

walk
5 km

The other Culemborg

City walk



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THE OTHER CULEMBORG

Welcome to Culemborg!

Culemborg has a colourful history that goes back to the Middle Ages. The city is located in the heart of the Netherlands and surrounded by a unique river landscape, the Betuwe region and the Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie defence line. It's a special city in many ways: unique, enterprising, welcoming and sustainable. There's lots to do here: enjoy centuries-old streets, special shops, beautiful restaurants and inviting outdoor cafés, taste a bit of culture or stroll along the river.

This city walk starts at the Gelderlandfabriek near the train station and shows a very different side of the medieval town. First, the route will take you through the largest ecological neighbourhood in the Netherlands: Lanxmeer. It continues along the river De Meer, on whose banks Culemborg was founded. The route then enters the city centre through characteristic streets, across the Markt and along the canals. In short, get to know both the new and historic side of Culemborg!

The city's history in a nutshell

The history of Culemborg goes back a long way. As early as the 14th century, the town became a so-called Vrijstad (free city) with its own jurisdiction. Back then, Culemborg was a central market town. Later, it also developed a lively industry. The city offered care to the poor and sick at the Pietersgasthuis, and children who had lost their parents were housed at the Elisabeth Orphanage (now a museum) starting in 1560. As an important city and trading centre, Culemborg was protected in turbulent times by three walls and moats, with seven city gates. Today, many monumental buildings still bear witness to Culemborg's rich history. Has this sparked your curiosity? This walk lets you dive into the city's past!



START OF THE WALK




The city walk starts and ends at the Gelderlandfabriek, Stationsweg 7, next to the train station.

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1 De Gelderlandfabriek

The Gelderlandfabriek is Culemborg's main cultural venue. Originally, this 1868 building next to the railway was a locomotive shed. The locomotive was used to push or pull heavy freight trains across the bridge. From 1936 onwards, the building served as the 'Gelderland' furniture factory. Following a big fire, it has now emerged as a place of great activity. Also housing the Una Volta restaurant, it's a prime meeting place for visitors to the city, theatre makers, designers and artists.

 Go right, down the stairs. Walk past the train station, Stationsplein. At the end, turn right onto Parallelweg Oost. Take the first left, Anna Blamanweg.





Lanxmeer



2 Lanxmeer

Lanxmeer is an inventive, ecological and largely car-free residential area based on the principles of sustainable urbanism. Lanxmeer exudes the atmosphere of a large garden and offers a great diversity of rare plants and animals. The greenery in the district is 'ecologically managed', giving wild plants and trees room to grow.

A unique aspect of this neighbourhood is that the residents themselves manage the public space, in consultation and close cooperation with the municipality.




After the parking lot, turn right onto Douwes Dekkerpad.

3 Water in Lanxmeer

Water plays an important role in the area and is present everywhere, both visible and invisible. A sophisticated water system ensures its economical use and local purification. Helophyte filters absorb and purify wastewater from the entire neighbourhood, using gravel, sand and reed plants. The roots of the reeds clean up the bacteria. After this filtration process, the water is sufficiently clean to be discharged into the surface water.

Once the temperature drops down to 6 degrees, and especially when its damp, you can see frogs, toads and salamanders in the streets at night. The neighbourhood is home to at least nine species of amphibians, one of which is even on the Red List of protected species.

 *At the end, turn right and immediately left (follow the path straight on): Marten Toonderpad.*

4 Houses in Lanxmeer

Most homes in Lanxmeer are built in a courtyard structure. Each house has a small private garden that opens onto a communal enclosed garden. There are no fences, giving each courtyard a green and open look and feel. Many residents experience the communal garden as their own and maintain it in collaboration with their fellow residents.



5 Earth-sheltered homes

Building a house in and under a layer of earth gives it remarkable climate control characteristics. The house stays warm in winter and remains cool for longer in summer. These earth-sheltered homes are extremely well insulated in every way. The large windows and cosy patios provide a surprising amount of light.




Earth-sheltered homes

 *At the end, turn left: Multatulilaan.*

6 Archaeological mound

Lanxmeer lies at the junction of two ancient river banks. People were living on the higher grounds as early as the Bronze Age. The hill that lies here today protects an archaeological site where remains from the Bronze Age, Roman era and Middle Ages have been discovered.

 *Take the first left: Douwes Dekkerpad. Go right at the bend: Henriëtte Roland Holstlaan. Take the second left: Annie Romein-Verschoorpad.*

In summer, the grass on the Archaeological mound is cut in a pattern of garlands or waves, creating a lot of variety, which is ideal for butterflies and other insects.



Archaeological mound



Greenhouse residences



Water tower

7 Greenhouse residences

The large greenhouses surrounding these homes provide an insulating layer of air. This keeps them wonderfully warm in winter. The houses are built with stony materials and are well insulated. As a result, they're nice and cool in summer as well.

Excess heat in the greenhouses can escape through skylights that open and close automatically.



At the end, turn left onto the cinder path. Then turn right, through the swing gate, and follow the path through an orchard.

8 Water catchment area and heat

The Vitens water catchment area is at the heart of the neighbourhood. Here, ground-water is extracted for the drinking water supply of Culemborg and its surroundings. The drinking water has a constant temperature of 12 degrees Celsius, making it very suitable for heating the neighbourhood.

Thermo Bello, Lanxmeer's own energy company, cools the drinking water by a few degrees with a heat pump and uses the extracted heat to warm the homes in the area.




Go through the next swing gate; the path turns into Anna Blamanweg. At the end, turn right and take the first right, Lodewijk van Deijsselhof. At the end, turn right onto a cinder path. Take a left on the cinder path.

9 Water tower


Dating from 1911, the water tower is 35 metres high and has two 200 m³ water tanks. Until 1971, the upper edge featured beautiful brick battlements. As they were crumbling,

they were replaced by an aluminium rim for safety reasons. Since 2005, the water tower is no longer in use. Water is now pumped up in the adjacent pump house.

 *Continue the path to the zebra crossing and cross Rijksstraatweg. Keep going straight on through the swing gate. For Caetshage city farm, walk 100 m to the right (open Mon-Sat).*

10 Caetshage city farm

Caetshage city farm is an organic care farm where farming, animal husbandry and nature go hand in hand. Caetshage is a site for nature and environmental education and information for schools and businesses. Five hectares of land are used for arable farming, animal husbandry, vegetable, fruit and flower cultivation. There's also an insect hotel and a large apiary. The farm shop and yard can be visited during opening hours.

 *After visiting the city farm, return the way you came. Back at the swing gate now turn right, following the path between the farm fields. At the end, after the swing gate, cross the bridge over the river De Meer.*

There really is a lot to be found in the fields of Caetshage. Every shard or object tells a story and is worth a look. Joost Vahl has arranged this seemingly insignificant urban rubbish and turned it into art, which is on display in the gazebo on the square.



Caetshage city farm



De Meer

11 De Meer

The small river De Meer was mentioned as early as 1100. Draining water from the Rhine, it was part of the barge route between Utrecht and Den Bosch: today's Meerkade. From 1759 onwards, more water flowed through De Meer due to the construction of a rifle factory on the castle grounds. To contain it, the Meerkade was constructed. The factory's water mill, which powered the machinery, was kept in motion by water from the river Lek, which was brought in via sluices. The excess water flowed via De Meer and later also the Bisschopsgraaf canal to the river Linge.



Turn left onto the Meerkade walking/bike path. At the end of the path, cross Beethovenlaan to the walking/bike path. Turn right at the bridge, De Raaf. At the end of the road turn left, Schubertstraat. At the end, cross the road twice, Weidsteeg + zebra crossing. Continue onto Oostersingel.

12 Oostersingel 38 - Dwarshuis (front house of farm)

The 'dwarshuis' dates from the early 19th century, but was later rebuilt and renovated. The house is a reminder that this part of Culemborg was originally an agricultural area. A characteristic feature is the façade's symmetrical layout, with in the middle the entrance flanked by two windows and right above the entrance a dormer window. A cornice tops the façade.



Cross the road in the bend. Continue along the path through the playground, A.J. van Sijlpad. At the end of the path, turn left, cross the bridge and turn left, Oosterwal. After the school, turn

right into Sint Janskerkstraat and follow the road to the right.

13 Janskerkhof

Here once stood St. John's Church with a presbytery and a cemetery. After the church was demolished, the cemetery was expanded but in 1870 it was closed.

In the 20th century, archaeologists uncovered the outlines of the church and presbytery on this site. During the construction of the parking lot, the remains of skeletons and old gravestones were found. The gravestones have been given a place in the parking lot to serve as a reminder.



Take the first left, still called Sint Janskerkstraat.

14 De Nieuwstad

This part of the inner city used to have a village feel. The neighbourhood was home to many farms that belonged to farmers who had fled the excessively wet surrounding countryside. After the Count of Holland had constructed and raised the Diefdijk in the late 14th century, the water level in the Culemborgse Veld rose. The farmers who lived there moved to the higher sand ridge on the south side of Culemborg. For obvious reasons, their new location was called Nieuwstad (New city). The farmers held on to their pastures and fields in the Culemborgse Veld, though. In the 1970s, the houses in this part of town were in such a bad state that the entire Nieuwstad between Zandstraat and Westerwal was rebuilt. Only a few city farmhouses still stand today.



Turn right at the end of the street, Zandstraat. In the bend, keep right and go to Varkensmarkt.

15 Varkensmarkt

In 1870, the stately mansion 'Maria Regina' was built by Leiden doctor Leendert Fangman. The striking house has a façade construction with neoclassicist features, while the ornamentation is in neo-Louis XIV style. The façade's layout is remarkable: the first storey has plastered rustication and can be seen as a plinth for the second storey, which functions as the principal floor (piano nobile). Later, this house was home to C.W. Dresselhuys, director of the TRIO cigar factory.

On the west side of Varkensmarkt there's a rectangular brick pump with a limestone frame that dates from the 18th century. The pump is crowned with a lion holding a shield with the city's coat of arms. It's no coincidence that the pump is located along the old 'Voorstraat', as the city's central main axis is sometimes called. The winding route of this axis follows the old course of the river De Meer.

16 Old Catholic Church

In 1578, during the Reformation, the Great or Barbara Church was taken over by the Calvinists. From then on, Catholics had to go to one of two sheltered churches: one in the inner city in the so-called 'Papenhoek' (Papists' Corner) and another in Nieuwstad. In 1836, the present Old Catholic Church was established at Varkensmarkt 18. It is dedicated to St. Barbara and St. Anthony Abbot. An example of early neo-Gothicism, it is a simple rectangular aisleless church. Above the semicircular upper window of the entrance porch you can see the Greek text

'Pantocratori' (To the Omnipotent). Of special note is the beautifully carved closing stile of the entrance doors. At the top, St. Barbara is depicted, recognisable by her attribute: a crenellated tower.



Keep going straight, Binnenpoort.

17 Binnenpoort

The Lanxmeerpoort or Binnenpoort is the only one of the seven city gates that remains. After Culemborg was granted city rights in 1318, the city was walled. This city gate dates from the 14th century, the upper part from 1557. In the niche you can see a statue of St. Barbara, the patron saint of Culemborg.

On the house at Binnenpoort 6 you can see a semi-circular side turret with arrow slits above the canal, the remnant of a front gate. Commemorative stones have been bricked



Binnenpoort



Markt



Town hall

into the façade, recalling the many dyke breaches and their measured water levels.

 *Pass through the gate and continue across the Markt and Oude Vismarkt.*

18 Markt

Culemborg has always been an important market town for farmers, traders and rural people from far and wide. The present-day market on Tuesdays dates back to the Middle Ages. In the 17th century, the city's main inns were found on the Markt. You can still find old buildings on both sides. Markt 11, built in 1549, is a very beautifully preserved example. Near numbers 8 and 34 there are rectangular sandstone pumps from 1718/1719 with a double outlet. The pumps have Louis XIV details, bear the city's coat of arms and are crowned with a vase. The water feature at the centre of the Markt is a reference to the high water that has ravaged Culemborg: each fountain's height represents the water level of a dyke breach in past centuries.


19 Town hall

Commissioned by Lady Elisabeth of Culemborg and her husband Anthonis van Lalaing, the town hall was built in 1534 to the design of master builder Rombout II Keldermans. Above the cellar door you'll see two lions bearing the coat of arms of the family of Elisabeth of Culemborg. Above the town hall's main entrance you'll notice the letters A and E (Anthonis and Elisabeth) and a Latin text: "Ignis omnia consummabit" (Fire will complete everything, meaning: with enthusiasm anything can be achieved). A blue stone sits right in front of the town hall.

At the town hall's right corner you can find a so-called 'kaak', a sort of pillory that was used to tie up convicts and subject them to public humiliation.


20 Oude Vismarkt

If you look closely, you'll discover an unusual scene on the grey gable stone above the side door of the town hall annex. In 1428 a battle was going on for the position of Bishop of Utrecht, which involved Zweder van Culemborg. Jan van Buren, who supported the other candidate for the job, tried to capture both the city and Zweder with his army. The attack failed and Van Buren was hacked to pieces at the fish market by Culemborg fishwives.

 *Straight ahead at the crossroads, Tollenstraat.*

21 De Vier Hoeken

This spot is where the first people settled in what is now Culemborg. De Vier Hoeken (The Four Corners) have always played an important role in city life. In the Middle Ages, those who couldn't pay their debts had to stand in the middle of De Vier Hoeken to try to get credit. Farmers traditionally had social gatherings here on Saturday evenings. And funeral processions always passed through De Vier Hoeken.

 *After the crossing go straight ahead, Tollenstraat, and continue until the three-way junction.*



De Fransche School

22 De Fransche School

The current theatre dates from 1846, when it was a school for poorer city children. In 1891, part of the building was put into use as a public primary school. Among other things, children who could learn well were taught French here, hence its name ('The French School'). Later, the building also served as a fire station, a training room for the militia and a city bus workshop.

In the late 19th century there were frequent floods, forcing those who lived in the plains around Culemborg to flee to the city. They took refuge in De Fransche School, which had a special flood room. The doors of this classroom were two metres above street level. In 1855, at high tide, 360 people found shelter here.

23 Scherpenhoek

Promoting cigarettes of the Virginia brand, Miss Blanche immediately catches your attention. This advertising mural was painted around 1925 by Vilmos Huszár, painter and co-founder of the art movement 'De Stijl'. In the first half of the



Scherpenhoek



Jan van Riebeeckhuis

20th century, advertising murals like these were quite common. Now only a few of them remain. The mural is very rare.

24 Jan van Riebeeckhuis

The Huis de Fonteyn is also known as Jan van Riebeeckhuis. This 16th century building was the birthplace of Jan van Riebeeck, founder of a Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope. The history of Culemborg is closely intertwined with that of South Africa. The unique herb garden at the back of the house, based on the ideas of Jan van Riebeeck, is accessible all year round.

 Continue until the crossroads.

25 Pietersgasthuis

The Pietersgasthuis (a remnant of the original building) is one of the oldest buildings in Culemborg. From 1386 onwards it provided shelter to poor travellers and the sick. Even wounded soldiers were nursed here. The

complex also included a farm and a chapel. Old bills show that the building served as a place of shelter/hospital well into the 16th century.

26 Lutheran Church

In the Dutch 'Disaster Year' of 1672, the French army invaded Culemborg. After they had left, Count Georg Friedrich of Waldeck-Pyrmont decided to convert the chapel of the Pieters-gasthuis into a Lutheran Church. The present building dates from 1839.

 *Go straight at the crossroads: Herenstraat.*

So-called Luther roses adorn the pilasters of the Lutheran Church, whose bell tower is topped with a swan. These symbols are clear indications that this is a Lutheran church.

27 Achterstraat /Herenstraat

These two streets were medieval back streets, with in between them the cross streets to the 'Voorstraat'. Herenstraat takes its name from 'witheren', friars of the Mariënwaerd abbey who wore a white habit. The abbot of Mariënwaerd bought a house for them in this street from a nobleman called Everwijn, an uncle of Lady Elisabeth of Culemborg.

 *After 60 metres:*

28 Elisabeth Orphanage

This former orphanage was founded through a bequest by Elisabeth of Culemborg. The gate has a gable stone with a Latin text that freely translates as: "Citizens' children who were deprived of their parents' care too soon,



Lutheran Church



Elisabeth Orphanage

are received here by Elisabeth, who nurtures them on her lap.”

Above it are the coats of arms of Elisabeth of Culemborg and Anthonis van Lalaing. More than 700 children grew up in this orphanage (1560-1952), which was the first newly built orphanage in the Netherlands. Now the library houses the Elisabeth Orphanage Museum. Behind the museum is a beautifully landscaped garden with the most authentic city wall of the Netherlands, which was restored in 2003. The wall contains a part of the ‘Nije Huus’ city castle, built after 1318.

The Elisabeth Orphanage Museum brings their stories to life. It’s an accessible place that illustrates the eventful history of the city and its residents.

 *Continue along Herenstraat. At the end, take a left into Everwijnstraat.*

29 Caffaigne

At number 9 you’ll see the Caffaigne, where free food and lodging were offered to the poor for many centuries. Its name derives from the Latin word ‘caffagium’, which was used to designate the main building of a noble estate. The house was built around 1532 and was transferred to ‘de Poth’, an institution for the poor, in 1549. Poor people were allowed to live here for free “for God’s sake”, but in later times the cottages were rented out.

Eventually the building was split up into four cottages with a small garden, intended for poor people of Roman Catholic faith. At the end of the street you’ll find Het Huys Mitter Hofstad, a former city farm.


 *Turn around and turn left at the end, Het Hof.*



Caffaigne

30 Medieval city wall

On 6 December 1318, Culemborg was granted city rights by Johan van Beusichem. They included the right to wall the city to protect it from invaders. Before 1318 the city seems to have been protected by earthen ramparts with wooden palisades and thorn bushes, surrounded by a moat. Almost immediately after the town was granted city rights, a start was made with replacing these ramparts by stone walls, parts of which are still present today. Near 't Hof, you can see preserved and restored parts of the old city wall.

 *Cross the bridge and past the mill take the 2nd street on the right, Molenwal. The road later curves to the left. At the end of the road/junction turn right, Prijssestraat.*

31 Mill De Hoop

The mill De Hoop is located along Het Jach. This stone smock mill dates back to 1853. For many centuries, there were windmills on top of the city wall. Citizens were under obligation to let the Count's mills grind their grain and hand over a portion as payment. Flour mill De Hoop still grinds grains with the help of wind power. The flour is made into a local bread named Kuilenburgs Molenbrood, among other things.

32 Urinal and Burgemeester Keestrasingel

The urinal at the corner of Burgemeester Keestrasingel and Prijssestraat dates from the early 20th century. It is constructed of red brick in half-brick bond on a cemented base and covered by a limestone slab, resting on wrought-iron ornaments.



Mill De Hoop




Urinal



Singelgrachten' and city canals



Triowijk

 After 50 m, turn left at the next crossroads and walk along the water, Triosingel.

33 'Singelgrachten' and city canals

A 'singelgracht', 'singel' or 'vest(e)' is a body of water around an inner city, often a remnant of a fortified town's medieval defensive moat. Unlike inner city canals, a 'singel' usually doesn't have brick quay walls, but sloping banks. Important reasons for the construction and maintenance of these canals are and were: drainage, transport, defence and sewerage. Nowadays, the 'singels' are no longer used for sewerage.


34 Triowijk

In the late 19th century, cigar manufacturer C.W. Dresselhuys had the Triowijk (Trio Quarter) built for employees of his cigar factory 'De Trio'. In its heyday the cigar industry employed some 840 people, about a third of Culemborg's working population. At the time of Dresselhuys' death, his company was Culemborg's largest employer.

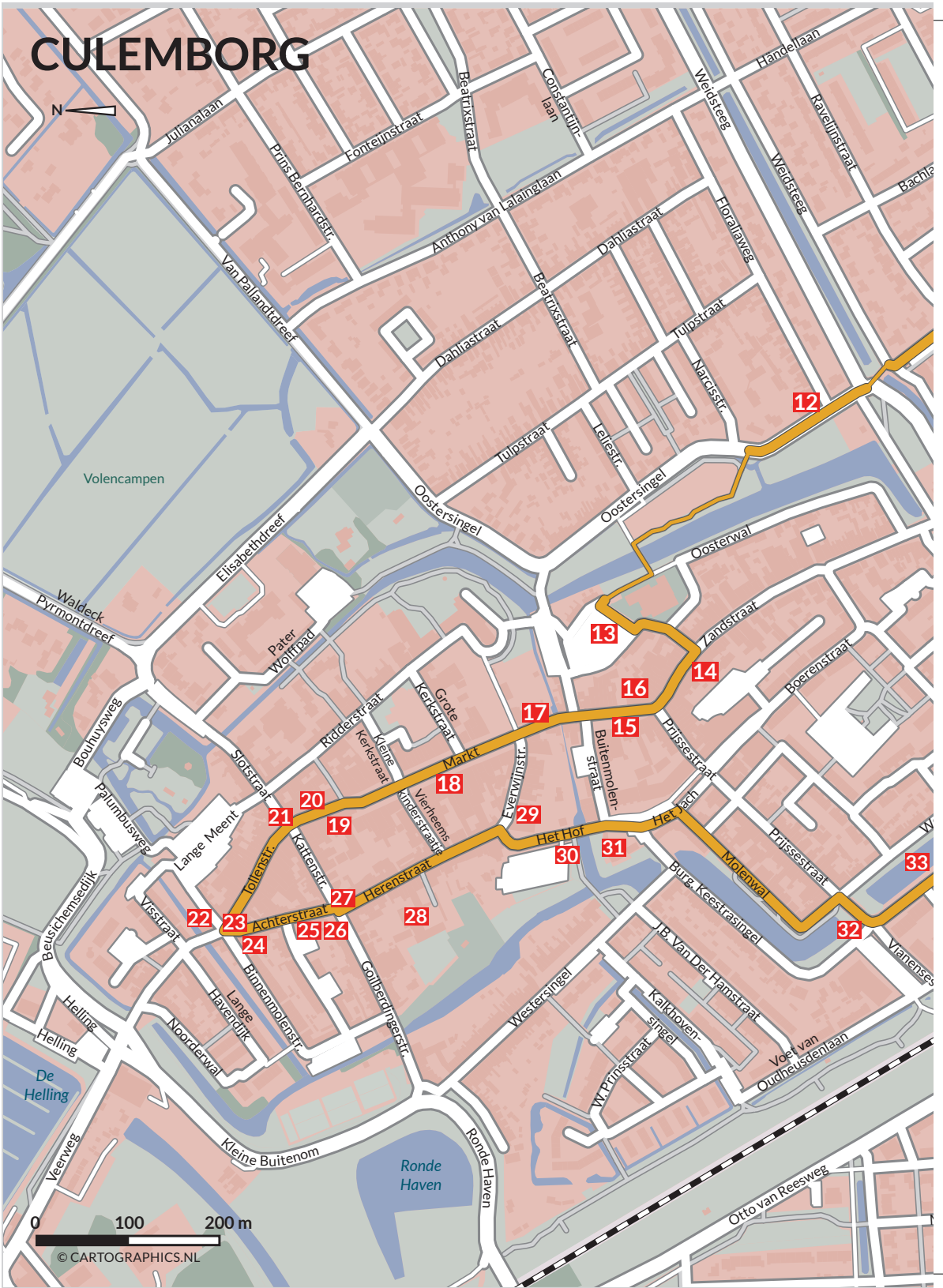
 At the end of the street turn right and cross the street, Stationssingel.

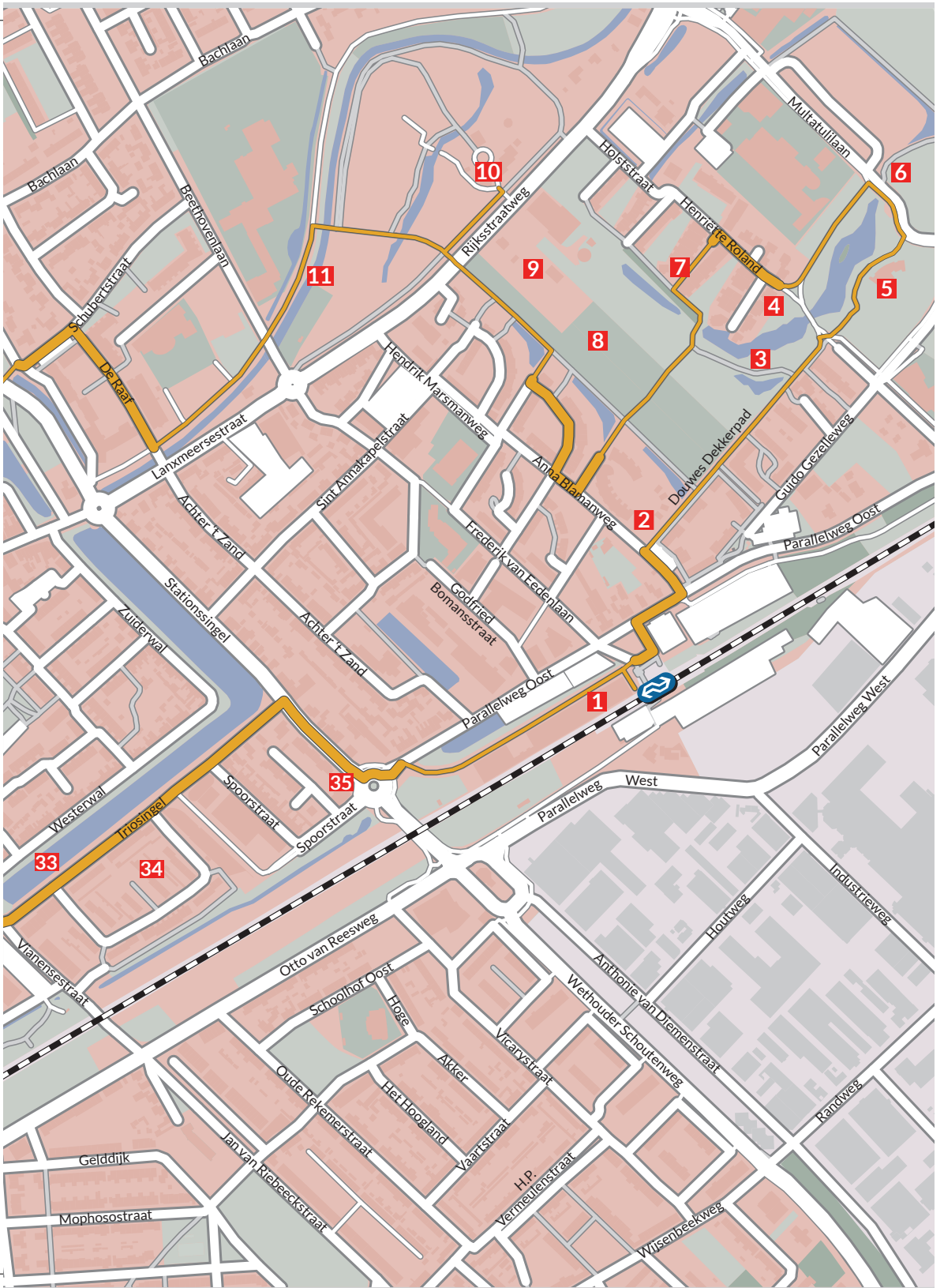
35 Bathhouse

At the corner of Stationssingel/Spoorstraat, you'll find the former bathhouse. It was built in 1930 by order of the director of the Gas Works, so that his employees and their families in this neighbourhood could bathe once a week (for a fee). Only after the war, it became compulsory to have a shower or lavatory area installed in social housing. The bathhouse kept its function until the 1960s. Then it was converted into an instructional pool of 5 by 5 metres. Nowadays it houses a furniture workshop.

 Turn left at the roundabout, Parallelweg Oost. After 50 metres cross the street and walk uphill on Stationsweg to the end point, Gelderlandfabriek.

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