

Art Nouveau Tour

The Valeriusstraat tour



Did You know..

Art Nouveau (the "new art") was a widely influential but relatively short-lived movement that emerged in Europe in the final decade of the 19th century, and was already beginning to decline a decade later. The purpose of the movement was to defeat the established order within the applied arts by turning artists into craftsmen. Art nouveau artist condemned the use of machines and the division of labour that it entailed. Their designs were characterized by organic, intersperse lines, forms resembling the stems and blossoms of plants, and the use of new materials such as iron. In the Netherlands art nouveau was soon followed by new movements like Art Deco and the Amsterdamse School which emerged shortly after in the 1920's. The latter was even started by former employees of the important art nouveau architects Eduard Cuypers.

Walk the Walk

This tour will take about 30 to 60 minutes. You can start the walk halfway if you'd like, the only limitation is the direction you are heading. Enjoy!

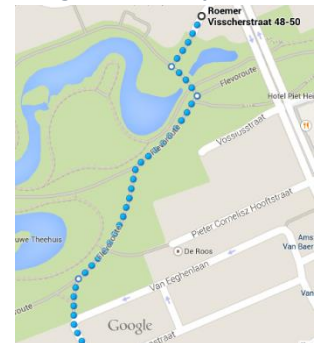


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We start at one of the smaller entrances of the Vondelpark, at the *Roemer Visscherstraat* numbers 46-50. On your right, you will see three remarkable villa's designed by Tjeerd Kuiper. Tjeerd mostly designed churches but he also

left his mark on the residential landscape of Amsterdam. Tjeerd worked for the architect agency Salm and later for Sanders & Berlage. He used different architectural styles throughout his career and was always looking for modern techniques. These villas were built in 1894 and have great art nouveau details such as the sinuous, elongated, curvy lines in the window frames, entrance and front door.

Continue into the Vondelpark and take a left, keeping the pond on your right. When you get to a Y-cross road, follow the *Flevooroute* indicated on the sign. Walk a bit further and take the second exit on your left, which leads



you to the corner of the *van Eeghenlaan* and the *Jacob Obrechtstraat*. On your right you see two villas, both designed by Ludwig Beirer between 1899 and 1900. The first villa at number 2 was built at the request of J. Bakker and was used as a residence. It's colourful decorative tile tableau's on the façade show the characteristic flowing lines with a so.

The history of the Vondelpark

The Vondelpark was founded in 1864 by a group of private investors linked to Christiaan Pieter van Eeghen. They collectively bought a piece of grassland in Amsterdam and asked landscape architect Jan David Zocher to design a walking and horse-riding park. On 15 July 1865, a year after the founding, a small part of the park was opened up for the public. It was then called the New Park. After placing the statue of Vondel in the park in 1867 it was soon renamed Vondel(s)park. In 1953 the park was donated to the city of Amsterdam and it has been a public park ever since. It is the busiest park in the city, welcoming over 10 million visitor on an annual basis.

Worthwhile a visit are the Blauwe Theehuis (the Blue Theahouse) and the newly renovated Vondel CS. When you have children, visit the Melkhuis (Milkhouse) or the Vondeltuyn (Vondelgarden) on the south side of the park.

called *femme-fleur* image. The inspiration from nature shows the Japanese influence that was characteristic for the art nouveau movement. The villa on the left, situated on the corner of



the *van Eeghenstraat* (numbers 62-64) and the *Jacob Obrechtstraat*, stems from 1900 and was also designed by the architect Ludwig Beirer. The building has beautiful tile tableau decorations depicting flowers and animals in the characteristic colour patterns. Don't forget to look at the left sidewall of the villa where more tile tableaus can be admired.

The double villa at numbers 66-68 on the *van Eeghenstraat* was designed by Joseph Herman in 1903 at the request of Z. Deenik and sons. The art nouveau influence is visible in the colourful floral surface ornamentation, resembling a heron-like bird between water lilies in a flowing symmetric configuration. The left side of the villa has smaller tile



decorations with flowers and birds (an owl, a rooster and a white bird in the middle). Also notice the flowing lines carved in the window frame on the first floor and the iron railing of the balcony.

Next stop is the villa on van *the Eeghenstraat* 76-78, which was designed by Theo Sanders in 1900. Sanders was once the employer of the famous architect Berlage, who came to work for him in 1881. Being so talented, it did not take long before Berlage became his business partner. Berlage left the firm in 1888

Hendrik Petrus Berlage

Hendrik Berlage (1856 – 1934) was born in Amsterdam and is by many known as the “Father of Modern Dutch architecture”. What is less known about Berlage is that he experimented with many different styles throughout his career including art nouveau. Berlage studied at the ETH in Zurich where he was mostly influenced by the Neo-Romanesque brickwork architecture. He returned to Amsterdam in 1880 and formed a partnership with Theodore Sanders a few years later. After setting up his own business he started to experiment with a mixture of rationalism and art nouveau. This is most prominently visible in the designs he made for the insurance company “De Nederlanden van 1845”, situated on the Muntplein.

to start his own business. The villa is one of Sanders last creations, he also lived in this villa for an unknown period. The art nouveau influence is minimal but still visible in the flowing lines in the decoration of the window frames and the front doors.

Walk further to the intersection with the *Cornelis Schuytstraat* and take a left. Cross the *Willemsparkweg* and take a left at the *van Breestraat*. This is a nice green street in the summer and the houses have beautiful balcony railings. Take a right when you get to the *Banstraat*. Your attention is immediately drawn to the colourful buildings at your left and right. Numbers 2 to 12 were all designed by L. van der Tas and P.H. Rieder between 1903 and 1905.

Their design incorporate curvilinear contours that, combined with the colours, give the buildings an almost playful look and make the buildings stand out in the street.



As you walk on, don't miss the colourful tile plateau on the wall of the “Café Valerie” located on the intersection with the *Valeriusstraat*. Walk further down the *Banstraat* and notice the bookshop at your right hand side at number 22. This magnificent building stems from 1902 and was commissioned by the development company “Exploitatie Maatschappij



Aurora”. Unfortunately I was not able to identify the architect who designed it. The shape of the window looks inspired by the work of the Belgian architect

Care for a coffee?

If you want to sit down and enjoy the neighbourhood, Restaurant Oud Zuid is a good place to do so!



The interior of this restaurant takes you back to the 1910's with its high ceiling and curved window frames. It is also a good lunch spot, using only fresh and biological ingredients. On sunny days it has a great terrace with sun!



Victor Horta. In one of his creations, Maison du Peuple, Horta used the novel engineering innovation of steel. Controversial in that time, he chose to expose rather than conceal the steel structure. With this design, the unknown architect clearly puts the emphasis on the skeleton of the building, rather than concealing it. This form of artistic expression is not often seen in Amsterdam and this bookshop seems to be an exception. Combined with the flowing lines, asymmetric form and whiplash curves, this structure is an art nouveau masterpiece.

Walk further to the intersection with the *Johannes Verhulstraat*. Here several buildings deserve your attention. Start with the building on your

left hand side, which was designed by H.T. Staring around 1902. Although the art nouveau influence is minimal, it is worth having a closer look at the decorations above the two doors. On the other side of the intersection, at *Johannes Verhulstraat* number 64, you will find *Restaurant Oud Zuid*. This restaurant is located in a design



from the same architect as *Bandstraat* number 22 and is also commissioned by the development company "Exploitatie Maatschappij Aurora". Take a look at the beautifully decorated iron railings on the balconies and flowing lines in the window frames.

Continue your walk into the *Johannes Verhulststraat* and notice the decorated doors at number 66 on your right. When you look up you see iron railings on the balconies with the same characteristic patterns as it's right neighbour. Turn



around to look at the designs of H.T. Staring at numbers 69-71. Completed in 1902, these buildings were designed as high class mansions. Notice the decorations above the windows and front doors.

Nature and symbolism

One of the general characteristics indicative to the art nouveau movement is the reference to nature and symbolism. The interest in nature was inspired by the publication of Charles Darwin's Origin of the Species (1859) and The Descent of Man (1871). This offset the vision that humankind was no longer above nature, but inextricably part of it. Nature and its organic forms became a source of inspiration, merging human, animal, and plant forms.

Another source of influence was Japan, where artist already used nature as an inspiration for their designs. They also used symbolism in depicting nature in relation to mankind.

An often portrayed bird is the Peacock, symbolizing the beauty of nature and rebirth since ancient times. It has also been used as a symbol for love, compassionate watchfulness, goodness and nurturing by some.



Some pictures depict Dutch landscapes but one shows a peacock, an animal that was frequently used as inspiration in the art nouveau movement.

Walk further down the street and notice number 77 at your left hand side. The flowing lines in the window frames and iron fences are very



subtle hints to the art nouveau movement. Continue to the next intersection on the *Cornelis Schuytplein* and walk to the other side of the square to number 46 on the *Cornelis Schuytstraat*. This building is part of a bigger complex and was designed by L. van der Tas in 1902. The interesting part of the complex is the decorated front door and the

round shape of the doorpost. It has unusual vibrant colours in comparison to the rest of the buildings on the square and it gives the building a luxurious exterior.

Continue the tour by turning right, which leads you to the *Cornelis Schuytstraat*. Take a left



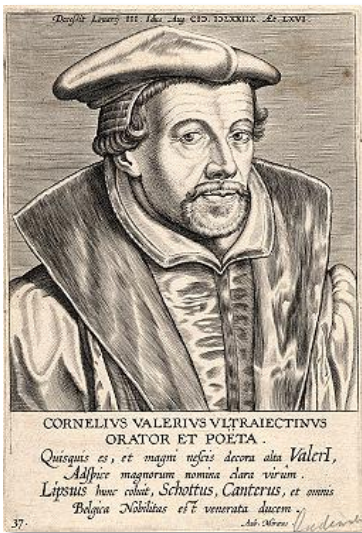
when you get to the intersection with the *Valeriusstraat*. As you walk into the *Valeriusstraat* notice the arched window frames on your left hand



side on numbers 39 to 43. One door down starts the colourful construction also designed by L. van de Tas in 1905. The construction covers four addresses, connected by a flowing line.

Adriaen Valerius

The streets in this part of Amsterdam are mostly named after composers. This was true for van Bree, Johannes Verhulst and Dufay. Adriaen Valerius, the son of a notary and later mayor, was a poet next to a composer. Valerius wrote the music for the song 'Het Wilhelmus', which became the Dutch national anthem in 1932. He is well-known for his poems on the eighty-year war against the Spaniards around 1560 and his poems breath the nationalism and patriotism so characteristic for that time.



The windows are painted in outstanding colors, in comparison to the rest of the street, and despite the fact that all buildings have a different color, they do form an entity together.



Walk further down the street, which has a variety of different contemporary architectural styles, and stop to look up at the tile tableau at number 75. Unfortunately, I was not able to trace the architect who designed it. Interestingly, the rest of the building does not have significant hints to any art nouveau influence.

We continue to the intersection with the *Emmastraat*, where you will find 6 buildings designed by J.H. Lesmeister & van J.F.W. Schaik, on the opposite corner. These buildings from 1905 were designed as one entity with 6 different residences. They did not just create a unique exterior for the different homes, but they also used different architectural styles at each address. This makes it a quite unique complex for that time. The interior layout of the buildings also differs per address. Numbers 18 and 16 show the most obvious art nouveau influence in features such as the tile tableau's, round decorated windows and front doors. Also take a look at the big round top floor window of number 16. It might be hard to spot when the trees are green, but it is worth a second look.



Mass production of art nouveau

The aim of the art nouveau movement was to contradict the emerging mass-production by appreciating craftsmanship. Ironically quite the contrary also happened.

A rising Dutch middleclass bought houses around 1900 when art nouveau was very popular. They were eager to show their sense of style, but unable to afford the expensive craftsmanship. Smart suppliers like Silberling & Zoon provided access to the popular art nouveau decoration, by delivering mass produced art nouveau tile tableau's. Copyright was not installed in the Netherlands until 1912, so they copied existing designs. Customers could order their tiles from a catalogue full of copied designs. Often the designer was mentioned, but no consent from his part was required.



Walk onto the intersection with the *Johannes Verhulststraat*, keeping the building of Lesmeister & van Schaik on your right-hand side, and take a right here.

Walk a bit further down the *Johannes Verhulststraat* and notice the tile tableau next to the front door of number 164 on your right-hand side. The blue heron is often depicted in art nouveau drawings, referring to nature. The bright colours used are also characteristic for the art nouveau movement.



One door down (number 166), at the intersection with the *Dufaystraat*, you will find a design of van



Schaik from around 1908. This building has big arches on the façade and ground floor, giving it a quite distinctive look. The construction gives room to four apartments with high ceilings and big windows. The apartment on the second floor was for sale for €395.000,- in 2015.

Take a right into the *Dufaystraat* and look at the big window on the left side of the building. Continue into the *Dufaystraat* and take a right when you get to the intersection with the *Valeriusstraat*. On your right you will see remarkable buildings at the numbers 91-87, designed by the architect Antonie Johan Scheelbeek in 1902. The construction has beautiful arching windows, asymmetric features and decorated iron balcony railings.





We have now reached the end of the tour. On your left hand you will find "Scala della Pasta", an Italian Traiteur with very nice sandwiches and a nice sunny terrace if you are lucky. We hope you have enjoyed this tour, go for more tours and information to www.artnouveauamsterdam.com and Like us on Facebook!