

So Very Dutch

Dutch directness

The Dutch are renowned for speaking their minds: from complete strangers reprimanding you for chatting in the train's quiet zone, to a friend not telling you a white lie about your bad haircut. Outsiders often see this as being rude or tactless, but for the Dutch it is actually a virtue of sincerity and honesty. They don't mince their words or beat around the bush, and are often not afraid to discuss hot topics such as religion, politics, immigration or money. In fact, it is even seen as a cultural faux pas to not have an opinion. Some studies



trace this directness back to the country's history of Calvinism: Calvinists are concerned with the essence of things and what is really important. The good thing about this 'callous' openness? At least you know exactly where you stand with the Dutch.