

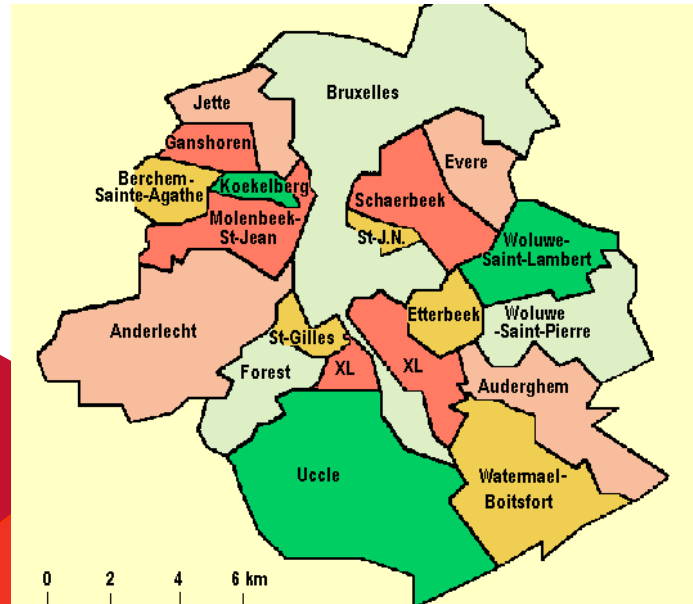
DOLCE

HOTELS AND RESORTS
LA HULPE BRUSSELS

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Business Center	02 290 99 05
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Brussels

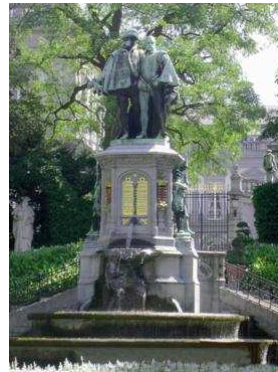


- Brussels is situated in the heart of Belgium at the borderline between North and South. Brussels is separated into 2 parts; the « upper » city and the « lower » city.
- The lower city forms the heart of the old city with the Grand Place.
- The Upper city includes the park of Brussels, the royal Palace and the commercial arterial street starting from the Avenue Louise and finishing at the Toison d'or.
- It counts 19 communes such as *Schaerbeek, Etterbeek, Ixelles, Saint-Gilles, Anderlecht, Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, Koekelberg, Berchem-Sainte-Agathe, Ganshoren, Jette, Evere, Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, Auderghem, Watermael-Boitsfort, Uccle, Forest, Woluwe-Saint-Lambert, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode* including Brussels
- The communes on the north and the west count all the industries and the east and the south communes are more the residential districts and many green areas.



Palace of Justice - Brussels

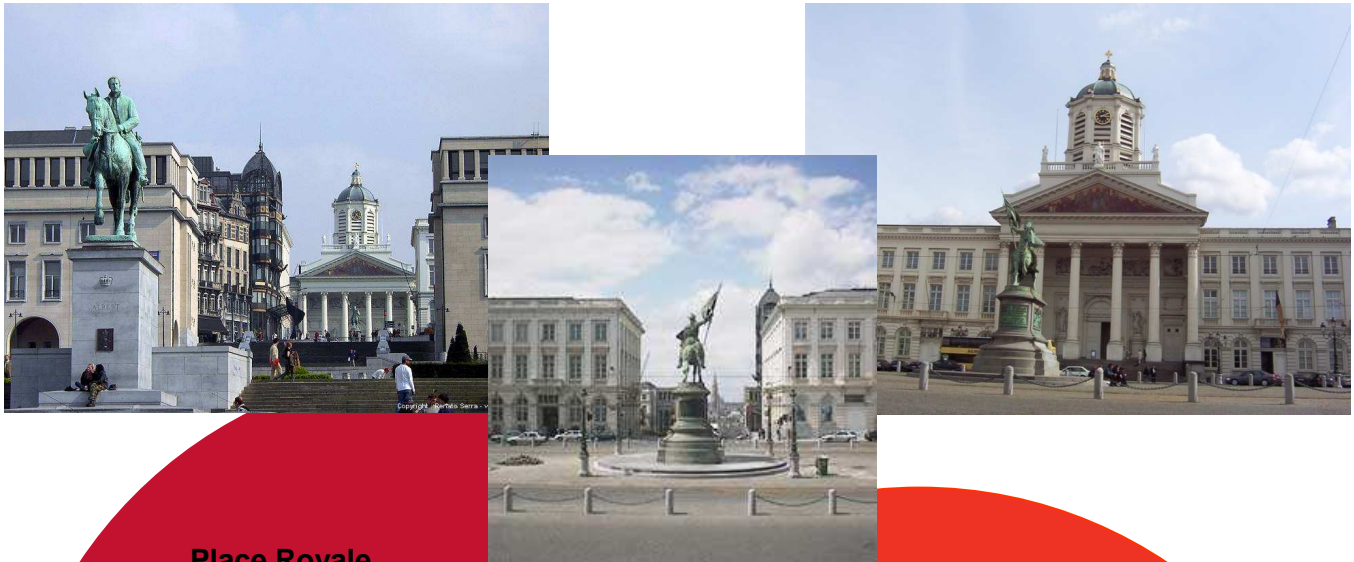
- The **Law Courts of Brussels** or **Brussels Palace of Justice** is the most important Court building in Belgium and is a notable landmark of Brussels. It was built between 1866 and 1883 in the eclectic style by architect Joseph Poelaert. The total cost of the construction, land and furnishings was somewhere in the region of 45 million Belgian francs. It is believed to be the biggest secular building constructed in the 19th century.
- The Brussels Palace of Justice is bigger than St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The building is currently 160 by 150 meters, and has a total built ground surface of 260,000 m². The 104 meter high dome weighs 24,000 tons. The building has 8 courtyards with a surface of 6000 m², 27 large court rooms and 245 smaller court rooms and other rooms. Situated on a hill, there is a level difference of 20 meters between the upper and lower town, which results in multiple entrances to the building at different levels.
- In 1860, an international architecture contest was organised for the design of the Palace of Justice. The designs entered in the contest were found to be unacceptable and were thus rejected. The then minister of justice Tesch appointed Joseph Poelaert to design the building in 1861. The first stone was laid on October 31, 1866, the building was only after the death of its architect inaugurated on October 15, 1883. For the building of the Palace of Justice, a large part of the city quarter of the Marollen was demolished. The inhabitants, forced to move by Poelaert and the police, used the word architect ever since as an insult. The Palace's location is on the *Galgenberg* hill, where in the Middle Ages convicted criminals were hanged.
- Adolf Hitler was tremendously fond of the building and, in collaboration with Albert Speer, based several of the monumental buildings of the Nazi era on the design of the court.
- Although lacking the dome and being much smaller, the Justice Palace in Lima in Peru, which houses the Supreme Court of Peru, is based upon the Brussels Palace of Justice.



Place du Grand et Petit Sablon

- The Sablon is one of the most prestigious and attractive areas in Brussels. In recent years it has become the center of the antiques shops and art galleries.
- The name of this area refers to the time when it was still situated outside of the city walls of the 12th century. It was originally a sandy road along which people had access to the city gates. Because of frequent use this road had become hollow and on both sides a yellowish earth layer could be seen. This type of sandy clay was called "zavel" in Dutch and "sablon" in French. In the 14th century a small chapel in the sablon area was transformed into an important pilgrimage site where a miraculous statue of Our Lady was venerated. Very soon the area became more populated and was enclosed within the 14th century city walls. Around 1450 the little chapel had been transformed into a beautiful gothic church, the Sablon church or church of Our Lady of the Victories. In the following centuries more and more noble men settled in the area because it was close to the duke's palace.
- A big change occurred in the second half of the 19th century. The Sablon was divided into two parts by the construction of the Regenschapstraat/Rue de la Régence. During this period the church was renovated in neo-gothic style and the houses which had been attached to it were demolished. On the eastern side of the church a new park was laid out, called "De kleine zavel/Le petit sablon". This park is still surrounded by 48 little statues representing the medieval guilds of Brussels. In the center is the statue of the counts of Egmont and Hoorn who were executed at the Market Place by order of Philip II of Spain in 1568.

Nowadays, the Sablon is visited by lovers of antiques and art because the entire area boasts hundreds of antiques shops and art galleries. Especially popular is the weekly antiques market which is held on Saturdays from 9 a.m till 6 p.m. and on Sundays from 9 a.m. till 1 p.m. A lot of people also visit the daily flea market (from 6 a.m. till 1 p.m.) which is situated at the Vossenplein/Place du Jeu de Balle in the adjacent Marolles area. Not only famous for its antiques, the Sablon also offers a range of good restaurants and pleasant cafés.



Place Royale

The royal square lies at the Koudenberg/Coudenberg, a natural hill at the edge of the medieval city center. Here, the duke of Brabant had a castle built in the 11th century. His successors left the city of Leuven, which had been the old capital of the dukedom and chose the castle in Brussels as their permanent residence. In the course of the following centuries, the dukes of Burgundy and, later, the Habsburg kings and emperors all adapted the castle to their needs and wishes. Between 1452 and 1459 Philip the Good of Burgundy had the Magna Aula constructed. This hall was meant for the many meetings of the Council of Brabant and other festivities. By the 16th century, the palace had become one of the most impressive and picturesque royal residences in Europe. It also had a magnificent garden, which is now the royal park.

In front of the palace was a square called "Baliënplein" where the citizens of the city met, where markets were organized, as well as executions and festivities. Around this square a lot of noble families had constructed their mansions and houses. The castle itself remained the residence of the rulers and the governors of the Austrian Netherlands until the night of 3 February 1731. That night, a fire broke out in the kitchen of the residence. By the following day the entire royal complex lay in ruins and could not be used anymore. Fortunately a large number of tapestries, paintings and other art objects had been saved from the fire.

Above :Backside of the palace at the Koudenberg seen from the Warandepark, before the fire of 1731 Painted by L. Van der Stock (17th century).
Reproduced by kind permission of Het Broodhuis -the City Museum of Brussels

In 1769 it was decided between the town authorities of Brussels and the court in Vienna (empress Maria-Theresa) that the former Baliënplein should be rebuilt in the then fashionable neo-classical style, the style of the age of enlightenment. Other European cities, such as Paris, Nancy and Reims, already had squares in that style. It reflected the new ideas of the French philosophers Descartes and Voltaire. They preferred cities to be urbanized according to plans and rules, rather than according to the illogical and whimsical construction methods of the Middle Ages.



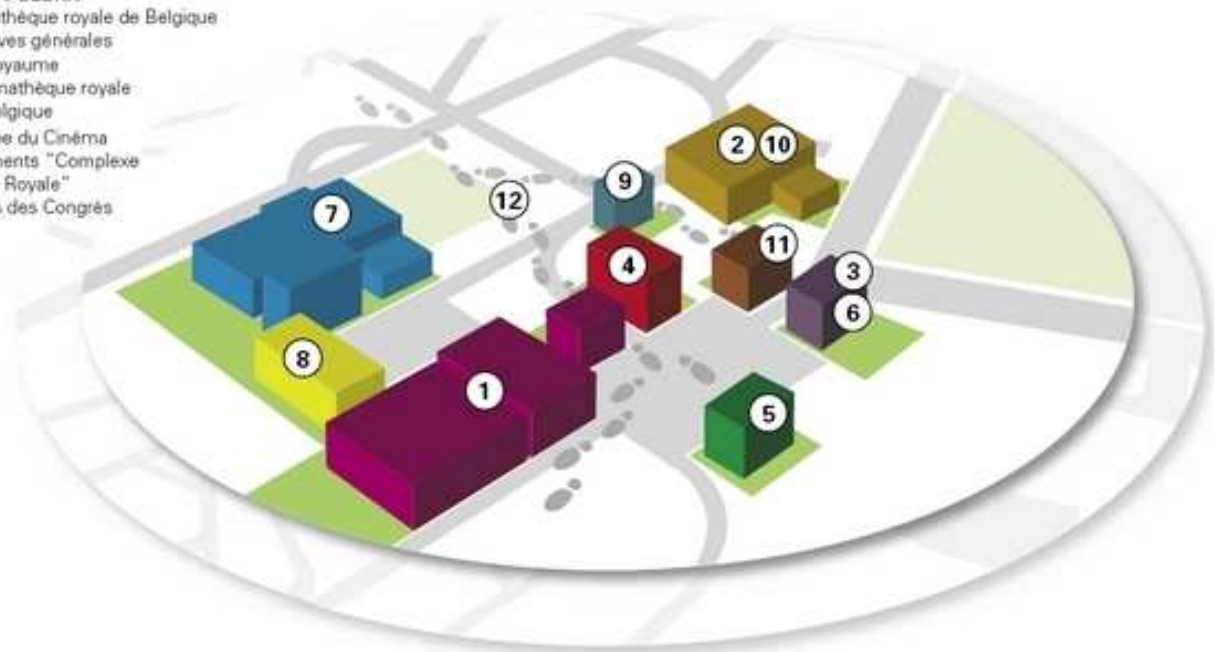
Mont des Arts

- The **Kunstberg** (Dutch) or **Mont des Arts** (French) meaning "hill/mountain of the arts", is a historic site in the center of Brussels.
- The showcase square was created for the Universal Exposition held in Brussels in 1910. It featured a park and a monumental staircase with cascading fountains descending the gentle slope from Place Royale / Koningsplein down to Emperor Boulevard.
- The original square was destroyed during the post-war construction frenzy known as Brusselization: between 1954 and 1965, the square and its surroundings gave way to massive, severely geometric postmodern structures such as the Royal Library of Belgium and the .
- The Mont des Arts offers one of Brussels' finest views. From the vantage point on a hill, the famous tower of the City Hall at Grand Place / Grote Markt is clearly visible. On a sunny day, the Koekelberg Basilica and even the Atomium can be seen.
- Major tourist attractions are located within walking distance from the Kunstberg: the Musical Instrument Museum, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts, the Royal Palace, and the city's cathedral.



- ❶ Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique
- ❷ Palais des Beaux-Arts
- ❸ Ancien Palais de Bruxelles - site Archéologique du Coudenberg
- ❹ Musée des Instruments de Musique
- ❺ Espace culturel ING
- ❻ Musée BELvue
- ❼ Bibliothèque royale de Belgique
- ❽ Archives générales du Royaume
- ❾ Cinémathèque royale de Belgique
- ❿ Musée du Cinéma
- ⓫ Bâtiments "Complexe Place Royale"
- ⓬ Palais des Congrès

LE MONT DES ARTS EN UN COUP D'ŒIL



OPENING HOURS

Open Tue. to Sun.: 10am to 5pm. Closed: 01/01, 2nd Thur. in Jan., 01/05, 01/11, 11/11 and 25/12.

ADMISSION

Museums: from € 2 to 5, free 1st Wed. of each month from 1pm onwards.

Exhibitions: from € 3,50 to 9

Info

Website:

www.fine-arts-museum.be

E-mail:

info@fine-arts-museum.be

ADDRESS

3 rue de la Régence

B-1000 Brussels

T: + 32 (0) 2 508 32 11



Musée Royaux des beaux Arts de Belgique

- The Royal Museums of Fine Arts have been the most visited group of museums in Belgium since several decades and they are the most appreciated by foreign visitors. Located in Brussels, they consist of the Ancient Art Museum, the Modern Art Museum, the Wiertz Museum and the Meunier Museum. They hold some 20,000 paintings, sculptures and drawings.
- In the heart of the Mont des Arts, the Museum of Ancient Art houses a vast collection of precious paintings by the Primitive Flemish artists, Bruegel, Rubens, Jordaens and the masters from foreign schools. It offers a vast overview from the 14th till the 18th century.
- The neighbouring Museum of Modern Art offers a rich panorama of the 19th century (Ensor, Khnopff...) and the 20th century, spread over eight floors, with halls dedicated to Delvaux and Magritte, the largest collection in the world!
- On a regular basis, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts organise exhibitions. From September 2007 on, Pieter Paul Rubens, his work and work-shop will be the subject of a vast exhibition. From November till March, the exhibition Alechinsky from A to Y, will honour the famous Belgian artist.

OPENING HOURS

Open Tue. to Sun.:

June > Sept.: 10am to 6pm.

Oct. > May: 10am to 5pm.

Closed on 01/01, Easter Sunday, 01/05, 25/12.

ADMISSION

Up to € 3. Combined ticket: € 5
(BELvue + Coudenberg)

INFO

Website: www.belvue.be

E-mail: info@belvue.be

ADDRESS

7 Place des Palais

B-1000 Brussels

T: + 32 (0)70 22 04 92



BELvue museum

- Have you ever wondered how much you really know about Belgium and its kings? Located on the Mont des Arts, next to the Royal Palace and right across from the Royal Park, the BELvue museum is the only museum that reveals the history of Belgium right in front of you.
- From the popular uprising in 1830 to the federal State of today: the museum offers the opportunity to examine unique historical documents, remarkable film fragments, striking photos and impressive objects. The reigns of the kings connect the milestones from Belgian history, such as the struggle for universal suffrage, the World Wars and the Royal Question, the Golden Sixties and the recent constitutional reforms. These milestones are presented to you in an exceptional and informative manner.
- But the very location and history of the building itself are also worth a visit. Before it became a museum, the former 18th century luxury hotel was also a royal residence. You will still find aspects from that era: with the recent renovation, the atmosphere of the old days was restored.
- The BELvue museum has a restaurant with a summer café in the royal garden, a modern museum shop, a strong>multipurpose conference room and a hall for educational projects.



Palais des Beaux Arts

- With one million visitors a year, the Centre for Fine Arts is one of the key attractions of the Mont des Arts. Situated between the place Royale and the Central railway station, it forms a brilliantly conceived link, designed by Victor Horta, between the upper town and the lower and between the various arts referred to in its name. The Centre's interdisciplinary approach and the quality of its productions have won it a special place at the cultural epicentre of Brussels.
- Judge for yourself: 250 concerts a year, on a par with the world's great concert halls; major international exhibitions – the Financial Times hailed the Russian Avant-garde exhibition (a co-production with Europalia as the "best exhibition of 2005"!
- Cinema, theatre, dances, literature, architecture, and art education. All partake of the same effervescence, which also owes much to the Centre's long-term partners, such as the Théâtre du Rideau de Bruxelles and the Royal Film Archive, whose international film collection is the most extensive in the world. Soon to have a new shop and a new street-front restaurant, offering access to culture via a wide range of made-to-measure packages, the Centre for Fine Arts provides a complete experience, open to the Mont des Arts, the city and the world: THE BOZAR EXPERIENCE!

OPENING HOURS

Open every day from 10am to 11pm, depending on the events.

Closed on 01/01 and 25/12.

TICKETS

Depending on the event.

Info

Website: www.bozar.be

E-mail: info@bozar.be

ADDRESS

23 rue Ravenstein

B-1000 Brussels

T: + 32 (0) 2 507 82 00

OPENING HOURS

Open Tue. to Fri.: 9.30am to 4.45pm,
Sat. and Sun.: 10am to 4.45pm.
Closed: 01/01, 01/05, 01/11, 11/11 and
25/12.

ADMISSION

From € 2 to 5, free admission 1st
Wed. of each month from 1pm
onwards.

Info

Website: www.mim.fgov.be

E-mail: info@mim.fgov.be

ADDRESS

2 Montagne de la Cour
B-1000 Brussels

T: + 32 (0)2 545 01 30



Musée des instruments de Musique

- At the end of the 19th century, the luxurious shops “Old England” acquired a grand reputation thanks to their very particular building. The entrance is a pearl of Art nouveau. The rest of the buildings is in perfect harmony with the place Royale complex in neo-classical style. You can discover all this in walking distance from the Grand-Place and the Central railway station.
- The **mim** moved to this architectural jewel on the hill of the Mont des Arts in June 2000. The museum houses one of the most renowned collections of the world. In all, about 1,500 instruments are exhibited, from the viola de gambe of the Brussels Court to the Russian theremin of the 20th century, from the African kora to the Irish uilleann pipes. The instruments and their history will bear no more secrets! Don't miss the instruments of Adolphe Sax!
- The **mim** is, above all, a world of music. With the infrared headphones, each visitor can explore the thematic paths while listening to the beautiful sounds of the instruments.



OPENING HOURS

Open Tue. to Sun.:

June > Sept.: 10am to 6pm.

Oct. > May: 10am to 5pm.

Closed on 01/01, Easter Sunday, 01/05, 25/12.

ADMISSION

Up to € 4. Combined ticket: € 5 (Coudenberg + BELvue)

Info

Website: www.coudenberg.com

E-mail: info@coudenberg.com

ADDRESS

7 Place des Palais

B-1000 Brussels T: + 32 (0) 2 545 08 00

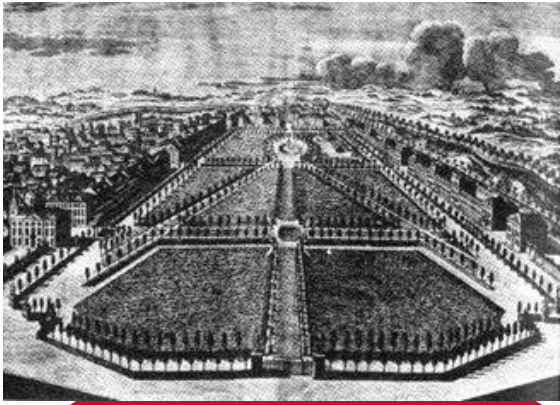
Former Palace of Brussels - Archaeological site of the Coudenberg

- The palace of Brussels was first built on Coudenberg hill from the 12th century and was subsequently rebuilt, extended and improved in line with the increased prestige of the Dukes of Brabant, then the Dukes of Burgundy, the Emperor Charles the Fifth and finally the Archdukes Albert and Isabel.
- For several centuries, the Palace was the centre of power. Distinguished visitors from all over Europe were attracted by the beauty of the buildings, the gardens and the richness of the Palace's artistic collection. This prestigious monument was unfortunately destroyed by a huge fire in 1731 and disappeared when the district was redeveloped after 1775.
- Over the last 15 years, excavations of the site have unearthed various archaeological remains of the Palace as well as the surrounding town.
- The vestiges are accessible to the public. A subterranean tour shows the caves of the main building of the medieval castle, halls under the Palace's chapel, the Isabelle Street that ran along the Lalaing House and went from the Coudenberg to the Saint Michael and Gudule collegiate church, and the lower levels of the Aula Magna.
- A fascinating walk beneath the place Royale gives you the opportunity to discover the vestiges of this illustrious Palace, unjustly forgotten by history.



Place des Palais

- The **Royal Palace of Brussels** (Dutch: *Koninklijk Paleis van Brussel*, French: *Palais Royal de Bruxelles*) is the official palace of the *King of the Belgians* in the centre of the nation's capital Brussels. However it is not used as a royal residence, as the king and his family live in the Royal Castle of Laeken on the outskirts of Brussels.
- The website of the Belgian Monarchy describes the function of the palace as follows: "*The Palace is where His Majesty the King exercises his prerogatives as Head of State, grants audiences and deals with affairs of state. Apart from the offices of the King and the Queen, the Royal Palace houses the services of the Grand Marshal of the Court, the King's Head of Cabinet, the Head of the King's Military Household and the Intendant of the King's Civil List. The Palace also includes the State Rooms where large receptions are held, as well as the apartments provided for foreign Heads of State during official visits.*"
- The palace is situated in front of Brussels Park. A long square called the *Paleizenplein/Place des Palais* separates the palace from the park. The middle axis of the park marks both the middle peristyle of the palace and the middle of the facing building on the other side of the park, which is the Palace of the Nation (the Belgian Federal Parliament building). The two facing buildings are said to symbolize Belgium's system of government: a constitutional monarchy.



The Royal Park

The entire area of the royal park and the royal square is situated on the site where the medieval court of Brabant used to stand. This enormous palace dated from the 11th century when the duke of Brabant left his 'castrum' in the centre of the city. A new castle was built on the so-called 'Koudenberg' at the edge where the higher part of Brussels stops and the lower part begins. The successors of the dukes (e.g. Filip the Good and Charles V) kept enlarging the palace which turned into one of the most beautiful and picturesque royal residences in medieval Europe. The entire complex, however, burnt down in 1731 during the Austrian rule of the Southern Netherlands. The palace was never reconstructed.

- A part of this royal residence was the 'warande', or the forest and the park of the palace. In 1775 the Austrian governor decided, together with the City of Brussels, to construct a new prestigious and modern residential area. The former park was almost like a forest in the city, with hills and little valleys where game and other animals lived. The Austrian empress Maria-Theresia agreed to turn the forest into a new park in classical style for the rich citizens of Brussels to spend their free time in. The park was leveled, new trees were planted and the roads were traced according to geometrical plans. The architects were GUIMARD and the Austrian Joachim ZINNER. Classical statues were placed in the park, some of which had come from the burned residence. In 1780 a Waux-Hall was built, where music was to be played and where people could sit down and relax while having a drink or something to eat. In 1803 a dinner for 1800 people was organized there in honour of Napoleon and his wife Josephine.
- In September 1830 the royal park became the cradle of the Belgian independence. After an uproar had broken out in the Brussels Opera, the revolutionary army fought the Dutch army in the royal park in order to break away from the union with Holland and the Dutch king, William I. The Dutch army had to leave Brussels on September the 27th, which finally resulted in the creation of a new state, Belgium.



Grand Place

- The **Grote Markt** (Dutch) or **Grand Place** (French) is the central market square of Brussels. It is surrounded by guild houses, the city's Town Hall and the Bread House (Dutch: *Broodhuis*, French: *Maison du Roi*). The square is the most important tourist destination and most memorable landmark in Brussels next to the Atomium and Manneken Pis.
- The Town Hall was constructed between 1402 and 1455. The original architect was probably Jacob van Thienen. The gothic tower was designed by architect Jan van Ruysbroeck. At the top of the 97 meter (318 feet) tower stands a statue of St. Michael, the patron of Brussels.
- In the 13th century the predecessor of the Bread House was a wooden building where bakers sold their bread in a covered market. Its Dutch name *Broodhuis* recalls this function. It was replaced in the 15th century by a stone building for the administration of the duke of Brabant. When the duchy fell to the Habsburgs, the *Maison du Duc* (Duke's house) became the *Maison du Roi* (King's house), the latter being the current French name of the building. Charles V rebuilt the building in a late Gothic style during his reign in the 16th century, similar to its appearance today. In 1873, the city entrusted architect Victor Jamaer to restore the battered structure in neo-gothic style.
- The Grand Place was first laid out after the construction of the town hall, at the centre of the city's commercial district. Neighboring streets still reflect the area's origins, named after the sellers of butter, cheese, herring, coal and so on. The original Grand Place was a medley of buildings constructed between the 15th and 17th centuries in a variety of styles.
- On August 13, 1695, a 70,000-strong French army under Marshal François de Neufville, Duke of Villeroy began a bombardment of Brussels in an effort to draw the League of Augsburg's forces away from their siege on French-held Namur in what is now southern Belgium. The French launched a massive bombardment of the mostly defenseless city centre with cannons and mortars, setting it on fire and flattening the majority of the Grand Place and the surrounding city. Only the stone shell of the town hall and a few fragments of other buildings remained standing. That the town hall survived at all is ironic, as it was the principal target of the artillery fire.
- The square was rebuilt in the following four years by the city's guilds. Their efforts were regulated by the city councilors and the Governor of Brussels, who required that their plans be submitted to the authorities for their approval. This helped to deliver a remarkably harmonious layout for the rebuilt Grand Place, despite the ostensibly clashing combination of Gothic, Baroque and Louis XIV styles.
- The Grand Place was named by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1998. One of the houses was owned by the brewers' guild, and is now the home of a brewers' museum.



Hôtel de Ville

- The **Town Hall** (French: *Hôtel de Ville*, Dutch: *Stadhuis*) of Brussels, Belgium, is in the city's famous Grand Place.
- The oldest part of the present Town Hall is its east wing (to the left, when facing the front). This wing, together with a small belfry, was built from 1402 to 1420 under direction of Jacob van Thienen, and future additions were not originally foreseen. However, the admission of the craft guilds into the traditionally patrician city government probably spurred interest in expanding the building. A second, shorter wing was completed within five years of Charles the Bold laying its first stone in 1444. The right wing was built by who in 1452 also built the Magna Aula.
- The 96-meter-high tower in Brabantine Gothic style emerged from the plans of Jan van Ruysbroek, the court architect of Philip the Good. By 1455 this tower had replaced the older belfry. Above the roof of the Town Hall, the square tower body narrows to a lavishly pinnacled octagonal openwork. Atop the spire stands a 5-meter-high gilt metal statue of the archangel Michael, patron saint of Brussels, slaying a dragon or devil. The tower, its front archway and the main building facade are conspicuously off-center relative to one another. According to legend, the architect upon discovering this "error" leapt to his death from the tower. More likely, the asymmetry of the Town Hall was an accepted consequence of the scattered construction history and space constraints.
- The facade is decorated with numerous statues representing nobles, saints, and allegorical figures. The present sculptures are reproductions; the older ones are in the city museum in the "King's House" across the Grand Place.
- After the bombardment of Brussels in 1695 by a French army under the Duke of Villeroi, the resulting fire completely gutted the Town Hall, destroying the archives and the art collections. The interior was soon rebuilt, and the addition of two rear wings transformed the L-shaped building into its present configuration: a quadrilateral with an inner courtyard completed by in 1712. The Gothic interior was revised by in 1868 in the style of his mentor Viollet-le-Duc. The halls have been replenished with tapestries, paintings, and sculptures, largely representing subjects of importance in local and regional history.
- The Town Hall accommodated not only the municipal authorities of the city, but until 1795 also the States of Brabant. From 1830, a provisional government assembled here during the Belgian Revolution.



OPENING HOURS

Open everyday (except on Monday) from 10am until 5Pm.

ADMISSION

2,48 € (Euro) per person, 1,98 € (Euro) per person for groups of min. 12 persons

ADDRESS

Grand-Place – en face de l'Hôtel de Ville
1000 Bruxelles
tél. 02 279 43 50

Maison du Roi - Broodhuis

- At the Market Place, opposite the Town Hall, stands another of the remarkable historical Buildings of Brussels. The beautiful neo-gothic building with its many decorative statues is the "Maison du Roi" in French or "Broodhuis" in Dutch. It now harbours the historical City Museum.
- The Dutch name "Broodhuis" (i.e. bread house) clearly shows what the origins of this building were. In the beginning of the 13th century a wooden construction stood here. It was used by the bakers to sell their bread. In 1405 a stone building replaced the original wooden bread hall. When during the early 15th century the bakers turned to selling their products from house to house, the ancient bread hall began to be used more and more for administrative purposes by the Duke of Brabant, hence the French name "Maison du Roi". During the reign of emperor Charles V, the King's House was rebuilt in flamboyant Gothic style from 1515 until 1536. In one of the rooms of the building the counts of Egmont and Hoorne spent their last night before their execution by order of Filip II of Spain on the Grand-Place on June the 5th 1568.
- After the French bombardment of 1695 the building was restored as far as necessary to keep it from collapsing. In the following centuries it was used for different purposes (e. g. as "Maison du Peuple - the people's house, after the French revolutionists had taken over power in the country at the end of the 18th century).
- In 1860 the mayor of Brussels, JULES ANSPACH, had convinced the city authorities to buy the old King's House which was then in a sorry state. The entire building had to be build up from scratch. The restoration was done in the then fashionable neo-gothic style. The architect JAMAER was clearly influenced by the early 16th century town hall of the City of Oudenaarde. On June the 2nd 1887 the King's House became the City Museum of Brussels On exhibition are original statues of the town hall, paintings, wall tapestries and different artifacts which have a relation to the history of the city.



Everard 't Serclaes

- **Everard 't Serclaes** (c. 1320 – 31 March 1388), lord of (Ternat), a famous citizen of Brussels, was made famous by his recovery of that city from the Flemish.
- At the death of John III of Brabant on 5 December 1355, his daughter Joanna and her husband, Wenceslaus, succeeded to the Brabantine throne, but this was disputed by the count of Flanders, Louis de Male. Louis invaded Brabant and quickly seized Brussels. During the night of 24 October 1356, Everard scaled the city walls at the head of a group of patriots and drove the Flemings from the city. This enabled Joanna and Wenceslaus to make their Joyous Entry into the city.
- Everard was later made schepen (alderman) of the city five times. He was assassinated for having defended the city's rights against the lord of Gaasbeek. Everard is commemorated by a monument carved by artist Julien Dillens (1849–1904). The monument is located on Charles Buls street, close to the town square.
- It is said among locals that the statue of Everard 't Serclaes brings luck & grants the wishes of all who touch it. Many tourists touch (or rather rub) the statue, and this constant polishing keeps the body depicted in the statue in a shining color compared to the rest of the sculpture. Other parts are also touched frequently by the tourists such as the face of an angel, a dog, and one of the shields.



Manneken Pis

- **Manneken Pis** (Dutch for *little man pee*) is a Brussels landmark. It is a small bronze fountain sculpture depicting a naked little boy urinating into the fountain's basin.
- On many occasions the statue is dressed in a costume. His wardrobe now consists of several hundred different costumes. The costumes are changed according to a schedule managed by the non-profit association *The Friends of Manneken-Pis*, in ceremonies that are often accompanied by brass band music.
- Since 1987, the Manneken has had a female equivalent, Jeanneke Pis.
- There are several legends behind this statue, but the most famous is the one about Duke Godfrey III of Leuven. In 1142, the troops of this two-year-old lord were battling against the troops of the , the lords of Grimbergen, in Ransbeke (now Neder-over-Heembeek). The troops put the infant lord in a basket and hung it in a tree, to encourage them. From there, he urinated on the troops of the Berthouts, who eventually lost the battle.
- Another legend goes like this: In the 14th century, Brussels was under siege by a foreign power. The city had held their ground for quite some time. The attackers had thought of a plan to place explosive charges at the city walls. A little boy named Juliaanske from Brussels happened to be spying on them as they were preparing. He urinated on the burning fuse and thus saved the city.
- There was already a similar statue made of stone in the middle of the 15th century, perhaps as early as 1388. The statue was stolen several times. In 1619 it was replaced by a bronze statue, created by Franco-Flemish Baroque sculptor Jerome Duquesnoy, father of the more famous François.



Jeanneke Pis

- **Jeanneke Pis** is a modern fountain and statue in Brussels, which forms a counterpoint in gender terms to the city's trademark Manneken Pis, as it does aurally and geographically, being about the same distance away on the other side of the Grand Place / Grote Markt.
- It was made by in 1985 and erected in 1987 and endowed with its own instant legend, the better to amuse strollers. This half-metre-high statue of blue-grey limestone depicts a little girl with her hair in bunches, squatting and urinating, apparently very contentedly. It is located on the east side of the *Impasse de la Fidélité / Getrouwheidsgang* (Faith Alley), a narrow dead-end street some 30 metres long leading northwards off the restaurant-packed *Rue des Bouchers / Beenhouwersstraat*. It is unsurprisingly much less well known than its male counterpart, being a new addition instead of a centuries-old symbol of the city.



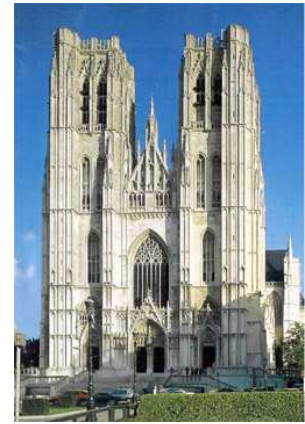
Rue des Bouchers

- In the shadow of Grand Place, a small passageway gives access to one of the most pleasant places in the city. On this narrow, gastronomic street, the restaurant doors are always open and, at the first sign of sun, tables and chairs line the alley. On display lie mussels, lobsters and oysters, all nicely decorated, awaiting hungry tourists. Brussels' gourmands will tell you that there are five really good restaurants in this neighbourhood: Taverne du Passage and Aux Armes de Bruxelles (traditional brasseries), L'Ogenblik (modern brasserie), Vincent (for meat) and Scheltema (expensive seafood). Also popular, Chez Leon.



Galerie Saint-Hubert

- The St. Hubert gallery is a fine example of a **typical kind of building of the 19th century**: the covered shopping gallery. Between 1820 and 1880 seven of these galleries were built in Brussels. Three of these have survived: the St. Hubert gallery, the Bortier gallery and the Northern Passage. These galleries had a double function: the ground-level was almost always occupied by shops, whereas the upper section (first and second floors) were reserved for apartments and habitation.
- The first true gallery was constructed in Paris in 1786. A nephew of king Louis XIV had financial problems and, therefore, decided to rent his garden close to the Palais Royal to shopkeepers who were allowed to build little shops to sell their products. Very soon this primitive gallery became a meeting place for lots of people, amongst which were booklovers, visitors of the neighboring theater but also whores and pickpockets. The gallery quickly received a bad reputation. This gallery was then replaced in 1830 by a more beautiful one (the Orléans gallery) where the aforementioned mischievous persons were no longer tolerated. The concept of the covered shopping gallery for the richer classes had by then become so popular, that in that same period similar galleries were constructed in Paris and other cities.
- After the Belgian independence in 1830 a plan was made to embellish Brussels. Already in 1820 a new gallery had been built close to the Monnaie (opera) of Brussels. In 1839 it was decided that the city should receive a new gallery which would be more beautiful than the one built in the Belgian city of Liège in 1837. The new gallery was to be implanted in the St. Hubert street, close to the Grand-Place. After the expropriation of the local shop owners, the first stone of the gallery was laid in 1846 by king Leopold I. The financial aspect of the construction was taken care of by the creation of a limited company with private funding. The architect was **Jean-Pierre CLUYSENAAR**.
- The gallery was **officially opened on June the 20th 1847**. The gallery consisted of two major parts which were called the King's gallery (**Galerie du Roi**) and the Queen's gallery (**Galerie de la reine**). A third, and smaller, section was called the Prince's gallery (Galerie du Prince). All through the 19th century, the St. Hubert gallery would remain in the center of the mundane life in Brussels. Noteworthy is, that the architect Cluysenaar has reached the pinnacle of gallery building with this beautiful example in the city center of Brussels. It was also the first time that a roof construction with glass and metal with these dimensions was built in Belgium.
- Even today the St. Hubert gallery continues to attract a lot of visitors. There are still nice luxurious shops (e.g. the chocolate house Neuhaus) and beautiful cafés (Taverne du Passage). From the center of the gallery, one can also see the famous Beenhouwersstraat/ Rue des Bouchers, which is still a famous restaurant area in Brussels.



Cathédrale St Michel et Gudule

- This church is to be found at the Treurenberg hill on the edge between lower and upper town. Already at the beginning of the 11th century a church was situated here. In 1047 the Duke of Brabant, Lambert II, had the relics of Saint Gudula transferred from the Saint Gorik church in downtown Brussels to the new church at the Treurenberg hill. From that moment on the Saint Gudula and Saint Michael church took the lead over all the other churches in Brussels. Lambert II also gave the church a chapter of 12 canons (= priests who took care of the services and possessions of the church).
- Because of its growing importance, the first St. Gudula church originally built in Romanesque style was transformed in gothic style as from the 13th century. Today, the foundations of the first church can still be seen under the crypt of the gothic cathedral. The gothic choir was constructed between 1226 and 1276, nave and transept in the middle of the 15th century. The western facade, completed between 1450 and 1490, follows the example of the French gothic facades.
- Via a large staircase (built in 1861) the three gates of the entrance can be reached. Inside, 12 pillars clearly determine the interior of the cathedral, whereas the triforia and glass-stained windows accentuate the later gothic style which allowed more light to fall in to the church. The choir is darker because of the smaller window openings. In the northern chapel on the left side of the choir, one can see the portraits of several kings and emperors who bestowed the richly decorated glass-stained windows: Joao III of Portugal, Louis of Hungary, François I of France and Ferdinand I. In the choir the windows of the following rulers can be seen: Maximilian of Austria, Philip the Beautiful, Charles V, Philip II of Spain, Philibert of Savoy with his wife Margaret of Austria.



Location

Zandstraat / Rue des Sables, 20
1000 Brussels
02/219.19.80

Opening hours

From 10am to 6pm

Admission

Adults : 6,20 € (Euro) per person.

Seniors : 5 € (Euro) per person

Children under 12 : 2,50 € (Euro) per person

Groups : minimum 15 persons : 5 € (Euro) per person.

Comic Strip Museum

- The visit to this museum is a must for two reasons. First of all, the museum is situated in the beautiful Art Nouveau setting of the Waucquez Warehouses. Secondly, one can see here the history of a very typical art form in Belgium: the comic strip.
- The Waucquez Warehouses are considered to be one of the masterpieces of the most famous Belgian Art Nouveau architect, Victor HORTA. Horta built the house in 1906 for the Waucquez family who used it for a wholesale cloth business. The building displays beautifully the principles of Horta's architectural style: sunlight filters from the glass ceiling into the central hall, thereby illuminating the rest of the warehouse in a natural way. The Warehouses were restored between 1987 and 1989.
- One of the most typical new art forms for Belgium are comic strips. After World War II, most of the Belgians have grown up with Belgian comic strips. One can say that there used to be two schools : the French-language comics (= Bandes Dessinés) and the Flemish ones (= stripverhalen).
- Of the former, the name HERGE stands out as the most important writer. He is the father of the best known Belgian comic strip: TINTIN.
- Willy VANDERSTEEN is the most known name of the Flemish school. His most important creation is SUSKE AND WISKE (in English known as Willy and Wanda). Since the 1950's, however, the entire comic strips scene has boomed in Belgium.
- This beautiful museum illustrates this "9th art" in Belgium, with sets of enlarged drawings, three-dimensional recreations, etc. One can also learn everything about the birth and the development of a comic strip album. The museum also has a nice shop with albums and gadgets of the different Belgian comic strip heroes.



Rue Neuve-Nieuwstraat

The Rue Neuve (New Street) is one of the most popular (though not the poshest) shopping precincts in Brussels.

It is here that in May 1967 the Innovation department store burnt down to the ground, claiming the lives of over 300 victims.

The street is supposed to be a pedestrian precinct, but there are always one or two building sites, and in the morning the street is jammed with delivery trucks.



De Munt
La Monnaie

Théâtre de la Monnaie

- The Koninklijke Muntchouwburg (de Munt) (Dutch), or le Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie (la Monnaie) (French) (both meaning Royal Theatre of the Mint) is a theatre in Brussels, Belgium.
- Today the National Opera of Belgium, a federal institution, takes the name of the theatre in which it is housed. Therefore, "*de Munt/la Monnaie*" refers both to the structure as well as the opera company.
- Façade of De Munt/la Monnaie
- As Belgium's leading opera house it is one of the few cultural institutions which receives financial support from the federal government of Belgium. Other opera houses in Belgium, such as the Vlaamse Opera and the Opéra Royal de Wallonie, are funded by regional governments.
- Dance and ballet always had their place on the stage of *la Monnaie*, and, during a major part of its history, the theatre housed its own *Corps de Ballet*. Several members of the Petipa family left their mark in Brussels in the 19th-century, but the enthusiasm of the public for traditional ballet performances diminished in the 1950s.
- In 1959 director embarked on a cooperation with the young Avant-Garde choreographer Maurice Béjart. This resulted in the creation of the new which became the theatre's new ballet company until 1987 when Béjart and his Ballet left *la Monnaie* after a conflict with Gérard Mortier. In 1988 Mortier engaged the New York choreographer Mark Morris and his company. Morris directed several productions in Brussels until 1991. Under Bernard Foccroulle, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker and her company Rosas became the dance company in residence.



Opening hours:
 from 2 PM to 5:30 PM
 (everyday except on Monday)
 Open to tour groups in the
 mornings.

Entrance fee:
 Standard 7.00 euros
 Students and seniors 3.50 euros
 Primary and secondary schools 2.50
 euros

Adress
Horta Museum
 1060 Bruxelles (Saint-Gilles)
 Tel.: + 32 2 543 04 90
 Fax: +32 2 538 76 31
 Website :
www.hortamuseum.be

Museum Victor Horta

- This is not a museum in the traditional sense: a building where the objects exposed draw all the attention. Here it is the reverse : the building itself is the museum. The Horta Museum was actually the house that Victor Horta built for himself in the late 1890's. It's a true example of the architectural style that made Horta into one of the most acclaimed architects in Belgium.
- The Art Nouveau style was popular in Europe, and especially in Brussels, between 1893 and 1918. The characterizations are: the use of industrial materials like steel and iron in the visible parts of houses, new decorations inspired by nature (e.g. the famous whiplash motive, which occurs very often in the Art Nouveau style and especially in the work of Horta), decorative mosaics or sgraffito on the façades of houses, etc... Most of these principles can be seen applied in the Horta Museum itself. This house also shows one of the great innovations of Horta: the rooms are built around a central hall. From the beautiful glass ceiling light falls into the house and thereby creating a much more natural illumination of the building than was the case in the traditional late 19th century houses in Brussels and Belgium.
- Victor Horta was born in 1861 in Gent, Belgium. After studies in Paris, he settles in Brussels and continues to study at the Académie des Beaux Arts (Beautiful Arts Academy). In 1893 he builds his first true Art Nouveau house, the house of the Tassel family, which can still be seen in the Rue Emile Janson/Emiel Jansonstraat, 6 in Brussels. Other truly magnificent constructions were to follow: 1894 The Solvay House (his masterpiece); 1895 La Maison du Peuple (the meeting house of the Brussels socialists, now sadly demolished) and the Van Eetvelde House; 1898 the Horta house (his private mansion and this museum), 1901 Les Grands Magasins Innovation (destroyed by a fire in 1967 during which over 300 people were killed), 1903 Les Magasins Waucquez (nowadays the Comic Strip Museum of Brussels).



Arcade du Cinquantenaire

- In 1880 Belgium celebrated the 50th anniversary of its independence. Therefore, king Leopold II wanted to have a world exhibition organized in Brussels. For its location a former military exercising ground outside of the center of the city was chosen, the so-called "Linthout" plains. In this exhibition the world would be able to see that the new state of Belgium was prospering and able to take its place between the important nations of Europe. In the second half of the 19th century Leopold II had acquired the Congolese colony in Africa which supplied him with considerable financial possibilities. He decided to use a part of his new fortune to give Brussels the outlook of an important European city. One of his realizations was this Cinquantenaire park with its imposing monuments.
- The most eye-catching monument is, of course, the triumphal arch. This arch was built to serve as a monument to illustrate the glorious past of Brussels. It also was to serve as a new entrance gate to the center for people entering from the eastern side of Brussels, via the newly constructed Tervurenlaan/Avenue de Tervueren.
- The arch was planned for the world exhibition of 1880, but would take a long time to be finished. In 1880 only the basis of the colons had been constructed. During the exhibition the rest of the arch was completed with wooden panels. In the following years the construction and completion of the monument was the topic of a continuous battle between the king and the government. The Belgian government actually did not want to spend so much money on an (in their eyes) unnecessary monument. Via private funding (for which the king had provided the money) the arch was finally completed by 1905, just in time for the 75th anniversary of the Belgian independence. The monument was then also crowned with a quadriga, representing the province of Brabant. The other 8 provinces were symbolized by allegoric statues at the foot of the columns.
- On both sides of the arch are 'galleries of the columns' with mosaics representing and glorifying the 'peace-loving nation of Belgium'. These mosaics were made between 1920 and 1932.



AUTOWORLD

Parc du Cinquantenaire 11

1000 Brussels

Tel. : +32 2 736.41.65

Fax : +32 2 736.51.36

Opening hours :

From 01.04 to 30.09: 10:00 > 18:00

From 01.10 to 31.03: 10:00 > 17:00

Admission Fee :

Adults : € 6

Children (6 - 13 years old) : € 3

Students : € 4,70

Seniors : € 4,70

Groupes :

8 adults or more : € 4,70

8 students / seniors or more : € 3,50

15 children or more : € 2,25

Autoworld Museum

- The AUTOWORLD museum in the Cinquantenaire Parc is really a 'must' for fanatics of old-timer cars. The more than 400 cars in this museum came mainly from the automobile collections of Ghislain Mahy and Charly De Pauw.
- On display is the entire history of "the Vehicle" of the 20th century, from 1886 up to the 1970's.
- There is, first of all, a department with Belgian automobiles. Although, nowadays, Belgian car brands do no longer exist, names such as Minerva, FN, Imperia, Nagant, Germain and Vivinus still ring a bell with lovers of the automobile. These cars came out of Belgian factories in the pre-World War II era.
- There are also several foreign cars from countries such as the United States, Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom. There are special models which belonged to the Belgian royal family, to the US presidents Franklin Roosevelt and J.F.Kennedy.
- Some rare car models are represented here: the Bentley 1928, the Bugatti 1930 and the Cord 1930.
- The Autoworld museum disposes of a shop where miniature models can be purchased as well as different other paraphernalia. Many of the vehicles can be hired for special events such as receptions or movies.



**MUSEE DES SCIENCES
NATURELLES**

Rue Vautier 29
1000 Brussels
Tel. : +32 2 627 42 38
Opening hours :
From 09h30-16h45 (Tuesday until
Friday)
From 10h00-18h00 (Saturday &
Sunday)
Admission Fee :
Adults : € 7
Children (up to 5 years old) : free
Students : € 6
Seniors : € 6

The Museum of the Royal Institute for Natural sciences of Belgium

The Museum of the Royal Institute for Natural sciences of Belgium gives a fascinating overview of natural life in Belgium and elsewhere, now and during the course of time. Some of the major rooms have been reconstructed to embellish and improve the presentation of the collection. The major attraction of the museum is its splendid collection of the so-called "Iguanadons of Bernissart". Skeletons of these dinosaurs were found in the late 19th century in the small village of Bernissart in the south of Belgium. The beautifully reconstructed skeletons draw lots of people every year. This is an ideal museum to visit with children.

Other permanent collections are:

the inhabitants of the seas of the Jurassic and Cretaceous eras (e.g.: mosasaurs)

"of Men and mammoths" : the evolution of mankind, with special focus on Ice-age men and their environment.

the Ishango bone: earliest proof of mathematical activity

the insect world (e.g. an animated termite mound)

whales : 18 skeletons

mammals: on display are 80 of the 107 existing mammal families

mineralogy : (also fragments of moon rock and meteorites)



VAN BUUREN

MUSEUM



MAISON DAVID & ALICE VAN BUUREN

41 av Léo Errera
1180 Brussels
Tel. : +32 2 343 48 51
Fax : +32 2 347 66 89
Opening hours :
Everyday from 14h00-17h30
Closed on tuesday

Admission Fee :

Adults : € 10
Children (up to 12 years old) : free
Students : € 5
Seniors : € 8

Admission Fee :

Garden only

Adults : € 5
Children (up to 12 years old) : free
Students : € 2.50
Seniors : € 4

David and Alice van Buuren

- This museum is situated in the house where **David and Alice van Buuren** lived. The museum exists since 1973.

In 1970, Mrs van Buuren had established the "Friends of the Museum of David and Alice van Buuren" society, to which she left by will the house, the garden, the works of art as well as a substantial donation allowing the society to take care of the legacy. During his life, Mr. David van Buuren, who was a fervent collector of art, had **turned his property into a living museum.**

The house.

The house itself was built in 1928. It was constructed in a typical Dutch style and decorated by different Belgian, French and Dutch designer in a very homogenous and harmonious style. In the different rooms of the house (grand hall, dining room, living room, office, workshop) the visitor can discover, guide by a professional historians, the 24 works of art that are displayed here : rare and precious furniture, luxurious woodwork, signed tapestries, sculptures and, above all, beautiful paintings. All these works of art have remained at their original place, thereby guaranteeing the intimacy of the visit. The entire "art deco" setting in which the mecenas and his wife lived, has been beautifully preserved.

The paintings.

The collection of paintings ranks from the Middle-Ages until the modern era, all centuries are represented. Among the old paintings there is a rare work of art by J. Patenier (15th century) as well as a very luminous version of the "Fall of Icarus" by Peter Brueghel the elder (16th century). From the 17th century : H. Seghers and P. Saenredem. From the 18th century: F.Guardi. From the 19th century: Fantin-Latour and James Ensor. Among the modern paintings are works by Foujita, van Dongen, Vincent van Gogh, Rik Wouters, G. Desmet, Permeke and the most important collection of paintings by Gustave van de Woestijne, the master of St.Martens Latem.

- **The garden.**

The surface area of the garden never stops to amaze the visitor (1 hectare 200). One is immersed in greenery at only ten minutes away from the busy city center. The gardens are an extension of the house in which they seem to penetrate. There are three different parts. First, the "picturesque garden" by Jules Buysens (1924), a masterpiece of art deco design, it recalls the spirit of the "roaring twenties". Second, the "Labyrinth" by René Pechère, constructed in 1968. Its 300 elms lead to 7 rooms of greenery, illustrating the "Song of Salomon". The last part of the garden is the "garden of the heart" by René Pechère, built in 1969-1970. It brings a touch of romanticism to the park.



ATOMIUM

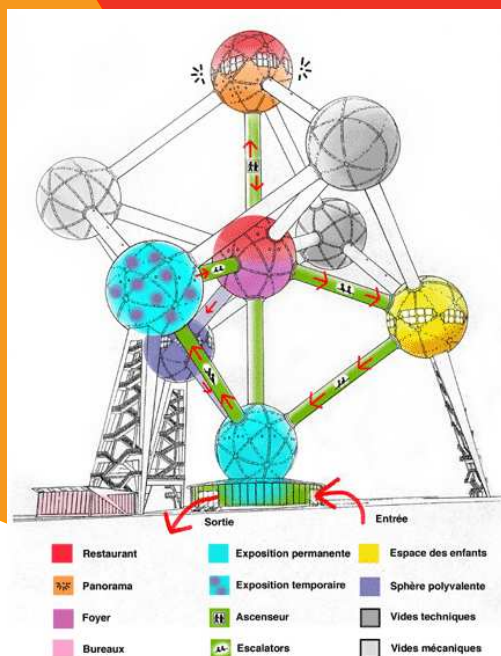
Square de l'Atomium
 1020 Brussels
 Tel. +32 (0)2/475.47.75
 Fax +32 (0)2/475.47.79
 Opening hours :
 Everyday from 10h00-18h00
 The cashiers closes at 17h30.

Admission Fee :

Adults : € 9
 Children (up to 12 years old) : free
 Students : € 6
 Seniors : € 6

Atomium

- The **Atomium** is a monument built for Expo '58, the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. Designed by André Waterkeyn, it is 102-metre (335-feet) tall, with nine steel spheres connected so that the whole forms the shape of a unit cell of an iron crystal magnified 165 billion times.
- Tubes which connect the spheres along the 12 edges of the cube and all eight vertices to the centre enclose escalators connecting the spheres which contain exhibit halls and other public spaces. The top sphere provides a panoramic view of Brussels. Each sphere is 18 metres in diameter. Three spheres are currently (2008) closed to the visitors, others are easily reachable with escalator. The vertical vertex contains a lift which was considered very fast and advanced at the time of building (the speed is 5 m/s).



Royal Residence

Chinese Pavilion & Japanese Tower



THE ROYAL RESIDENCE

- In the suburb of Laken/Laeken, just outside the city center, lies the royal domain with the "Chateau de Laeken", or the royal residence. Whereas the palace in Brussels is the official office of the king, the royal residence in Laken is the place where the royal family lives. It was built in **1772** by Albert von Sachsen-Teschen, the **Governor of the Austrian Netherlands** as his residence. After the French take-over of power in the southern Netherlands it was purchased by Napoleon in 1804. After the battle of Waterloo in 1815 it became the property of King William I, king of the united Netherlands. Another change of owner occurred 15 years later in 1830 when Belgium became independent. King Leopold I received it as a gift from the Belgian state. After a fire in 1890 it was rebuilt and enlarged. It became the **permanent residence of the royal family during the reign of King Leopold III.**
- In the royal park the **greenhouses** draw most attention. The construction of these magnificent botanical gardens started in 1870. Among the participating architects were Alphonse Balat and the young Victor HORTA, who would later become the leading Art Nouveau architect in Belgium. The collection of beautiful tropical plants and flowers **can only be visited by the public during 10 days in April and May.**

THE CHINESE PAVILION AND THE JAPANESE TOWER

- On the northern corner of the royal park two monuments can be seen, which are rather unusual for Belgium, but nevertheless splendid. After his visit to the **1900 universal Exhibition in Paris** King Leopold II decided to have his park embellished with exotic monuments. He ordered the Parisian architect **Alexandre Marcel** to construct the Japanese tower and the Chinese Pavilion. The entrance of the Japanese tower had by build as the Japanese pavilion at the Paris exhibition by a Japanese carpenter. The woodwork of both buildings was made by specialists from Yokohama and Shanghai.
- After restoration works the two monuments can be visited. On display are Chinese porcelain items from the 17th and 19th century and Japanese art objects.

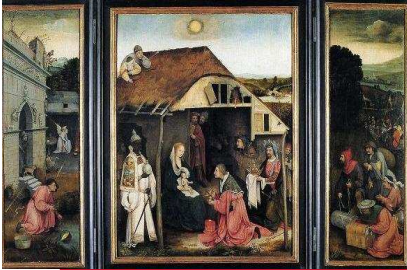


Basilique de Koekelberg

The national Basilica of the Sacred Heart or Koekelberg Basilica (French: *Basilique du Sacré-Coeur* or *Basilique de Koekelberg*, Dutch: *Basiliiek van het Heilig Hart* or *Basiliiek van Koekelberg*), in Brussels, Belgium, is the sixth largest church in the world. It is situated in the territory of the Koekelberg municipality.

The church, on Koekelberg hill, is a landmark on the Brussels skyline. It is the largest building in Art Deco style in the world, being 89 metres high and 167 metres long (outside length). The cupola platform gives an excellent city panorama over Brussels and the wider area of Flemish-Brabant. The central nave is 141 metres long, and at its widest, the building is 107 metres. The cupola has a diameter of 33 metres. The church has room for 2000 people.

This enormous building houses catholic church celebrations, in both main Belgian national languages (Dutch and French), but also conferences, exhibitions (like in 2007-2008 the International Leonardo da Vinci Expo), a restaurant, a catholic radio station, a theatre, two museums, and is a training place for speleology and climbers.



MUSÉE DE LA MAISON D'ÉRASME

Rue du Chapitre, 31
1070 BRUXELLES
Tél. + 32 2 521 13 83
Fax + 32 2 527 12 69

HEURES D'OUVERTURES

tous les jours sauf les lundis (ouvert les jours fériés sauf le
31 décembre et le 1er janvier)
de 10 à 17h

€1,25 pour la Maison d'Érasme et le Béguinage

Maison Erasme

The Erasmus House and the Beguinage of Anderlecht are the oldest communal museums in Belgium. Together with the Collegial Church of Saint Peter and Saint Guidon they form a valuable historical unity which bears testimony to the glorious past of Anderlecht Commune. Anderlecht went through a period of considerable growth during the Middle Ages as a result of the cult of St. Guidon, the patron saint of cattle, and its position on the pilgrim route to Compostella. In 1252 a small beguinage came into existence here in the shadow of the church thanks to a donation from one of the canons.

Around the Collegial Church there were a number of important houses in which the canons of the Chapter lived. Among these was the future pope, Hadrian IV). Erasmus stayed in one of these houses in 1521 in the home of his friend Pieter Wychman who was entrusted with teaching in the Chapter. At that time Anderlecht was a small village of 300 inhabitants. For that reason Erasmus wrote to Guillaume Budé to say that he had followed his advice and had come to Anderlecht as he wanted to play at being a farmer. Although his stay was very short, he made a big impression since as early as the 17th century pilgrims visited the house 'where the great Erasmus had lived'. Today this house shelters both a museum (the collection includes paintings by the Flemish Primitives, sculptures and furniture) and a study centre with thousands of early printed books which are used in research by countless scholars of Erasmus and his works.

Waterloo



Waterloo, is a small city of about 20.000 inhabitants in the Belgian province of Walloon-Brabant (Brabant-Wallon). It was originally a hamlet of the village of Braine-l'Alleud However, at the end of the 18th century Waterloo became an entirely separate town. Today Waterloo plays an important economic, touristic and cultural role due to the enthusiasm of its many national and international companies, its trades-people and the high cultural standards of its residents from all corners of the world.

The city owes its fame to the Duke of Wellington and to the battle which took place on the **18th of June 1815**. The Battle of Waterloo was fought between the French, under the command of **Napoleon Bonaparte**, and the Allied armies commanded by the **Duke of Wellington** from Britain and **General Blücher** from Prussia.

At his headquarters (now the Wellington Museum) the Duke of Wellington drafted the message announcing the defeat of Napoleon after the battle of Mont-Saint-Jean or the "Belle Alliance". Although the fighting mostly took place in Braine-l'Alleud and the surrounding areas, history commemorates it under the name of the "**Battle of Waterloo**" with its monument, the "Butte du Lion" (the Lion's Mound). The actual battlefield lies at about 5 Km south of the city, in the nearby village of **Mont-Saint-Jean**.

The French defeat at Waterloo drew to a close 23 years of war beginning with the French Revolutionary wars in 1792 and continuing with the Napoleonic Wars from 1803. There was a brief eleven-month respite when Napoleon was forced to abdicate, exiled to the island of Elba. However, the unpopularity of Louis XVIII and the economic and social instability of France motivated him to return to Paris in March 1815. The Allies soon declared war once again. Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo marked the end of the Emperor's final bid for power, the so-called '100 Days', and the final chapter in his remarkable career.

Waterloo

The Lion Hill



The lion hill, which is the main memorial monument of the Battle of Waterloo, indicates the spot where the Prince of Orange was wounded. A total of 226 stairs leads to the top of the monument where one can enjoy a beautiful view of the entire battlefield.

King William I of the Netherlands ordered the construction of this monument in 1820, to commemorate bravery of his son, the prince of Orange, who was wounded here during the battle.

The construction started in 1824 and was finished in November 1826.

The hill is the ideal place to have an overview over the entire surface of the battlefield. A total of 300.000 m³ of earth were moved to erect this (for its era) imposing monument. The earth was taken out of the fields between the "Haie Sainte" farm and the sunken lane behind which the Duke of Wellington had strategically positioned his troops.

The earth was poured into a hill by working women from the Cockerill company in Liège, where also the Lion statue was cast. The hill is 43 m high and at the basis the circumference measures 520 m. A total of 226 stairs lead to the top of the hill. The socle on which the lion stands has been built in brick throughout the entire hill. The Lion itself weighs 28 tons, is 4,45 m high and 4,50 m long.

The statue was brought via the waterways between Liège, Dordrecht (in Holland), Antwerp and the canal of Willebroek to Brussels. From Brussels it was brought on horse-drawn carriages to Mont-St. Jean.

Legend has it that the statue was cast from the bronze of the guns and weapons the French left behind on the battlefield. It is only a legend !

Brugge



Bruges is called : 'the Venice of the North'. This splendid medieval city is one of Belgium's crown jewels. In no other European city the feel and the look of medieval times are so present as here in this city close to the North Sea.

Today's Bruges has a population of about **45.000 people** (the old center) or 120.000 people (center together with the suburbs). These numbers clearly show that Bruges is not a tiny miniature city. It ranks, even today, among the important cities of Belgium. It is also the **capital of the Belgian province of West-Flanders**. A lot of people take day-trips from Brussels to Bruges, but there is too much to see here to fill only 1 day. The best way to visit Bruges is to spend at least one night in one of the many beautiful and cozy hotels. Later in the evening, when all the tourists have gone, Bruges finds back its charm and quiet of old times. When one is lucky with the weather, a stroll through the tiny medieval streets can be an enchanting experience. **Bruges is always beautiful**, in the summertime as well as in the wintertime. Lucky visitors will never forget the city after they have seen it on a snowy December or January day.

Bruges is unique, in the sense that here the town authorities have done the utmost to preserve the medieval-looking image of the city. Of course, not every stone in Bruges has come to us straight from the Middle-Ages. The 19th century neo-gothic style is more present than one should think. Because of these 19th century renovations, some critics have put Bruges down as a 'fake' medieval city. Nevertheless, the combination of old, not so old and new fascinates everyone who first sets foot in Bruges.

Brugge

The History of Brugge

Bruges (Brugge) was founded in the 9th century by Vikings who settled here at the end of the little river 'de Reie'. The name Bruges is probably derived from the old-Scandinavian word '**Brygga**', which means 'harbor, or mooring place'. Because of the proximity of the North Sea, the settlement very quickly became an important international harbor. A sea-arm, called the **Zwin**, connected Bruges with the North Sea. The young settlement acquired city rights as early as the 12th century. At that time a first protective wall was built around Bruges. Soon, however, the Zwin started to silt up. This would have caused major problems for the city, were it not that Bruges adapted itself to this situation by creating outports in **Damme** and in **Sluis**. Moreover, transport of goods over land became more and more usual. In the 14th century Bruges became the starting point of a commercial transport road to the Rhineland (over Brussels and Leuven, cities in Brabant which also started to flourish because of this trade). Already in the 13th century Bruges was an important **international trading center**. Traders from all over the then known world came to the city to sell their products to each other and to buy **Flemish cloth**, a internationally acclaimed textile product, produced in different Flemish cities (e.g. Gent). In the early 14th century Bruges was the scene of political unrest between the citizens and the count of Flanders. Because of this unrest the French king tried to annex the county of Flanders, but the population managed to kick out the French garrison on May the 18th 1302. Later the Flemish army beat the French army in the 'Battle of the Golden Spurs' on July the 11th in the Flemish city of Kortrijk.

In the 14th century Bruges turned also into an **international financial and trading center**. It became the warehouse of the North-European Hanza cities. Several countries had their own representation in Bruges: the Italians, the Germans, the Scottish, the Spanish made the city into a true European center where different languages could be heard and where the most exotic products could be found.

The decline of Bruges' wealth started in the 15th century : the unstoppable silting up of the Zwin, the competition with the bigger harbor of Antwerp and the crisis in the cloth industry resulted in less commercial activity. The crisis, however, was not immediately noticeable. Bruges continued to construct splendid late-gothic buildings and churches, and the **Flemish painting school** (with e.g. the brothers Van Eyck and Hans Memling) started to flourish as never before.

By the end of the 16th century the former glory was only a memory and Bruges slipped into a **wintersleep** that took several centuries. New textile industries were introduced in the 19th century, but to no avail. In the middle of the 1800's Brugge was the poorest city in Belgium. The 20th century, however, brought new life. The city was discovered by the international tourism and the medieval heritage turned out to be a new source of wealth for the '**Venice of the North**'. Economically and industrially another important evolution took place. The new harbor of **Zeebrugge** (Seabrugge-at 10 miles outside of the city, at the Belgian coast) brought new developments and new industries to the region.

Brugge

The Minnewater



For most visitors the **Minnewater and its lovely park are the entrance to the beautiful city of Bruges**. The Minnewater is a canalized lake. From the bridge (1740) one can already enjoy a nice panoramic view over the town. Because of the idyllic surroundings it is mostly referred to as '**the lake of Love**', the Dutch word 'Minne' meaning 'love'.

Actually, the origins of the lake are less romantic. It was here that the **coastal river 'Reie'** entered the city. The river was later canalized and made to continue until the center of town. It is not sure where the name 'Minnewater' comes from. An explanation could be 'water van het gemeen', which could be translated as the 'common water'. The lake was used as a water reservoir, to keep the water of the canals at a constant level. Next to the lake is the Minnewater park, where sometimes in the summertime (rock) concerts are organized.

One of the symbols of Bruges is the **swan**. There are always plenty of them on the 'Minnewater'. There exists a nice legend about the swans of Bruges. In 1488 the people of Bruges had executed one of the town administrators belonging to the court of Maximilian of Austria, husband and successor of duchess Mary of Burgundy. The town administrator was called '**Pieter Lanchals**', a name which means 'long neck'. The Lanchals family coat of arms featured a white swan. Legend has it that **Maximilian punished Bruges by obliging the population to keep swans on their lakes and canals till eternity**. Most of these legends and romantic interpretations come from the 19th century. Believe them or not : the beautiful 'Minnewater' deserves them.

Brugge

The Beguinage

Begijnhof



Just behind the Minnewater lies the Beguinage '**De Wijngaard**' (= the Vineyard). It is one of those typical areas in Bruges where one can find more peace and quiet than in the sometimes busy and overcrowded streets of the town center. The Beguinage is a group of houses around a little garden covered with large poplar trees. It was here that during the last seven centuries lived the beguines of Bruges. In **1937 the beguinage became a monastery** for the Benedictine sisters who still live here now.

The Beguinage of Bruges was **founded in 1245** by the Countess of Flanders, Margaretha of Constantinople, daughter of Count Baldwin who conquered Constantinople (now Istanbul) during the crusades. In 1299, Philip the beautiful of France, placed the Beguinage under his own rule, thereby withdrawing it from the influence of the town magistrate. Visitors enter the place via a bridge over the canal. The entrance gate bears the date **1776**. A lot of houses, however, are much older than that. Most date from the 17th and 18th century. Some houses were built in the 19th century in neo-gothic style. In the southern part is a little dead end street where still some houses of the 15th-16th century can be found. The largest and most impressive house is situated in the left corner behind the garden. It was here that the '**grootjuffrouw**', or '**grand-dame**' lived. It was she who ruled over the beguinage. The original church of the 13th century was destroyed by a fire in 1584. It was rebuilt in 1609 and later again renovated in late baroque style.

Brugge

The Beguinage

Begijnhof



What is a 'Beguinage' ?

In the rapidly changing world of the 13th century, some people became more attracted to a **purier and more mystical form of religion** as a reaction to the growing material and formal aspirations of the regular clergy. The example to be followed had been shown by the apostles : poverty, simplicity and preaching. People from both sexes decided to follow this new movement, which resulted in the creation of numerous new religious orders and movements.

The official religious institutions distrusted these new orders, so that they were very often persecuted or forbidden. In the Low Countries, however, the female followers of the mystical movement were tolerated in the form of the **'Beguine' movement**. They were allowed to live in separate parts of the cities, in the so-called Beguinages. In this way, the religious authorities could control and supervise them. The beguines lived like regular nuns, but did not make the same binding vows that nuns normally made. Beguines usually made the vows of obedience and chastity, but not the vow of poverty. Moreover, they could at all times break their vows and leave the beguine community.

In the early middle-ages most beguines worked in the textile industry of the cities. It was not a religious movement exclusively for poor and needy women. Very often, girls from rich and noble families joined the beguine community. They were then very often chosen to become **'Grand mistress of the Beguinage'** and they lived in the nicest houses, whereas the poorer beguines lived in the 'convents' which were houses where several sisters lived together.

Most still-existing beguinages are situated in the Northern part of Belgium. Although, now, there are practically no beguines alive anymore , their beautiful beguinages still exist as museums, cultural centers or houses for elderly people. The most important beguinages in Belgium are situated in the following cities: Bruges, Kortrijk, Gent, Lier, Turnhout, Dendermonde, Hoogstraten, Leuven and Diest.

Brugge

Our Lady's Church

O.L.V Kerk



When approaching Bruges, one can already see from afar **the highest tower in the city, the tower of Our Lady's Church**. Although this church is not the most important one on the religious level (St Salvator's church is) it certainly attracts most visitors because of its medieval character and the important works of art that can be admired here. Architecturally Our Lady **does not present a uniform style**. The construction has to be situated between the second half of the 13th century and the late 15th century. The style varies from late Romanesque style over Scheldt-Gothic to French Gothic. Furthermore, in the 18th century Our Lady was transformed into a more contemporary style. Around 1900, however, the church was renovated whereby the renovators tried to re-establish the original medieval styles. The most important and eye-catching part of the church is certainly the tower. The building started in the middle of the 13th century. The tower reaches a height of **122 meters**, which makes it the second highest church tower in Belgium (The cathedral of Antwerp has the highest tower: 123 m !). A really enormous mass of bricks was used for the tower. It is impossible to imagine that this mighty edifice could one day collapse or that some authority would decide to demolish it. The tower looks like it was built for eternity.

The reason why so many tourists visit Our Lady is, of course, the presence of the **Madonna by Michelangelo** and the splendid **tombstones of Mary of Burgundy and her father Charles the Bold**.

Brugge

Our Lady's Church

O.L.V Kerk



Michelangelo's Madonna.

In the sacrament chappel in the right wing of the church is the famous Madonna by Michelangelo. This beautiful marble sculpture is the only sculpture by the great Italian artist that can be seen in the Low Countries. It was **made for the cathedral of Sienna**, but two merchants from Bruges (Jan and Alexander Moscroen) brought it to Bruges after one of their business trips to Italy in 1506.

The tombs of the Dukes of Burgundy.

In the choir of the church are the splendid tombstones of Mary of Burgundy and her father Charles the Bold. Duchess Mary reigned over the Low Countries in the last part of the 15th century and died in Bruges in 1482 after she fell from her horse during a hunting trip in the surroundings of Bruges. Her father had died in 1477 in Nancy, France. In 1550 the remains of Charles the Bold were brought to Bruges and buried next to those of his daughter Mary. The tombs of both dukes were decorated in late gothic style (Mary's) and early renaissance style (Charles'). In front of both tombs is a triptych by Barend van Orley.



Brugge

The Canals & the old harbour



Because of its canals Bruges is often called '**The Venice of the North**'. The water situation in both cities was, however, very different. Venice was founded on islands in a lagoon of the Adriatic sea. Bruges lies deeper inland ; at least now, because in the five centuries B.C the Flemish coastline must have been flooded several times by the North Sea. When the waters retreated they left behind different **sea-arms via which ships could reach the area where now Bruges is situated**. Bruges was probably already visited by the Vikings. The Flemish name 'Brugge' is probably derived from the Latin word 'Rogia' (which was the Latin name of the '**Reie**' the river which flowed through Bruges), and the Scandinavian word '**Bryggia**', which meant 'mooring place'.

In the Middle-Ages, the waterways to Bruges had to be regularly adapted and enlarged to allow large trade ships to reach the city. Already in the 12th century the cargo was mostly brought to the outports of **Damme and Sluis**, two small medieval cities that still exist today, and are certainly worth a visit. All through the golden era of Bruges the rivers and canals were constantly dredged. Inside the city the 'Reie' river had been turned into a network of canals that enabled the traders to bring their products to the large Water Halls at the Market. Inside the Water Halls the goods were stored or sold directly. The Water Halls do not exist anymore now. In their place is now the neo-gothic Provincial Court at the Market.

After they had passed Damme, the ships entered Bruges on the site where now the **Dampoort-complex** is situated. The 'Dampoort' was one of the city gates that allowed entrance to the city. On the way to the center the sailors followed the canals which are now called 'Langerei', 'Potterierei' (where the shipyards were located), 'Spiegelrei', and 'Spinolarei'. From the Spinolarei one can see the 'Poortersloge' which was the meeting place for the richer and more important members of the Bruges society. Very often concerts, festivities and banquets were organized in this building. In front of it is the '**Jan van Eyck**' square with the statue of the greatest Flemish painter of all times who lived and died in Bruges (+ 1444). Finally, on their way to the Market, the ships passed the great 'Crane', a medieval crane that was used to unload the goods from the ships.

Nowadays no commercial ships sail on the Bruges 'reien' (=canals) anymore. The canals are now exclusively used for **tourist boats**. There are five families that are allowed to organize tourist excursions by open boats on the canals. Each family has 4 boats.

Brugge

St John's Hospital



In front of Our Lady's church stands the large complex of the medieval St. John's hospital, one of the oldest still existing hospitals in Europe. In 1978 it lost its function as hospital and harbors now **the Memling museum, the hospital museum and the old pharmacy**. The oldest known document with rules for the hospital dates from **1188**. It shows that the 'brothers and sisters' of the hospital did not really belong to a religious order with strict rules. In this respect, they did not make vows like other religious orders. This changed in 1236 when the bishop of Tournai insisted that the brothers and sisters made vows of obedience, chastity and poverty. They were also then obliged to wear a religious habit. It was only in 1459 that bishop Chevrot succeeded in transforming the lay order of brothers and sisters of St. John's hospital into a real religious order with formal vows. The reason why the occupants of the hospital accepted this was political : by placing themselves under the authority of a religious institution they could diminish the power of the city's magistrate and Duke Philip the Good.

The St. John's hospital was a **powerful and rich institution**, with a lot of real estate possessions inside and outside of Bruges. The sisters took care of the daily organization of the sick-bay and kitchen, whereas the brothers were responsible for the administration of the entire complex. Each group lived in a separate part of the hospital. Around 1600, however, St. John's hospital became an all-female institution.

The **first and oldest part** of the hospital was built in the 'Mariastraat', near to the Mariapoort (Mary's gate, one of the city gates of the first city walls). The hospital was built to provide housing and care for pilgrims, passers-by and traveling salesmen. Also sick people were accepted (at least if their illness was not contagious). Of course, the state of medical care then can not be compared to the present state of medicine in the 20th century. Basically, in the Middle-Ages people turned to the hospitals to find a roof, food and religious assistance in their hour of need and in their time of dying. Because of the continuous growing of the population in the Flemish cities, the hospital soon had to expand. During the 13th and 14th centuries more halls and sick-bays were added to the complex. Not all sick people were accepted : in Bruges there were other institutions for lepers and insane people.

In the 19th century it was decided that a **new and more modern hospital** building had to be constructed. This was done after 1855 by architect Isidoor Alderweirelt.

Fortunately, the old buildings remained at the site so that they can still be visited and admired today. In the 1970's a new general hospital was built in Bruges so that after 8 centuries the St. John's hospital lost its function. It was transformed into a museum and a congress center. Inside the old chapel is now one of the smallest but most attractive museum of Bruges, the Memling museum. Here **six paintings by the 15th century painter Hans Memling** can be seen. Four of them were painted by Memling for the sisters of the hospital. The most famous painting is the relic shrine of St. Ursula. Furthermore, one can visit the former rooms and sick-bays of the medieval hospital, as well as the old pharmacy. In the buildings of the 19th century is now the cultural center 'Oud Sint-Jan' where numerous congresses and exhibitions are regularly organized.

Brugge

The house of Gruuthuse



The **Gruuthuse house and museum** is situated behind the Our Lady's church. This impressive city mansion belonged to one of the richest families of the medieval city. It has now been transformed into the archeological city museum of Bruges. The name already explains why the Gruuthuse family was so important. The old Flemish word '**gruut**' means : peeled barley or wheat. This was the main ingredient for beer-brewing in the Middle Ages. The lords of Bruges had the monopoly for the sale of this very important product. Because of their monopoly position they became very wealthy and powerful and they soon became known as the 'lords of Gruuthuse' (huse= house).

The most famous member of this family is **Lodewijk van Gruuthuse** (= Louis of Gruuthuse), diplomat and art lover. His equestrian statue can be seen above the lower front facade of the Gruuthuse palace. Under the statue is his personal motto 'Plus est en Vous' (= there is more in you. The motto is in French, the language of European medieval nobility). This part was built during the lifetime of Lodewijk, namely in 1465. In 1628 the former palace of Gruuthuse became a pawn shop. After a complete renovation (partially in neo-gothic style) in 1883 to 1898 the entire house became the archeological city museum 'Gruuthusemuseum' with a very large collection of works of art from different domains (lace, tapestries, paintings, furniture, etc...)

Brugge

De Grote Markt



The central location of the Market square indicates that this was the medieval heart of the city. At least, the commercial medieval heart, because the center of the city administration was found on the nearby 'Burg' square.

The market place (Grote Markt) is free from traffic since October 1996. It has been completely refurbished and is now one of the most attractive parts of the city. The main monument is of course the belfry tower and the cloth hall. On the Northern side of the Market is the Provincial Court. It stands on the site where the medieval 'water halls' used to stand. This was a covered hall where the ships could unload their products for storage in the halls or for direct sale on the adjacent market. Right in the middle of the square the statue of Jan Breydel and Pieter de Coninck can be seen. The other sides of the market are occupied by restaurants and shops located in former private houses as well as in guild houses.

The **Provincial court** is the best example of how Bruges was renovated in neo-gothic style during the second half of the 19th century. After the destruction of the water halls in 1787 a new complex of houses was built there in classicist style. This style was considered very modern in a town that was basically built in late-gothic style. In 1850 the provincial government bought the complex, enlarged it and made it the seat of the provincial institutions. The members of the catholic and traditionalist political parties rejected the building as 'unfit for the beautiful gothic Bruges'. In 1878 a fire destroyed most of the building. Different groups took their chance to have it reconstructed in neo-gothic style, the 'house'-style of the catholic party. On the left side of the complex is now the house of the Governor of the Province of West-Flanders. The red brick building on the right side is the Post Office of Bruges.

In the center of the Market stands the statue of **Jan Breydel and Pieter de Coninck**. The statue not only honors these two leaders of the '**Battle of the Golden Spurs**' which took place on the 11th of July 1302, it is perhaps more so a clear statement of the political leaders of the 1880's that the cause for Flemish emancipation was something that the Belgian government had to take notice of. Both Breydel and de Coninck participated in the 1302 uprising of the Flemish against the occupation by the French king, known as the Battle of the Golden Spurs'. This battle was also the central theme of the book 'De Leeuw van Vlaanderen' (the lion of Flanders) written by Hendrik Conscience in 1838. He romanticized the Flemish uprising and it became a symbol of the Flemish movement which fought for recognition of the Dutch language and Flemish culture in the French-language dominated Belgium of the 19th century.

Finally, on the Southern side of the Market several **medieval-looking houses** can be seen. They are not really medieval because a lot of them are modern reconstructions of the medieval styles. Some critics use these and other reconstructions (like the Provincial Government house or the Holy Blood Chapel) to bring down the image of Bruges as a fake. It is absolutely true that Bruges is as much a medieval city as a neo-gothic reconstruction from the 19th century. It is not difficult, however, to understand that buildings which are several centuries old always have to be renovated at certain times just for the sole purpose of keeping them in existence. Will the Empire State building, if it still exists in 500 years, look exactly the same as today, with no single stone changed ?

Brugge

The Belfry & the Cloth Hall

The Market square is dominated by the cloth hall and the **83 meter high** Belfry tower, one of the symbols of the city. The original cloth hall and tower date from 1240. The first tower, however, was **destroyed by fire in 1280**. At the time of the fire the four wings of the cloth hall already existed, as well as the two square segments of the belfry. The present octagonal lantern was added to the tower between 1482 en 1486. The wooden spire that crowned the tower was again destroyed by fire in 1493 en 1741. After the last fire it was never rebuilt. Like in most cities of the Low Countries the belfry tower was **the place where the important documents of the city were preserved**. At the same time such towers were used as watchtowers. Inside hung bells, each bell having a distinct sound and function (e.g.: bells for danger, bells for important announcements, bells to indicate the time, etc.). The entire complex still bears witness to the **importance of Bruges as a medieval trade center**. In the cloth hall, the Flemish cloth which was manufactured in different other cities was sold to the rest of the world. In 1399, for instance, there were 384 sales stands inside the hall. Nowadays, the belfry tower charms the visitor with the lovely music of a carillon, which consists of 47 bells. Other more recent decorations are the **sculpture of the Madonna in renaissance style** and the weapon with a Belgian lion.



Brugge

The Town Hall

The Burg Square



Bruges is a city with two town squares. The largest one is the **Market**, the commercial heart of medieval Bruges. The second square is called the '**Burg**'. Here was, and still is, the heart of the administrative Bruges. It was here that Count Baldwin I had a fortified castle built to protect the area against the ramping Normans and Vikings. The castle has long since disappeared as well as the main religious building of Bruges, the **St. Donatius church**, which stood on the opposite site of the town hall. On the site of the church is now a little wall, a partial reconstruction of the choir walls of the church. It was built here after the foundations of St. Donatius had been found back in 1955. The church was erected around the year 900. The central part was octagonal, much like the cathedral of Charlemagne in the German city of Aachen on which it was modeled. The original prayer house of the year 900 was replaced in the 12th century by a church in Romanesque style. This version of the St. Donatius church was destroyed in 1799 during the French occupation of the Southern Netherlands. Some of the art treasures went to other churches (**St Salvator's Cathedral** in Bruges). Several famous people were buried in St. Donatius : the English princess Gunhilde (+ 1087), the Flemish painter Jan van Eyck (+ 1441) and the Spanish philosopher Juan Luis Vives (+ 1540)

One of the most beautiful buildings of Bruges can be seen here : the gothic town hall from 1376. It was one of the first monumental town halls in the Low Countries. In the front facade are six gothic windows. On the frontside are also displayed the town weapons of the cities and villages that were under administrative rule from Bruges. There are 48 niches for statues. The original statues (biblical figures and counts of Flanders) were demolished during the aftermath of the French Revolution. Their 19th century replacements have also already been changed for more modern versions. In the entrance hall a large staircase leads to the so-called Gothic Hall (1386-1401). This hall was decorated in 1895 with neo-gothic wall paintings that illustrate the most important events in the history of Bruges.

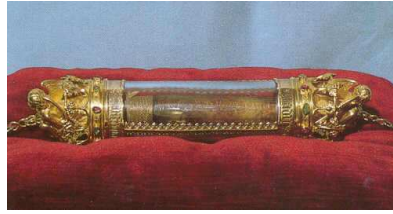
The Burg square is really a showcase of different European architectural styles. Next to the gothic town hall stands the Old Civil Registry in renaissance style. (1534-1537). The decorative statues were also smashed to pieces in 1792, but later renovated. The bronze statues represent Justice, Moses and Aaron. Since 1883 the building is used as Peace Court. On its left side is another building in another style: the former Court of Justice in neo-classicist style. (1722-1727). Inside this building is the famous monumental chimney of the 'Brugse Vrije'. The chimney was built between 1528 and 1581 in wood, alabaster and marble, to commemorate the victory of Emperor Charles V on the French king François I in Pavia. The former Court of Justice now houses the Tourist Information center of Bruges.

Also the Baroque style is represented here. On the left side of the square is the Deanery (1662), the former house of the Deans of the St. Donatius church. It became later a part of the palace of the Bishop of Bruges.

Then, finally, tucked away in the corner of the square, next to the town hall, is the Basilian church and the Chapel of the Holy Blood

Brugge

The Chapel of the Holy Blood



The chapel of the Holy Blood is actually a double chapel which can be visited on the 'Burg' square in Bruges. It was first constructed in the 12th century and promoted to the rank of **Basilica in 1923**. One can enter the church on the first floor where the Holy Blood is kept via the '**Steeghere**' which is a beautifully decorated façade behind which a staircase leads to the first floor. The original façade was constructed in late-gothic and renaissance style in the 16th century. It was demolished in the aftermath of the French Revolution and later rebuilt and slightly moved. The guild statues represent Flemish counts. The lower part is called the **Basilius chapel**. It has preserved its original Romanesque style from the 12th-13th century. On the left side of the choir is the former chapel of the clerks of the civil registry (1503) and on the right side one can see a statue of the Virgin from around 1300. The passage between the main nave and the side chapel is decorated with a **tympanum**, which is a sculptured stone in half-relief, probably representing the baptism of St. Basilus. The church on the first floor is the actual **chapel of the Holy Blood**. The church itself was originally built in Romanesque style like the Basilius church on the ground floor. It was changed completely in gothic style in the 15th century and again in 1823. The mural decorations in the present church are from this second renovation in the 19th century. The **original stained-glass windows have been removed after the French Revolution**. Some of the original ones ended up in the Victoria and Albert museum in London. The copies which can be seen in the church today also date from the 19th century renovation. The silver altar is the place where the relic is preserved during the week. The relic is shown to the public every Friday and every day from the 3rd to the 17th of May. Outside the chapel is the Holy Blood museum, which contains the shrine for the Holy Blood and other treasures belonging to the chapel.

THE RELIC OF THE HOLY BLOOD

*(According to recent investigations, the bottle of rock cristal, containing the blood, **dates back to the 11th or 12th century**. Since its arrival in Bruges it has never been opened. It is almost certain that the bottle was made in the area of **Constantinopel** (now Istanbul in Turkey) and that it was meant to contain perfume. The Bible never mentioned the fact that Christ's blood was preserved. One of the apocryphal gospels mentions that Joseph of Arimathea preserved the blood after he had washed the dead body of Jesus) Tradition has it that count '**Diederik van den Elzas**' brought the relic containing the blood of Christ from Jerusalem to Bruges after the second crusade. Recent investigations, however, prove that the relic arrived later in Bruges, probably **around 1250** and that it came from Constantinopel (now: Istanbul in Turkey). The adoration of the relic is at the origin of the internationally famous '**Procession of the Holy Blood**' which passes every year on Asuncion day during the month of May through the streets of Bruges. Citizens of Bruges dressed in historical costumes enact during this procession biblical scenes and re-enact the arrival of the Count of Flanders who brings the Holy relic to Bruges.*

Brugge

The Godshuizen



The visitors who take the time to walk through the beautiful city of Bruges will notice after a while that a certain type of houses can be seen quite often in the city. Those houses are mostly late medieval-looking and bear a name and a year on the outside wall. These houses are called '**Godshuizen**'. Literally translated this would mean 'Houses of God'. However, this translation could mislead one to believe that these houses were small churches, or places of worship. A better name would be '**Houses for the poor and the needy**'. Indeed, as early as the 14th century rich families and rich corporations of Flemish cities built houses for poor and needy widows and widowers. Sometimes the houses were constructed by corporations or guilds, for their members who had lost their income or were unable to work because of illness, handicaps or other mishaps. Most of the time these houses form a complex around an inner court where the people of the complex could get their water and grow vegetables in the little gardens. Most complexes also have a chapel where the inhabitants were supposed to pray for the souls of their benefactors. In most 'Godshuizen' the poor inhabitants also received food and basic care.

Bruges still has numerous examples of these houses. There are two areas in the city where there is a high concentration of these 'Godshuizen': around the **Zand square** and around the **Sint Kathelijnestraat** (Saint Catherine street). Every group of houses (mostly between 4 or 24 houses) was meant for a specific group of the population: widows, widowers, older couples, etc.... Most 'Godshuizen' bear on the outside wall the name of the donator or rich family, together with the year of construction. One of the most beautiful and impressive complexes is the 'Godshuis De Meulenaere' in the 'Nieuwe Gentweg' street '(see picture on top of the page). There are houses in Bruges from different centuries. Most date from the 17th and 18th centuries. Most are still inhabited now, mostly by elderly people. They now belong to the **OCMW** of Bruges, the Department of Social Care.

GODSHUIS DE VOS 1713