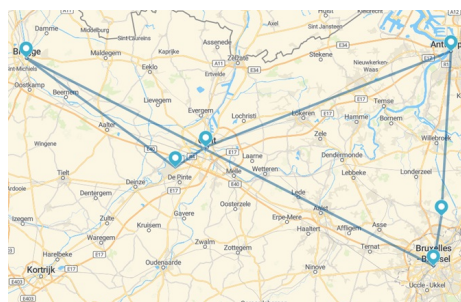




Belgium, 6 Days · Tailor-made by car

Route through the Flemish Region

This time we suggest a route that will allow you to enjoy one of the most beautiful areas of Belgium. From pro-European Brussels, with its unmissable Grand Place, passing through the attractive medieval cities of Ghent and Bruges, with their famous canals and fascinating architecture. Small towns full of life and bursting with history, with castles that evoke a past carried on in the unique buildings, popular traditions and books. Historic centres with World Heritage treasures, and with venues that play host to an array of outdoor events in the summertime. Concerts and festivals light up the streets and squares, some with a myriad of flowers and colour. Winter is the time of cosy Christmas markets that reveal the warm side of the towns and villages that adore Flemish culture and where beer welcomes its visitors. Flanders offers you a magical Tour.



CULTURAL FAMILIES URBAN

Departure date: Departures from May 2026 till May 2027

From: Dublin, Shannon, Cork

Travel details

DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - BRUSSELS

Flight departure from the city of origin to Brussels. Arrival and rental car pick-up at the airport. Set off for Brussels where we will enjoy free time to get to know the city.

Enjoy the day in Brussels, Belgium's capital, and the main administrative headquarters of the European Union.

Brussels is a blend of old and new. Its population is probably one of the most diverse in Europe. It is unofficially seen as the continent's capital, since it houses the European Council, the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. These buildings are all together in what is known as the European neighbourhood, with Robert Schuman Avenue in tribute to the French minister who was the "Father of Europe". The city also hosts the building of the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. The Atomium is an imposing sculpture that adds a touch of vanguardism to Brussels. This structure, which was designed by the architects André Waterkeyn and André & Jean Polak on the occasion of the World Fair in 1958, represents an iron molecule of 9 atoms measuring 18 metres in diameter, joined together by tubes with escalators and stands over 100 metres tall. There is a museum inside and it offers one of the best panoramic views of the city. Its restaurant in the top sphere is a great place to dine. The other iconic symbol of Brussels is the Manneken Pis, a small bronze statue, sculpted by Jerome Duquesnoy in 1619, depicting a boy urinating in a fountain. Listen to the various legends about this figure, which is actually a copy of the original that was stolen and reclaimed several times, and which is currently housed in the City Museum. It is very close to the Grand Place and a must for any visit.

The Grand Place, Brussels is a beautiful square, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998. It consists of Gothic and Baroque buildings that once housed the Guild Houses, the Gothic style Town Hall, and the King's House. In August, in alternate years, a 1,800 square metre carpet of begonias covers the square. The square is surrounded by streets full of shops and restaurants, while the nightlife begins at sunset. There are buildings nearby not to be missed: the Gothic style Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula; the Bolurse; the Palace of Justice, in neo-Baroque style built during the reign of Leopold II and for decades the largest building in the world; the Art Nouveau style houses, designed by the architect Víctor Horta, and the Royal Palace. It is the official residence of the Belgian monarchy, but the Royal Family actually live in the Castle of Laeken. It is open to the public during the summer months. The Sablon neighbourhood is also interesting; it is home to the church of Notre Dame du Sablon, a bijoux Gothic house of worship. During the weekend there is an antique market that we recommend visiting. You can dine near the Grand Place, where there are plenty of restaurants offering delicious dishes. And do not miss the famous Belgian chocolate. Several internationally known makers have shops in the area. There is no better souvenir.

Overnight stay in Brussels.

DAY 2 · BRUSSELS - BRUGES

Have breakfast at one of the many magical cafes in cosmopolitan Brussels. Why not treat yourself to some chocolate before continuing the journey to the city of Bruges, an hour away from Brussels. Bruges is Belgium's most touristic city and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. It boasts some magical sunsets; it looks like the setting for a fairy tale. It is one of the finest preserved medieval cities in the world; it was founded in the 11th century around a 9th century fortress. It was a major trading centre for Northern Europe until the fifteenth century. Take a walk along its cobbled streets lined with houses right next to its numerous canals; it is no surprise then that it has drawn comparisons with Venice.

Have dinner and enjoy a beer, Belgium's most famous drink.

Overnight stay in Bruges.

DAY 3 · BRUGES - ST.-MARTENS-LATEM - GHENT

Make the most of the morning to visit the city and stroll through Minnewaterpark. Head for its Main Square, also called Markt, home to an interesting market on Saturdays.

Belfort tower is not to be missed; it is 83 metres high and has a step for every day of the year. It gives you unmissable stunning views of the city. In Burg Square, visit the Town Hall (Stadhuis), with a 14th century façade. Another point of interest is the Church of Our Lady, with the stunning tower standing at 115,5 metres. There are two museums worth a visit: the Gruuthuse, in a medieval mansion, and the Groening, dedicated to art. Have a bite to eat in the centre of Bruges before rejoining the Tour. Near Bruges is Wijnendale Castle and a visit to which includes several adjoining buildings and a wonderful woodland landscape. The next destination is Sint- Martens-Latem. Visit Ooidonk Castle, rebuilt in the 16th century with a Spanish influence that replaced a medieval fortress destroyed during the religious wars. The palace, still inhabited, has luxurious rooms. Sixteenth century portraits include that of Philip de Montmorency, Count of Horn, beheaded in Brussels in 1568. Its beautiful gardens become a stage for summer concerts (admission to the castle costs €9 and €2 to visit the gardens). The town itself is also worth a visit; it is surrounded by vibrant green valleys and rural scenery. Continue the Tour to the city of Ghent, a 20-minute drive away.

It has been an industrial city since the nineteenth century and today it is prosperous and full of energy, thanks in part to its high (20%) student population. However, it's more famous for being the birthplace of Charles V, son of Joanna the Mad. The story goes that she gave birth to him in a bath during a party at the Prinsenhof Palace. Ghent has a well-kept network of canals and a beautiful medieval urban centre. Do not miss Saint Bavo's Cathedral (St-Baafskathedraal), patron saint of the city, and its Baroque pulpit from the 18th century, as well as its paintings, such as the outstanding masterpiece 'The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb', painted by the Van Eyck brothers in 1432. The work of 12 altarpieces has been wondrously conserved and has been stolen six times. Admission to the Cathedral is free, but you have to pay €4 to admire the painting. Another religious building of interest is the Church of Saint Nicholas, and, next to it, the Korenmarkt, the city's most lively square. Go to the strikingly beautiful Town Hall and visit the 14th-century belfry, that rises some 95 metres. The views from here are spectacular. No visit is complete without seeing Gravensteen castle, the former residence of the Counts of Flanders and which was used up to the fourteenth century as a defensive fortress and from then till the seventeenth as a prison. Like many other castles, it has a museum of torture that reflects the cruelty of the punishments once imposed on the subjects. While wandering around Ghent, be sure to take a photo of St. Michael's Bridge.

Overnight stay in Ghent.

DAY 4 · GHENT - ANTWERP

Ghent is also impressive at dawn. Enjoy a good breakfast with views of some of its main attractions before saying farewell to this beautiful city. Follow the suggested itinerary to reach Antwerp, an hour's drive away. The city is famous for its diamonds industry that is home to 85% of the world's supply.

Antwerp became an important cultural centre at the start of the seventeenth century and has always been one of the most important trading cities in Northern Europe. The river Schelde helped give its port a strategic importance. Visit the Main Square (Grote Markt), surrounded by beautiful Renaissance buildings, with the Town Hall taking pride of place along with the fountain of Brabo, which pays tribute to the birth of the city. A visit to the Cathedral is a must! It is the largest religious building in Belgium, built between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Another point of undoubted interest is Antwerp Castle, rechristened Het Steen (The Stone) by Charles V. If your fancy a spot of culture, we recommend four museums: that of Rubens, which was the home and studio for the last 29 years of the famous Baroque painter's life, built in the seventeenth century; that of Fine Arts, in a 19th century neoclassical building; that of Diamonds, dedicated to these precious stones, and the Plantin-Moretus, which honours the printers that give it its name and which has been deemed a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

In the evening, wine and dine in Groenplaats square and soak up its very lively atmosphere.

Overnight stay in Antwerp.

● DAY 5 · ANTWERP - GRIMBERGEN - BRUSSELS

Say your goodbyes to this fascinating city, where legend has it the giant Druon Antigoon once lived in the river Scheldt and who charged a toll to any ships wanting to pass. If a ship refused to pay, the giant would cut off the captain's hand and throw it into the river; that was until a Roman centurion cut his hand off. Besides its stories, the river Scheldt plays a vital role for the city, which today we bid farewell as we continue the journey to Brussels. But first we suggest stopping off in Grimbergen, 40 minutes away. This town is famous for its Abbey sharing the same name. It belongs to the Order of Canons Regular of Prémontré and was built between the 12th and 18th centuries. The most interesting thing is that this abbey produces the well-known Grimbergen beer. Don't leave town without trying it! (Note. It's possible to book a group visit and hire a guide. For groups, please bear in mind that you are required to book at least 4 weeks in advance sending an email at toerisme@grimbergen.be. There you can also ask all the necessary information you need about the beer museum.)

Continue the Tour to the Belgian capital just a 20-minute drive away. Take the opportunity to once again enjoy its magical sights and do some shopping. If you are looking for luxury shops, take a stroll down Avenida Louise. Do not forget to purchase some chocolate from the famous Belgian brands: Godiva, Galler, Neuhaus and Leonidas. You will also find beer gift packs. If comics are your thing, we recommend a visit to the Comic Museum, where you can buy books and figurines.

Overnight stay in Brussels.

● DAY 6 · BRUSSELS - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Your trip includes

Your trip includes

- ✓ Return flight.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Brussels.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Brussels.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Bruges.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Bruges.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Ghent.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Ghent.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Antwerp.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Antwerp.
- ✓ Rent-a-car.

Your trip doesn't include

- ✗ Accommodation taxes in Belgium direct payment in facility.
- ✗ Possible toll charges.
- ✗ Insolvency protection.
- ✗ Bike rental.
- ✗ Boat tours.
- ✗ Entrance to historical buildings (some are free).

Destinations Visited

Brussels



Bruges



SintMartensLatem



Ghent



Antwerp



Grimbergen



Important remarks

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far as possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.
- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.
- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.