The best way to understand your new hometown is to talk to the locals. If you want to greet them just nod your head and say ‘a goei’ (ah-goei-juh). That’s the Leeuwarden way of greeting in the local dialect. Luvvards, a mixture between Frisian and Dutch.

In the area around Leeuwarden people speak Frisian. This is a language that is closer to old English than to Dutch. If you want to know more about this language visit Afürk. You better practice the following sentence: Bûter, brea en grêne têlis, wa’t dat net sizze kin is gijn aprochêc Fries. In earlier times your head was chopped off by Grutte Pier, if you were unable to pronounce this sentence correctly! People in Leeuwarden, or in the north of the Netherlands in general, are really down to earth and they don’t like to boast. If you tell them how beautiful Leeuwarden is, they will probably reply by saying ‘it kin minder’ or ‘it kin nog wol wut wurde’ meaning as much as ‘it could have been worse’ and ‘maybe it can become something.’ That’s the local way of being positive. On a hot day they will tell you ‘it’s not cold today.’

Explore the Surroundings
Leeuwarden is not that big, so it might be nice to explore the surroundings of the city in the weekends. When the weather is nice, head to the recreation area called Groene Ster. This is on the outskirts of Leeuwarden and you can swim here! You can explore the Eise Eisinga Planetarium in Franeker (only a 20 minute train ride). Eisinga was a laborer who built an accurate moving model of the solar system in his living room between 1774-1781 and it’s still working! You should also explore the surroundings by bike! De 8 van Grouw bike trip involves 8 ferries! Do visit the islands in the north and spend some time on the beach! During low tide it is also possible to walk to the islands with a guide. This is called Wadlopen and is a really unique experience. Head to Earnewoude and rent a kayak or boat to explore National Park De Alde Feanen from the water. This low lying peatland is magnificent. We don’t have mountains here, but we do have terpen, these man made mounds protected the early inhabitants against the water. In Hegebeintum you can find the highest one, almost 9 metre above sea level.

Groceries
Jumbo (11), Albert Heijn (12) and Poiesz (13) are local supermarkets. Aldi and Lidl are budget supermarkets that you can find outside the city centre. If you want to go green and organic try Ekooplaza (14). Toko Salmon (15) and Toko An Phúc (16) take care of all your Asian desires. Every Friday there is a Friday’s Market (17) on the Wilhelminaplein a.k.a. Zaalrand from 8:00 till 17:00. Every Saturday you can get your groceries from the local farmers market at the Streekboer in the Blokhuispoort (31). You do have to pre-order this online (www.streekboer.nl).

Full Shopping
In the smaller streets like Nieuwe Oosterstraat, St. Jacobstraat, Kelders, Vijzelstraat, Naauw and Kleine Kerkstraat you’ll find most of the nice shops. At De Lekturhal (23) you can get your foreign newspapers and magazines. For second hand furniture try Kringloopwinkels (Dutch for thrift shop) like Kringloop XL (24), Estafette and Emmaus. For decorations bring a visit to the wonderful world of Panta Rei (25), the colourful shop of Ny-Na (26), the cosy Kabinett (27) or the House of Colour. If you’ve got a missing compartment, head to Auke Rauwerda (28) and get lost in a maze of 13 buildings. In Leeuwarden, they say that if Auke doesn’t have it, it doesn’t exist. For music, visit one of the six record shops of Leeuwarden like De Deenstraan Records (29) or King Kong Records (30). The Saint is our T-shirts shop and if you need a vintage outfit visit Liz Boetiek or Silvia’s Sneupwinke!

Festivals
We are the festival capital of Friesland. In the summer we’ve got Psy-Fi, Welcome to the Village and Into the Grave! Later in the year you can enjoy the Leip! International festival, CityRock, Noordelijk Film Festival, Explore the North, Freeze, Kingsday, Befrijdingsfestival etc. Become a volunteer and you’ll get free entrance and probably meet some nice local people on the way!

Enjoy the Water!
Leeuwarden calls itself the capital of watertechology because we have the international water research institute WETSUS. But besides these scientists, everybody here loves water! We like to sail our boats through the canals. If you don have one, you can rent a small electric boat (greenjoy leeuwarden.nl). When you do so you can also ask us to join your boat tour and we can guide you through the canals. If you don’t want to steer yourself, you can also join the daily boat tours (praamvaren). If you like to be a bit more active you can rent a kajak or SUP from the local city beach and paddle through the canals yourself (sup2thepeople.com). If you really like to learn how to sail a sailing boat, get in touch with Sail Experience (www.sailexperience.fr). During wintertime we like to ice skate. The biggest thing that can happen to Friesland is the eleven city ice skating tour. It only happened 15 times in the last 100 years, because we need a lot of ice and a tough winter for this. But you can ice skate indoors at the Efstedenthal throughout the year. You can rent skates there as well.

Explored Shopping
Explore the Surroundings
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Where do I buy a bike?
Leeuwarden is a small city, so you absolutely don’t need a car here. If you live in the city centre, you can even do everything by foot. But if you want to go uni every morning and then ride a bike a bit further away from the city, YOU NEED A BIKE! Dutch people do everything on their bike, so if you don’t want to be left out, you better buy one. You can try your luck at the facebook group ’Leeuwarden’s first Online Garage Sale’. Or Google ‘tweedehands fiets Leeuwarden’ (Dutch for 2nd hand bikes) and you’ll get many results. Try the previously mentioned Kringloopwinkels (thrift shops) like Estafette or check the website www.marktplaats.nl. There are more bikes than people in the Netherlands, so you should be able to find yourself a bike. And don’t forget to buy a good lock!

Sport
If you want to do some sports, make sure you get hold of a Student Sport Card (studentensportleeuwarden.nl). With this card you can play all kinds of sports and practice fitness without limit for the lowest prices in Leeuwarden!

Restaurants
In Leeuwarden people love it. If you’re craving a pizza head to Pompei or Sardegna. At the latter one you can order the Caroena reeper pizza. You’ll get a free bottle of wine if you are able to finish this spicy pizza! At just a short walk from the city you can find Wannee (45), where you can experience the Dutch Cuisine (at Stenden).

Cambuur
The local football club is called SC Cambuur. They play in the Dutch second division. If you find yourself in between the fans from Cambuur, don’t mention SC Heereren. There is a big rivalry between the two. Cambuur supporters don’t even dare to pronounce that name, they just call it DKV, which is short for ‘dertig kilometer verderop’ (30 km further away). If you really want to integrate, you should visit one of their games and stand outside the city centre. If you want to go green sailing, call our boats through the canals. If you don’t have one, you can rent a small electric boat (greenjoy leeuwarden.nl). When you do so you can also ask us to join your boat tour and we can guide you through the canals. If you don’t want to steer yourself, you can also join the daily boat tours (praamvaren). If you like to be a bit more active you can rent a kajak or SUP from the local city beach and paddle through the canals yourself (sup2thepeople.com). If you really like to learn how to sail a sailing boat, get in touch with Sail Experience (www.sailexperience.fr). During wintertime we like to ice skate. The biggest thing that can happen to Friesland is the eleven city ice skating tour. It only happened 15 times in the last 100 years, because we need a lot of ice and a tough winter for this. But you can ice skate indoors at the Efstedenthal throughout the year. You can rent skates there as well.

More Information?
You can join our Free Walking Tours to get more insights about Leeuwarden. Our tours start at the Oldehoofsterkerkhof (that’s the square in front of the Oldehoeve). Every Saturday at 12:00 (noon) we offer a Free Walking Tour in English! From time to time we also offer themed tours like a Street Art Tour, Beer Tour or our Mini Hati tour. Check our website to see when we offer these and in which language. You can also find more information and loads of Maps of Leeuwarden: www.aguidetoleeuwarden.nl