harbour.

Originally built in Dutch renaissance style, the palace with its Flemish gables towered over the surroundings. There was a large garden and a warehouse faced the waterfront. Over time, many alterations have been made, but the old reception hall still retains its original look. A 17th century painted ceiling was rediscovered in the 1960s, modelled on etchings made by the German-born Dutch painter Hendrick Goltzius.

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GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE

Above: A model of the Governor's Residence, as it appeared in the 17th century. Notice the large garden and the tiled roof with Flemish gables.

Upper right: the old reception hall.

Lower right: a painted ceiling was rediscovered in the 1960s.

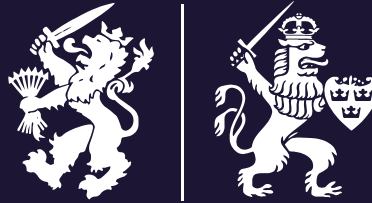
HOW TO VISIT

To visit the house (groups only), [click here](#) or search:

<https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vastra-gotaland>

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NEW SWEDEN (NO PHYSICAL SIGN)

The bronze monument at the edge of Stenpiren commemorates the short-lived settlement of New Sweden in North America. Sweden had colonial ambitions in the 17th century and Dutchman Willem Usselinx offered his services. He had been one of the founders of the Dutch West India Company, but later became disgruntled.

His countryman Peter Minuit was appointed leader of the first Swedish expedition to the New World. Seamen and officers were recruited in the Netherlands. Two ships left Gothenburg in 1637 and sailed up the Delaware river in the spring of 1638. Peter Minuit negotiated with local tribes to establish a settlement. He had previously purchased the island of Manhattan when he served as governor of the Dutch colony of New Netherland.

The neighbouring Dutch colonists objected to the arrival of the Swedish expedition. Swedes and Finns settled the area, but the colony of New Sweden was not successful. Very few ships arrived in the following years and the conditions became untenable.

In 1655, New Sweden was forcefully joined with the colony of New Netherland. Less than a decade later, the Dutch colony was in turn captured by English forces. The United States of America gained independence in 1776.

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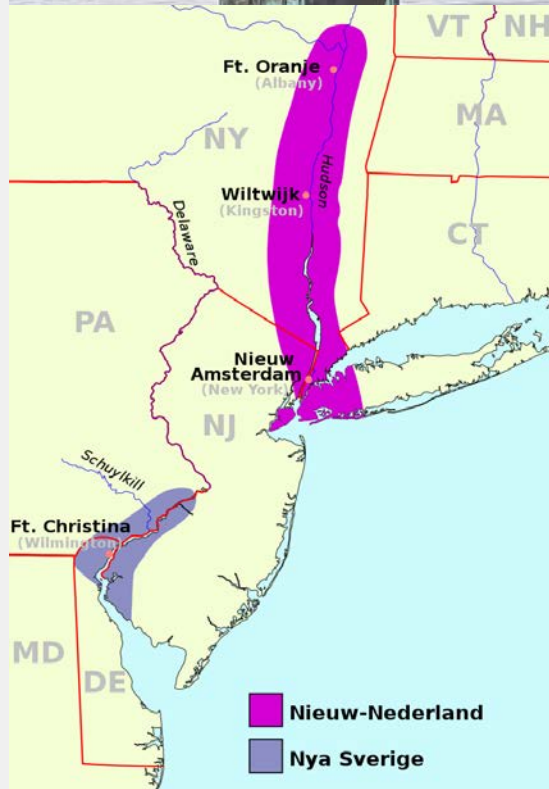
NEW SWEDEN

Upper left: The bronze monument at Stenpiren commemorates the settlement New Sweden. The granite original is in Fort Christina Park, Delaware, USA.

Upper right: A panel on the monument showing "Swedes buying land from Indians".



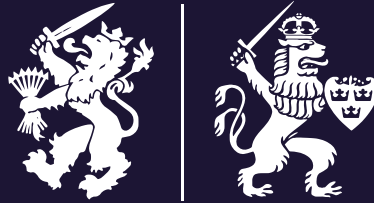
Lower left: A map showing the Dutch colony to the north and the Swedish claim to the south. Nieuw Amsterdam is today's New York.



Lower right: Willem Usselinx (1567–1648) was the one of the founding fathers of the Dutch West India Company. He later relocated to Sweden and offered his services.



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THE GERMAN CHURCH

When Gothenburg was founded, it was important to attract foreign merchants and experts. Many of the Dutch and German settlers were of Calvinist or Arminian faith, who faced potential persecution in their homelands.

In 1623, King Gustavus Adolphus allowed for a foreign congregation in Gothenburg. Officially, Sweden was strictly Evangelical Lutheran, but the authorities were instructed to tolerate other versions of Protestant worship. The local Swedish superintendent objected, but had no other choice than to obey the king.

The first treasurer of Gothenburg in 1621 was Dutchman Gilius van Eijck. In 1624, he bought the old wooden church in Nya Lödöse, had it dismantled and donated it to the new congregation. The church was reassembled here on this site. A German-speaking vicar had already been recruited, a language that the Dutch settlers knew.

A permanent church was inaugurated in 1648. It was named after Swedish Queen Christina, whose government had made important economic contributions. Fires raged in 1669 and 1746, but the church was rebuilt. After more than 400 years, the German congregation is still active. It is fully integrated with the Church of Sweden.

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THE GERMAN CHURCH

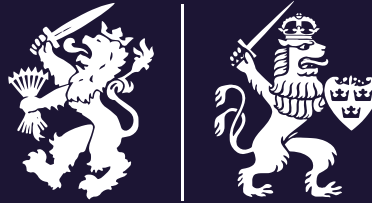
- ◀ In 1746, the German Church burned for the second time. You can see the previous structure on the drawing to the left. The protruding mausoleum from 1682 still stands, it was cut off from the fire when the bell tower fell.

Alms for the poor and contributions to the congregation were put in a coffer. The 17th century chest is on display inside the church. Three padlocks protected the contents and the keys were kept by the vicar, the warden and one of the church elders.

HOW TO VISIT

The church is frequently open for visits, free of charge. If the door is open, you can enter. Please show respect during services.

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HERRING STREET

Until 1895, Postgatan derived its name from the herring, a periodically abundant fish of great importance for the North Sea region. Cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam thrived on the herring trade for centuries. The Swedes also wished to capitalize on this lucrative fish, but had little experience from open sea fishing.

In order to develop better methods to catch and preserve herring, fishermen from the Netherlands were offered privileges in the 1660s to settle in Gothenburg. Unfortunately, the Swedish attempts to emulate the Dutch herring industry were not immediately successful. A century later, however, the herring trade flourished.

Across the street there is a historic enclave, surrounding the oldest building in town. Begun in 1642, it has the appearance of a Dutch warehouse. The red bricks for the lower part were imported from the Netherlands.

Originally, the site was home to the first cemetery in Gothenburg. The new building meant that graves had to be relocated, including the remains of Dutchman Jacob van Dijk (1567—1631). When Gothenburg was founded, he was appointed King's Commissioner by the Swedish Crown to organize the new town

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HERRING STREET

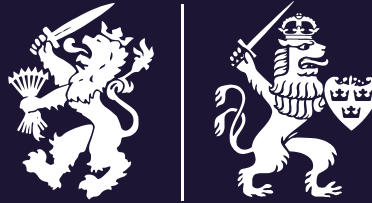
- ◀ Jacob van Dijk was born in 1567 in the town of Haarlem. He played an instrumental role in connecting Sweden with lenders in the Netherlands after Denmark demanded enormous war reparations in 1613.

In 1621 he was asked to organize the new town of Gothenburg and to attract Dutch merchants. Unfortunately, he was outmaneuvered by clever merchants and died a poor and bitter man in 1631.

Herring became one of Sweden's largest exports in the 18th century. For decades, enormous schools of herring endowed the Swedish west coast. The fish could be caught from small boats fairly close to land and factories were built on desolate islands. In 1808, however, the great herring period was over.



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A PRETTY DUTCH TOWN

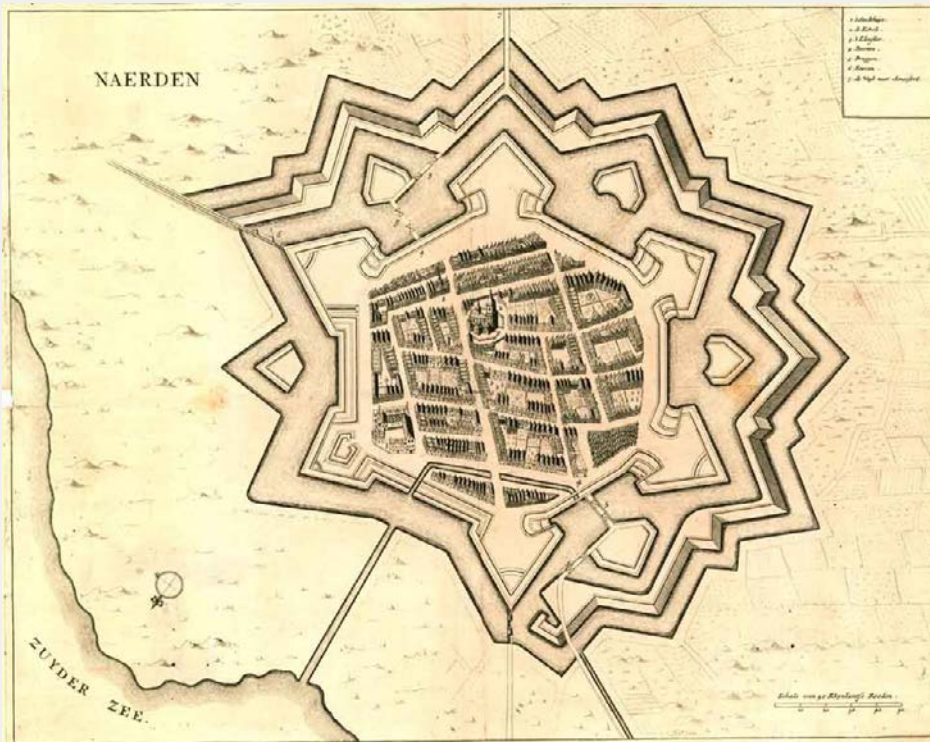
King Gustavus Adolphus is said to have chosen the location of Gothenburg standing on a hilltop in 1619. For this mythical reason, the statue of the king in the open square is pointing downwards. Near the royal monument there is a colossal map in the stone pavement, depicting Gothenburg in 1644. The fortified town was surrounded by a moat with protruding bastions, a design which still can be distinguished.

The regular street grid with canals was inspired by Dutch town planning. When Gothenburg was being built, experts from the Netherlands were hired. The Dutch were also accustomed to reclaim land from the sea, skills needed here on the swamplike south bank of the Göta river.

When the great Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus visited Gothenburg in 1746, he noticed the Dutch influence. Linnaeus left an account of a very pretty town with canals, lined with trees and crossed by vaulted bridges.

Several of the original street names in Gothenburg were borrowed from the Netherlands. Torggatan bore the name of St Nicholas, patron saint of Amsterdam and the protector of merchants and seafarers.

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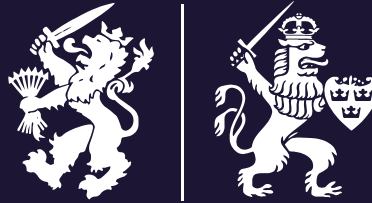


A PRETTY DUTCH TOWN

Star-shaped towns, similar to 17th century Gothenburg, are found in the Netherlands. A 1649 map shows Naarden, a town about 15 km east of Amsterdam. Modern photo to the right.

Another Dutch fortress city is Heusden on the Maas river (left). The fortifications were completed in 1613.

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THE PORT OF GOTHENBURG

A good harbour was a key priority when King Gustavus Adolphus founded Gothenburg, Sweden's new gateway to the west. He looked to the Netherlands for inspiration, where wet marshlands had been transformed into canals, facilitating trade. With the help of skilled Dutch professionals, works on the harbour canal began in the summer of 1620. From where you are standing, you can see the result.

The canal was dug by hundreds of soldiers from western Sweden using wooden shovels. A pump, powered by horses, drained the incoming water as the mud was removed. The quaysides were lined with timber. In 1622, the harbour was finally opened for traffic. Two new streets were named in honour of the principal Dutch “conducteurs”, Jan Arendts and Jost van Werdt. The names were later changed to Magasinsgatan and Korsgatan.

Very soon the shallow canal proved too small and the nearby river became increasingly used for harbour purposes, particularly by larger ships. Between the river and the town, cargo was transported on barges or smaller boats. The Port of Gothenburg has steadily expanded for more than 400 years and is today located in the outer harbours, west of the city. It is the largest port in Scandinavia.

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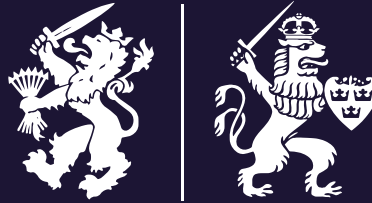
THE PORT OF GOTHENBURG

- ◀ For more than 400 years, the Port of Gothenburg has been growing steadily. It was the most important feature when the town was founded and the port is still essential for Gothenburg's economy.



- ◀ A third of Sweden's foreign trade passes through the Port of Gothenburg. It is a vital part of the nation's infrastructure — beyond the wildest dreams of King Gustavus Adolphus, four centuries ago.

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SAINT JOHN'S STREET

Södra Hamngatan was originally laid out as St. John's Street in 1621. It was probably modelled on Sint Jansstraat in Amsterdam, but in Gothenburg the name never stuck. During the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, St. John the Baptist was given greater importance. His open-air sermons, as told in the Bible, inspired followers.

Catholic Spain largely controlled the Netherlands through the House of Habsburg. Over time, persecution of Protestants increased. After a century of conflict, a Protestant Dutch republic was finally recognized in 1648.

When Gothenburg was still in the making, the Dutch negotiators wanted to make sure that merchants and settlers from the Netherlands would not suffer any religious consequences. In Sweden, the church was strictly Evangelical Lutheran, but foreign Protestants were allowed to keep their religious practices in the new town.

This building from 1806 belongs to the Swedish Order of Freemasons, a Christian fraternity where St. John the Baptist is an important symbolic figure. In the Christian tradition, he is associated with Midsummer's Day. For many years, the Freemasons of Gothenburg held special celebrations on this occasion.

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"The Sermon of John the Baptist", was painted in 1566 by Dutch artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder. At the time, many illegal assemblies were held in the Netherlands. Calvinists, Lutherans, and Anabaptists gathered in the open, on the outskirts of the cities held under Spanish Catholic rule to listen to Protestant sermons.

During the Reformation, the authority of the Catholic Church was challenged. John the Baptist became a source of great inspiration. He spoke directly to the people with a message that was for everyone. In the painting, full of details, there are people from all ages and walks of life.



ST JOHN'S STREET

◀ HOW TO VISIT

The Swedish Order of Freemasons was established in Gothenburg in the 1750s. Half a century later, the present house was built, a lovely example of neoclassical architecture.

Groups are welcome to book a guided tour of the premises. Please contact: kastellan.gpl@frimurarorden.se

FESTIVE OCCASIONS

Freemasons' Hall can be also hired for festive occasions. For pictures and more information, please [click here](#).

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DANK U WEL

This project was made possible by:

Domkyrkopastoratet, Tyska församlingen
Göteborgs Frimuraresamhälle
Göteborgs Hamn — The Port of Gothenburg
Innerstaden Göteborg
Länsstyrelsen i Västra Götaland
Saxborn Fastigheter
Stena Fastigheter
Stadsfastighetsförvaltningen
Vasakronan



Geogr. Tab. d. Königl. Reichs
 1704
 Stettin Stadt
 Eine Plan- und Topographische Karte der Stadt
 nach dem neuesten Stande

- 1. Die Stadt Stettin
- 2. Die Festung Stettin
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