

The Low Sky: Understanding the Dutch

Han Van Der Horst



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Doe maar gewoon dan doe je gek genoeg – Act normal, and that will be crazy enough Nine out of ten people in the Netherlands will quote this well-worn saying if asked to come up with a basic trait of the Dutch character. Expatriates who have been here for a while see it differently. For them, Dutch society is a weird and wonderful maze full of unpredictable people.

At times Dutch people will ignore you politely; other times they will go out of their way to help you. You will get into trouble with the authorities for putting up a fence without permission but, in the late evenings, many family television channels broadcast pornography and advertisements for telephone sex into the privacy of your home.

Even your best friends reach for their diaries to make a dinner date, because you don't just drop by without being invited. And when you buy them a present they will open it in front of you without batting an eyelid. A country and a people full of paradoxes. Or is there some kind of system behind it all?

Han van der Horst paints a picture of Dutch society and the Dutch psyche that will help expatriates understand the country they are living in and will help them function properly at work and in their free time. The Low Sky – Understanding the Dutch is the best guide to the Netherlands and its people. This latest edition has been completely reviewed and updated to do justice to the major social changes that have affected Dutch society in recent years.

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