



FOCUS FLANDERS is the **incoming/DMC** division of OMNIA TRAVEL.

Omnia Travel has offices in several cities in Flanders (Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, Hasselt, Leuven and Roeselare) and is 100% owned by the Belgian KBC bank.

Focus Flanders is specialized in **tailor-made** travel for groups traveling to Flanders/Belgium. We focus on the cities Ghent, Brussels, Bruges, Antwerp, Leuven and Ypres.

Since many years, Focus Flanders offers customized tours such as:

1. chocolate and beer tours
 2. gastronomy tour
 3. garden tours (and day programs such as visit of the FLORALIES in Gent)
 4. Art tours (art nouveau tours, The Flemish Primitives,...)
 5. battlefield tours (Flanders combined with Northern France)
 6. Sport travel
 7. Shore excursions
- and more

We organise **sightseeing tours** for **groups** and **private sightseeing tours**

Focus Flanders offers also numerous **company events** (playful evening and teambuilding programs)

A few examples: beer, champagne and chocolate tasting tours in Brussels, culinary bicycle tours from Bruges to Damme, a treasure hunts on foot and by boat in Ghent, discovery tours by old-timer in the surroundings of Ghent, chocolate tours and workshops in Bruges, perfume workshops in Ghent, pub crawls by horse carriage in Antwerp, bicycle tours in Ypres and more

Good to know: Focus Flanders has its own guide service, competitive rates for hotels and offers 25 years of know-how

Take a look for an inspirational visit: www.focusflanders.com

Send us your request or contact us for more information on: focusflanders@omniatravel.be



FLANDERS & BRUSSELS IN 5 DAYS

DAY 1: Zaventem - Ghent - Bruges

Morning

Arrival at Brussels airport.

Our guide will welcome your group and you will be transferred to **Ghent**.

Upon arrival, transfer by taxi-boat towards the centre of Ghent.

Disembark at the Korenlei, followed by **lunch** (3-course menu, drinks not included) served in a restaurant along the famous Korenlei.

Afternoon

Visit to the historical centre of Ghent, on foot, that includes its main highlights: Graslei and Korenlei, Saint Bavo cathedral (including the famous painting The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb by the Van Eyck brothers), the Town Hall, the 'Vrijdagsmarkt' Square, the charming Patershol quarter, and the medieval Castle of the Counts (outside only).

Transfer to **Bruges**.

Check-in at the hotel.

Dinner (3-course menu, drinks not included) in a typical restaurant outside the hotel.

Overnight stay in Bruges.

DAY 2: Bruges

Breakfast buffet.

Morning

Our guide will welcome you at the hotel and we'll start our visit to **Bruges**.

With its almost intact medieval street plan, Bruges is certainly an evocative open-air museum. Having survived the two World Wars unscathed it fortunately preserved all its art treasures and museums. The Groeninge Museum for example ranks among Belgium's top three museums.

We will start our day with a **30-minute cruise** on the famous canals. When you admire them from a different angle, Bruges' loveliest places look even more charming.

Visit to the **Groeninge Museum** where we will find an excellent overview of works by Belgian painters from the 15th century till today. This museum boasts a complete collection of the Flemish Primitives like van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hugo van der Goes, Hans Memling and Pieter Breughel. In the modern art section we will find Paul Delvaux, René Magritte, Constant Permeke and Gustave van de Woestyne. We will continue over the Dijver, where we will find the College of Europe that offers lectures and seminars on all aspects of the European Union to a selection of postgraduate students from all member countries.

Lunch

Afternoon

After lunch we will go to the Burg Square for a visit to the prestigious Gothic Chamber of the **Town Hall**. We will continue to the Market Square and enter the inner courtyard of the dominating belfry. With the halls as a backdrop we may hear the distinctive sounds of the 47

bells carillon, one of the finest in the world. Halfway to 't Zand Square we will stop and visit the Saint Saviour Cathedral. After coming face-to-face with the ultra-modern Concert Hall we will go back in time again to the Old Saint John site. There, on the premises of the former hospital, we will visit the **Memling in Sint-Jan Hospitaalmuseum**. This museum is primarily dedicated to one of the best-known Flemish Primitives, Hans Memling. The museum also provides a touching impression of what life was like in a medieval hospital ward. Visit to the Minnewater Park and a walk through the hushed beauty of the Princely Beguinage Ter Wijngaerde (1245). A quasi-religious community of women lived in this peculiarly medieval institution; they carried out good works like making and selling lace as an income for the hospital where some of them worked as nurses. Nuns of the Order of St Benedict have lived here since 1927. We will end our day with a visit to the **De Halve Maan brewery**, the last remaining active brewery located in the historical centre of Bruges, where the Brugse Zot is brewed. **Dinner** is served in the brewery (possible with a minimum of 25 people) or in a nearby restaurant. Overnight stay in Bruges.

DAY 3: Surroundings of Bruges & the Belgian coast

Breakfast buffet.

Morning

Transfer by bus to the outskirts of Bruges (we will drive along the ramparts and windmills) and **transfer by boat to Damme** (you can only get there via the historical canal Damse Vaart, which was commissioned by Napoleon).

We will then take a stroll through the lovely centre of the historical village of Damme, known from the legend of Tijl Uilenspiegel and popular these days due to its many charming restaurants and its antique stores and bookshops.

After Damme we will proceed to the Belgian coast and visit **Knokke**. By coach, we will drive along the numerous villas of Belgian's most mundane beach town. We will pass through **Zeebrugge**, which together with Antwerp is one of the most important container harbours in Europe, and we'll stop in **Lissewege** for lunch (3-course menu, drinks not included).

After **lunch** we will walk through this authentic polder village and visit the brick 'polder cathedral' Our-Lady Church and the historical Hof Ter Doest, a gigantic brick barn from the 13th century and all that remains of a former Cistercian abbey.

Afternoon

Brief visit to the seaside resort **De Haan**, famous for its numerous buildings in Belle Epoque style (late 19th, early 20th century). The Belgian king Leopold II was closely involved in the growth of this seaside resort and famous people such as Einstein loved coming there.

Next we will visit **Oostende**, the most popular beach town along the Belgian coast. The beautiful sandy beaches, the fish and yacht harbour and the fish market are some of its major attractions. After a stroll along the harbour and the dike we will continue our journey with a drive along the coast. Our next stop will be at the King Albert-I Monument in **Nieuwpoort**, an old fortified village that played an important role during the 'Battle of the IJzer.' From here we will have a splendid view over the IJzer plain and the lock complex. We will end the day with an evening walk through the historical city of **Veurne**.

Transfer back to Bruges.

Dinner (3-course menu, drinks not included) and **overnight stay** in Bruges.

DAY 4: Antwerp - Mechelen - Brussels

Breakfast buffet.

Morning

Our guide will welcome you and we will transfer to **Antwerp** by bus.

We will visit the historical centre of Antwerp on foot. We will start our discovery at the docks of the river Scheldt (Schelde) and walk along Het Steenplein square where the statue of the devil, De Lange Wapper, overlooks the area.

We will take a stroll through the 'Vlaeykensgang,' a medieval quarter full of narrow streets and blind alleys. On the Market Square (Grote Markt), the Brabo fountain, the beautiful Renaissance City Hall and the 16th and 17th century guild houses will certainly catch your eye.

Next we will visit **the Cathedral of Our Lady**. This magnificent Gothic church contains several great pieces of art by P.P. Rubens and other Flemish masters. Via the Groenplaats we will reach the Meir and pass some landmarks that were put on the international fashion map by the Antwerp Six. We will end the morning with a visit to the **Rubens House museum**. For 25 years, the museum served as the house and studio of the Baroque painter Pieter Paul Rubens.

Lunch will be served in a historical cave restaurant.

Afternoon

Transfer to **Mechelen**.

This charming city is full of history, reflecting its remarkable significance over the past few centuries. In the first half of the 16th century, under Margaret of Austria's reign, it even became the capital of the Low Countries. We will take a walk through the historical centre of Mechelen and will visit the Saint Rombouts Tower and take a stroll through the beguinage.

Transfer to Brussels.

Dinner and overnight stay in Brussels.

DAY 5: Brussels-Zaventem

Breakfast buffet.

Morning

We will visit the historical centre of Brussels on foot, and include the St Hubertus galleries, the Grand Place with the beautiful guild house gables, the statue of Manneken Pis, Place de Brouckère with the imposing 19th century Stock Market, the Kathelijneplein/Place St Cathérine Square, and the De Munt/la Monnaie opera.

We will end the morning with a visit to a real **chocolate manufacturer**. Demonstration and several tastings are included!

Lunch will be served in the oldest restaurant of Brussels, famous for its mussels and Belgian fries.

Afternoon

City tour of Brussels by bus, covering all its places of interest that are outside the historical



city centre: the EU district, the Cinquantenaire Park, the Royal Palace of Laken, the Japanese tower and the Chinese pavilion.

Before we proceed to the airport we will make one last photo stop, at the Atomium.

Transfer to Zaventem/Brussels airport.