

Admiral of Europe

Admiral Michiel de Ruyter is often remembered as one of the greatest naval heroes in Dutch history. However, his significance goes far beyond national pride. His life story and deeds form an unexpected yet powerful source of connection among European countries.

During his military career, De Ruyter operated from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. At that time, European powers not only fought each other but also frequently collaborated. His actions spanned regions that today belong to 23 member states of the European Union. Whether as a protector of trade, ally, or adversary, his presence made him a shared historical figure within Europe's collective memory.

What sets him apart is not only his strategic acumen or courage, but also his human qualities: his diplomacy, his sense of justice and equality, and his ability to build bridges. In a time of division, he managed to inspire trust, forge coalitions, and serve the greater good.

In that sense, Michiel de Ruyter can inspire us today as a symbol of European connectedness. His legacy reminds us that our histories are intertwined—not only through conflict, but also through cooperation, mutual respect, and shared challenges. An “Admiral of Europe,” not because he defended borders, but because he crossed them—both literally and figuratively.

Equality

Respect

Band of Hearts

