



The lobby lounge at the CitizenM Hotel.

Weekend Getaway

Rotterdam Uncovered

Known for its pulsing student nightlife and alternative vibe, Rotterdam is starting to steal Amsterdam's spotlight. Here's how to spend three days in this dynamic Dutch city.

FRIDAY Start your weekend off by checking in to the **Mainport** (mainporthotel.com; doubles from \$165), a wellness-oriented hotel where you can book a room with a Finnish sauna, or the **CitizenM Hotel Rotterdam** (citizenm.com; doubles from \$92), which feels like your design-savvy friend's living room. Wander north for some shopping in Oude Noorden, a vibrant residential area with experimental fashion and home-design boutiques. Grab a pre-dinner drink at **Brouwerij Noordt** (brouwerijnoordt.nl), a brewery with 20 beers on tap situated in a former firehouse. Continue the tasting tour with a 15-minute bike ride to **Roffa Streetfoodbar** (roffafood.nl; entrées \$9–\$28), a smokehouse that serves bread, beer, and cheese from some of Rotterdam's best producers. The brisket—slow-cooked over oak for 24 hours—is not to be missed.

SATURDAY Stroll to the nearby **Het Nieuwe Instituut** (hetnieuweinstituut.nl), a museum dedicated to Dutch design and architecture. Afterward, cruise the river in a water taxi to spot a few examples in person, like the Erasmus Bridge and De Rotterdam, a striking skyscraper by Rem Koolhaas. This summer, cool off with a dip at **RiFO10** (rif010.nl), an artificial-wave park in the Steigersgracht canal. Once you've worked up an appetite, take in the skyline while dining on dishes such as veal tartare with langoustines and *pata negra* at **HMB Restaurant** (hmb-restaurant.nl; small plates \$5–\$24). Cap off the evening with a bespoke G&T at **Ballroom** (ballroomrotterdam.nl), where your ideal elixir is crafted with one of more than a hundred gins.

SUNDAY Art is everywhere in this city—more than a thousand pieces adorn the public spaces. Walk along the Rijnhaven for a glimpse of *Bobbing Forest*, a surrealist installation of floating trees by art collective Mothership, then head to **De Markthal** (markthal.nl), a vast, mural-covered space where vendors sell aged Goudas and cinnamon-kissed *stroopwafels*. It's also home to De Tijdtrap, an exhibition of medieval artifacts excavated from the ground on which the building now stands. Save room for dinner at **Fenix Food Factory** (fenixfoodfactory.nl; entrées \$3–\$27), in buzzy Katendrecht. In the winter, a hip crowd hovers indoors over cured meats and pear cider. In warmer months, benches overlooking the canal are the setting for long, boozy evenings.



Ballroom's lamb meatballs.