Family-friendly Flanders and Brussels

Inspiration for holiday planners

VISITFLANDERS
CONTENT

ANTWERP 10
BRUGES 16
BRUSSELS 22
GHENT 28
MECHELEN 34
LEUVEN 40
THE COAST 48
THE KEMPEN 58
LIMBURG 64
SIMPLY FAMILY FRIENDLY

We have everything...

Welcome to Flanders, a small region excelling in craftsmanship, from delicious chocolate to Flemish Masters. The art cities of Antwerp, Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Leuven and Mechelen make every city trip an unforgettable experience full of culture, relaxation and delicious dining, all of which is set against the unique backdrop of several UNESCO World Heritage sites. Come and discover the rich culture and heritage available outside the cities with a comprehensive range of amusing excursions and pleasant bike rides. In short, Flanders has everything necessary to offer families an unforgettable stay.

...particularly for families.

There are few places that offer such a versatile array of activities for all ages. From the hippest food spots and the most hospitable accommodation, to fascinating museums and fun attractions. It’s a place where sea, green spaces and historic cities can be visited within a stone’s throw from each other. For a memorable experience, Flanders and Brussels has plenty to offer for a short, easily accessible family break, there’s a good reason why Flanders and Brussels are known as a great family-friendly destination. Flanders may be relatively small in size, but big in terms of what it has to offer. This brochure aims to provide a whole range of tips, interesting destinations and activities for a great family trip, all within Flanders’ historic cities and places beyond. Wishing you a fun filled inspirational trip!
FLANDERS AND BRUSSELS IN A NUTSHELL

THE FLEMISH COAST BORDERS THE NORTH SEA. THE LENGTH OF THE COAST IS NO LESS THAN 108 MILES.

EVERY YEAR, OVER THREE MILLION PEOPLE VISIT AN ATTRACTION OR MUSEUM AT THE COAST.

IN SOME PLACES THE BEACH IS 500 METRES 1/3MILE WIDE!

SEVERAL ART CITIES ARE SITUATED ALONG THE WATER AND A MAJORITY OFFER BOAT EXCURSIONS, GIVING VISITORS A CHANCE TO DISCOVER THE CITY IN AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY.

THE WEATHER CAN BE MERCURIAL WHICH IS WHY EVERY CITY AND REGION OFFERS BOTH INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.

A CHARMING EXPERIENCE: IN THE MAJOR CITIES YOU CAN TAKE A RIDE IN AN OLD-FASHIONED HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE.

THE MAJORITY OF FLANDERS IS FLAT WHICH IS WHY EVERY CITY AND REGION OFFERS BOTH INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.

YOU CAN ALSO GO BOATING IN THE REGIONS FOR EXAMPLE BY HIRING A KAYAK, CANOE OR MOTORBOAT.

THE LENGTH OF THE COAST IS NO LESS THAN 108 MILES FROM THE NETHERLANDS TO FRANCE.

FLANDERS HAS A NUMBER OF THRILLING AMUSEMENT PARKS, CYCLING HUBS, WALKING DISTANCE ARE LOCATED THE PLACES OF INTEREST.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE FUN IN THE WATER IN MOST PLACES:

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A CHARMING EXPERIENCE: IN THE MAJOR CITIES YOU CAN TAKE A RIDE IN AN OLD-FASHIONED HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE.
THE MAJORITY OF FLANDERS IS FLAT, SO CYCLING WITH CHILDREN IS EASY, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF THE MANY CYCLING HUBS. THESE MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE THE LENGTH OF YOUR OWN ROUTE.

A handy route planner is http://www.fietsroute.org/cycle-node-planner

FLANDERS ALSO BOASTS A NUMBER OF THRILLING AMUSEMENT PARKS, SPREAD ACROSS THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

THE MAJORITY OF FLANDERS IS FLAT, WHICH IS WHY EVERY CITY AND REGION OFFERS BOTH INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.

IN THE MAJOR CITIES THE PLACES OF INTEREST ARE LOCATED WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF EACH OTHER.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE FUN IN THE WATER IN MOST PLACES: FLANDERS HAS MORE THAN 170 SWIMMING POOLS.

ALL CITIES HAVE A CINEMA (OR SEVERAL).

LOOKING FOR A LOW BUDGET BUT COSY STAY IN THE CITY? OPT FOR A HOSTEL STAY!
DISCOVER FLANDERS WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY

HOW TO GET TO FLANDERS AND BRUSSELS?

The major cities are all located in close proximity to one another and can easily be reached by car and public transportation. On www.visitflanders.com/en/plan-your-trip you find useful information on how to get to Flanders and Brussels.

- Antwerp to Brussels: 45 km (50 min.) [via Mechelen]
- Antwerp to Mechelen: 25 km (25 min.)
- Antwerp to Bruges: 95 km (1 hour 40 min.)
- Antwerp to Ghent: 65 km (1 hour)
- Antwerp to Leuven: 64 km (53 min.) [via Brussels]
- Brussels to Mechelen: 35 km (45 min.)
- Brussels to Bruges: 100 km (1 hour 45 min.) [via Ghent]
- Brussels to Ghent: 65 km (1 hour)
- Brussels to Leuven: 30 km (30 min.)
- Mechelen to Leuven: 25 km (40 min.)
- Bruges to Ghent: 50 km (55 min.)
- Bruges to Leuven: 130 km (1 hour 40 min.) [via Ghent]
- Ghent to Leuven: 90 km (1 hour 25 min.) [via Brussels]
GETTING AROUND

All major cities are closely located and easily accessible by car and public transport. You can get around Flanders in various ways.

**BY TRAIN**
- Travel through Flanders safely and easily by train, enjoying connections to all cities.
- Train travel is free for passengers under the age of 12.
- Young persons between the ages of 12 and 26 can travel for just €6.40 (one-way).
- Discounted fares are available for families with three or more children.
- Train tickets can be purchased at train stations or online. www.belgianrail.be

**BY BUS, TRAM OR METRO**
- Get around the city or regions smoothly and without the stress of parking by bus, tram or metro.
- Children under the age of 6 travel for free.
- Tickets are available at the ticket kiosk in the station or from machines. www.delijn.be en www.stib-mivb.be (Brussels)

**BY (RENTAL) CAR**
- Cars can be rented from various places. For example at the airports and in the centre of the cities. Hire locations are often close to the central station.
- Freedom and flexibility.
- A child seat is mandatory for children under 1.35 metres (often easy to add to your booking).
- Ensure a smooth and pleasant journey with these top tips:
  - Avoid traffic jams (6 - 9:30 am and 4 – 7.30 pm).
  - Always bring plenty of water and snacks.
  - Park your car outside the cities and take the bus or tram to the centre.
  - Rent a car with air-conditioning (during summer months).

**BY COASTAL TRAM**
68 stops between Knokke and De Panne. In summer the Coastal tram runs every ten minutes, in winter it runs every twenty minutes. Read more on page 57.

Turn the page for up to 72 pages full of family-friendly tips. Get to know six charming cities in three hospitable regions, and everything they can offer to holidaymakers of all ages.
SIX STUNNING CITIES

ANTWERP
BRUGES
BRUSSELS
GHENT
MECHELEN
LEUVEN
ANTWERP

WELCOME TO ANTWERP

- Discover Antwerp Zoo, one of the oldest in the world.
- Find out more about one of the city’s most famous resident artists, Peter Paul Rubens.
- Don’t miss out on one the best (free) views of the city from the roof of the MAS museum.
- Look out the many budget-friendly hostels to spend the night with the family.


SLEEPING & WAKING UP

Arass Hotel ***
Located in the Zurenborg district, known for its beautiful architecture, and accessible public transport. All rooms are equipped with a kitchenette and the hotel is located close to a supermarket.
www.arasshotel.com

Astoria Hotel ***
A pleasant hotel in the centre of Antwerp. Children up to and including 11 years old can stay for free in their parents room. They also offer family rooms, which are connected via an adjoining door.
https://nl.astoria-antwerp.com

Crowne Plaza ***
A comfortable hotel with indoor pool. Near the most beautiful parks on the outskirts of the city, plenty of opportunity for play spaces and restaurants. Public transport is within walking distance.
www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels

Hilton Antwerp Old Town ****
An historical building in the environs of the cathedral, offering family rooms or suites. Babysitting is available on request and the restaurant caters for children.
www.hilton.com

HotelO Kathedral ***
A modern and stylish hotel adorned with Rubens images on the walls of the rooms and a view of the beautiful Antwerp Cathedral. Families with children can easily book a room with an adjoining budget single room attached.
https://hotelokathedral.com

Leopold Hotel ****
A stylish boutique hotel with many family rooms with interconnecting doors. Children up to 12 years of age can stay free of charge in an extra bed. Information about family-friendly attrac-
tions is available and there is an extensive breakfast buffet to cater for children, including pancakes!
https://nl.leopoldhotelantwerp.com

**Pulcinella**

This modern youth hostel in the middle of the city offers group rooms for families from 2 to 6 people. Offering relaxation areas with plenty of games, books and musical instruments. Packed lunches are available on request.


**Radisson BLU Astrid 4⭐️ superior**

An eye-catching hotel near the Central Station with Antwerp ZOO and many child-friendly restaurants within walking distance. A babysitting service is also available for parents.

[www.radissonblu.com](http://www.radissonblu.com)

**Van Hecke Holiday Apartment ♦️**

A comfortably- furnished family apartment in the centre of the city, for groups up to 8 people. The layout consists of 4 renovated sleeping areas and 2 modern bathrooms.

[www.apartmentsvanhecke.be](http://www.apartmentsvanhecke.be)

**TOPTIP HOSTELS**

Hostels are budget-friendly and are often located in the heart of the city. Multiple occupancy rooms can work perfectly for families. Moreover, hostels offer plenty of opportunity for relaxation and entertainment. The presence of other young people and their informal atmospheres contribute to a well-rounded city trip experience with kids.
EATING & DRINKING

Brasserie Appelmans
A fantastic brasserie close to the cathedral. Offering tasty children’s menus, typical Flemish cuisine and an extensive bar, as a highlight for parents.
www.brasserieappelmans.be

De Bomma
Located right in the centre of the city. Its menu offers authentic, delicious Flemish cuisine, in a cozy home atmosphere. Diners can create their own meal by selecting their favourite ingredients.
www.restaurantdebomma.be

De Burgerij
Tasty burgers, including vegetarian options, at De Burgerij’s two charming locations. With child sized burgers, high chairs and a separate play corner where kids can play, read or simply colour to their heart’s content.
http://www.burgerij.be

HET GELUK
The ideal place to enjoy sandwiches, soup or chocolate milk during the day. The restaurant is located by a large pedestrian square directly in front, for children to play on.
www.hetpaleis.be/over-ons/hetgeluk/over-hetgeluk

Sensunik
This restaurant is equipped with a playroom attended by entertainers whilst their chef prepares children’s dishes. Allowing parents enjoy a delicious meal, in relatively quiet relaxation.
www.sensunik.be
**TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES**

**The Belgian Chocolate Experience**
A new attraction for Antwerp: The largest chocolate museum in the world is set to open in the winter of 2018/2019! An interactive experience with plenty of tasting, telling the story of Belgian chocolate.
www.tbce.be

**Comics Station**
There’s plenty to discover and fun to be had in this spectacular experience park at Antwerp’s central station. Visitors get to experience many of the most famous Belgian comic characters, such as the Smurfs, Tintin and Lucky Luke.
www.comicsstation.be

**DIVA**
This relatively new museum focusing on the world of diamonds and silver. Free admission to the museum is available for children under the age of 12 years.
www.divaantwerp.be

**Photo museum**
This photographic museum features an exciting treasure hunt for children as well as offering several family-friendly exhibitions. Numerous activities and gadgets are available too. Free entry for children and young people under the age of 18.
www.fotomuseum.be

**Ghostwalk and Mystery Walk**
For an exciting take on Antwerp’s most spooky stories, these specially ghostly themed tours and mystery walks provide an evening full of adventure and unexpected surprises.
www.ghostwalk.be

**Middelheim Museum**
Set in lush idyllic park grounds this beautiful museum on the outskirts of the city, provides an array of outstanding outdoor installations ranging from quirky crooked boats to cycling skeletons. Nearby, is a large playground with an inviting family-friendly restaurant.
www.middelheimmuseum.be

**Red Star Line Museum**
Two million passengers made the crossing from Antwerp to North America between 1873 and 1935 on one of Red Star Line’s steamships. This museum tells their universal story of dreams, hope and the search for happiness. Children can find out about the journeys of the emigrants and the interactive family installation as well as a family tour tailored to children.
www.redstarline.be

**MAS (Museum aan de Stroom)**
This museum contains an impressive ‘warehouse’ where every floor reveals a different story about Antwerp’s history, its port connection to the rest of the world. Families can explore with Captain MAssimiliaan’s free treasure hunt. Its wide airy corridors lead to long escalators climbing 60 metres high for a spectacular roof top view over the city. Families can take a picnic and borrow blankets from the main desk for a special dining experience.
www.mas.be

**Antwerp ZOO**
Next to the central station is one of the oldest zoos in the world. A must-see for families, with more than 5,000 jungle, savannah and underwater creatures to see. Prams are available for rental for €3 euros per day.
www.zooantwerpen.be

**TOPTIP EVENTS**

Antwerp offers some of the best events for all seasons. In summer, highlights include the Sinksenfoor fun fair, family-friendly pop-up summer bars and the Zomer van Antwerpen cultural outdoor music and theatre festival. A top tip to see in winter is the city’s enchanting Christmas market, complete with ice rink and big wheel.
www.visitantwerpen.be
ACCESSIBILITY

**Buses and trams**
De Lijn buses and trams are easily recognisable; they travel to every corner of Antwerp and also make the area outside the city, easily accessible.

www.delijn.be

**Tourist tram**
This tram runs at certain times and follows a fixed route through Antwerp city centre. Its day pass allows visitors to hop on and off as desired. There are special rates for families.

www.hopnstop.be

DISCOVER MORE

Take in the castle atmosphere at Het Steen, relax on the beach of Sint-Anneke... Visit www.visitantwerpen.be/en/sightseeing/unique-places to discover many more unique places in and around the city.

Looking for even more nature and tranquillity? Be sure to visit the region of De Kempen (page 58).
WELCOME TO BRUGES

- The most popular destination for a city break, including families!
- The city centre of Bruges is for the biggest part traffic-free and everything easily accessible by foot.
- The rich history, secret courtyards and beautiful bridges, will transport the entire family back in time.
- With its stunning vistas from the water, a boat trip offers the chance to see the city from an entirely different viewpoint. A great way for younger children to get close to the pond ducks and swans, along the way.
- With its high concentration of chocolate shops, there is always something delicious available for young and old alike.

Good to know! For an overview of all family-oriented activities see: www.visitbruges.be/permanent-offer-for-families-2

SLEEPING & WAKING UP

Apart hotel Aragon  ****
Luxurious holiday apartments for up to six people for long or short stays – enjoy the privacy and space of an apartment with the services of a hotel.
www.aragon.be

B&B Den Witten Leeuw  ***
A 500-year-old building, located in a great location by the Bruges canals in view of passing boats. The family suite has a spacious bathroom with corner bath.
www.denwittenleeuw.be
Het Pand Hotel ****
This luxurious hotel welcomes children of all ages and the friendly staff are happy to help plan family-friendly activities. A Pram hire and babysitting service is available.
www.pandhotel.com

Hostel De Snuffel
Centrally located, this is a brand new budget hostel suited for families. The rooms have a contemporary and functional look. Youngsters create a pleasant buzz in the common room along with a nice garden and terrace.
www.snuffel.be

Hotel Flanders ****
A pleasant hotel with family rooms accommodating for up to five people. Within walking distance of the old town. Also equipped with a small indoor pool.
https://www.hotelflanders.com

Hotel Marcel ***
This charming boutique hotel offers traditional hospitality with a modern twist and is located less than 150 metres from the market. Double rooms with kitchenette are available for families.
www.hotelmarcel.be
EATING & DRINKING

Restaurant Sint-Joris
Restaurant Sint-Joris on the Bruges market place has been run by the same family for more than 40 years. Traditional Flemish cuisine dominates the menu but includes vegetarian dishes made with high-quality, regional ingredients.
www.restaurant-sintjoris.be

‘t Bagientje
This is a restaurant with a quaint old-time fashioned atmosphere, near the station and with a large green park as its back garden. A great recommendation for young and old visitors, partial to Flemish classic dishes.
www.bagientje.be

Books&Brunch
This restaurant doubles up as a second-hand bookshop. Its relaxed atmosphere and varied breakfast menu, light lunches and delicious desserts, provide the perfect atmosphere for children to browse through its wide range of books.
www.booksandbrunch.be

Nomad
Enjoy a fresh breakfast or organic lunch in a sleek and trendy setting. Its wide range of child friendly meals are popular and worth considering getting seating during cooler months, in its heated terrace.
www.nomadbrugge.be

Cookie’s Tapas Bar
Tucked up in the market area, this is a great dinner location, housed in a genuine medieval building. Besides traditional Spanish tapas, children’s favourites such as meatballs in tomato sauce, mini-burgers and other small dish tapas offer a great options for all ages.
www.cookiescafe.be

De Verloren Hoek
This restaurant, named after its historic location by the windmills of Bruges offers a good range of Flemish classic dishes. Its idyllic setting, in front of the mills make it a great setting during the warmer months.
www.deverlorenhoek.be
**Belfort**
Visitors keen to get an eagle eye view of the city can climb the 272-foot (83-metre) Belfort tower. Its 366 steps take a journey via the tower’s impressive clock mechanism and 47-bell carillon. A breath-taking panorama awaits those who scale this exhilarating trip.

[www.museabrugge.be](http://www.museabrugge.be)

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**Bruges Beer Museum**
This museum offers the opportunity for children to use an iPad to find out about the legendary Bruges bear story as well as his adventures in medieval Bruges through the various rooms. Allowing parents to find out more about beer in general. Available in 10 languages.

[www.brugesbeermuseum.com](http://www.brugesbeermuseum.com)

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**Chocolate Museum**
In this special chocolate dedicated museum, children can play a special game as well as taking part in a quiz and collecting stickers with chocolate rewards at the end. Every Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. the museum runs a chocolate workshop for families with children from 6 years and above.

[www.choco-story-brugge.be](http://www.choco-story-brugge.be)

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**Concert building tour**
In the city’s eye-catching concert hall, a special family trail with assignments and games has been devised to help impart information about how the concert hall works with the added bonus of experimenting with sound art. The stunning views from the concert hall’s roof terrace on the seventh floor is worth a look as well as the chance to play with their rooftop bells.

[www.concertgebouw.be](http://www.concertgebouw.be)

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**Groeninge Museum**
Jan van Eyck’s iconic parrot forms the theme of a wonderful family tour of Bruges’ most famous art museum. The tour dives into six centuries of art, from the world-famous paintings of the Flemish primitives to modern masters. Children are given some green plumes to take away and use to decorate their own favourite work of art. Suitable for children aged 6 - 12 years.

[www.museabrugge.be](http://www.museabrugge.be)

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**Historium**
In a very special virtual reality experience, families are invited to travel back in time to 1435 with a tour hosted by a character named Anna. The colourful world of old Bruges, complete with the smells and sounds of the time are re-enacted as well as the chance to be acquainted with the famous painter Jan Van Eyck. This engaging experience which stimulates the senses is perfect for all the family. The audio guide is available in 10 languages.

[www.historium.be](http://www.historium.be)

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**ACCESSIBILITY**

**Bus**
Walking from one beautiful spot to another is easy in the Bruges city centre. Buses operated by De Lijn offer a convenient alternative. Tickets can be purchased at the ticket office at the station or on the bus.

**Boat**
Embarking on a short tour on the water is easy, with five different docking points located around the city. The excursion lasts half an hour and take in the scenic highlights of Bruges.

**Horse-drawn carriage**
A carriage ride makes for an unforgettable experience by horse-drawn carriage, visitors need only to join a tour at the market square. The journey takes half an hour, with a short stop at the Minnewater, where there is time to view the beguinage.

**DISCOVER MORE**
Bruges is a stone’s throw away from the Flemish coast. Ideal for a day of relaxation if the weather is good. (page 50)
WELCOME TO BRUSSELS

- Thanks to its central location, all corners of Flanders are reachable from the capital.
- Take a selfie with the cheekiest symbolic character in Belgium. The Manneken Pis.
- With comic strip characters adorned all over the city, fans can indulge themselves with a number of themed walks, museums and enjoy viewing their favourite characters in public spaces.
- Take endless walks and play in the impressive parks, such as the Cinquantenaire and the Sonian Forest.
- Take advantage of free pram hire in the heart of the centre: www.muntpunt.be/bezoeken/wat-vind-je-muntpunt.
- Parents who want to travel light can rent baby accessories such as cots etc. from www.oscarlili.com.

Good to know! This page lists the best family activities in Brussels at: https://visit.brussels/en/profile/kids

SLEEPING & WAKING UP

Apart hotel Citadine Toison D’or ***
Conveniently located, this apart-hotel is spacious and clean and located close to public transport. Additional plus points include their friendly staff, easily accessible shops and supermarkets and restaurants in close walking distance.
www.citadines.com

FunKey Hotel ***
This colourful hotel welcomes many families with young children as well as being popular with teenagers for their free soft drinks, snacks and the option to borrow a laptop. The playrooms are also equipped with game consoles, puzzles and table football. Visitors are encouraged to make their own breakfast before taking it to the dining tables.
http://funkeyhotel.com

Hostel Bruegel
This affordable, new hostel has the advantage of being located close to the highlights of Brussels, all within walking distance. Children under the age of 3 years are free. Discounts are offered for children under the age of 16. Board games, free baby cots and high chairs are available.
www.jeugdherbergen.be/nl/brussel
Hotel Amigo  *****
For a high-end, family-friendly accommodation experience, this special hotel offers children a royal reception. It offers a welcome package with bathrobe and slippers in children’s sizes. Children can also prepare their own breakfast in the morning. An English and French speaking babysitting service is available 24/7.

www.roccofortehotels.com

Hotel Bloom  ****
No two rooms are the same here. Uniquely designed by young artists with large family rooms available.

www.hotelbloom.com

Jam Hotel  ****
A trendy city hotel with a fresh look, offering family rooms with a special bunk bed. Extra facilities include games, table tennis, and skateboards. Its small pool is the perfect place to cool off after a day walking around the city.

www.jamhotel.be

MEININGER Hotel  ***
With affordable rates, this modern hotel combines the best features of a hostel with that of a hotel. It offers a large lounge with pool table and table football. Children up to the age of 5 years, stay for free.

www.meininger-hotels.com

Novotel Brussels  ****
Offering a warm welcome to all families with rates that allow two children under 16, to stay free in their parent’s room. With a good children’s menu in their restaurant, children can relax in the hotel playroom.

www.novotel.com

Sleep Well
In addition to comfortable rooms, the Sleep Well hostel has a large family duplex with a view of the city. A private kitchen is available for just €5 euros extra. Facilities include games, a ping-pong table and bike rental.

www.sleepwell.be

Radisson Blu Royal Hotel  ****
Guests can walk to many city attractions from this centrally located hotel. The beautiful building exudes luxury and tranquillity and offers interconnecting rooms for families.

www.radissonblu.com

Train Hostel
A unique opportunity to sleep in a train carriage! This is a special hostel located by the Train World train museum, offering rooms and apartments with a special theme. A must for all train enthusiasts.

www.trainhostel.be

Zoom Hotel  ****
A comfortable, photography themed hotel with spacious rooms. Easily accessible by metro and bus and close to several restaurants around the corner. Family friendly staff and cots and child-care available on request.

www.zoomhotel.be
EATING & DRINKING

Chalet Robinson
Getting to this restaurant is an adventure in itself. Located close to the Africa Museum, the restaurant is located on an island, accessible by a raft. Large open spaces and a good children’s menu make this restaurant to being a popular choice for families.
www.chaletrobinson.be

Chez Leon
Traditional Flemish cuisine, with tasty a children’s menu offering free meals for children under 12 years, accompanied by an adult. Look out for specialties such as mussels and fries and chocolate mousse. The restaurant has a designated area for prams and pushchairs.
www.chezleon.be

Chicago Café
An excellent family-friendly café-restaurant, ideal for breakfast or lunch, with a special children’s corner at the back of the premises. Child friendly specialities include home-made lemonade, yoghurts and of course, ice cream. The restaurant has a large family-sized toilet with changing table.
www.chicagocafe.be

La Fabrique
Located in a discreet but beautiful spot in the Egmont Park, surrounded by greenery. In its pleasantly busy orangery location, tasty home-made lunches and sweet delicacies make this a famous weekend brunch destination with special prices for children.
www.lafabriqueresto.be

Houtsiplou
A family-friendly snack bar with colourful walls and great burgers. Plenty of books and toys for children to play with during their time there.
www.houtsiplou.be

Roodkapjes eetzaal – Le Wolf
The Le Wolf House of Literature houses this warm and relaxed lunchroom offering a fun lunch menu including “gingerbread houses” and “stone soups”. The room is, naturally, full of books but also games to amuse children.
www.lewolf.be
TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES

AfricaMuseum
The completely renovated AfricaMuseum will open its doors in December 2018 and is set to become a new top destination for families. With a particular focus for young visitors, all information will be available for children as well as having a family-friendly restaurant with food warming facilities for younger children. Free admission will apply for under 18’s and the surrounding green areas make this museum the ideal place for children to explore freely. Nearby, the Sonian Forest and the new playground are within walking distance of the museum.

www.africamuseum.be

Atomium
An icon of Brussels’ skyline! An incredible experience complete with old escalators, exhibitions and impressive views of Brussels from the gigantic spheres. Free admission for children under six years.

www.atomium.be

Belgian Chocolate Village
A fun insight into the process of making chocolate, from cocoa bean to pralíné. This small museum is located just outside the centre, but is easily accessible via the Simonis metro station stop. An audio guide for children is available in three languages and of course plenty of chocolate tasting!

www.belgianchocolatevillage.be

BELvue Museum
The ultimate museum about Belgium and its history. Interactive and interesting for all ages, with a quaint shop and lunch café serving organic food. Children can choose from various fun trails, including one for toddlers, from three years upwards. Free admission every Wednesday afternoon.

www.belvue.be

Coudenberg
Ideally suited to the whole family, the medieval Coudenberg Palace can be explored via underground corridors. Listen to trams traveling over ground from its cellars. Access is via the BELvue Museum and interesting features include a fun children’s quest, in costume.

www.coudenberg.brussels

House of European History
Experience modern European history through several interactive, hands-on activities and trails. Experiences include taking a cycle ride and driving a sixties car. The house offers a family backpack for children aged between 6 to 10 years with plenty of surprises and fun games in the discovery rooms. Free admission; open seven days a week.

www.historia-europa.ep.eu

Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Families with children can spend hours of fun and discovery in this haven for natural sciences delving into the evolution of people, animals and the Earth. With a wealth of natural collections to view, visitors should not miss the huge dinosaur skeleton collections. Other features include the opportunity to take part in excavations and discovering the world of insects and the deep sea. During holidays, family friendly paleoLAB workshops take place that include the study of fossils together and dressing up in prehistoric outfits.

www.naturalsciences.be

Meise Botanical Garden
A day out with the whole family? Meise Botanical Garden is well worth a visit! Children can discover more about the plant kingdom with the help of a quest with “King Amaryllo”. Features include playing in the forest visiting the Palace of Plants and taking a raft on the castle moat. Its Orangery self-service restaurant operates a terrace in the summer and indoor wood fired lounge in cooler months.

www.plantentuinmeise.be
Magritte Museum
This museum, in the heart of Brussels, displays the most important collection of René Magritte artworks in the world. His sometimes quirky depictions, with clear imagery, appeal to young and old alike. Audio guides are available in five languages, with versions created for kids aged 6-11 years and teenagers aged 12-18 years. www.musee-magritte-museum.be

Parlamentarium
The European Parliament’s modern and interactive visitor centre offers free admission for all. Children can explore the museum via a treasure hunt using a booklet, while parents can opt for an audio guide that is available in all 24 official languages of the EU. www.europarl.europa.eu/visiting/nl/brussel/parlementarium

Train World
The perfect place for all train enthusiasts with a family. A spectacular museum to explore and experience everything to do with rail travel. An opportunity to see huge locomotives, board a train in an interactive simulation or visit the excellent museum shop stocked with a multitude of fun toys. www.trainworld.be

TOPTIP FOR COMIC FANS
90 years ago, Tintin saw was discovered in Brussels. Countless famous comic characters followed, such as the Smurfs and Lucky Luke. Belgium has a large comic strip culture, which also comes to life outside of the comic books!

MOOF
MOOF enchants young and old with wonderful, colourful rooms and interactive exhibits where you stand among your comic book heroes. It’s right by Central Station. www.moofmuseum.be

Comic walks
Just taking a stroll through Brussels’ city streets will reveal dozens of comic book character murals. To take full advantage of what there is to see, visitors can navigate themselves on a discovery trail to experience some of the comic-style walls and take a walk in Tintin’s footsteps. Both guides are available at every tourist information desk. www.visitbrussels.be
ACCESSIBILITY

The MIVB transport system provides public transport in Brussels by bus, tram or metro. Children under the age of six years travel for free.

www.stib-mivb.be

DISCOVER MORE

Hoeve Nos Pilifs
This is a large farm park where a variety of farm can be found. An ideal hiking spot that includes fruit picking from the garden and its own bakery.

www.fermenospilifs.be

Castle of Gaasbeek
A perfect day trip from central Brussels! This beautiful historic castle offers a great insight into the past. Home to an impressive collection of modern and classic art, a special treasure hunt for children is popular. Famous for its location, close to notable landscapes depicted by Flemish Master Pieter Bruegel the Elder, its restaurant even serves a “Bruegel” ice-cream!

www.kasteelvangaasbeek.be
The Castle of the Counts, Ghent
WELCOME TO GHENT

- It is the home of The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb, otherwise called the Ghent Altarpiece. This famous painting by the Van Eyck brothers is one of Flanders' greatest masterpieces and is on display at the Cathedral.
- It offers a good selection of reasonably priced hostels for families.
- Not to be missed is Gravensteen, a medieval castle in the heart of Ghent.
- This is the birthplace of Emperor Charles V, who was just six years old when he became the ruler of the Netherlandish region.
- Baby spots: Infant-friendly restaurants and shops display a green sticker in windows to indicate that they welcome baby feeding and changing. [Link]
- At Ghent pram points, pushchairs and prams are free to use when visiting the city: [Link]

Good to know! Also view this overview page with family offers in Ghent: [Link]

SLEEPING AND WAKING

Aparthotel Castelnou ***
This hotel offers separate apartments with spacious modern rooms, equipped with a kitchenette. The separate bathroom and bedroom are ideal for families with children. Tasty daily specials and children's menus are available in the restaurant; a neighbourhood shop, cinema and playgrounds are also nearby. [Link]

Camping Blaarmeersen ****
For a camp location close to the city centre, the Blaarmeersen Sports and Recreation Park offers a multitude of facilities including sports and relaxation. Often described as a large, child-friendly park in an ideal location. [Link]

De Draecke Hostel
A meeting place for guests from all over the world. Large and small rooms available with private bathroom, all at a reasonable price. [Link]
Flandria Centrum *
Children under the age of seven years stay free with their parents at this budget hotel. The pedestrianised location provides peace and quiet, after a day full of discovery.
http://www.hotelflandria-gent.be

Harmony ****
This centrally located hotel by the river, is within walking distance of the most important sights. Children under the age of three stay for free in their parents’ room.
www.hotel-harmony.be

Hostel 47
Low budget accommodation with stylish and ultra-modern furnishings. Free Wi-Fi, linen, breakfast and tips from its hosts is also included and is located in the nicest spots in the city.
www.hostel47.com

Hotel Orion ***
Stylish living in the large art deco family room. A beautiful hotel with swimming pool is located just outside the centre, close to a number of other architectural gems.
www.hotel-orion.be

KaBa Hostel
A trendy location for a budget price. Great for a secure stay with a spacious garden for children.
http://www.kabahostel.be

Monasterium PoortAckere *
This former monastery offers children under 15 discounts on city discovery packages. Conveniently situated close to the centre of the city.
www.monasterium.be

NH Gent Belfort ****
A great location right opposite the town hall with interconnecting rooms, ideal for families. The inner courtyard terrace is a great place to relax in good weather.
www.nh-hotels.com

Novotel Gent Centrum ***
A family-friendly hotel in the centre of Ghent. Featuring a swimming pool, as well as a snug play area and library ideal for hours of fun, for children.
www.accorhotels.com

Treck Hostel
The very first indoor campsite! In this unique hostel you can stay (and have breakfast) in one of the nine themed caravans or in a communal room. Nice extras are the indoor playground for the little ones, board games and table tennis. At walking distance from the centre.
www.treckhostel.be

Uppelink Hostel
This hostel occupies one of the oldest buildings in Ghent. An affordable option with communal kitchen, right in the historic city centre by the river. Great for its magnificent views and kayak rentals.
www.hosteluppelink.com
EATING & DRINKING

Amélie+Moi
A trendy combination of café, shop and meeting space, geared towards pregnant mothers and parents with young children. The menu includes some delicious fair-trade dishes and child-sized drinks. A play area with cushions and toys completes the experience.
www.visitgent.be/nl/zien-doen/ameliemoi

Balls & Glory
A favourite eating place for Flemish meatballs (vegetarians options are available). Free water and fruit are available to guests on their bench-style tables and children are welcome in their open kitchen. There is also a location in Antwerp.
www.ballsnglory.be

Bavet
The two Bavet branches in Ghent welcome spaghetti lovers of all ages in a fun, youthful setting. Messy eating is of course obligatory! The portions come in three sizes: mouse, dog and horse. Bavet branches can be found in Antwerp, Brussels and Leuven.
www.bavet.eu

De tuin van Eten
A vegetarian restaurant close to Citadel Park. It offers popular children’s dishes and a chest full of toys. Well behaved children are rewarded!
www.restauranttuinvaneten.be

Le Jardin Bohémien
An atmospheric breakfast and lunch venue where youngsters are also welcome. It offers a varied children’s menu including organic sandwiches and homemade lemonade.
www.lejardinbohemien.be

Pannenkoekenhuis Gwenola
A centrally located pancake house specialising in pancakes in all sizes and flavours for all ages.
www.gwenola.be
**TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES**

**Belfort**
Climb the famous Belfort tower and enjoy a beautiful view of the city from the city’s rooftops. Code cracking and mystery solving treasure hunts are available for youngsters discover.

[www.belfortgent.be](http://www.belfortgent.be)

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**Design Museum Ghent**
Children are encouraged to go on a Playmobil character treasure hunt in this house full of ornate furniture and ornaments. Admission to the museum is free for children and young people up to the age of 18.

[www.designmuseumgent.be](http://www.designmuseumgent.be)

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**Gravensteen**
The imposing medieval Gravensteen castle is an unmissable feature of the city. A beautiful view of Ghent awaits visitors from its ramparts and from within the castle are incredible spiral staircases, corridors and even a fun medieval “torture” museum. Free admission for youths up to the age of 19.

[www.gravensteen.stad.gent](http://www.gravensteen.stad.gent)

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**Huis van Alijn**
A colourful museum that celebrates daily life. A dive into the past with the assistance of vintage furniture, images and film transform visitors to an age gone by. A beautiful courtyard with a terrace provides a safe and pleasant play area for children.

[www.huisvanalijn.be](http://www.huisvanalijn.be)

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**Museum of Industry**
Located in the centre of Ghent, this museum is housed in an impressive factory building. Children between the ages of 18 months and 12 years old are given a choice of games to play. Workshops allow children to get creative with all kinds of materials.

[www.industriemuseum.be](http://www.industriemuseum.be)

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**MSK - Ghent**
The Museum of Fine Arts Ghent is an impressive gallery catering to the young and old with over 600 masterpieces of art, dating from the Middle Ages to the present. Amusing installations appeal to all imaginations and in the various halls, interactive activities encourage children (over three months) to engage with the exhibits (suitable for children from three months). The beautiful Citadel park at the entrance of the museum provides extra space for walking and playing.

[www.mskgent.be](http://www.mskgent.be)

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**Blaarmeersen Sports and Recreation Park**
Housing a playground, an adventure forest and the largest indoor climbing park in Europe, Blaarmeersen is popular choice for recreation in Ghent. There is a separate climbing zone for pre-school children. In summer, the large swimming pond with eight slides and man-made beach is a good place to escape to cool down with an ice-cream.

City walks
Ghent has mapped out some handy city walks. They have also devised some special apps for children that work with their walks. ‘Fosfor the Dragon’, sends kids on a quest with games to interact with the city’s cultural sights. Free to download, they are aimed for children aged five to 12. Look out for the Concrete Canvas Tour, a route along the coolest artistic graffiti walls in the city centre. https://visit.gent.be

ACCESSIBILITY

Ghent’s water tram allows six hop on, hop off stops along various tourist locations in the city, such as Gravensteen castle. Children pay a reduced rate and adults purchasing a Gent City Card are entitled to free use of the water tram for a day.

DISCOVER MORE

Families with sea legs shouldn’t miss a classic boat trip on Ghent’s inland waters. Tours come with running commentary in various languages by the captain. Alternately, boats can be rented to sail to idyllic green destinations such as St.Martens-Latem and Deurle. All sailing options are listed on www.visitgent.be/varen.
MECHELEN

WELCOME TO MECHELEN
- Where children are treated like royalty! Follow Rommy, its city mascot of for children for a memorable trip with the whole family.
- Discover treasure hunts in the city and climb St. Rumbold’s Tower.
- On arrival, children receive a free backpack (subject to availability) with plenty of activities when staying at the many family-friendly hotels.
- A walk along the Dijlepad, a floating walkway along the canal, is a popular activity for children.

Good to know! An overview of the family-friendly options in Mechelen can be found here: https://visit.mechelen.be/families

SLEEPING AND WAKING

Best Western Hotel Golden Anchor ***
This comfortable hotel offers weekend packages for the whole family, with admission to many attractions included in their rates.
www.guldenanker.be

De Zandpoort Hostel
This is a family-friendly hostel equipped with a playground within walking distance of the historic city centre. Features include good parking and the use of videos and games.
www.mechelen-hostel.com
Holiday Inn Express Mechelen City Centre ***
A centrally located hotel, a stone’s throw from all sights in and around Mechelen. The family rooms with sofa bed are particularly comfortable.
www.hiexpress.com/mechelenbe

Hotel Elisabeth ***
This modern hotel’s family room holds a special surprise with a children’s version of “champagne” to raise a glass with their parents! Positioned in an excellent location near the centre.
www.elisabethhotel.be

Hotel Muske Pitter ** superior
A charming family hotel with interconnecting rooms and a welcoming, home-from-home atmosphere. The ground floor houses a tavern serving hot food. At breakfast time, packed lunches can be prepared for later in the day.
www.muskepitter.be

Martin’s Patershof ****
A large church which has been transformed into a stylish hotel and pays special attention to young guests. A special feature is the unique rooms with stained-glass windows. Special breakfast for children is served, family rooms and interconnected rooms. Special family deals are often offered during weekends and holidays.

NH Mechelen ***
Centrally located hotel on the renovated Korenmarkt. The friendly staff, spacious rooms and the late check-out on a Sunday, make this hotel a popular choice for families.
www.nh-hotels.com

Novotel Mechelen Centrum ****
With 100 family rooms, a central location and free accommodation for under 16 year olds, the Novotel is perfectly geared for child-friendly city stays.
www.accorhotels.com

VixX Hotel *** superior
This hotel’s ‘Out with the kids’ package includes a luxurious family suite with terrace, breakfast and tickets for the Planckendael animal park.
www.vixxhotel.be
FOOD & DRINKS

Beans Bar
A small breakfast and brunch spot in the centre of Mechelen. Children can enjoy a bagel with banana and chocolate, or another popular dishes on the menu such as wraps, smoothies and tarts all of which are reasonably priced and delicious.
www.beansbar.be

Bokes en Co
A small casual eatery with a retro look, ideal for breakfast, lunch and teatime. Serving sandwiches, fresh soups and cakes. Toys are available in its relaxed, cozy setting.
www.bokes-co.be

Café Belge
A brasserie with a great family atmosphere, located in an ideal sunny spot, on the Grote Markt. Classic Flemish dishes such as vol-au-vent and stews await hungry parents and children.
www.cafebelge.eu

Cups’ n Cakes
This coffee and lunch café excels in serving unusual pies, delicious macaroons and, of course, cheerful cupcakes. A milkshake or smoothie completes the indulgence.
www.cups-n-cakes.be

De Cirque
A café bar offering Mechelen’s famous ‘Gouden Carolus’ beer for adults with special dishes such as “Smurf” soup, cool burgers and “gnome” ice cream for children.
www.decirque.be

Den Equator
A comfortable café with a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Parents and children can unwind on the quiet terraces at the front and back of the café with a special corner to occupy the children.
www.kinderstad.mechelen.be/den-equator

Bistro t’ASS
This bistro actively promotes work experience opportunities for young staff with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) so its pleasant and friendly atmosphere make this a great choice for a small snack or lunch. Its position close to a playground with a sunny terrace make this popular with families.

Il Cardinale
An ecclesiastic theme is the highlight of this fun burger bar known for its excellent service. Look out for its striking wall of Mary statues and on the menu, children might want to try its “Baby Jesus” burger!
www.ilcardinale.be
Sava
Sava’s long tables and sharing dishes provide the perfect setting for a family meal together. Delicious Spanish specialties in a warm, family setting, loved by locals.
www.savamechelen.be

Sister Bean
Enjoy a healthy breakfast, lunch or dessert at this young, trendy cafe. Great for its take-away selection with specialities including home-made lemonade and iced tea.
www.sisterbean.be

**TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES**

**St. Rumbold’s Tower + skywalk**
The St. Rumbold’s rises proudly above the city and is visible from every direction. The climb up to the top of the 320-foot (97.5-metre) tower is an unforgettable experience and includes a tour of the tower. An adventurous treasure hunt for children is also available. Views from the top include the Atomium in Brussels and the Antwerp Cathedral.
www.visitmechelen.be

**Hof van Busleyden**
A beautifully renovated city palace with a special family guide available in English. Tear-off sheets to navigate the way to exciting assignments for children. Exhibition halls contain special golden cubes, designed to be discovered by children and encourage invention such as the creation of mythical creatures amongst other tasks. Free entry for children under the age of 12.
www.hofvanbusleyden.be/kinderen-3

**Technopolis**
An active science centre which aims to shed light on the technology that hides behind everyday things. With more than 350 exhibits, children, young people and their parents can easily spend a morning or afternoon enjoying activities such as landing an aeroplane, resting on a bed of nails, or even cycling in the air suspended by a cable.
www.technopolis.be

**Toy museum**
This large toy museum is located right next to a train station and features five floors of toy collections through the ages. Treasure hunt play areas (also for toddlers and pre-schoolers) and of course plenty of toys, ranging from trains and board games, to teddy bears and doll houses are in abundance. The museum café serves favourites such as pancakes, waffles and ice cream.
www.speelgoedmuseum.be

**Planckendael ZOO**
This all-weather zoo and playground offers year-round activities for the whole family. With animals from five continents to view, there are numerous suspension bridges and play equipment to amuse children with. Indoor water areas provide protection and amusement in bad weather.
www.planckendael.be

**Eight historic churches**
Learning facts about the rich religious heritage of the city doesn’t have to be boring. The city has devised several fun and playful assignments for children based on stories of the city’s beautiful churches.
www.visitmechelen.be

**Dijlepad**
The Dijlepad is a wooden floating path that has been created on the river. A walk along the route reveals a multitude of charming historic waterfront houses as well as wildlife such as ducks and fish. A great activity for the evening, to enjoy the sparkle of the city lights.
www.visitmechelen.be

**Visit Mechelen**
Mechelen offers a variety of options to discover the city with children: interactive walks, a DIY guide, fun packages and a special family city map. All playgrounds and play equipment are listed on the city map reveal little havens where children can play, e.g. the children’s maze, places for climbing, and large interactive cubes to play with.
www.visitmechelen.be
ACCESSIBILITY

**BUS**
Take a bus in the city to conserve energy in the city centre. There are even special discounted rates for very short trips.

**BICYCLE**
Easily navigable, a good way to explore Mechelen is by bike. Atelier Mechelen rents out children’s bicycles, trailer bikes and bicycle carts for a broad range of ages.  
www.atelier-mechelen.be

DISCOVER MORE

**Sportimonium**
The Domain of Hofstade hosts the sportiest museum in the country, in the middle of a nature reserve. Ideal for active and adventurous families looking for a day of fun whether it is swimming and playing in the lake, climbing or simply enjoying a family picnic together.  
www.sportimonium.be
LEUVEN

WELCOME TO LEUVEN

- Home to the oldest university in the Low Countries. Climb Leuven’s university library tower (free admission under the age of 12) for a magnificent view of the city.
- Other must-sees: the beguinage, the old Botanical Garden and the cities various charming parks.
- The floating Dijle terraces provide a perfect picnic spot.
- The beautiful Gothic-style City Hall, adorned with remarkably ornate statues, is a focal point and will impress all ages.

Good to know! An overview with the best family activities in Leuven can be found here: https://www.visitleuven.be/en/leuven-with-kids

SLEEPING AND WAKING

Boardhousing Apartservice ***
Luxuriously furnished studios for short or long stays. An a la carte hotel service for breakfast is available. Offering free bike hire to explore the beautiful surroundings outside the city.
http://www.boardhouse.be

De Blauwput Hostel
This modern hostel with family rooms is located close the train station. Travel with by train to and from Brussels and Brussels Airport only takes 30 minutes and provides the ideal, budget-friendly base.
www.jeugdherbergen.be/en/leuven

Martin’s Klooster Hotel ****
A Former monastery beautifully converted into a stylish hotel. Located at the end of a quiet, traffic-free street in the middle of the city. Children under the age of 12 stay for free.
www.martinshotels.com/nl/hotel/klooster-hotel

Novotel ****
Children under the age of 16 stay for free in their parents’ room at this well-appointed hotel, just outside the centre of Leuven. A friendly welcome and plentiful breakfast buffet awaits.
www.novotel.com/Leuven

The Cube hostel
A modern hostel offering both large and small rooms offers good breakfasts with the chance for guests to make their own pancakes.
https://www.cubehostel.be
**EATING & DRINKING**

**Burgerfolie**
With paper and pencils in plentiful supply, this burger bar is popular with children. With mini burgers with home-made fries and salad available for kids, a choice of over 20 gourmet burgers (including vegetarian options) will sate the parent’s appetites too.
www.burgerfolie.be

**Coupe Matadi**
A homemade ice-cream parlour set unusually on a vintage 1929 cargo barge. With eight delicious flavours on offer, the choices include specialities such as yoghurt and honey ice-cream and caramel.
www.coupematadi.be

**Domus**
This gastro-pub is one of Leuven’s most notable establishments. Serving traditional dishes at fair prices, Domus offers good children’s menu options. Famous for its brewery, parents can try their speciality home brews.
www.domusleuven.be

**Improvisio**
A modern brasserie offering good local dishes and a variety of children’s favourites. Facilities include a playroom and high chairs making this eatery a great family friendly destination. A safe pedestrian courtyard provides a good place to play.
www.improvisio.net

**Noordoever**
This vegetarian restaurant with a buffet option is located close to the Leuven canal. Plates are weighed to determine the cost of the meal.
www.noordoever.be
TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES

M - Museum Leuven
An unmissable art museum for all ages. Its spacious halls are filled with a mix of classic and contemporary art with interactive tools to amuse children. In addition to their playful treasure hunt, children are entertained by activities such as music, a climbing wall, and a “Fit-O-Meter” fitness calculator as well as other engaging exercises. A quiet courtyard and free pram rental completes its welcome for families.

www.mleuven.be/nl/met-kinderen

Great Beguinage of Leuven
This is a haven of peace and tranquility within the city walls of Leuven. Its picturesque setting is the perfect place to take beautiful pictures. Now a UNESCO World Heritage site, this area historically housed single women who chose to live a religious lifestyle. Nowadays it is home to students and families.

www.leuven.be

Botanical garden
The oldest botanical garden in Belgium is free to visit and is an oasis of peace in the middle of the city. Children will enjoy exploring its many paths and its large tropical greenhouse even has turtles to discover.

www.leuven.be
HOW TO PLAN A CITY TRIP WITH KIDS?  
**TIPS FOR LEUVEN AND OTHER CITIES**

- Advance organisation: Give children the opportunity to help choose what they’d like to do ahead of time. This way they’ll know what to expect and will to look forward to the activities planned.
- Allow children pack the contents of their city rucksack. To include of a choice of:
  - Drinking bottle and snacks
  - A sun hat or cap
  - A raincoat
  - A notebook for drawing and writing in.
  - Pocket money for a souvenir
  - A label with their name and a telephone number for security.
  - Room for a city map
- Opt for a centrally located family-friendly hotel, apartment or hostel. Each will have their own advantages, whether they provide an adventurous setting or conversely, peace and comfort.
- Include a combination of activities throughout the day, such as, visiting a museum, taking a peaceful boat taking a swim.
- Plan for all weather conditions in the sun or rain.
- Parents might like to take advantage of babysitting services in the evening to enjoy their evening, offering with a different experience for their stay.
**ACCESSIBILITY**

**Solar train**
For a view of Leuven’s most beautiful spots, take a ride on the city’s solar energy-powered tourist train. For a relaxing view with an informative commentary along the way.
[www.zonnetrein.be](http://www.zonnetrein.be)

**Bicycle**
The perfect way to explore this compact city and its surrounding areas. Hire bikes for adult and children. Helmets are also available in all sizes.
[www.leuvenleisure.com](http://www.leuvenleisure.com)

**DISCOVER MORE**

**Kessel-Lo provincial domain**
A beautiful green area with playground, petting zoo and mini golf.

**Meerdaalwoud**
Another natural park, closely located from Leuven. Children can play giant Mikado, climb the park bridge or simply explore the beautiful forest.
[www.meerdaalwoud.be](http://www.meerdaalwoud.be)
NOT TO BE MISSED

FLEMISH MASTERS FOR FAMILIES

The ideal opportunity for families to acquaint themselves with the greatest artists of Flanders. Over the next few years, Flanders will be showcasing a series of activities and exhibitions that will place a special focus upon its Flemish Masters. It is a great way to indulge in its history of fine art by taking a journey through the past. From young to old, the Flemish Masters promises an experience to pique the interest of all. More info on www.flemishmasters.com

A selection of the best features on offer include:

PERMANENT EXHIBITION

Hof Van Busleyden, Mechelen
A palace full of art treasures

This beautiful city palace invites the experience of Flemish art in all its glory. Containing priceless artworks by Jan van Eyck, Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel, its regal setting provides a fitting home for masterpieces. Children are treated as VIP guests and the English language family trail provides a guide with a map with tear-off sheets to navigate the way to exciting assignments. Exhibit halls contain special golden cubes, designed to be discovered by children and encourage invention such as the creation of mythical creatures amongst other tasks. Free entry for children under the age of 12. www.hofvanbusleyden.be/kinderen-3

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

The world of Bruegel
Bokrijk open air museum
Use all your senses and dive into a Bruegel painting

In 2019, the Bokrijk Open Air Museum will delve into the world of Bruegel. Its interactive features allow guests to immerse themselves into Bruegel’s ‘The Fight Between Carnival and Lent’ and the Bruegelian characters within the painting. Visitors receive wristbands to scan objects from copies the paintings, which can be found throughout the park. Aimed at offering a sensory trip to see, hear, feel, taste and smell life, as it would have existed in Bruegel’s lifetime. www.theworldofbruegel.be
TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

**Bruegel’s Eye** 17 April – 30 October 2019, Dilbeek

A walking tour through the green landscape of Bruegel’s paintings

Dilbeek’s unique walking trail has been created to commemorate the 450th anniversary of Pieter Bruegel the Elder death. This beautiful walk alongside local flora and fauna takes in views of the church of Sint-Anna-Pede and the water mill of Sint-Gertrudis-Pede, as depicted by Bruegel in his paintings and remain unchanged. The child friendly walking trail offers pushchair-friendly hiking trails, short walks (ideal for children) as well as lavatory stops and places to find special playgrounds, open spaces for play as well as sanitary facilities and other information tailored to children.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

**Feast of Fools** 17 April – 28 July 2019, Gaasbeek Castle

A playful, artistic journey through castle grounds.

In this vivid exhibition, visitors come face to face with key works by Flemish and international artists, all of which have been influenced by the works of Bruegel. Modern art, performance and music fill the halls of the castle. The guided tour will bring together stories tailored to children with fun facts for adults. Enchanting castle grounds encourage exploration and hours of opportunity to appreciate the tranquil setting of this fairy-tale castle.

www.feastoffools.be

PERMANENT

**Van Eyck**

St Bavo’s Cathedral, Ghent

Experience “The Adoration of the Lamb of God” in augmented reality

St Bavo’s Cathedral will welcome a brand new visitor centre in 2020. As well as this, the fully restored panels of “The Adoration of the Lamb of God” and other art treasures will be returned to the Cathedral, with all their splendour. Augmented reality glasses will take visitors into an immersive look into the history of the whilst the centre will offer a number of special trails designed to inform children.

www.sintbaafskathedraal.be
THREE OUTSTANDING FLEMISH REGIONS

THE COAST
THE KEMPEN
LIMBURG
THE COAST

WELCOME TO THE SEA

- Over 108 miles (67 km) miles of wide sandy beaches, and sand dikes offering hours of beach fun on Belgium's coastal towns.
- Endless fun on wide expanses of beach featuring activities such as exhilarating trampoline parks and bouncy castles.
- Bike rental for the whole family, or for a special experience, drive go-carts over the dikes together.
- Children under the age of six travel free on the coastal tram.
- A Coast Pass offers a number of discounts at local attractions and sights. Available for free download at www.dekust.be/nl/download-jouw-gratis-kustpas-met-voordelen
- Look out for the seasonal beach clubs for an ideal family base.
- For an overview of the various locations, visit www.dekust.be
- Rental of surfboards can be found at:

Good to know! Even more inspiration for family-friendly outings:
www.belgiancoast.co.uk/en/inspiration/taking-your-children-seaside-10-tips
www.belgiancoast.co.uk/en/48-hours-belgian-coast/48-hours-kids
Dozens of tips for kids in Ostend: https://www.visitoostende.be/en/agenda#

SLEEPING & WAKING UP

KNOKKE-HEIST

Knotwilgehoeve ★★★★
This is a cozy B&B, located in Ramskapelle, on the edge of Knokke-Heist. Set in green surroundings, it offers comfortable family rooms with child-friendly activities on site.
www.knotwilgenhoeve.be

ZEEBRUGGE/HEIST

Hotel ibis Styles Zeebrugge ★★★
Conveniently situated just over a mile (2km) from the North Sea and the sandy beach of Zeebrugge. The coastal tram stops just 330 feet (100m) from the hotel. Rooms offer sofa beds for children and spacious family suites with connecting rooms are available. During warmer months the hotel has the advantage of being able to offer an outdoor pool with sun terrace.

BLANKENBERGE

Hotel Du Commerce ★★★
This quiet but welcoming hotel is located in the centre of Blankenberge, just four minutes from the seafront. It offers luxurious and comfortable three and four person occupancy rooms for families.
www.hotel-du-commerce.be
Alfa Inn Aparthotel ***
Alfa Inn offers apartments with the advantages of hotel services. Spacious rooms situated around a courtyard garden make for a great family setting. Offering a babysitting service, playground and playroom available.
www.alfa-inn.com

DE HAAN–WENDUINE

Hof ter Lepelem ***
A family-friendly hotel equipped with a terrace, playground and swimming pool. A relaxed atmosphere in the setting of a quiet B&B. Suitable for families of all ages.

Hof ter Meulen ***
A holiday farm with old bakery and barn turned into characterful holiday residence for 7-20 people. Large family rooms are available with plenty of room for children to play. Look out for the extraordinary woolly-coated pigs on site!
www.hoftermeulen.be

OSTEND

Hotel Kruishof ***
An attractive family hotel in a green setting mile (800m) from the sea. Well served by transport links as the bus and coastal tram stop nearby. The former farm offers a large relaxation area and plenty of outdoors fun: a football field, trampoline, playground and go-carts.
www.kruishof.be

Hotel Ostend***
This hotel offers an indoor play area with bouncy castle. Children under the age of 12 stay for free when booking a family package.
www.hotelostend.be

Hotel Princess ***
This pleasant hotel is located just a few steps from the beach. It offers a range of 3-4 person family rooms as well as an inviting bar for parents to enjoy. A playroom for children is also on site.
www.hotelprincess.be

Vayamundo Oostende
Studios and apartments with an impressive location on the seafront. Other great features of this holiday complex include the indoor swimming pool with sauna and separate children’s pool, a craft club, and a giant play village.
www.vayamundo.be/nl/kust

MIDDELKERKE–WESTENDE

Hotel Kristoffel ***
A centrally located family hotel close to the beach, tram stop and Middelkerke casino. The hotel has 3-4-person family rooms and provides baby cots.
www.hotelkristoffel.be

Zon en Zee Aparthotel **
Another apartment with hotel services that is just a 10-minute walk from the beach. The apartments have their own kitchen and seating area. A buffet breakfast is available upon request. Family apartments and suites with multiple bedrooms are also available.
www.zonenzee.be
NIEUWPOORT

Het Klein Noordhof 三星
Quietly tucked away in a peaceful setting, this family friendly hotel excels in providing ideal play facilities for children and pets, an unforgettable stay. Half-board catering is also available.
www.kleinnoordhof.be

Kompascamping Nieuwpoort 四星
An extensive campsite that provides for young and old, both nearby and on site. Offering several indoor and outside playgrounds, two heated outdoor swimming pools with a slide, as well as many sports facilities with an enthusiastic entertainment team.
www.kompascamping.be/nieuwpoort

KOKSIJDE-OOSTDUINKERKE

Soll Cress, Koksijde 三星
A family hotel by the sea in this charming resort town. Close to public transportation, the hotel offers a swimming pool and play area.
www.sollcress.be

De Torreele 三星
An oasis of calm for parents and children on this holiday farm. Features include sunny terrace, spacious living room and facilities for kids to race go-carts, bicycles, or play in the football fields or its bouncy castle. A tour of the farm or a ride on the tractor is also possible.
www.detorreele.be

Hof ter Duinen 三星
This family hotel is located 15 minutes from the amusement park, Plopsaland. It is also just a short walk from the sea, beach and dunes. Up to three additional children can stay in each of the superior rooms. The special family rooms with inter-connecting door are equipped with garden view a balconies, double Jacuzzi, DVD player and free access to the DVD-library.
www.hofterduinen.be

DE PANNE

Hotel Ambassador 三星
This hotel’s ethos in excelling its family friendly service is clear. Children can play quietly in the hotel’s special children’s corner, or opt for board games and comic books from the bar library. In a central location, moments from the beach, with nearby bike rental, beach games, green areas and a range of play zones.
www.hotel-ambassador.be

Plopsa Hotel
From 2020, the grand Plopsa Hotel, entirely focused on children will open. The hotel will accommodate 117 rooms and will focus on its ‘theatre’ as its theme. Features will include an eye-catching entrance hall in the style of an old opera hall. Located next to Plopsaland De Panne amusement park.
www.plopsa.be
EATING & DRINKING

Aan Tafel, Wenduine
With entrance to its restaurant via its fish shop, this small, attractive fish restaurant with open kitchen is the ideal place to enjoy fresh fish in an honest and well established eatery.
www.restaurantaantafel.be

’t Boerenhof, Knokke-Heist
A child-friendly restaurant where parents can enjoy the sun on the large terrace, and children can enjoy the playground or nearby animals. Offering an extensive children’s menu with something for everyone.
www.tboerenhof.be

Belle de Jour, Ostend
A delicious bistro in the centre of Ostend. Freshly prepared meals are listed on a chalkboard and the menus change daily. Children can select, value for money dishes from the kitchen.
www.bistrobelledejour.be

Kantine, Koksijde
A hip and relaxed brunch bar, situated right next to a family concept store, Kabine. The perfect place for a delicious breakfast, a healthy lunch and other treats. The perfect place to unwind and enjoy.
www.kabine.be/kantine

Marie Siska, Knokke-Heist
Famous for its wonderful waffles, this location is a paradise for children thanks to its fantastic play areas (which include a baby areal and a maze). Traditional Flemish dishes, also available in child-sized portions, all in a family-friendly setting.
www.siska-marie.com

Moeder Lambik, De Panne
Popular amongst families for a snack after visiting a day in Plopsaland amusement park. A pub-style brasserie, offering grilled specialities.
www.moederlambik.be

De Spelleplekke, Oostduinkerke
Families receive a warm welcome at this trendy restaurant by Oostduinkerke dike. Varied, fresh and original dishes and the tastiest home-made, healthy drinks are served.
www.despelleplekke.be

TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES

KNOKKE-HEIST

Zwin
In this bird-world paradise, its renewed visitor centre offers some fantastic family activities for all ages. Features include an interactive exhibition and an outdoor hut trail guided by rangers. From 2019, children will also be able to follow an adventure trail through the park, just one of the many play elements.
www.zwin.be

ZEEBRUGGE

Havenrondvaart
A trip to Zeebrugge offers a range of interesting sights. Visit the international harbour and embark on a trail of some of the newest passenger ships. And in this gusty sea port, look out for the wind turbines, an island with thousands of birds and one of the largest locks in the world.
www.havenrondvaarten.be
BLANKENBERGE

De Lustige Velodroom
Crazy bikes are available for rent on this velodrome at Blankenberge beach. Hilarity is guaranteed! For 2.50 euros, children can ride around and swap crazy bikes as often as they like. Parents can give it a try, too.
www.delustigevelodroom.be

Sea Life
Over 50 aquariums showcase an amazing underwater world. There’s no shortage of unique experiences such as getting close to seahorses, interact with a sea lion and having fun in the maze of climbing walkways.
www.visitsealife.com

Serpentarium
With a focus on all things beastly, this exciting reptile zoo is a great place to pet snakes. The serpentarium takes an impressive journey through a jungle full of spiders, lizards and frogs.
www.serpentarium.be

OSTEND

Provincial domain Raversyde
This versatile natural park offers experiences for all ages. Home to the Atlantic Wall, one of the top attractions on the coast, visitors can take a unique walk along historical bunkers and trenches. Visit an old fishing village where fishermen tell stories of old and there is a playground for younger visitors.
www.raversyde.be

James Ensor House
Surrealist artist, James Ensor was one of Ostend’s most famous residents. In a new interactive experience centre (opening in spring 2019), families will get the opportunity to find out more about this Anglo-Belgian artist. Multimedia and virtual reality provide an exciting experience for young and old. Children are also kept busy with fun assignments and treasure hunts. Available in five languages (including Spanish).
www.hetjamesensorhuis.be

KOKSIJDE-OOSTDUINKERKE

Abbey Museum Ten Duinen
This medieval abbey museum site offers a refreshing look at life in the Middle Ages. A special virtual reality experience helps add to the experience. A walk through the church to admire elaborately decorated manuscripts. In addition, the museum also offers the ‘Hourglasses’ tour for children between the ages of six and 12, designed for families.
www.tenduinen.be

Oostduinkerke Lido
This wonderful outdoor heated pool is unique to the coast. Close to the charming sea dike of Oostduinkerke, there are even shallow pools for smaller children.
www.dekust.be/nl/doen/strandbad-oostduinkerke

NAVIGO - National Fisheries Museum
A delightful child-friendly museum which tells the story of Belgium’s fishing history. Interactive features and fascinating aquariums teaming with sea life make this a popular spot. Children can stroke stingrays and view infant dogfish in the museum’s maternity clinic. Sticker games for children from 3-6 are offered whilst older children are encouraged to play their ‘SOS Sea Monster’ game with adults.
www.navigomuseum.be
DE PANNE

Duinpanne Visitor Centre
This completely renovated visitor centre reopens in 2019. Coastal nature and the discovery of unique animals is the focus of the interactive exhibition here. Freely accessible, with terrace, garden and dining facilities, a visit here is a good base for a walk through the dunes.
www.west-vlaanderen.be/domeinen/duinpanne

Rosalie City Game
Get moving with Rosalie, a city game for children and young people between eight and 14 years. The mission is to find 10 locations via iPad to carry out clever assignments to score points. The iPad is provided by the tourist office upon rental of the game.
www.dekust.be/nl/doen/citygame-rosalie

Plopsaland and Plopsaqua
Recently voted the second-best family park in Europe! This large theme park promises a whole day of exuberance for kids and adults and features a pirate ship, giant slides, exciting shows and endless water fun at Plopsaqua. Well-known Belgian characters such as Maja de Bij and Kabouter Plop await young visitors. Carts used for transporting small children and/or personal belongings can be rented at the entrance.
www.plopsalanddepanne.be
www.plopsaqua.be

ACCESSIBILITY

NAAR DE KUST
Please note, the coastal area is ideally accessible by car, although parking can be limited in high season. The train offers a convenient alternative.

ON THE COAST
The coastal tram enables travel over the entire coast, from Knokke to De Panne and return, for only €3. Children under six travel for free and for children under 12 years there is an inexpensive multi-day pass. Tickets can be purchased at the coastal tram shop or at automatic ticket vending machine along the route.
www.dekust.be

Cycling along the dike is very accessible. The Westhoek region has also developed a number of special cycling routes, especially for families with children. One particular loop-shaped route starts in De Panne and is recognisable by hexagonal signage, carefully located at lower eye level for children to follow. Comic characters “Jaek” and “Nink” direct children via child-friendly stops and special picnic spots.
www.toerismewesthoek.be

DISCOVER MORE

Visit the extraordinarily beautiful city of Bruges, for an extra touch of culture (page 16).
De Nete

WELCOME TO THE KEMPEN
- A haven for children in the Kempen’s beautiful green forest and heathland
- Enhance a holiday to Kempen with a visit to one its many playgrounds and recreation parks.
- With plenty of outdoor activities such as walking, cycling and kayaking. There’s fun to be had with hiking and cycling routes for the whole family
  - A must do is an invigorating forest walk in Dessel.
  - Discovering the landscape of the ‘Sleeping Giant’ in Kasterlee. A walk over the Kempense Heuvelrug provides an enchanting experience into the mythical stories that are hidden its beautiful landscape.
  - Cycle alongside real castles (such as one in Schoten).
- Proud of their warm welcome and hospitality, the citizens of Kempen enjoy visitors to their region.

SLEEPING & WAKING UP

Boshuisje, Kasterlee ★★★★
Ideal for families who want to enjoy peace and quiet, the sound of bird song or simply the rustling of the trees. Look out for the beautiful, round gnome house, a popular place for children. Cargo bikes can be rented here.
www.boshuisje.be

De Lilse Bergen Camp, Lille ★★★★
Offering camping amongst the trees, with all the benefits a swimming pond and giant playground. Rent a mobile home, a tepee, a caravan, water tent or tree house.
www.delilsebergen.be
Floreal Het Veen Camp, Sint Job 'n’t Goor ****
This well-kept campsite is located on the banks of the Kempen Canal. Plenty of fun with playgrounds, a children’s play forest and summer activities available. Features a special infant bathroom.
www.florealgroup.be

Floreal Kempen Camp, Lichtaart ****
A comfortable camp site situated in a wooded area. While parents relax at the bar with its terrace and veranda, children can entertain themselves in the playground, on the sports field and in the pentaquin area.
www.florealgroup.be

Houtum Camp, Kasterlee ****
Set in a green and open site surrounded by the beauty of Kempen nature. The child-friendly brasserie De Putten, with indoor and outdoor playground, adds to the special holiday experience.
http://campinghoutum.groepvaneyck.be

De Schaapskooi, Lichtaart ***
Studio accommodation with woolly sheep on site. Petting and feeding the animals is popular with families. Close to the Bobbejaanland amusement park.
www.schaapskooi.be

Provincial Recreation Domain Zilvermeer, Mol ****
This site offers a choice of simple camping pitches or comfortable log cabins. Kids stay amused with the swimming pond and snow-white beach, water sports and playgrounds. With five catering establishments, a terrace, an adventure park with cable car and a special toddler playground there’s fun to be had for the whole family. Non-overnighting visitors are also welcome.
www.zilvermeer.be

Sunparks Kempense Meren, Mol ***
This beautiful holiday park with swimming facilities lies in the middle of the vast forests and lakes of the ‘Stille Kempen’. There are bolder carts, pushchairs and trailer bikes to rent. A visit to one of their nature or amusement parks in the area, is a must.
www.sunparks.be
EATING & DRINKING

De Putten, Kasterlee
This eatery offers a three-course family menu with a special children’s menu. Offers delicious meals after a busy day in the parkland and can be found at the Houtum campsite at Domein De Putten.
http://domeindeputten.groepvaneyck.be/families

Havencafé Port Aventura, Mol
A great place to eat when combining a trip by boat or taking a nature trail. Choose from multiple children’s menus. The dessert menu is a popular choice for children.
www.zilvermeerhaven.be

Koningsbos, Kasterlee
This is a stylish spot in a rural setting at the foot of the Kempense Heuvelrug. There’s something for everyone on the menu which ranges from seasonal suggestions to smaller snacks. Children’s menus are presented stories from the area and local ingredients.
www.koningsbos.be

’t Schipke aan de Nete, Herenthout
Formerly a farm pub, this modern restaurant is set in a breathtaking location on the Grote Nete River. Ideal for recuperating and relaxing after a pleasant walk or bike ride.
www.schipkeaandenete.be

A real deal! All the holiday parks and recreation complexes welcome the whole family with open arms in their local restaurants and cafés, which serve children’s menus and snacks.
Indoor playgrounds

The following places guarantee a fun-filled day for parents and their active children, all year round.

- Lago De Waterperels Swimming Pool, Lier
  This water paradise in the centre of Lier includes a large pool, warm lagoon together with hot tub, sauna, steam bath, white-water course, wave pool, paddling pool and a heated outdoor pool.
  www.lago.be/lier

- Mega Speelstad, Lille
  A unique indoor playground that has been developed into a magical children’s amusement park. In addition to the enormous indoor playground, the area of Toverstad is discoverable just outside and features a beautiful outdoor playground and spacious sun terrace.
  www.speelstad.be

- Super Jump, Geel
  The most comprehensive and varied trampoline park in Flanders. No less than 12 different zones, including the challenging “Ninja” route. Admission available for children from the age of six.
  www.superjump.be

Bobbejaanland, Kasterlee

Pay a visit to this special amusement park with more than 40 attractions. With something for everyone there’s activities from driving trucks to splashing through a white-water course. Everything is aimed at giving the whole family a fun day out and dogs are welcome. Limited opening days from September to April.
  www.bobbejaanland.be

De Averegten, Heist-op-den-Berg

De Averegten is a natural park with a picnic area, animal pasture, hiking trails through nature, and an unforgettable natural playground with plenty of sand, water, willow huts and tree trunks. The terrace at Eetcafé Boshuis, provides a good look-out point for their children in this extensive playground.
  www.provincieantwerpen.be

Hidrodoe, Herentals

Discover the dazzling world of water, launch hydrogen rockets, create a gigantic whirlpool or play a game of water football. This experience centre also offers guided tours in several languages and is suitable for children up to the age of 12.
  www.hidrodoe.be

Olmense Zoo, Balen

A great day trip to this zoo includes the chance to see beautiful animals from monkeys to sea-lions, up close in a natural environment. Children can also enjoy themselves in the zoo playgrounds.
  www.olmensezoo.be

Recreational areas

Playgrounds and outdoor swimming pools are guaranteed to offer hours of fun in good weather. The following green areas are accessible free of charge or at a low price.

- De Keiheuvel, Balen
  This area houses a petting zoo, numerous sports and play facilities, an outdoor swimming pool and a campsite. The Keimannetje hike, with accompanying picture book, leads a trail to some of the nicest spots in the nature reserve.
  www.keiheuvel.be

- De Mosten, Hoogstraten
  The ideal location for a full day of excitement, with a swimming pond, mini-golf, playground, climbing park and outdoor experience food bar. The adjoining Goodlife Cablepark offers extra water adventure for water skiers and wakeboarders.
  www.hoogstraten.be

- Netepark, Herentals
  Activities include trampolines, a BMX course, a playground and relaxation on a large lawn. The indoor or outdoor pool can be visited for a refreshing swim. Easily accessible by train.
  www.herentals.be

Steam train, Turnhout

The miniature steam train in the city park is popular with young and old. Open from April to September, it is open for service on Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays and during special activities in the park.
  www.stoomgroep.be
Paddling, boating, stand-up paddling
Always popular with families: discover De Kempen from the wa-
ter. There’s a great option for every age. Ahoy there!
- Paddle on the Nete
  A canoe or kayak tour goes past idyllic spots and peaceful
  landscapes. The entire route is 15.5 miles (25km) long, but can
  be shortened if required. A number of rental centres offer
  canoes, kayaks and packages.
  www.kempenkayaks.be
  www.dewaterral.be
  www.dewimpe.be

- Take a trip on an eel boat
  In Lier, the Binnennete, an old eel boat, can be sailed from 1
  April to 31 October. A great way to discover hidden corners,
  beautiful bridges and surprising cityscapes.
  www.bootjevareninlier.be

- Paddleboarding
  The most active way to experience the Lierse waters! During
  summer months follow an instructor for an active paddle-
  board lesson.
  www.visitlier.be

ACCESSIBILITY
Several cities and villages in the Kempen
are accessible by train. The De Lijn buses connect these
stations with the countryside. Nevertheless, it is useful
to have access to a car to experience the outdoor
region. All tourist hotspots have parking facilities.

DISCOVER MORE
For a day out in the city, you can easily get from de
Kempen to Antwerp by car, bus or train (page 10).
Cycling through the water, Bokrijk
WELCOME TO LIMBURG

- The region is widely known for its warm Limburg hospitality. There’s a smile for everyone!
- Limburg excels in offering walking and cycling routes, most of which are also suitable for families.
- Walk through the streets of Tongeren, the oldest town in Belgium.
- Don’t miss visiting Bokrijk.
- Well worth a visit is Hoge Kempen National Park. This is where you can find the Barefoot path and experience nature at its best.

Good to know! A map with an overview of all family activities and ideas can be found at www.toerismelimburg.be/en/discover/distinctive-about-limburg/kids

SLEEPING & WAKING UP

Akkermanshof, Bocholt ***
Enjoy ultimate hospitality at this unique guesthouse with a view of the animals in their barn. Helping out at the farm, such as milking cows is a favourite highlight for children!
www.akkermanshof.be

Bungalowpark Landal Mooi Zutendaal ***
A beautiful holiday park offering a special sleeping cabin, children’s utensils and a child-sized toilet and toys. The children’s bungalows are fully equipped and extremely family-friendly. With swimming pool, playgrounds and forest adventures outdoors.
www.landal.be/parken/mooi-zutendaal

Caelus VII, Tongeren ***
A quiet and upmarket hotel, in the heart of Tongeren. Most centrally located for good access to all sights. Children up to the age of 12 years, have the option to stay in a separate adjoining room, with their own TV.
www.caelus.be/cms

Center Parcs, Erperheide ****
A very family friendly holiday park with comfortable cottages to recharge in, after a day full of activities. The park offers swimming, diving, safari tours and fishing.
www.centerparcs.be
Center Parcs, Vossemeren  *****
Peaceful open spaces and two impressive lakes where water sports enthusiasts will be in their element. The subtropical swimming paradise and the enormous Discovery Bay play world offer hours of fun. Opt for a self-catering cottage or stay in the comfortable hotel.
www.centerparcs.be

Hassotel, Hasselt  ***
An ultra-modern city hotel in the heart of Hasselt. Close to the city’s popular shopping streets. Suites with multiple rooms are available.
www.hassotel.be

EATING & DRINKING

Gasterij de Commanderie, Sint-Pieters-Voeren
A welcoming brasserie in the beautiful Commanderie 7 area, where fish have traditionally been farmed. Tasty children’s fish dishes available. Visitors can cast a fishing line themselves in the adjoining fishing ponds.
www.commanderie7.com

Contrast, Lanaken
A stylish restaurant with a nice outdoor terrace and indoor children’s play corner. Children can choose from the menu whilst the chefs prepare their delicious meal. Vegetarian meals and alcoholic cocktails are catered for as well as opportunities for children to prepare their own dessert.
www.restaurantcontrast.be

’t Dilsers Eetcafé, Dilsen-Stokkem
The combination of a friendly atmosphere and traditional specialities makes this brasserie particularly popular. With a beautiful back garden and terrace equipped with outdoor toys and games, children can savour dishes, among other things, freshly made fish fingers and a mini steak with French fries.
www.dilsersseetcafe.be

Grill restaurant Burgemeestershuis, Lommel
This stylish restaurant is housed in a beautiful villa dating back from 1898. In its relaxed dining area, delicious meat and fish dishes make this an ideal family dining venue. The varied menu serves dishes such as salmon to guinea fowl, with a good choice of grilled options for children.
www.hetburgemeestershuis.be

Museum Kafee, Gallo-Roman Museum, Tongeren
In the spacious brasserie of this Gallo-Roman Museum, children can enjoy a number of choices from its children’s menu. A cozy reading corner with newspapers and comics makes this restaurant even more inviting.
www.galloromeinsmuseum.be

Paal 26, Beringen
This grand café with covered terrace exudes a family-friendly atmosphere. Indoors, the secure and well-equipped facilities are clearly visible, whilst outside is a great playground. Offering child and teenagers menus with a wide choice of snacks, traditional Flemish dishes and tapas.
www.paal26.be

De Zwaan, Hasselt
This brasserie, set in a beautiful old house, is full of atmosphere and character. Families with children are pampered with a menu catering for all ages offering a high-end, quality choices to appeal to all.
www.zwaan-hasselt.be

Molenheide  ****
A family-friendly bungalow park, ideal for a relaxing holiday. The perfect base for access to the nearby amusement parks.
www.molenheide.be

De Lage Kempen Holiday centre, Hechtel-Eksel
A versatile holiday centre in the beautiful Bosland nature reserve. Various different types of accommodation on offer and recreation in a green, quiet environment. The heated outdoor swimming pool with spectacular slides is popular with kids.
www.delagekempen.be
TIPS FOR FUN ACTIVITIES

Bilzen Mysteries, Bilzen
This exciting itinerary provides a multimedia journey through the beautiful historic site of Alden Biesen for the whole family. With the help of a hand-held tablet, families follow an interactive treasure hunt, full of riddles. In the evening, the experience is heightened with a spectacular game using light and sound. Available in four languages. Free parking for visitors.
www.bilzenmysteries.be

Cycle through the water, Genk
A bike ride through the wetlands area of this beautiful natural cycle path. Stunning vistas over the water provide a wonderful experience to see, feel and smell the water.
www.toerismelimburg.be

Gallo-Roman Museum, Tongeren
This captivating and beautifully presented museum manages to convey this ancient town’s rich historical past in an interactive and lifelike way. Features include a prehistoric hut reconstruction for children to crawl into and rare archaeological finds. In addition to the permanent collection, the museum also regularly hosts fascinating temporary exhibitions.
www.galloromeinsmusuem.be

Kattevennen Cosmodrome, Genk
For an insight into the solar system, take a view through the super telescope and see the sun in a whole new light. Accessible via the Genk entrance of the National park.
www.kattevennen.be
Hoge Kempen National Park, Genk
Nature in all its glory. The vast pine forests, purple heathland, large ponds and special animals make this beautiful park an extraordinary place. Look out for the Blotevoetenpad – a barefoot walking path almost 2 mile (3km) long that can be enjoyed by everyone.
www.nationaalparkhogekempen.be
www.rlkm.be

Bokrijk open air museum, Genk
One of Limburg’s highlights. This vast park looks at the past by following routes via historic houses, different animal species and a number of crafts. Children’s favourites include its pottery and baking workshop with the whole family. A restaurant next to the museum provides a gigantic playground (freely accessible throughout the year).
www.bokrijk.be

Plopsa Indoor Hasselt
This adventure theme park earned the title of ‘Best Children’s Park in Belgium and the Netherlands’ in 2018. Its popularity is evidenced by the hours of entertainment it provides for children the aged between two to 10 years. Opportunities for boundless climbing, dancing, sliding and playing with boats and bumper cars plus more, make this park a big favourite for families.
www.plopsaindoorhasselt.be

Speelbossen, Voerstreek
The four adventure forests in the Voer region promise a host of green adventures for families. With treasure hunts, fruit tasting, playground activities and even a tree house there are plenty of activities on offer. Look out particular for the 's Gravenvoeren forest for its range of experiences on offer. The visitor centre loans baby carriers to assist parents for maximum mobility for infants.
www.voerstreek.be

Teseum, Tongeren
Visit this treasure trove of archaeological finds in historic Tongeren with the whole family. Children up to 12 years old can join an adventurous treasure hunt with an interactive app. Youngsters over 12 years of age are encouraged to gather their own selfie mood board.
www.teseum.be

TOP TIP: THE MINING PAST OF LIMBURG
Find out about the unique history of the region, mostly dominated by what happened underground.

C-Mine, Genk
A lively location in the Winterslag mine buildings. The C-mine expedition is an indoor children’s playground and cinema, designed with families in mind. Its expedition consists of an adventure experience trail delving down the depths below and finishing almost 200 feet (60m) high upon the C-mine shaft tower.
www.c-mine.be

be-MINE, Beringen
This best-kept secret mining site in Belgium offers a swimming paradise and a museum under one roof. A museum game teaches children about the mining profession, whilst the Alpamayo climbing centre offers visitors the newest and biggest of climbing walls. Its Adventure Mountain provides a range of slides and climbing apparatus before reaching the summit and is one of the highlights of the visit.
www.bemine.be

ACCESSIBILITY

CAR
The vast nature reserves in Limburg are easily accessible by car and you can often park for free.
DMC'S AND INCOMINGS

The following organisations offer packages tailored to families. Contact details can be found on the respective websites below.

- www.admire.be
- www.aab-allaboutbelgium.be
- www.brilliantbelgium.com
- www.eventmasters.be
- www.geoffreyvanhulle.be
- www.debuckagency.com
- www.focusflanders.com
- www.brusselsandbeyond.com
- www.gent-watertoerist.be
- www.vostravel.be

More inspiration for family trips on:

- www.herita.be
- www.publig.be
- www.riebedebie.be

COLOPHON

About the author
Sophie Serraris has spent years working on child and family-friendly projects, focusing in particular on museums, heritage, the hospitality and catering sector.

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Family-friendly tourism

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