

9am The east side of Amsterdam has three vibrant neighbourhoods — Amsterdam Oost (east), De Plantage (the plantation) and Oostelijke Eilanden (the eastern islands). Start your perfect day in the heart of the Oost neighbourhood itself at De Tropic café and restaurant beside Oosterpark, where different cultures are celebrated through food — you might find chicken satay, jalapeño peppers and apple pie on the same menu.
SEE: amsterdamdetropen.nl

11am Our next stop is the Tropenmuseum (Tropical Museum, adults €16, children aged 4-18; €8) where not only is the building itself pretty impressive, but exhibitions give fascinating insights into different cultures. For example, there's a collection of historic objects from New Guinea and a section focusing on the Dutch history in Indonesia through stories of different characters. The Cool Japan exhibit (until September 1) celebrates everything fun, from cute fashion and *Hello Kitty* to anime, manga and cosplay.
SEE: tropenmuseum.nl/en

1pm Amsterdam regulars know restaurant space can be at a premium, but Da Kas defies this with a magnificently grand park setting in huge 1920s greenhouses, with high ceilings and views over Park Frankendael. It's the ideal bright space for lunch (or eat on the patio in warm weather), herbs, vegetables and edible flowers are grown on site and the daily menu (a three-course lunch costs €35.50) uses what is freshest that day.
SEE: restaurantdekas.nl

4pm Set in a historic city park and dating back to 1838, Artis Zoo (adults €23, kids 3-9 €19.50) focuses on bringing people and nature together in an educational way. Allow a few hours and bring a picnic in warm weather. Don't miss Micropia next door (€15/€13; combination zoo ticket €29.50/€25.50) which explores the fascinating world of microbes. It's amazing to see how important they are to our world and there are some fun interactive exhibits including body scanners.
SEE: artis.nl/en; micropia.nl/en

8pm The shiny modern buildings of the Eastern Docklands are a contrast to the wide, 19th-century streets elsewhere in eastern Amsterdam, but among these, Scheepskameel restaurant makes the most of its setting in a former naval building. The chefs work in a fully open kitchen and the menu is divided into sections — raw, vegetables, fish/meat, cheese and dessert — the idea is to share a dish from each, with mains like plaice with manzanilla

A PERFECT DAY IN AMSTERDAM

Yvonne Gordon escapes a crowded city centre to check out the parks, street markets, exciting bars and restaurants of east Amsterdam



GET THERE

Yvonne travelled as a guest of KLM (klm.com), which flies daily from Dublin to Amsterdam, and amsterdam&partners.iamsterdam.com. Find more to see and do in the city at iamsterdam.com.

and oyster mushroom sauce or pork belly and octopus with quince (both €16.50).
SEE: scheepskameel.nl

10pm Tuck into casual bites at Louie Louie in the early evening (tacos are a speciality, reservations are advised) or visit later on when it turns into a thriving bar where you can share a pitcher of G&T or Bloody Mary with pals. The local team behind Louie Louie have so many successful bars in the area, they are known as 'the three wise men from the East' — check out sister bar, Bar Bukowski (open from 8am) for breakfast, lunch or cocktails.
SEE: louielouie.nl, barbukowski.nl

SLEEP: Cosy four-star The Manor Amsterdam is set in a historic red-brick building which started out as a hospital in 1889 and explains the grand lobby and high ceilings on some floors. Thankfully, the funky rooms (from €115 per night) feel nothing like hospital rooms and it's right at the centre of the action. Trams pass the door and the hotel can also arrange bike hire.
SEE: themanorhotelamsterdam.com/en/

Don't miss

In good weather, take to Oosterpark for walks around the paths and ponds, picnics or just chilling out. The area is home to a diverse population and there's lots going on — check local listings for festivals and other events.

Three to try



The market

Dappermarkt (dappermarkt.nl) is east Amsterdam's buzzing neighbourhood market, with more than 200 stalls lining the streets, selling everything from fruit and flowers to textiles and home furnishings — check out the shops around the market for bargains too, or drop into wine bar Alex and Pinard (alexpinard.nl) for post-shopping refreshments.



The nightlife

For live music or dance, east Amsterdam has lots going on. Check out Plein Theater (plein-theater.nl) for theatre and dance, the Badhuistheatre (badhuistheater.nl) for community theatre or Q-Factory (q-factory-amsterdam.nl) for all types of gigs from rock and pop to funk, jazz and garage. The student-run Studio/K (studio-k.nu) has a cinema, café and restaurant.



The alternative

Another up-and-coming area worth exploring in the city is Amsterdam Noord — a short hop by free ferry across the River IJ from Central Station, with funky street art, bars and restaurants both around the NDSM shipyards area (NDSM ferry) or around Eye Museum (eyefilm.nl) and A'DAM Tower (above; adamtoren.nl); for both take the Buiksloterweg ferry.