




# Belgium: Art, Architecture & Garden Design 2028

10 MAY – 25 MAY 2028

Code: 22825

Tour Leaders **Diane Perelsztejn, Inge Pullar**

Fitness Level 

**Level 2 - Intermediate**

For people with energetic lifestyles and very good mobility

Combining world-class art collections, Gothic and Art Nouveau architecture, with visits to private gardens by leading Flemish landscape designers including Jacques Wirtz, Chris Ghyselen & Erik Dhont.

## Overview

Led by native French and Flemish speaker, [Diane Perelsztejn](#), and accompanied by native Dutch speaker, [Inge Pullar](#), this tour is a feast of splendid classic and contemporary private gardens, great museums and natural landscapes of Belgium. The tour includes a number of private gardens hosted by either the owners, head gardener or garden designer.

- In Antwerp, Brussels and Bruges visit world-class art collections; we view works by Peter Paul Rubens, Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hans Memling, Frans Hals, Peter Bruegel, Jan Brueghel the Elder, Anthony van Dyck and René Magritte.
- Explore the Art Deco home of [David and Alice van Buuren](#); the house and studio of Art Nouveau Architect, [Victor Horta](#) and the UNESCO-Heritage listed [Hôtel Van Eetvelde](#) and [Hôtel Solvay](#).
- Visit Gothic churches, town halls and merchant palaces in Brussels, Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp.
- View the work of leading Flemish landscape architects including [Erik Dhont](#) and [Piet Blanckaert](#); and meet [Chris Ghyselen](#), known for his use of fine grasses and perennials, who will show us a number of his projects including his own garden.
- Explore the private garden of [Jacques Wirtz](#) featured in Monty Don's [Around the World in 80 Gardens](#).
- Visit the [Arboretum Kalmthout](#), the former private garden of Robert and Jelena de Belder designed with the support of their close friend, Russell Page.
- Visit the gardens of the 14th-century [Kasteel van Oostkerke](#), restored with the aid of Mien Ruys; and [Morishof](#), the private garden of landscape designer [Marc Moris](#).
- View the famed rose collections at the traditional 'kasteel' gardens of [Hex](#).
- Dine at the 2-star Michelin [Le Chalet de la Forêt](#) and enjoy an aperitif in their vegetable garden designed by Erik Dhont.

Overnight Antwerp (4 nights) • Bruges (5 nights) • Brussels (6 nights)

Photo credits: see gallery.

## Leaders



### Diane Perelsztejn

Educated in Brussels, Diane is a native French and Flemish speaker. A multi award-winning independent film-maker, she has travelled extensively throughout Europe, Asia and the US to produce documentaries about history, art and music.

Raised in Brussels, Diane, a native French and Flemish speaker, migrated to Melbourne in 1996. She is a multi award-winning independent documentary film-maker, having graduated in 1981 from the Institut des Arts de Diffusion, in Louvain-La-Neuve, Belgium. Diane has been fortunate to travel extensively throughout Europe, Asia and the US to produce her documentaries about history, art and music. Her films have been widely broadcast and distributed around the world. Her documentary *Kathleen Ferrier* (2012), on the British contralto singer, narrated by Charlotte Rampling, has been released worldwide on Decca. Her latest documentary *The Paper Brigade* (2019) tells the moving story of how a small band of Jewish poets and writers saved priceless collections of books and manuscripts from destruction during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania, and then again during the Sovietisation of the Baltic states.

Diane also pursues a passion for singing. She graduated in 1994 in classical singing from Académie de Musique in Anderlecht, Belgium, and has taught French for singing and French opera at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne. Diane has been working with ASA since 2013 and is taking tours throughout Europe.



### Inge Pullar

Inge Pullar is an experienced tour manager who has travelled extensively through Europe, Asia and the Americas. She speaks several languages, including fluent Dutch and intermediate German, French and Spanish.

Inge Pullar has extensive experience leading tours in Europe, the USA and Australia, including several Contemporary Architecture Tours for ASA. She studied History of Society at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam and undertook Art History subjects at University College London and Cultural History subjects at Leiden University. Inge has travelled widely in Europe, North-, Central- and South America, South East Asia, Japan, The Pacific and Australia and speaks several languages, including fluent Dutch and intermediate German, French and Spanish. Since 2017 Inge has managed ASA tours to Spain, Morocco, Portugal (including Madeira and the Azores), France, United Kingdom and Japan.



## Itinerary

The following itinerary includes a range of private gardens and houses which we plan to visit. Several are accessible to the public, but many require special permission which may only be confirmed closer to the tour's departure. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified to accommodate alterations in opening hours and confirmation of private visits. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches & dinners indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner.

### Antwerp - 4 nights

Day 1: Wednesday 10 May, Arrive Antwerp

- Tour commences at 1.30 pm in the foyer of the Hotel 't Sandt
- Welcome Meeting
- Plantin-Moretus Museum
- Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal (Cathedral of Our Lady)
- Short Orientation Tour
- Welcome Dinner at the Sir Anthony Van Dijck Restaurant

**Meeting Point:** Tour commences at 1.30pm in the foyer of the [Hotel 't Sandt](#) located in the historic centre of Antwerp.

After a short welcome meeting we visit the renovated Plantin-Moretus Museum, a stately town house with period rooms that chronicles 300 years of the process of printing. French printer Christopher Plantin established his famous printing and publishing house in Antwerp in 1555. His successors, the Moretus family, maintained the Officina Plantiniana until the 19th century. The museum displays typographic material, a library, paintings including a Rubens and an impressive graphic collection. It also owns the world's oldest extant printing press (c.1600). The Print Room holds prints and drawings by Antwerp masters from the 16th century to the present including botanical and medicinal works. We spend time in the museum's enclosed garden, an oasis planted according to the 16th-century style. It is the only museum in

the world to be UNESCO World Heritage listed.

We take a short walk to the Grote Markt (main city square) and visit the Cathedral of Our Lady. Four of Rubens' most important paintings, including the *Raising of the Cross* and his *Descent from the Cross*, embellish this vast seven-nave UNESCO-listed Gothic cathedral.

Tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner at the Sir Anthony Van Dijck Restaurant located in the medieval quarter of Antwerp. (Overnight Antwerp) D

#### Day 2: Thursday 11 May, Antwerp – Schoten – Antwerp

- Private garden of Jacques Wirtz, Schoten – featured in Monty Don's *Around the World in 80 Gardens (To be confirmed)*
- Museum aan de Stroom (exterior) and Antwerp's historic port
- Garden of the Rubens House

This morning we visit the private garden of the late Jacques Wirtz, the world-renowned Belgian landscape architect who, in his innovative gardens, enhanced his sculptural treatment of boxwood and yew hedges by drawing on his deep knowledge of plants and flowers. Jacques' son, Martin, who is now CEO of Wirtz International, has kindly agreed to show us the family's private garden.

We return to Antwerp where we view the impressive exterior of Museum aan de Stroom (MAS) an extraordinary ultramodern tower, composed of great blocks separated by undulating glass walls. It was designed by the acclaimed Rotterdam firm Neutelings-Riedijk Architecten. Across from the MAS is Antwerp's new Port House designed by Zaha Hadid Architects, and the Red Star Line Museum designed by New York architects Beyer Blinder Belle. A short visit to the rooftop of the MAS provides panoramic views of the city and its historic port.

This afternoon, we visit the garden of the Rubens House. The Rubens House, the Italianate palazzo where the great artist and diplomat Peter Paul Rubens lived and worked, is closed for restoration until 2030. However, the newly restored garden of the Rubens House has reopened. In 1610, a narrow plot was transformed by Rubens into a peaceful retreat amidst the bustling business district of the city. The design of the restored garden has been inspired by 17th-century botanical, historical documents, and Rubens' own paintings (such as *The Walk in the Garden*). It features over 17,500 plants and flowers. Antwerp-based fashion designer Dries Van Noten provided colour advice for the new, sustainable garden, ensuring it remains vibrant and colourful throughout all seasons. (Overnight Antwerp) B

#### Day 3: Friday 12 May, Antwerp – Lier – Berlaar-Gestel – Haacht-Wespelaar – Antwerp

- 't Kranske, City garden renovated by Marc Moris, Lier
- 'Morishof': private garden of Marc Moris, Berlaar-Gestel
- Arboretum of Philippe de Spoelberch, Haacht-Wespelaar
- Private gardens of Sybille de Spoelberch, Haacht-Wespelaar
- Art Nouveau's Zurenborg District

Flanders was once the leading horticultural nation in Europe. Sixteenth-century Antwerp was a centre for the study of botany. In the 18th and 19th centuries dozens of fruit varieties were created and the rarest plants grown and improved. In recent years a remarkable revival of gardening has created beautiful new gardens.

Landscape designer, Marc Moris, designs simple, mature, 'timeless' gardens. His nursery cultivates naturally developing trees and large shrubs which are up to 100 years old. We begin today with a visit to 't Kranske, a monastic complex restored by Marc Moris. As part of his renovation, Marc cleared its courtyard to develop a 6000 metre<sup>2</sup> city garden. The original convent's chapel was also restored. Then we visit 'Morishof', Moris's private 3-hectare garden which includes a vegetable garden, a meadow, natural swimming pool and a flower garden. We end the morning with a lunch prepared by Jasmin, Marc Moris's daughter, taken in a second garden designed by Marc Moris.

This afternoon we drive to Haacht-Wespelaar to visit the private Arboretum of Philippe de Spoelberch and the adjacent private garden of Sybille de Spoelberch. Spread over 20 hectares, Philippe de Spoelberch's arboretum contains over 2,000 different plant species including many varieties of oaks, maples, magnolias and rhododendrons.

The 10-hectare garden of Sybille de Spoelberch was formerly the kitchen garden of Château de Wespelaar. In 1983, the *potager* was partly re-designed by landscape architect Jacques Wirtz. The garden includes hedges of *Carpinus*, *Taxus* and *Buxus* which provide structure. Lemon trees in pots decorate both sides of a path and walls are covered with *Ceanothus*, roses and other climbing plants. There is also an Italianate water garden, a Japanese garden, a contemporary garden of blue stone rocks, many perennials, and collection of old roses and choice shrubs. A woodland garden under the canopy of oak trees holds a collection of remarkable trees and shrubs.

We return to Antwerp for a stroll down Cogels-Osylei in the Zurenborg district. Here we view houses built in the Art Nouveau style including de Zonnebloem designed by Belgian-Dutch architect Jules Hoffman in 1900. (Overnight Antwerp) BL

#### Day 4: Saturday 13 May, Antwerp – Kalmthout – Antwerp

- The Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp (KMSKA)
- Arboretum Kalmthout

This morning we visit the recently reopened KMSKA, whose collection of paintings, sculptures and drawings includes work by Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hans Memling, Frans Hals, Jan Brueghel the Elder, Peter Paul Rubens, and Anthony van Dyck.

After lunch at leisure we depart for Kalmthout. The history of Arboretum Kalmthout goes back as far as 1856, when the Antwerp dendrologist Charles Van Geert started a nursery. In 1952, the brothers Georges and Robert De Belder bought the site to create their private botanical garden. Under the inspiring leadership of Robert and his wife Jelena De Belder, and with contribution by internationally renowned garden designer Russell Page, Arboretum Kalmthout grew into one of the world's most prestigious botanic collections. Instead of the severe formality of traditional botanic gardens with their collections laid out in straight lines, the De Belders favoured a natural-looking garden with perennials, creepers, shrubs and trees. They collected seeds in the wild and also selected a great number of new varieties, in particular *Prunus*, *Malus*, *Pieris*, *Hamamelis* and *Hydrangea*. (Overnight Antwerp) B

#### Bruges - 5 nights

#### Day 5: Sunday 14 May, Antwerp – Ghent – Bellem – Bruges

- Orientation walk, Ghent
- Cathedral of St Bavo, Ghent

- A cottage garden 'Kroempelhoef' designed by Chris Ghyselen, Bellem

Today we travel to Ghent. The Medieval and Renaissance trading city of Ghent was the stronghold of the counts of Flanders. This city was established among numerous islands between the Lieve, Leie and Scheldt rivers and is therefore traversed by picturesque canals. We take a short orientation walk through the cobbled streets of Ghent. After lunchtime at leisure, we view the huge 24-panel altarpiece, the *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* in Ghent's Cathedral of St Bavo. Begun by Hubert van Eyck (c.1390-1426) and completed after his death by Jan van Eyck in 1432, it is the greatest painting of the Northern Renaissance. St Bavo's other treasures include Rubens's *Conversion of St Bavo* (1623).

A short drive from Ghent, Krompoelhof is an amateur and cottage garden set in the middle of a nature reserve. The garden is divided into two parts: an old garden created in 1960 with a magnificent view over the 'Kraenepoel' pond, and a new garden designed by landscape architect Chris Ghyselen. There is also an orchard and a vegetable garden.

In the late afternoon we continue to UNESCO World Heritage listed Bruges, one of a few canal-based northern cities. (Overnight Bruges) B

#### Day 6: Monday 15 May, Bruges – Hooglede – Bruges

- Private garden designed by landscape architect Piet Blanckaert, Hooglede
- Walking tour: Beguinage and Bruges' secret gardens

Piet Blanckaert is a greatly admired Belgian landscape designer who established his practice more than 30 years ago in Bruges. He has designed numerous gardens in Israel and the US, and throughout Europe – including the Flanders Fields Memorial Garden in London, which was opened by the Queen in 2013. This morning we transfer to Hooglede to view one of his largest private gardens.

Then we return to Bruges. A *beguinage* or *begijnhof* was a medieval housing complex for women who devoted themselves to prayer and charitable works, but did not care for the constraints of a convent. A wall usually surrounded a group of houses in which the women lived. These houses could be disposed around courtyards and the precinct would include a chapel and infirmary. Most Belgian cities have these precincts, and they are all UNESCO heritage-listed. Bruges' Beguinage was founded around 1245. Most of its extant houses, grouped around a pretty garden, are from the 17th and 18th centuries. This afternoon we explore the atmospheric Beguinage and some of the city's secret private gardens. (Overnight Bruges) B

#### Day 7: Tuesday 16 May, Bruges

- Groeninge Museum
- Saint John's Hospital & the Hans Memling Museum
- Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk (Church of our Lady)
- Afternoon at leisure

The small canal city of Bruges reached its apogee between the 12th and 15th centuries when it was an economic powerhouse to equal Florence and Venice. The city's fair was established in 1200 CE and it burgeoned as a centre of textile manufacture. The great Burgundian Duke Philip the Good (1419-67), one of the wealthiest men of his time, established his court here. In the later Middle Ages cities' economies and cultural production were determined by the conspicuous consumption by the rich and Bruges benefited from the presence of the Burgundian court, nurturing artists like Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling.

This morning we visit St John's Hospital Complex which includes the recently reopened small Hans Memling Museum. The German Hans Memling (1430-1494) worked in Bruges from 1465. His late masterpiece, *The Shrine of St Ursula*, is a carved and gilded wooden reliquary containing panel inserts painted by the master.

Then we visit the famous Groeninge Museum with its excellent collection of Flemish masters. A highlight of this museum is Jan Van Eyck's stunning *Madonna with Canon van der Paele* (1436), one of the most important works of the Northern Renaissance.

We visit also the Church of Our Lady, a treasure house of art such as the gilt-bronze tombs of Charles the Bold, last Valois Duke of Burgundy, and his daughter, Mary. The most celebrated treasure of the church is, however, Michelangelo's Bruges *Madonna* (1504). Following our visit to the church, the remainder of the day is at leisure. (Overnight Bruges) B

#### Day 8: Wednesday 17 May, Bruges – Damme – Bruges

- Kasteel van Oostkerke, Damme
- Medieval village of Damme
- Bonemhoeve, Damme

Until around 1600, Bruges was an important Hanseatic League port city linked to the sea by the Zwijn canal. Canals were dug to facilitate the passage of goods to this canal and thence to its commercial outpost, the harbour at Damme. Today we drive to Damme and visit Oostkerke Castle. Allison Campbell-Roebling and her husband Baron Joseph Van Der Elst restored ruined Oostkerke Castle, aided by the great Dutch landscape architect Mien Ruys. The result is an idyllic combination of intimate spaces and grandiose avenues. Separate gardens include a private courtyard, a Maria garden and a rose garden. Footpaths run along the foundations of the old ramparts, and the ancient moats have been excavated and planted.

After our visit, we transfer to Damme where there will be time for lunch and to explore this picturesque medieval town which features a magnificent Gothic Town Hall, an impressive Church of Our Lady, and canals lined with poplars.

Bonemhoeve, which dates to the 13th century, is located on a mound completely surrounded by water. In 2005 the restoration of the farm, the garden and the surrounding landscape (16 ha) started. Landscape designer Erik Dhont implemented an innovative contemporary vision with respect for the intimacy and history of the farm and the surrounding polder. Since 2012, renovation works have been overseen by head gardener Gijsbert Smid who will give us a guided tour of the farm. Pools and a pond have been constructed, there is an orchard, a vegetable garden, hay meadows with grassy paths and old roses. (Overnight Bruges) BD

#### Day 9: Thursday 18 May, Bruges – Zedelgem – Oedelem – Beernem – Bruges

- Private garden designed by Wim Van Wassenhove, Zedelgem
- Private garden of landscape designer, Chris Ghyselen, Oedelem
- Private garden of 't Groot Kerkegoed, designed by Chris Ghyselen, Beernem

This morning, we visit the private garden designed by Wim Van Wassenhove's, the son of well-known Flemish landscape architect the late André Van Wassenhoven.

In Oedelem, Chris Ghyselen will show us his own private garden which includes playful hedges, water

features, and a double border of high and small perennials. There is also a swimming pond and a flower meadow.

Nearby, we also visit 't Groot Kerkegoed, a renovated farm whose gardens were also designed by Chris Ghyselen. The inner courtyard of the farm offers a contemporary and sober look. There were originally some fruit trees in the central lawn, which with the redesign of the space became more prominent. There are wide flower borders and under a large walnut and apple tree masses of spring bulbs. To the south of the house itself, there is a spacious terrace. Wide joints allow flowers and herbaceous plants to grow. There is also a wide flower border with a large colour palette. Finally, there is a large flower meadow that leads to a meandering stream; a nature reserve in itself. (Overnight Bruges) BL

## Brussels - 6 nights

Day 10: Friday 19 May, Bruges – Ename – Brussels

- Huis Beaucarne and garden hosted by Julien Fornari and Lena Vastesaeger, Ename
- The Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium: Musée Magritte
- Brussels: Orientation Walk

This morning we travel to Ename. Huis Beaucarne, located outside the village of Ename, has been inhabited by the same family for over 250 years. A few years ago, Julien Fornari and his partner Lena Vastesaeger, took on the task to restore the family home and its historical gardens. The first garden was designed in the 18th century and took its inspiration from 17th-century French geometric gardens. In the 19th century, under the influence of English Romanticism, winding paths and mixed borders were added. The Beaucarne family were passionate plant collectors. Some of the old plantings brought back from journeys to Asia and the Americas still remain in the gardens. A genus of flowering plants native to Mexico and Central America, *Beaucarnea*, was named after the Beaucarne family. In the second half of the 20th century, a flower-garden designed by the renowned Belgian landscape architects Brigitte de Villenfagne and her son Michaël de Villegas, was added to the domain.

After lunch we continue our journey to Brussels where we will be based for six nights in a charming boutique hotel located in the historic centre.

We take a guided tour of the museum devoted to displaying works by Brussels' most famous modern artist, the Surrealist painter René Magritte. The Musée René Magritte displays some 200 original paintings, drawing and sculptures, mostly donated by his wife Georgette and by his principal collector, Irène Hamoir Scutenaire. This is the world's largest collection of Magritte's work.

To finish the day, we enjoy a short orientation walk to Brussels' Grand Place. (Overnight Brussels) BL

Day 11: Saturday 20 May, Brussels

- Musée Victor Horta
- Hôtel Van Eetvelde (by special appointment)
- The Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium: Old Masters

Brussels was the cradle of Art Nouveau. Victor Horta, who developed the style, inspired architects like Hector Guimard, France's most important Art Nouveau architect, who applied Horta's whiplash design in his work for the Paris Métro.

Today, we first visit the Musée Victor Horta, located in Horta's private house and studio (1898 – 1901). Both have utterly exquisite, finely detailed interior decoration that has largely been retained, with the mosaics, stained-glass, and wall decorations forming a harmonious and elegant whole.

Then we visit an exceptional Art Nouveau townhouse that has recently been reopened to the public. The UNESCO World Heritage-listed Hôtel van Eetvelde was designed by Victor Horta for Edmond van Eetvelde, administrator of Congo Free State, and built in 1895. Hôtel van Eetvelde consists of two buildings with the corner town house constructed later to house the office of Baron Edmond van Eetvelde. One of the recent restoration highlights is the monumental glass dome of the winter garden, an emblematic example of Horta's preoccupation with introducing natural light into buildings. For the elegant and stylised interior, Horta used materials from Congo, while several motifs reference the former colony, such as mosaics adorned with vines, and the depiction of plants and flowers in the structure of the dome and its stained glass windows.

This afternoon, we return to the Royal Museum of Fine Arts to view the Old Masters' Collection. Artists represented include Rogier van der Weyden, Hans Memling, Hieronymus Bosch, Lucas Cranach, Gerard David and Pieter Brueghel the Elder, whose *Fall of the Rebel Angels* and *The Census at Bethlehem* are collection highlights. Other later masters to be seen include Flemish Peter Paul Rubens, Anthony van Dyck and Jacques Jordaens, and works from the Dutch, French, Italian and Spanish schools including masterpieces by Rembrandt, Vouet, Claude, Ribera and Tiepolo (Overnight Brussels) B

#### Day 12: Sunday 21 May, Brussels – Wépion – Brussels

- Le Sous-Bois, Wépion
- Gardens of Annevoie

Outside Wépion we visit Le Sous-Bois, a private garden, designed by owners Philippe Taminiaux and Karine Fonsny, with sweeping views of the Meuse Valley. It includes an English garden with over 100 varieties of climbing roses, expanses of shade-loving plantings, and mixed borders which mingle perennials with shrub roses and a huge variety of other colourful shrubs.

Our second visit is to the Jardins d'Annevoie in Haute-Meuse, a region of forests and rivers. Annevoie's gardens combine the splendour and majesty of the French formal style with English romantic whimsy and Italian refinement. These 250-year-old water gardens comprise cascades and fountains, majestic hundred-year-old trees, trimmed hornbeam lanes and false grottoes. (Overnight Brussels) BL

#### Day 13: Monday 22 May, Brussels

- Arboretum Kreftenbroek Foundation
- Chalet de la Forêt: Lunch & [vegetable garden designed by Erik Dhont](#)
- Hôtel Solvay (by special appointment), Ixelles

This morning we visit Arboretum Kreftenbroek where Etienne and Rose-Marie Van Campenhout have transformed an old farm and adjacent land into a magnificent series of gardens. The 'natural garden' focuses on a small pond. The classical garden behind the house features a canopied alley of apple trees linking two large Louis XVI urns. Intimate green 'rooms', an alternating serpentine pond and an elegant staircase then lead to the 'Valley Garden' designed by Jacques Wirtz.

Midday, we dine at the 2-star Michelin restaurant, Chalet de la Forêt, located at the edge of the Sonian Forest of European beeches and oaks. We also take an aperitif in the structured vegetable garden that Erik

Dhont designed for chef Pascal Devalkeneer. It features local varieties such as Mirabelle plum and apple trees.

This afternoon, by special appointment, we view the interiors of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Hôtel Solvay, designed by Victor Horta. On avenue Louise, the Hôtel Solvay is a luxurious residence built by Victor Horta in 1894 for the Solvay family. The 33-year-old architect was given complete freedom and unlimited funds to design the interior and furnishings. This is generally considered the most ambitious and spectacular work of Horta in the Art Nouveau period. It features a decorated staircase, mosaic floor, painted walls, wrought iron work and custom furniture. (Overnight Brussels) BL

#### Day 14: Tuesday 23 May, Brussels – Heers – Haacht-Wespelaar – Brussels

- Kasteel van Heks (Hex Castle) and lunch, Heers (*To be confirmed*)
- Herkenrode, private garden of Philippe de Spoelberch, Haacht-Wespelaar

This morning we visit Hex Castle to view its world-famous rose collection. The 18th-century castle was originally a hunting pavilion surrounded by formal gardens including a rose garden, a Chinese garden, and an exceptional vegetable garden. A landscape park inspired by Capability Brown was added later. The original formal Renaissance garden includes a nut garden and a walled vegetable garden. Its celebrated rose garden contains a unique assortment of about 250 varieties. We enjoy lunch in the castle, guests of Count and Countess d'Ursel.

This afternoon we return to Wespelaar to visit Herkenrode, the private garden of Philippe de Spoelberch. The gardens were founded in 1796 by the Artois, a famous brewing family who created one of the first English landscape-style gardens in Belgium. They were later extended and redesigned by Jacques Wirtz in 1979. (Overnight Brussels) BL

#### Day 15: Wednesday 24 May, Brussels

- Musée David et Alice van Buuren: House and garden
- Afternoon at leisure
- Farewell Dinner

We start the day with a visit to the extraordinary house of the banker and art patron David van Buuren. Its interior decoration presents a feast of Art Deco by Belgian, French and Dutch designers. He and his wife Alice Piette collected rare furniture, carpets, stained-glass windows, sculptures and masterpieces of painting from the 15th to the 19th century. The collection includes two Brueghels and works by Fantin-Latour, Ensor, van Gogh, Signac and Max Ernst. Its gardens were initially designed by Jules Buyskens, proponent of the Belgian Picturesque Garden movement. His geometrical 'Picturesque Garden' reflected the Art Deco style of the house. It includes a wild garden, water and bog gardens, a rock garden, a walled garden, a fernery and herbaceous border. In 1969 the Brussels designer, René Pechère, added the 'Garden of the Heart' and the 'Labyrinth'.

This afternoon will be time at leisure. Tonight we enjoy our farewell dinner at a local restaurant. (Overnight Brussels) BD

#### Day 16: Thursday 25 May, Brussels

- Tour concludes in the morning
- At leisure/Check out

Our tour ends in Brussels after breakfast. In the morning you will be required to check out of the hotel. Please contact ASA if you require assistance with a transfer to Brussels Airport. **B**

## Accommodation

ASA has selected 4-star hotels that are themselves historical buildings and/or are located in historical centres. All hotels provide rooms with en suite bathroom.

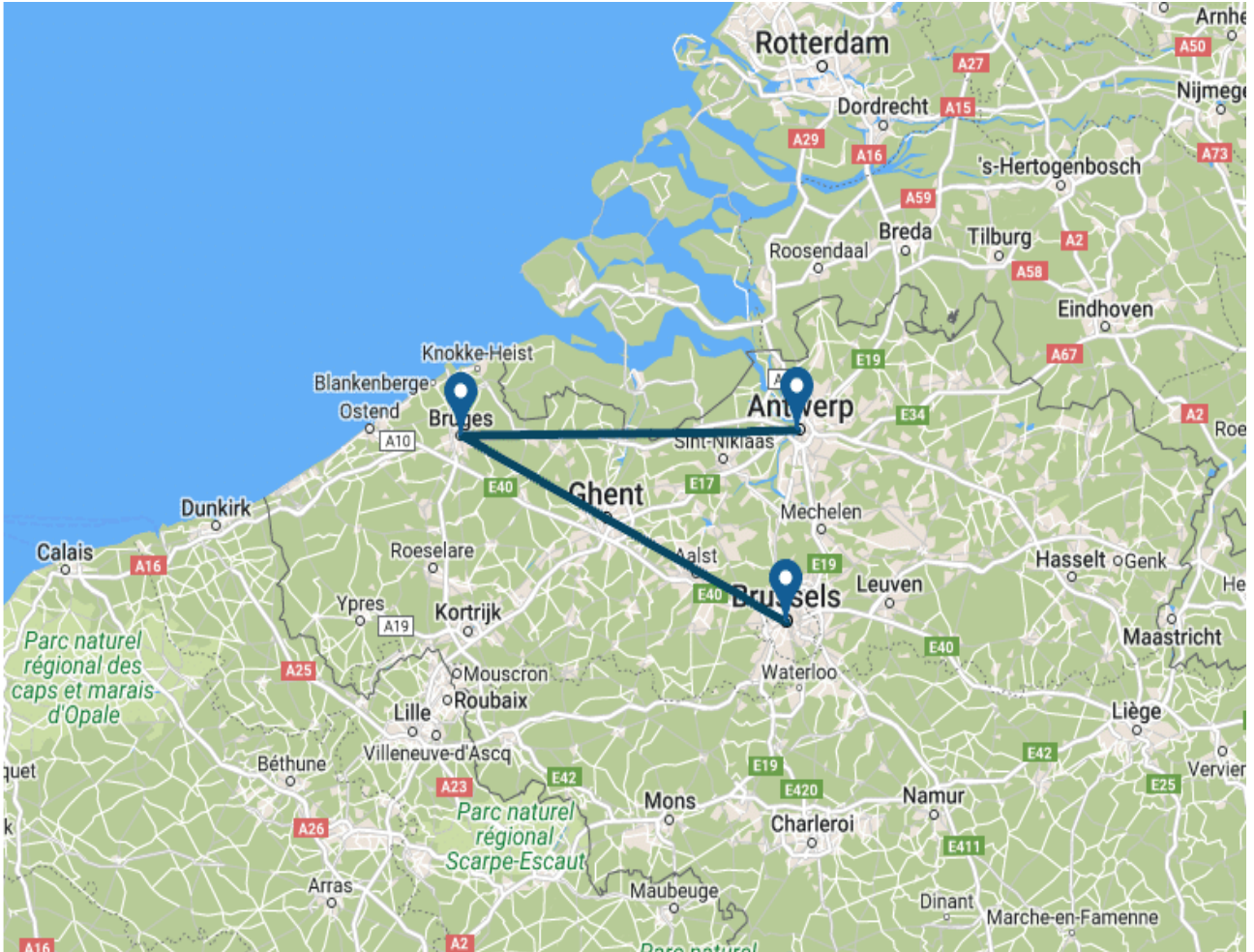
- Antwerp (4 nights): 4-star [Hotel 't Sandt](#) – housed in an elegant 17th-century neo-Rococo mansion located in the historic centre.
- Bruges (5 nights): 4-star [Grand Hotel Casselbergh](#) – housed in three former 18th-century residences located in the historic centre.
- Brussels (6 nights): 4-star [Hotel Le Dixseptième](#) – a charming boutique hotel situated in the historic centre, 240m from the Grand Place.

*Note: Hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

### Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double (or twin) room for single occupancy throughout the tour. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

## Tour Map



## Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$ TBA Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 30 June 2027

AUD \$ TBA Land Content Only

AUD \$ TBA Single Supplement

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 4-star hotels
- Meals as indicated in the tour itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=dinner
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Entrance fees
- Tour Notes
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Brussels, Brussels-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport transfers
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)



## Fitness Criteria & Practical Information

Fitness Level 

### Level 2 - Intermediate

For people with energetic lifestyles and very good mobility

You must be able to:

- manage at least five to six hours of physical activity per day with ease.
- walk at a regular to moderate pace to explore towns and gardens extensively on foot. Some days include walking tours of at least 5-7kms. Many walks include uneven terrain, cobbled streets and steep ascents/descents.
- keep up with the group at all times.
- climb a few flights of stairs without duress.
- stand for one to two hours during visits to galleries and museums without the need to sit.
- cope with a daily schedule which generally involves an early-morning departure (between 8.00-8.30am), concluding in the late afternoon (between 5.30-6.30pm).
- board/alight coaches or public transport (eg. in Brussels) with steep steps unassisted.
- contend with a shower over a bath; walk-in showers may not be available at all hotels.
- manage your own luggage at some hotels.

### Fitness Levels

Please also view the fitness criteria required for our tours, graded from Level 1 to Level 3, at [www.asatours.com.au/fitness-level/](http://www.asatours.com.au/fitness-level/)

All ASA tours are active programs suitable for people with a good level of mental and physical fitness and good mobility. They are not suitable for people who lack stamina, have difficulty walking at the group's pace or who have mobility issues. An unavoidable aspect of every tour is the need to manage walking, stair-climbing and standing for long periods of time.

It is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. Before enrolling on an ASA tour please read the fitness requirements carefully.

## Booking Conditions

### ASA INTENTION TO TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD \$200.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD \$800.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of AUD \$1000.00 is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

Or

- CANCEL your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD \$200.00 per person deposit, less a \$66.00 service fee (including GST).



# Intention to Travel Application

TOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TOUR DATES \_\_\_\_\_

## Booking before the tour price is available

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD\$200.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD\$800.00 per person applicable for International tours OR AUD\$300.00 per person applicable for Australian tours. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your full deposit is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

**OR**

- Cancel your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD\$200.00 per person deposit, less a \$66.00 service fee (including GST).

## Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr  Mrs  Ms  Miss  Dr  Other \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ GENDER Male  Female

## Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like:  a twin-bedded room  a double-bedded room  a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling:  on my own  with a friend/family member Travel Companion \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish  poultry  red meat  dairy products

eggs  pork  nuts

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence  Postal Mail  Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour.

ASA's ability to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs, your health and safety and the health and safety of other tour members, is of paramount importance to us. For this reason the ASA Reservation Application includes a Medical Information section. As a general guideline, you must be able to accomplish each of these activities *without assistance or support*:-

- walk & stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions
- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1 km every 15 - 20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_



# Intention to Travel Payment

## Tour / Course Name

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Name of Traveller 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Traveller 2 \_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

Payment by (please indicate):  Cheque  Direct Debit (see below)  Credit Card (see below)

## International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

### By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

### Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

### Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ  
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic  
Swift Code ANZBAU3M  
BSB 013-423  
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. \_\_\_\_\_

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Money Transferred \_\_\_\_\_

### Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my:  Mastercard  Visa  American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (CVC) \_\_\_\_\_

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD

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