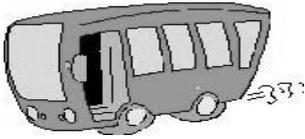


# **THE BENE Rapide TOUR**

*(A THREE-DAY, WEEKEND TOUR, IN A SMALL EURO-COACH / MINIBUS)*

Friday 8th to Sunday 10th March 2019



*An outstanding STARS 'Annual Short Tour'  
at an all-inclusive fare of only £193.85*

*If this Tour is upgraded to a Large Euro Coach, a Fare Supplement of £43.00 will be payable  
Hotel Single Room Supplement £25 (optional)*

**A minimum deposit of £50.00 will secure your seat, and the balance must be paid by 25th January, 2019.**

The "Bene Rapide" tour is usually our first tour of the year but this year we have 'dropped' it down the order to allow more daylight on Days 1 and 2. The tour has become a firm favourite, so much so that in 2018 we ran it in a large coach for the first time - prior to that it had run fully booked for two years. Its inspirational itinerary promises, and always delivers, so much.

We concentrate on an area of Holland where the highest number of locomotives can be seen, and the majority are of private operators. In the area of Rotterdam Docks, one of the largest ports in the World, locations such as Waalhaven, Botlek, Kijfhoek, and Maasvlakte can only be reached by road, and there is a feast of freight locomotives which abound. For the photographers the opportunities to capture the diverse liveries are endless.

On our visits to Waalhaven, we have previously been denied a clear view of locomotives stabled in and around the Shunter BV depot and works. We usually do reasonably well for sightings but this year we are actively pursuing enquires to secure a visit. At the very least we intend to seek out an alternative viewing location.

Not only is this Dutch itinerary intensive but we include a visit to Antwerpen Noord Depot on the return. Once again, we are booked into our excellent hotel in Den Haag where the breakfast is magnificent. It is situated just a two-minute walk from tram and bus routes that connect with both Den Haag Centraal and Den Haag HS Stations. Superb restaurants are also within a two-minute walk of our hotel.

The tour, when it took place in January 2018, was greatly enhanced by running in a large coach. No matter how cold it was outside, everyone remained snug and comfortable inside, and after re-boarding from the many location breaks, the 'warm up' process continued with endless hot drinks and soup. So - book now without delay!

## **This is a Tour with an Upgrade Option.**

**Whilst this tour is scheduled to run in a minibus/coach, it will be upgraded to a Large Euro Coach in the event of the small vehicle becoming Fully Booked. This option will bring with it all the usual facilities available on large coach tours (double seat, hot drinks, toilet etc). It is imperative that you book without any delay in order that we can make early arrangements with the hotel, coach company and Eurotunnel.**

## **ITINERARY**

### **Days One & Two - Friday 8th / Saturday 9th March**

After we leave Calais, the long run to Roosendaal will afford ample opportunity to catch up on some sleep before a packed day begins. We cover **Roosendaal Station, Roosendaal Stabling Point, Roosendaal Old Depot, and Roosendaal Infrastructure Yards**. We then continue to **Dordrecht Station** where we will find not only the unique mABk Double Deck Motor Composite sets stabled, but also Arriva GTW 2/6 & GTW2/8 EMUs. Locomotive sightings will now double and treble as we probe deep into the Rotterdam Docks area. We start with the **Shunter BV Locomotive Facility at Van Graftstraat**. This is followed quickly by **Waalhaven Yard**. By now you will be seeing more and more of Shunter BV and Rotterdam Rail Feeding (RRF) locomotives, private main line locos, and numerous DB Cargo (formally Railion) Class 6400s, and we hope that our requests for a visit to **Shunter BV Waalhaven** will have been answered positively. We continue to **Botlek** and then into the heart of Europort at **Maasvlakte** where locos will literally surround you. After clearing the Docks, we then enter one of the many tunnels under the extensive Dockland area to turn our attention to the north of Rotterdam, where we call at **Rotterdam Noord Yard** and a visit to the **SSN Steam Depot and Museum** (Please note that the entrance charge for the Museum is not included in your fare). Museum this

may be, but expect at least two 'privateer' Class 66s under repair or service. Next up will be our final destination for today, Den Haag, but before we retire to the hotel there will be visits or views of both **Leidschendam Depot** and **Voorburg Stabling & Servicing Facility**. We will arrive at our hotel early afternoon which will afford you the opportunity of visits to **Den Haag Centraal** and/or **HS** stations, or explore further locations. **Amsterdam Centraal** is less than one hour away. For the Tram enthusiasts there are 12 routes most of which serve Centraal Station, operated by HTM & Randstad Rail. HTM's new Siemens Avenio 5000s are now in service, and don't forget the Rotterdam Metro Bombardier RSG3s (5500s) that run into Centraal Station.

### **Overnight - Hotel Ibis Den Haag City Centre**

#### **Day Two - Sunday 10th March**

The distance back to the port dictates that today our visits will be somewhat limited. The expectation at principal depots should be high and, after a diversion to **Kijfhoek Yard** where there should be many locos to view, along with the passing traffic, we leave the Netherlands and are once again in SNCB territory at **Antwerpen Noord**, not a location to be ignored! Finally, there will be a visit to **Merelbeke Depot / Melle Yard** site (will the new depot be operational? We shall see!) Finally, we visit **Gent CS** which will bring down the curtain on another enjoyable tour.