



EEFJE VOOGD • EEFJE VOOGD MAKELAARDIJ

‘Zuidas has a much better balance now than it used to’

Eefje Voogd, Eefje Voogd Makelaardij

Recently proclaimed Amsterdam’s real estate woman of the year 2019, she also holds the national title for 2016, presided over the Amsterdam Real Estate Brokers Association (MVA) for many years and was actively involved in the Dutch National Real Estate Brokers Association (NVM). Eefje Voogd lives and breathes real estate. Operating from her office on Parnassusweg for over ten years now, Eefje has become a key figure in the Zuidas residential market. She herself lives in Zuidas, having moved into one of the towers on Gustav Mahlerlaan a few years ago. In that time, she says, Zuidas has achieved a better balance – precisely because of all the residential options combined within the district now.

You established your real estate agency on Parnassusweg just over ten years ago. Could you briefly describe what those ten years have been like for your office?

‘To tell the truth, the past few years have been one big roller-coaster. I’ve been in the profession for around 36 years and have worked at lots of different firms. Ten years ago I opened my agency, Eefje Voogd Makelaardij, on a corner of Parnassusweg, on the edge of Zuidas. When you start a business, there’s a lot you have to deal with. It was hard work, but despite starting out in the thick of a crisis, we’ve grown in terms of the amount of work and our staff. That’s thanks in part to our clients and their immense trust in us and the work they do for us. It has been remarkable to see how fast Zuidas has grown, both in volume and population. For me, that’s a positive development in which we as a firm are proud to have played a part.’

You live in one of the big towers in Zuidas. What made you decide to move here, and how do you like it?

‘All together I’ve moved something like 21 times in my life, pretty much of which was spent all over in Amsterdam. As a kid, I would come here to play tennis, and members of my family played football at the AFC. So I always had a thing with Zuidas. As an estate agent, I saw how special this area is and its potential as a really unique piece of land in not only Amsterdam, but the whole country. In our capital city it’s pretty unusual, actually, this mixture of high-rises and low-rises together. Also, I have a thing for new-builds, so it didn’t take long for me to decide I wanted to live here; however, the tower in which we bought our apartment still had to be built! It’s interesting, with a new building, how intensely you one experiences the construction process.

I tended to follow every little development. Now that we are settled in, we really like living here. It’s brilliant and rather unique to live so high up and enjoy such a stellar view. You can see a lot along the skyline – the activity at Schiphol, cruise ships coming into the port, and when there’s a game night at the Arena, we’ve got front row seats. At the same time, I’ve been able to experience the really unique identity of the low-rises around here, when visiting neighbours, and the interaction with people on the street and the general vibrancy of everyday life.’

What are your thoughts on the gradual shift towards more residential space in the district?

‘With the growth of the local housing stock, there are whole new kinds of traffic flows emerging here at different times of day. Services and amenities are being used in different ways, and the demand is different, too. The district has achieved a much better balance, and that’s great to see. The opening of the Noord/Zuid route has also injected more life into the area outside working hours. When I’m out and about here during the weekend and see people walking their dogs and kids playing, then it hits me that this has become a true residential neighbourhood.’

Is there anything still lacking?

What could make Zuidas even better?

‘I would love for the Albert Heijn on Gustav Mahlerlaan to be open on Sundays. But, beyond that, Zuidas is big, and every subdistrict has its own vibe. It would be nice if there were more of a connection between them, as is the case with the knowledge quarter. I don’t feel Zuidas should have one central quarter and I think linking all the different parts would help bring that about.’

Text Romy Lange • Photography Davien Hulsmans • On www.hellozuidas.com you can see the making of video