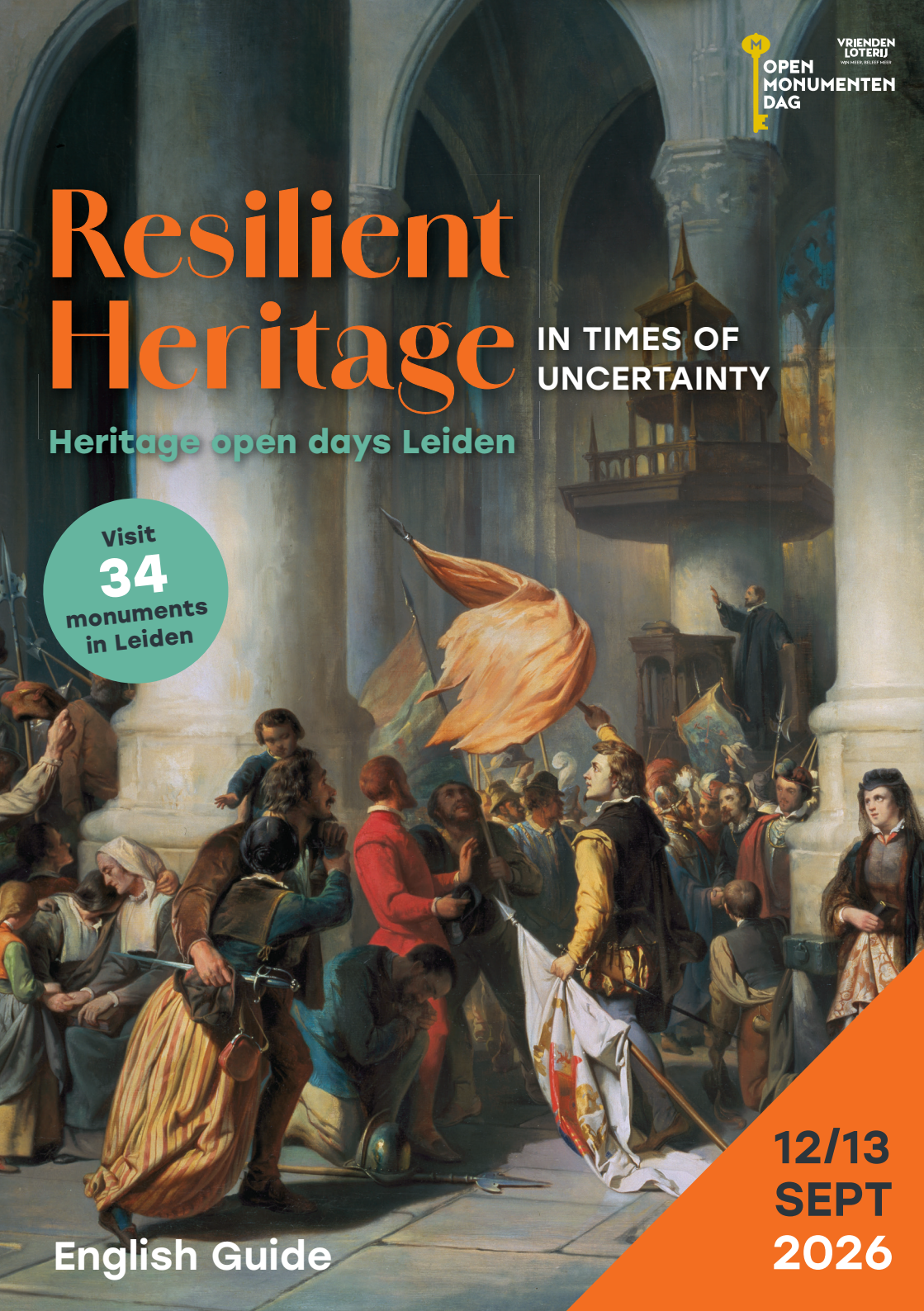

OPEN MONUMENTEN DAG

VRIENDEN LOTERIJ
VAN MEER, BELEEF MEER

Resilient Heritage

IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

Heritage open days Leiden

Visit **34** monuments in Leiden

English Guide

12/13 SEPT 2026

Resilient Heritage

IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

VISIT THIRTY-FOUR MONUMENTS IN LEIDEN /

During the weekend of 12 and 13 September 2026 thirty-four monuments in Leiden open their doors to the public. This is a unique opportunity to visit old sites rich in history, ancient homes and university buildings. Many monuments host small exhibitions as well as performances by choirs and music societies from Leiden.

This year's theme is Resilient Heritage in Times of Uncertainty. Take a look behind the scenes of the restoration of buildings - discover how Leiden's heritage has adapted itself throughout time.

In this brochure you will find an overview of all the monuments that are open to the public, tips for your visit and a city plan indicating their locations.

Enjoy monumental Leiden!

OPENING HOURS /

The opening hours are Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., unless stated otherwise in the list of monuments.

INFORMATION /

On these days the central information point is in the City Hall (main entrance Stadhuisplein 1).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ALL MONUMENTS AND THEIR LOCATIONS IN DUTCH SEE OUR WEBSITE: WWW.OMDLEIDEN.NL

Photo's: OMD Leiden

SAT Open on Saturday from noon to 5 p.m.
SUN Open on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Different opening hours
Toilets accessible by wheelchair
Partially wheelchair accessible
Not wheelchair accessible
Please take waiting time into account
First Aid/Emergency Response Officer
Music in heritage building
Kids activities
Additional activity
Refreshments available
Toilets
Wheelchair accessible toilet
Reservation through www.omdleiden.nl

01 TOWN HALL

Stadhuisplein 1, main entrance

OPEN / SAT SUN 10 am-5 pm

Due to Leiden's flourishing textile industry a new town hall had to be erected in the late 16th century, of which only the façade remained after the 1929 fire. The present building was finished six years later, with contributions by the internationally well-known graphic artist M.C. Escher, among others.

02 MINERVA STUDENTS' UNION BUILDING

Breestraat 50

OPEN / SAT SUN

The Union moved from a nearby coffee house to this spot in 1846. The neo-renaissance building was destroyed by fire in 1959 and replaced by the present brutalist residence, incorporating some remaining elements such as the seven chandeliers. In times of crisis it may function as an emergency support centre.

03 POLDER BOARD OFFICE

Breestraat 59

OPEN / SAT SUN

This building may serve as a model for this year's theme. It represents seven hundred odd years of struggle with water infrastructure. The same architect who created the town hall (see 01) and the city building yard (11) designed it in 1578. Its administration was moved to a new office-block.

04 PRIVATE HOME AFTER RENOVATION

Rapenburg 49

OPEN / SAT SUN

This 17th-century house replaced a 15th-century monastery. Confiscated by the city authorities after the 1572 Reformation its basement, oak roof timbers and fireplaces were integrated in the new dwelling. The outhouse contains the entrance to the cistern, still in use.

05 ACADEMY BUILDING

Rapenburg 73

OPEN / SAT SUN

This early 16th-century chapel was bestowed on the university in 1581 and split into two levels. The tower was added in 1670, the windows in the19th century, as were the charcoals, a students' prank depicting the tiresome route to graduation. In the 'sweat box' candidates await their judgement after examination.

06 FORMER UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Rapenburg 70

OPEN / SAT SUN

A resilient heritage indeed, considering its adaptations from a 15th-century chapel to a university library. The ground floor became a library, the first floor was integrated in the 18th century. 1910 saw the front extension. Since 1983 it has been the seat of the university administration.

07 BOTANICAL GARDENS

OPEN / SAT SUN 9 am-6 pm

Rapenburg 73a

The country's oldest botanical gardens were founded here as a medicinal garden in 1591. As for resilience and perpetual innovation, this year's heritage theme, they have been a hotbed for research and the collection of plants from all continents, renowned for research in the field of biodiversity and climate change.

08 BIBLIOTHECA THYSIANA

OPEN / SUN 10 am-6.15 pm

corner Rapenburg/ Groenhazengracht

This building (1655) in Dutch classical style houses Johannes Thys's collection of books, to the avail of Leiden scholars. It contains one of fourteen revolving bookcases still in use in the world, enabling readers to consult several books simultaneously. Please note the red phoenix, the symbol of resilience.

09 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES

OPEN / SAT SUN

Rapenburg 28

The entrance hall used to be a courtyard of a 17th-century beguinage. The early 19th century saw the construction of a façade with Doric and Ionic pilasters on the ground and first floor respectively. For the temple of Taffeh the south courtyard got its steel and glass roof.

10 NAUTICAL COLLEGE

OPEN / SAT SUN

Noordeinde 2a

In 1853 Prince Hendrik, whose bust is over the entrance, founded this neo-classical boarding school for boys from deprived families. After confiscation in World War II it was rented as an office block. This national monument is being redeveloped to become a training institute for the liberal arts.

11 CITY CARPENTRY YARD

OPEN / SAT SUN

Kort Galgewater 21

Due to the city's 17th-century extension this complex was built. Into the 18th century building material was supplied, stored, processed and shipped here. Do not miss details like doors, wrought-iron locks and decorations, 17th- and 18th-century Delft blue tiles, the box bed and vaulted basement.

12 COMMUNICATION BUNKER

OPEN / SAT SUN

Morsweg 1b

As part of the Atlantikwall this bunker was to maintain German telephone links. It had a camouflage façade and mock windows. Due to its strength demolition failed in 1984. Thirty years later it became a municipal monument to harbour a future exhibition room.

13 DE HEESTERBOOM SAWMILL

OPEN / SUN

Haagweg 79

After a fire in 1804 this windmill was built, the third on this site since 1663. From the 1920s it was powered by electricity until in 1953 the crankshaft broke. After its restoration in 1962 volunteers resumed its operation through wind energy. The city and neighbouring estates provide it with lumber.

14 PEST HOUSE

OPEN / SAT SUN

Pesthuislaan 7

As the plague had petered out by 1661, when these premises were built, it has never been used as a pest house. Resilient as it is it functioned as a military hospital, prison, reformatory, army museum and part of Naturalis. The relief over the entrance commemorates the disease. Restoration is forthcoming.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS
Leiden

15 FORMER PENITENTIARY CELL BUILDING

OPEN / SAT

Pesthuislaan 4

This is the 1848 annex of a military prison, with a department for reformatory boys. In the early 20th century the ground floor became a women's prison and later it became the workshop for the Army Museum in 1937. The first floor has Jugendstil details. Nowadays it is a artists' studio.

16 DE VALK WINDMILL MUSEUM

OPEN / SAT SUN sat 10 am-5 pm

Molenwerf 1

This monument is an outstanding example of resilience: craftsmanship, social function, re-use, volunteer work. The present 29-metre-high specimen has been the third on this spot, since 1743. The miller's family lived on the ground floor; since 1966, when it became a municipal museum, this floor has been the home to the manager.

17 FORMER WASTE INCINERATOR

OPEN / SAT SUN

Langegracht 7c

Since its construction in 1913 all industries in its vicinity have disappeared. It provided them with electricity generated by the heat it released. It closed down in 1929. Twenty-five years later it became the transformer station of the adjacent power plant. Now it houses BamBam Masonry and Pronck Brewery.

18 BLANKET FACTORY "SCHELTEMA"

OPEN / SAT

Marktsteeg 1

The Leiden blanket factory is a typical example of resilient heritage: it has survived a bankruptcy and protests against bad working conditions. After a complete restoration which preserved its authentic architectural characteristics it now serves as a cultural centre. A living reminder of a one-time crucial industry in uncertain times.

19 BOERHAAVE MUSEUM

OPEN / SAT SUN 10 am-4 pm

Lange St.-Agnietenstraat 10

Boerhaave Museum shows centuries of adaptive reuse: the age-old complex used to be a monastery, a peat storehouse and a sickbay. In the eighteenth century it became a place for Boerhaave's innovative education of students at patients' sickbeds. Today it is a museum for science and the history of medicine.

20 ALMSHOUSE "DE BAKKERIJ"

OPEN / SAT SUN noon-5 pm

Oude Rijn 44B

For six centuries De Bakkerij has served as an almshouse for Leiden's poor. In 1582 the College of Benign Mothers was founded. They still support new mothers with financial aid and free baby packages. The Benign Mothers' room (Goemoerskamer) deserves special attention as the College still meets here today.

21 DE KIKKERBERG -DWELLING UNDER RECONSTRUCTION

OPEN / SAT SUN

Hooglandse Kerkgracht 23

After the fire of 1738 this grand house was built, its construction fully documented through preserved specifications and design drawings. Despite centuries of alterations and artistic interventions the building endures. Above the corridor door the family's coat of arms with three frogs explains its nickname: the Frog Hill House (Kikkerberg).

22 LUTHERAN CHURCH

Hooglandse Kerkgracht 26

OPEN / SAT SUN sun 12.30 pm-5 pm

The Lutheran Church dating from 1618 was hidden behind residential homes and accessible through a secret gate in one of them. Despite religious restrictions, restorations and reallocations the building continued to exist. Today it is on the eve of a new transformation because of a planned redevelopment.

23 FORTRESS "DE BURCHT"

Van der Sterrepad 5

OPEN / SAT SUN

Fortress "De Burcht" was built in the 900s as a wooden fortification. It later lost its defensive function and became a public attraction with a seventeenth-century entrance gate featuring the Leiden coat of arms. The 2010 sustainable restoration ensures that this iconic monument will endure for future generations.

24 HERENGRACHT CHURCH

Herengracht 68

OPEN / SAT

The Herengracht Church originated from a warehouse. In 1888 a new church with eclectic Gothic and classical elements arose. Due to an interior modification in 2020 the building remains a place for those who seek rest and contemplation.

25 WEAVER'S HOUSE

Middelstegracht 143

OPEN / SAT SUN

At the end of the sixteenth century textile workers moved to Leiden, which increased the demand for housing. New houses with standard layouts as living and working space sprang up. This house, with its original design, lives on as a museum about the daily life of Leiden's former residents.

26 DE MEELFABRIEK (THE FORMER FLOUR FACTORY)

Lange St-Agnietenstraat 10

OPEN / SAT SUN

In 1884 De Meelfabriek was a modern plant with electric lighting and pneumatic grain processing. By the 1950s it produced 20% of Dutch bread. After its closure this resilient piece of industrial heritage gained a new life as a residential and work area, preserving the historic complex.

27 FLOATING HERITAGE "DE SOLITAER"

Zijlsingel at the Ankerpark

OPEN / SAT SUN

For centuries maritime transport has been important for Leiden's economic development. With three major factories the Zijlsingel was a hotspot for loading and unloading cargo. During the Open Monument Days you can visit various historic sailing and motor vessels docked here, keeping the city's maritime past visible and tangible.

28 GROENESTEEG CEMETERY

Groenesteeg 126

OPEN / SUN

Groenesteeg cemetery was founded in 1813 on one of Leiden's ramparts. Important inhabitants of Leiden are buried here. Due to the efforts of a group of residents various renovations and its national heritage status this ecologically valuable spot with the thickest tree of South-Holland has been preserved.

29 DWELLING UNDER RECONSTRUCTION

Garenmarkt 5

OPEN / SAT SUN

Around 1585 a new residential area arose on land once used for drying cloth sheets. This house is a typical example of Dutch urban architecture and once contained a bakery famed for its sticky buns. It is being renovated, with an exhibition of construction finds on display.

30 FORMER ARCHIVE BUILDING - UNDER RECONSTRUCTION

Boisotkade 2a

OPEN / SAT

This archive building at the Boisotkade (1893), with its fireproof cast iron floors, housed the first municipal archive of the Netherlands. As the collection expanded a five-storey addition was built in 1967. Today it houses Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken (Leiden and environs heritage) and is being renovated for a sustainable future.

31 DISTRICT COURT LEIDEN

Witte Singel 1

OPEN / SAT

The 1916 Dudok building, designed in the Amsterdam School style, used to house the local newspaper *Het Leidsch Dagblad*. Sculptures and stained glass windows reference news and journalism: roosters announcing the news and, beside the entrance, figures representing speech and reading. Since 2002 the District Court has been located here.

32 SIJTHOFF (FORMER) PUBLISHING HOUSE

Doezastraat 1b

OPEN / SAT SUN 2-5 pm

The Sijthoff building (1908) once formed the heart of a leading printing and publishing company, exuding rational architecture and innovation. Powered by steam and rotary presses the firm grew rapidly. Since 2011 it has housed Sijthoff Culture but the aging building needs renovation – through crowdfunding the money is being collected.

33 SAINT PETER'S CHURCH

Kloksteeg 16

OPEN / SAT SUN

Saint Peter's Church has withstood centuries of storms and destruction: the tower was lost in 1512, the Catholic interior during the Iconoclastic Fury, and the stained glass windows in the 1807 gunpowder disaster. Thanks to various restorations this monument remains inseparably connected to Leiden's history.

34 GRAVENSTEEN

Pieterskerkhof 6

OPEN / SAT SUN

The twelfth-century Gravensteen has served many roles: a keep for the Count of Holland, a city prison, a labour house and a courthouse. Today it houses Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken (Leiden and environs heritage), but a renovation and a new purpose are needed to preserve this resilient heritage.

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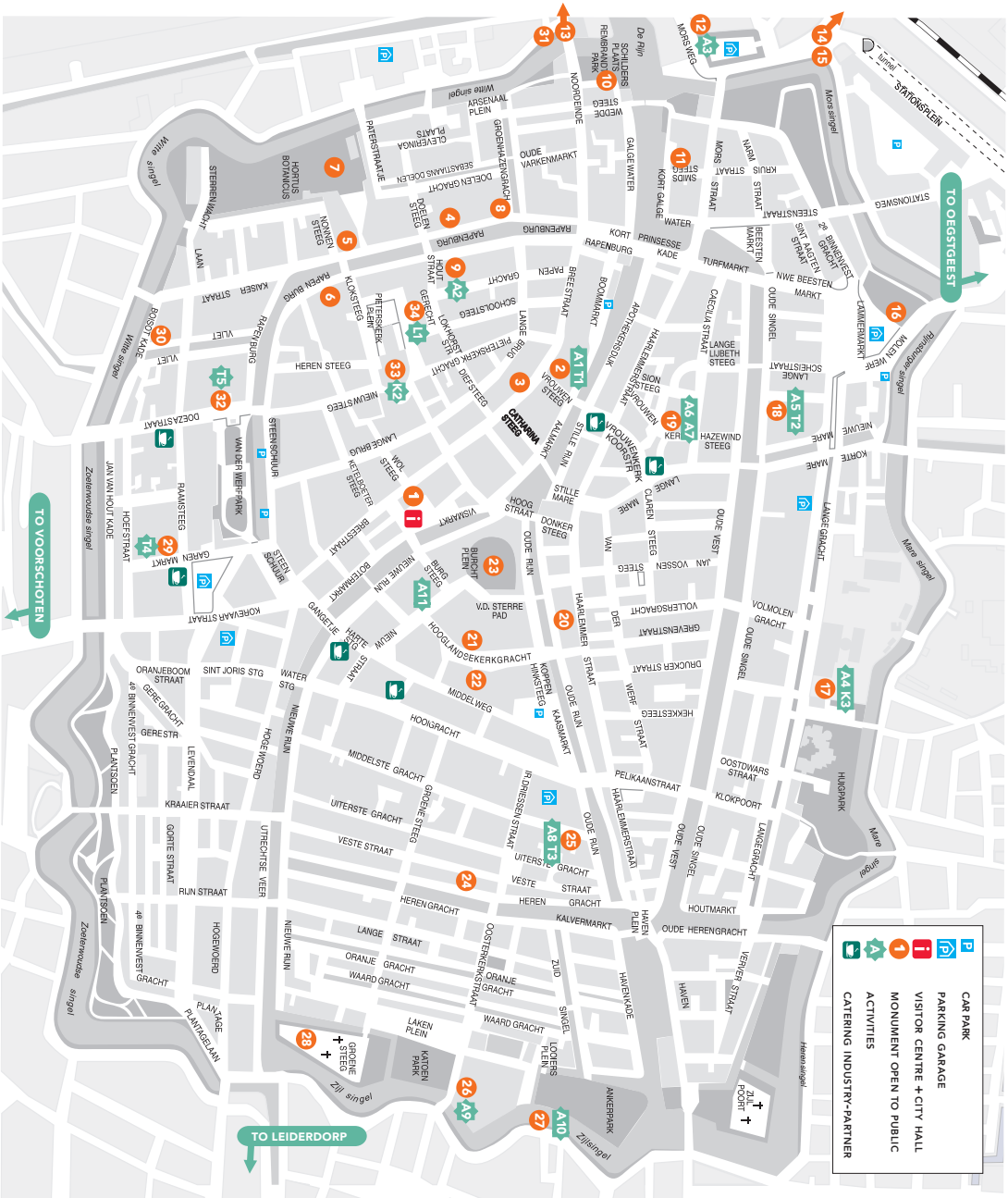

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