

# ELFSTEDENROUTE

## MAX 2.40

Sneek - IJlst - Sloten - Stavoren - Hindeloopen - Workum - Bolsward -  
Harlingen - Franeker - Dokkum - Leeuwarden



253 KILOMETER  
1/2 WEEKS

### **Sneek – IJlst – Sloten – Stavoren – Hindeloopen – Workum – Bolsward- Harlingen – Franeker – Dokkum - IJleuwarden**

*When talking about Friesland, the Eleven Cities Tour is often mentioned in the same breath. Also known as the "Tour of Tours", the Frisian Eleven Cities Tour is a famous ice skating tour and a tourist route that passes through 11 historic cities and villages. The tour covers 200 kilometers of canals, lakes, and channels through the Frisian countryside and is considered the largest ice skating tour in the world. The tour can only be skated when there is at least 15 cm of thick ice, but fortunately, boaters can navigate this beautiful route every summer.*

From Sanzi Yacht Charter, we set course for IJlst. We sail through the Houkesloot towards the city center of Sneek and pass the Sneeker Waterpoort. It is one of the most famous monuments of Friesland and is clearly visible from the water. Once you have passed the bridge, you can take the perfect photo by looking back. The Waterpoort is beautifully lit up at night, and if you can find a spot on one of the quays, we highly recommend it. From this point, the center of Sneek is also within walking distance, where you can find all kinds of cozy shops, restaurants, or visit the Frisian Maritime Museum.

After Sneek, we sail on to IJlst, which is located on the route between Sneek and Heeg and is a beautiful historic town. The most beautiful part of IJlst is located along the Eegracht and Galamagracht. Along this elongated canal, there are beautiful facades and stately houses from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The beautiful authentic atmosphere that IJlst exudes is mainly due to the many historic buildings that are located there. Most of them are open to the public and definitely worth a visit. Be sure to visit the sawmill De Rat, which was built in 1632 and is still in operation. Here, you can see how wooden beams and planks are sawed using wind energy.

We continue our route and sail along Heeg and Woudsend via the Wide Wimers, where there is plenty to see and do despite not being part of the eleven cities. These villages are truly water sports villages and are well-equipped for this purpose.

On the Heegermeer, you can find several islands, including Rabbit Island. Once a breeding ground for rabbits, it is now mainly a beautiful piece of nature with nice mooring spots and stunning views over the Heegermeer, and on very rare occasions, a rabbit. Heeg is located ten kilometers south of Sneek on the Heegermeer. Eel fishing was an important livelihood for a long time. What Heeg is mainly known for now is watersports. The village is full of monumental buildings, churches, and old historical homes. In the center, there are also many cozy restaurants in the center offering local products. Once a year, in July, the Heechsimmerfestival takes place. Various bands perform on a floating stage on the beach of the Heegermeer lake.

You cross over the Slotermeer to get to Sloten. Sloten is the smallest city of the Frisian Eleven Cities. It has held its city rights since the 14th century and has always maintained them. The town is incredibly beautiful to look at and is full of historic buildings, windmills, canals, and bridges. It is also one of the best-preserved historic towns in the Netherlands. There is a nice marina with all the necessary facilities available.

After Sloten, there is an opportunity to also visit Balk. There is a nice marina with a restaurant pavilion located on the Slotermeer at Balk, where fresh eel and salmon are smoked on the terrace every week. You can enjoy a delicious lunch or dinner here, and there is regular live music. It is about a 500-meter walk to the charming center of Balk. The village has a cozy atmosphere and character, and it includes several supermarkets, a bakery, and various shops. On the last Wednesday of August, the popular Gondola Parade takes place, a 70-year-old tradition where illuminated gondolas sail through the Luts, which is definitely a must-see.

After Balk, you cross back over the Slotermeer, past Woudsend, over the elongated Heegermeer towards Stavoren.

Stavoren is a picturesque town on the IJsselmeer and has a rich history. It owes its name to the word "staveren," which means "pole foot" in Old Frisian. This refers to the poles that were once used to strengthen the banks of the harbors. Stavoren also has a legend that dates back to the Middle Ages. According to this legend, Stavoren was once the richest city in Europe, and the legendary "Lady of Stavoren" is said to have lived here. However, the city would have fallen due to her greed and disappeared into the waves of the sea. Her statue can be admired in the harbor. A walk through the historic center is definitely recommended.

We continue sailing towards Hindeloopen, a picturesque town on the coast of the former Zuiderzee, and has a rich history as an important trading city in the 17th and 18th centuries. There is a lot to see and do in Hindeloopen. It's nice to take a walk through the village. In this picturesque town, some people still wear the old traditional costumes, and be sure to take a look at the typical painting style. Hindeloopen has a large and comfortable marina with cozy restaurants, and a popular kite- and surf spot can be found here as well.

Returning via the Heegermeer, we sail over the beautiful Gaastmeer towards Workum. Workum is a well-known village among water sports enthusiasts. There are several beaches for surfers and sailors. Workum is one of the oldest towns in the province and has plenty to offer: there are beautiful paintings to admire by Jopie Huisman, a museum about the history of Workum, cozy shops, and it's nice to take a walk through the old center.

We set course for Bolsward. Bolsward has two marinas that are both equipped with all the necessary facilities. Bolsward has a beautiful city center with some nice restaurants and cafes and a cozy center to take a walk through. It's also nice to visit the weekly market on Thursday morning.

From Bolsward, you sail to Harlingen, where you can explore the old town. Visit the Hannemahuis, a museum about the history of Harlingen and the Wadden Sea. There is also the Monument for the Fisheries, which reminds us of the rich fishing tradition of the city. A true port town where there is always something going on. A very cosy centre with all sorts of nice shops and restaurants. Harlingen is also well worth seeing from the water, and there are several marinas

After Harlingen, continue the route to Franeker, a charming town located in the heart of Friesland. It is rich in history and culture, with its unique 18th-century planetarium and its famous university. Walking through the picturesque streets and along the canals of Franeker, you will feel like you have stepped back in time and experience the authentic Frisian atmosphere. Franeker has cosy shops and nice boutiques.

On the way to Dokkum, you first sail through Berlikum, Oude Leije, Bartlehiem, and Budaard. Each of these villages has a beautiful and unique appearance. Berlikum is a charming village located in the northwest of Friesland, between Franeker and Sint Annaparochie. The village has a rich history dating back to the Middle Ages and is especially known for the impressive St. Martinus Church from the 13th century.

Dokkum is a city where there is always a lot to do, a charming city located in the northeast of Friesland, on the edge of the Lauwersmeer National Park. The city has a rich history dating back to the Middle Ages and is especially known for the legend of Bonifatius, who was murdered here in 754. Nowadays, Dokkum is a popular tourist destination with plenty of sights and activities.

As a tourist in Dokkum, you can enjoy the charming city center with its old buildings, canals, and cozy shops and terraces. Visit the Bonifatius Chapel and the Bonifatius Spring, which commemorate the legend of Bonifatius. Take a walk along the ramparts, the old city walls, and the town hall. Visit the Admiralty House, where you can learn all about the maritime history of Dokkum and the Frisian Admiralty.

On the way back through Budaard and Bartlehiem, you will sail through a beautiful piece of nature towards Leeuwarden. Along this stretch, you will also come across the Eleven Cities Monument 'It Sil Heve'. This bridge contains thousands of photos of skating heroes from now and then. Displayed in Delft blue color, this beautiful monument has a typical Frisian appearance.

Arriving in Leeuwarden, the capital city of Friesland, you'll find a city rich in history and culture, with its influences still visible in the beautiful architecture and museums. From the impressive Oldehove tower to the modern Fries Museum, there's something for everyone to discover and experience. Wander through the charming streets and enjoy local specialties in one of the many cafes and restaurants. A recommended place to dock your boat is the Prinsentuin; this beautiful city garden offers a peaceful and green environment to relax in. The Prinsentuin is just outside the center of Leeuwarden and offers a beautiful view of the canal.

After Leeuwarden, you'll sail back to Sneek, crossing the Sneekermeer. The lake is approximately 4.3 square kilometers in size and has an average depth of 2 meters. It's one of the most popular recreational areas in Friesland. The Sneekermeer offers plenty of water sports activities. Along the lake's shores, you'll find several beaches where you can sunbathe and have a nice picnic. In addition to the many water sports activities, the Sneekermeer is also a beautiful natural area. The lake is surrounded by vast meadows, reed beds, and forest areas, making it an ideal place for hiking, cycling, or bird watching. Prominently located on the Sneekermeer is the Starteiland with a cozy marina. This island is also the central hub of the Sneekweek, the sailing event of the year.