

The Moses Bridge

A (day) trip to the Moses Bridge
in Halsteren (near "Bergen Op Zoom")



We received a few questions from fans in the USA and Australia (!!) about the possibility of visiting the Moses Bridge as a daytrip from Maastricht. To be honest: We had never heard of a Moses Bridge in the Netherlands!! It is totally unknown here. In the meantime we found out that the bridge was built in 2010 and in March 2011 we visited the "Fortress de Roovere" in Halsteren (by car) to see what it is all about.

Our conclusion: a daytrip from Maastricht by train and bus is a (time consuming) challenge. For people who like the adventure, we describe the trip below and please judge for you whether it is worthwhile.

We recommend bringing your lunch and drinks, and wearing sturdy shoes.

Be aware that there are no facilities whatsoever at the fortress.

Maastricht to Halsteren, the trip.



The (one way) distance between Maastricht and Halsteren is about 150 KM or 94 Mls. There are several ways to make this trip, by (rental) car (preferred) or by train.

Green line: by car.

Blue line: by train.

The fortress/bridge is located outside the village of "Halsteren" near "Bergen Op Zoom". Easiest way to get there is by car. Train is also possible, but you have to change trains three times and then take a bus and finally a 15-20 minute walk.

Trip by car

The trip by car from Maastricht is approx. 150 KM or 94 MIs and will take just over 1 hour 30 minutes to arrive at your destination (traffic permitting). The most direct route will take you through Belgium via Antwerp.

Since the location is in the fields outside of Halsteren, it is recommended to use/rent a navigational system (GPS). Set this navigation system to the intersection of the "Ligneweg" and "Schansbaan" in the city of "Halsteren". At this intersection the parking lot, 250 meters/yards down into the Ligneweg, is marked.

Trip description:

- On the Maastricht ring road follow the signs "Hasselt". You will cross the river "Maas" by means of a bridge and enter into Belgium. For about 15 minutes you will travel through small villages and rural roads, following the signs "Hasselt" and/or "Antwerpen".
- Enter highway A13/E313 in the direction of "Antwerpen". Stay on this highway (approx. 87 KM / 54 MIs) until you reach the Antwerp Ring road.
- Keep to the right and follow the sign "Breda", turning right onto the Antwerp Ring road (R1).
- After a few kilometers/miles follow the signs "Bergen Op Zoom", leaving the ring road and continuing on highway A12. This highway will bring you back into The Netherlands and the road will then continue as highway A4. A different type of road surface and light posts is all you will notice, guaranteed you will miss the actual border crossing! The signs "Welcome into Holland" are a few miles down the road... Turn right onto the A58, still following "Bergen Op Zoom".
- Leave the A58 at exit 27 "Bergen Op Zoom-Noord"
- At the end of the off-ramp, turn left (crossing the highway) into the A259 ("Randweg Bergen op Zoom-Noord").
- After 1.6 KM (1 Mile) make a right turn into a street named "Melanenweg" (2nd intersection after leaving the highway).
- After 300 meters/yards turn right at the traffic light and onto the Ligneweg. Follow this road until you come to a left- and then a right-hand turn into the road. The parking lot will be on your left hand side. If you reach the T-Junction with the "Schansbaan" you have gone too far, so turn around and head for the parking lot.

The way back:

- Leave the parking lot and turn right. Follow the "Ligneweg" until you come to the traffic lights. Make a left turn.
- After 300 meters make another left turn onto the "Bergen Op Zoom Ringroad".
- After 1.6 KM (1 Mile), make a right onto the highway A58, direction "Antwerpen"
- Near Antwerp follow the signs in the direction of "Luik" (Liege).
- When on the ring road follow the signs "Luik" and exit right to get on the A13/E313. Note: This is an elevated ringroad. Just before the exit you will see the "Antwerp Sportpaleis" on you left hand side. Cannot miss this building. During the 2nd half of November our maestro will perform here.

- Follow the A13/E313 for approx. 87 KM / 54 MIs and take exit 31 to "Bilzen Hoeselt". At the end of the off ramp, turn left and pass underneath the highway. Now be very careful, this is a very confusing spot! As soon as you pass underneath the highway, make an immediately turn right onto the first street ("Alden Biesensingel"). Follow the bend in the road to the left and at the end make a right hand turn.



- Continue to the roundabout (traffic circle), make a right turn and from here follow the signs towards Maastricht.

Trip by Train

A day return (retour) by train from Maastricht to Bergen Op Zoom will cost € 46.00 (2nd class) or € 78.20 (1st class).

Except for the ticket vending machines at Schiphol and Amsterdam Central Station, it is not possible to purchase tickets with a credit card, so be prepared to have cash money at hand or visit the ticket office at the railway station. One never knows how busy the ticket sales office may be, so it is suggested to buy your ticket one or two days in advance, but then clearly ask for a ticket without a date (otherwise you will receive a ticket valid only for the date of purchase).



Before boarding the train, validate the –dateless- ticket in the yellow "Stempelautomaat". This yellow box is located on your right hand side at the very beginning of Platform 3 in Maastricht.

Train/bus schedule:

The schedule is shown for a departure from Maastricht around 09:00 (9AM) and return from the fortress around 16:00 (4PM).

The train service runs every 30 minutes at .28 and .58 after the hour, so one is flexible as to which train to take. The train trip will take 2 hours 31 minutes and an additional 30-45 minutes to reach the fortress by bus and foot.

Note: When arriving at railway stations always check the timetable or information panels for the actual departure times and/or delays. Trains in The Netherlands tend to run on a very accurate schedule, but accidents or maintenance may at times affect the schedule.

Be aware that you have to change trains THREE times!

Maastricht – Bergen Op Zoom			
Time	Time	Station	*PL
08.58	09.28	Maastricht	4b
09.59	10.29	Eindhoven	5
10.02	10.32	Eindhoven	6
10.24	10.54	Tilburg	2
10.37	11.07	Tilburg	3
11.11	11.41	Roosendaal	1a
11.19	11.49	Roosendaal	4a
11.28	11.58	Bergen Op Zoom	2

Bergen Op Zoom - Maastricht			
Time	Time	Station	*PL
15.29	15.59	Bergen Op Zoom	3
15.40	16.10	Roosendaal	4b
15.51	16.21	Roosendaal	1b
16.23	16.53	Tilburg	1
16.28	16.58	Tilburg	1
16.57	17.27	Eindhoven	3a
17.02	17.32	Eindhoven	1
18.02	18.32	Maastricht	4b

*PL = Platform

As always on train stations: be aware of pickpockets, so keep a keen eye on your belongings.

Bus service from Bergen Op Zoom Railway station to the Fortress:

When leaving the train, cross the pedestrian walk across the tracks to the main railway building. Pass through the building and turn right towards the bus platform.

Locate bus number 101 with final destination "**Rotterdam – Zuidplein**" (on the way back take bus number 101 to "Bergen Op Zoom"). Trip will cost approx. €3 single journey (no returns).

Below is the bus schedule.

You will need to hop off at a stop called "**Molenplein**" in **Halsteren**.

This is the 6th stop after the railway station.

Ask the driver to warn you, don't count the stops. If there is nobody entering or leaving the bus, he does not stop and your count may be off...

Bergen op Zoom – Fortress (Molenplein)				Fortress (Molenplein) – Bergen Op Zoom			
Hour	Monday / Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Hour	Monday / Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9	06	06	08	9	02 32	10	
10	06	06	08	10	09 39	10	09
11	06	06	08	11	09	10	09
12	06	06	08	12	09	10	09
13	06 41	06	08	13	09	10	09
14	11 41	06	08	14	09	10	09
15	11 41	06	08	15	10	10	09
16	11 41	06	08	16	02 32	10	09
17	11 36	06	08	17	02 32	10	09
18	06 36	08	08	18	02 32	10	09
19	08	08	08	19	03 32	08	08

But... Before hopping on the bus you have to make a difficult decision:
There are **no** facilities at all at the fortress, no toilet, no food, no drinks, etc.

Suggestion: When leaving the railway station, first cross the street and go to hotel "De Blauwe Vogel" (The Blue Bird). Here you can use the bathroom and have a coffee or a (light) lunch.
Nice friendly people and lots to see inside!



From the bus stop to the fortress

The bus stop is located at a round-about (traffic circle). From here it is a 15-20 minute walk to the fortress. Take the right hand exit on this traffic circle, turning into a street called "Grondmolen". Keep the modern and new building of a school called "Bredeschool de Schans" on your right side.

About 150-200 yards after the school complex, turn right onto the "Schansbaan". Follow this road until you come to the "Ligneweg". Easy to recognize, at the other side of the intersection (T-Junction) is an isolated, but very nice house (villa). Turn right onto the "Ligneweg". The fortress is immediately to your left.

See map on next page.

Note: Please walk on the sidewalk pavements or bike lanes if possible. If these sidewalk pavements or bike lanes are not available (anymore), walk on the left hand side of the road, facing traffic. This will allow you to see oncoming traffic and step off the road if necessary.

Note on the return journey: Please be at the bus stop around 10 minutes before the scheduled time. This bus travels a lengthy route and depending on traffic conditions, it may arrive a few minutes earlier.

The surroundings of the fort contain a few walking/biking routes through a forested area. You can spend a few hours here and have a picnic. There is nothing around but nature and a few benches, not even trash bins. There is a signposted walk (about 3 KM / 2 Mls each). Please be aware that part of the trails are also used by off-road bikers. The trail will follow the line of the outer defense works through the area where in 1747 fierce fighting with the French took place. These outer defense works are still largely covered by trees and shrubs, but provide for a nice walk. Imagine, when it was being used as a fortress there were no trees for miles and one could see the enemy approaching through the fields.



Original plan of the fortress.

Aerial view of the fortress during restoration in 2010.





More on this fortress can be found on the excellent website devoted to the defense works:
<http://www.westbrabantsewaterlinie.nl/> Unfortunately in Dutch only.