

Breaking the Stroopwafel Addiction (Dutch Syrup Waffle)

A Stroopwafel sounds more like a dance, but it's actually a delicious waffle cookie which Dutch people have been enjoying for centuries.

The first mention of Stroopwafels goes back to 1784 when a baker from Gouda (which is also famous for its cheese) baked a waffle using remaining product from old crumbs and spices and then filled the waffle with syrup. This was the birth of the Stroopwafel which became a popular pastry among the poor which street vendors quickly began selling as snacks and people became hooked.



For many Dutch people, Stroopwafels are a daily treat eaten

with morning coffee or tea. In our household, the warm caramel gooey cookie is becoming increasingly popular too. Being that I'm obsessed with caramel – I'm so not a chocolate fan, so the Dutch syrup waffles and a mug of tea are a “compulsory” afternoon treat.

Can you Make Stroopwafels at Home?

Sure, but it takes time. The batter for Stroopwafels is baked in a special waffle or pizelle iron that has a diamond pattern. Once the waffles are cooked, they are split in two, spread with the caramel syrup and sandwiched or glued together. Sounds easy right? It is essentially, so watch this video to see how it's done.

The delicious treats are still made using traditional recipes and nearly every bakery has its own recipe as well as families too. The recipes are a well-guarded secret which are passed down from parent to child, one generation to the next, even along with the baking iron.

Being that I don't have a lovely silver Stroopwafel iron at home, I make it a point to purchase a fresh one from a food market such as the Markthal in Rotterdam. Since I can't get enough of the caramel-gooey-goodness, I stock-up on packaged Stroopwafels every time I visit Holland – which is often. ☐

How to eat a Stroopwafel?

If you eat a fresh Stroopwafel, I advise you to wait until it cools down as the sticky caramel center is extremely hot. In fact, Stroopwafels should come with a warning just like the coffee at Mickey D's.

If you purchase packaged Stroopwafels, you can eat them at room temperature. Boring!

You can also heat them in the microwave for a few seconds.

Lame!

Ideally, make a cup of coffee or tea and place a Stroopwafel on top of the cup and wait a few moments until it begins to warp in the middle. Now sink your teeth into the gooey center. Lekker, lekker! That's Dutch for tasty.

Stroopwafels, the Official treat of the Wikimedia World

Next time you're in Holland have your nose follow the sweet caramel buttery scent coming from a Stroopwafels vendor and try one. After your first bite, you'll definitely want to buy one or more, but be aware they are addictive. You might get so hooked you'll want to join the [Association of Stroopwafel Addicts](#). No joke, it's real. ☐

Experience an Indonesian Rijsttafel

Experience an Indonesian Rijsttafel, a Culinary Treat for the Senses

Love Dutch food? You know, pancakes, pea soup, pancakes, raw herring with onions, and more pancakes. If so, great! If not, think again because there's more to Dutch food than you know and when you experience an Indonesian Rijsttafel, your senses will be open to a tongue tantalizing wow.



Indonesian Rijsttafel. Wiki photo by Takeaway.

The History of Indonesian Rijsttafel Food in Holland

During the 17th and 18th centuries, thanks in large to the Dutch East India Company, the lush abundant area in Maluki Islands, known as Spice Islands supplied the world's demand for spices. The new, unheard of spices such as nutmeg, mace, clove and black pepper were in high demand especially among high-ranking Dutch workers in the sea and trade industry.

Dutch colonials became enamored with the Indonesian seasonings and cuisine which was colorful, vibrant, delicious and far from what they had eaten in Holland. The Dutch colonists and the Indonesian that migrated to Holland introduced an array of luscious foods namely the Indonesian Rijsttafel (literally means “rice table”).



Rijsttafel in Dutch family in Bandung (West Java) in 1936. Wiki photo by Japing.

With around 17,000 islands in Indonesia the cuisine and recipes vary. So when Dutch officials decided to feast, they did so by having their servants prepare mini portions of the country’s top culinary dishes to highlight the best of Indonesian cuisine for their dinner guests.

What to Expect at an Indonesian Rijsttafel Feast

So what can you expect from a Rijsttafel? Well, how about magic in a dish. Actually more than 18 dishes in my experience. Think chicken satay in peanut sauce, curried meats

and vegetables, roasted coconut, sweet-sour cucumber—all served with rice.

This tantalizing combination of tastes and spices are hot, cold, sweet, salty, sour, and bitter—and eaten in an orchestrated manner. Your wait staff will use every centimeter of table space to line up the colorful dishes and guide you through the recommended eating order. Then get ready to enjoy the taste explosion.

I've ordered Rijsttafel at various Indonesian restaurants such as [Blauw](#) in Holland where I had a positive eating experience. Do check the internet and hopefully you'll find authentic Indonesian restaurants serving Rijsttafel near you.

If you've burnt out on hearty Dutch classics, head to an Indonesian Rijsttafel restaurant or try making Indonesian dishes at home. Once you do, you'll be clicking your clogs for more.

The Reality of Glamping at Feather Down Farms Holland

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The first day was exciting but brought some challenges, mainly the weather. It was 6 degrees Celsius (30 Fahrenheit) in our tent. That's the reality of [glamping at Feather Down Farms Holland](#) or anywhere else for that matter. It was so cold I

could see my breath as I grabbed my flashlight to head to the Honesty Shop to grab the coffee and fresh milk I had ordered the day before.



Spacious tent interior, © Feather Down Farms

Around 7:00 AM on the way to the shop, I checked the chicken larder for farm fresh eggs, but I was not alone. Aside from the guinea pigs and rabbits, the most beautiful Dutch children were anxiously anticipating the arrival of fresh eggs. The egg-laying hens teased us as they jumped onto the back of the wood step. They turned their backs giving us the illusion they would soon lay eggs, but didn't.

Considering some hens lay three eggs every four days then repeat the cycle again, I grabbed half a dozen eggs from the Honest Shop and noted my purchase. The kids were still waited disappointingly as I ducked through the petting barn for cover from the hard rain and strong winds.



Fresh eggs, © Feather Down Farms

By the time I returned to the tent, my husband had started the fire and gladly welcomed the mug of coffee and fresh raisin rolls. The next challenge would be to make a real meal on the wood burning stove.

That morning's menu included, scrambled eggs with red peppers, onions, and garlic topped on a slice of buttered whole wheat toast. Our first glamping breakfast turned out well. The only trick is to control the wood burner temperature, so prep everything first before you start cooking.



Glamping bed and breakfast cooked on a wood-burning stove at Feather Down Farms

Shower and Shave

There is yet another barn, this one with hot water, where you can shower and shave. Some people took advantage of it and it appeared others just went for a true camping experience by bemoaning a shower at the ~~campground~~ glampground. You'll need to haul your towels, flip-flops, and bath items to the shower barn, to get fresh, sparkly, and squeaky clean.

The one thing I can't refrain from is to brush my teeth at least twice daily, so I brought my toothbrush. At least my pearly whites were clean and my breath didn't frighten the farms animals away. Ok, ok, so I cheated and glamped a bit.

Insider Tip #3

Many of the [Feather Down Farms Holland](#) offer services such as ready-made fires to welcome you and even a set of bath towels; I'd recommend you purchase the services if you aren't ready to leave the comforts of home quite yet.

What's on the Agenda?

Depending on your preferences and the weather, you can discover the farm and farm living. Take a farm tour, hike or bike ride in the forest, play with the kids in the barn, or just hang around and relax.

Our Feather Down Farm was located near some quaint villages in Holland. That gave us the chance to discover the area and visit a local restaurant. A great excuse to heat up and charge the mobile phone. Too bad we forgot the charger.



Friendly bull from Feather Down Farms Holland

The End of a Unique Experience

Once we got the hang of glamping, we thoroughly enjoyed the Feather Down Farm Holland vacation concept and the surroundings—you leave the city madness and are welcomed into simple country 'green' living.

We slept comfortably in our tent which was under a tree with an owl above that cooed us at night. We enjoyed the sunrise holding a cup of coffee watching the cows graze across the meadow, and relished the moments with our furry little vacation pet Hasi.

Making our own fire to heat the tent and cook our food was very empowering and after the first attempt were able to make some decent meals. By the end of the trip I was whistling my way through the woods with my cart to pick up dry wood and thinking about returning to one of the many [Feather Down Farm locations around the world](#) very soon, but most certainly when the weather is warm and toasty.