

Netherland's Society Rotorua Inc.

This year the Netherland's Society Rotorua Inc. will take part in the annual Global Fest as one of many nations that will be represented. As part of the Global Village we have our own Dutch marquee, with refreshments, Dutch delicacies, music and a continuous screening of photographs about the Netherlands. We will ensure that you receive a warm 'Dutch' welcome, and feel at home in a different part of the world. I am certain that you will go home with a 'touch of Dutch' to brighten your day.

The main language is [Dutch](#), while [West Frisian](#) is also a recognized language and it is used by the government in the province of [Friesland](#). Another Dutch dialect granted the status of regional language is [Limburgish](#), which is spoken in the south-eastern province of [Limburg](#).

[Calvinism](#) became the theological system of the majority in the Netherlands. The Netherlands today is one of the most secular countries in Europe. An estimated 49.6% of the population (2007) call themselves non-religious. The remaining are 15.7% [Protestant](#), 27% [Roman Catholic](#), and 5.3% [Muslim](#). [Islam](#) has begun to gain a foothold and [mosques](#) are being built. The Netherlands is also home to a significant [Hindu](#) minority, mostly made up of migrants who came from former colony [Suriname](#) after its independence

The Netherlands have multiple musical [traditions](#) ranging from folk and dance to classical music and ballet. Their music is a mixture of [native](#), [African](#) and Dutch elements, and is closely connected with trends from neighboring islands like [Barbados](#), [Martinique](#), [Trinidad and Tobago](#) and [Guadeloupe](#), as well as the mainland former Dutch possession of [Suriname](#), which has exported kaseko music to great success on the islands.

As indicated in the famous painting by Vincent van Gogh (the aardappeleters, meaning "potato eaters"), the main ingredient in old-fashioned Dutch dinners is potatoes, usually accompanied by meat and boiled vegetables. The Dutch traditionally don't use very sharp spices and are very fond of pouring gravy onto everything. Dutch cheeses are world renowned with famous cheeses such as [Gouda](#), [Edam](#) and [Leiden](#). One of the most characteristic festivities in the Netherlands is the feast of [Saint Nicholas](#) or [Sinterklaas](#). It is celebrated especially in families with little children. Another characteristic festivity in the Netherlands is the feast of [Saint Maarten](#). The day is celebrated in the evening of November 11 in some parts of the Netherlands. Children go by the doors with [paper lanterns](#) and candles, and sing songs about St. Martin and about their lantern in return for a treat.
