

FROM FLANDERS WITH FOOD



Flanders
State of the Art

FLANDERS, A HOME FOR FOOD LOVERS

WITH PETER GOOSSENS

MEET FLANDERS' BREWERS

WITH ROSA MERCKX

FLANDERS' STREETFOOD

WITH WIM BALLIEU

HOME OF WORLD-CLASS CHEFS

WITH GERT DE MANGELEER

CUTTING-EDGE CHOCOLATIERS

WITH HERMAN VAN DENDER

FLANDERS KITCHEN REBELS

WITH DENNIS BROECKX

VISITFLANDERS

FROM FLANDERS WITH FOOD



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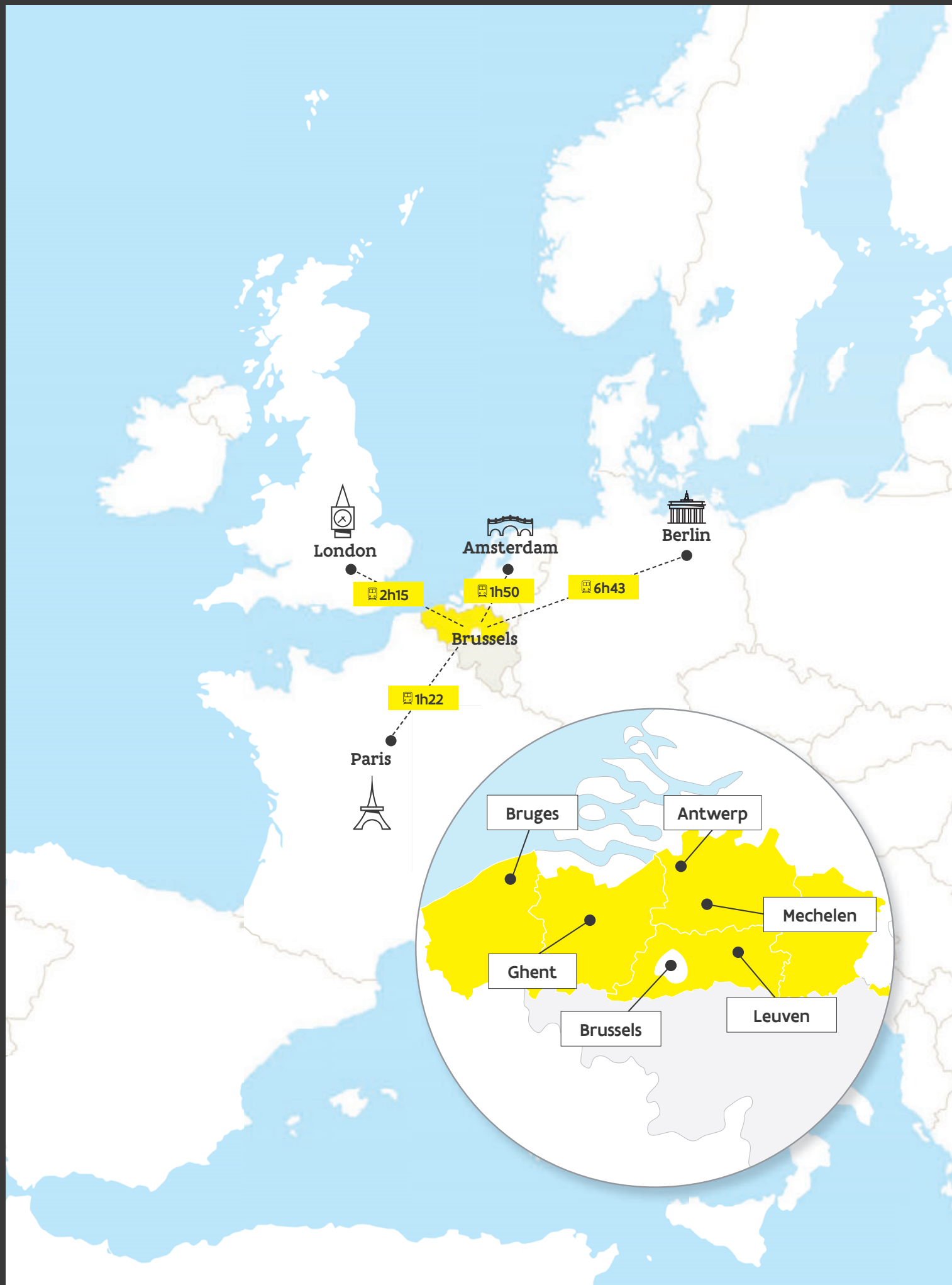
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**MORE THAN 350
INSIDER TIPS**
PLAN YOUR TRIP TO FLANDERS

COVER IMAGE:
HANNES VANDENBROUCKE
WITH THANKS TO
FLANDERS KITCHEN REBEL DAVY DE POURCOQ
AND RESTAURANT VOLTA.



THIS IS FLANDERS

Welcome to Flanders, the northern half of Belgium. Situated in the heart of Europe, it's also at the centre of European history. Over the years, pioneers in art, design, fashion and architecture have all called Flanders home. And today, the region is admired all over the world, thanks to the cutting-edge craftsmanship that puts Flanders at the forefront of chocolate, gastronomy, arts & culture, heritage and cycling.

Bite-sized Flanders is the perfect scale for exploring – the art cities Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, Leuven and Mechelen and capital Brussels are all within easy reach and just waiting to be discovered.



6,509,894
population

13,522 km²
surface area

51° 0' 0" N
4° 30' 0" E
coordinates

Dutch
official language

Euro
currency

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for more info

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7 reasons to visit Flanders



UNESCO
Flanders has no fewer than seven sites protected by UNESCO, with Bruges as the jewel in the crown. In 2016, Flanders' beer culture received the seal of approval as cultural heritage – something all Flemings are proud of!



Culinary craftsmanship
Whether in a smart restaurant or a snack bar, you can find top-quality gastronomy at every turn.



Arts & heritage
Explore a rich cultural heritage that goes back centuries. The region has a multitude of world-class museums and galleries and a wealth of art events all year round.



Cycling
Flanders is paradise for cyclists, so get on your bike and explore its beautiful landscape, picturesque villages and artistic cities.



Flanders is a festival
Flanders is the ultimate place to experience the festival atmosphere in summer. Every year millions of people gather at more than 280 festivals covering 16,500 km.



Family-friendly
Feel at home, even on holiday. Throughout Flanders you'll find places to eat and stay that welcome families with open arms. For active families, it's the perfect base for days out and bike rides.



Accessibility
Flanders aims to offer great experiences to travellers with disabilities too. We're committed to making our accommodation, transport, museums and other attractions as accessible as possible.



“ In Flanders we enjoy life and we love to eat, you can find that at all culinary levels ”

Peter Goossens

For 30 years, chef Peter Goossens has been the godfather of Flemish gastronomy. With his three Michelin star restaurant, Hof van Cleve, he's performing at an international level with some of the biggest names in the culinary world. He serves up gastronomic craft of the highest order, and his innovative creations set the tone for the food landscape of tomorrow. His emphasis on using local products makes him one of the proudest ambassadors of our Flemish terroir and our culinary craftsmanship.

FLANDERS, A HOME FOR FOOD LOVERS

PETER GOOSSENS

Flanders' culinary culture and tradition are the thread running through Peter Goossens' cooking and his restaurant. His signature work exudes Flemish craftsmanship in all its facets. "The dishes we serve in our restaurant are the result of skilful handicraft and expertise on so many levels," he says. **Without the hard work of our farmers, fishermen, hunters and cheese makers, it would be impossible to create magic on a plate.** Everything begins with these fantastic Flemish products. I cherish

Our artisans are always looking for new ways to improve. We're not resting on our laurels here, we're always challenging ourselves without denying our culinary traditions. The classic Flemish vol-au-vent is a good example. It was once a hearty dish based on a heavy béchamel sauce. Today we've refined the sauce and replaced some of the flour and butter with a robust, flavourful broth. We don't hesitate to take our traditions and adapt them to contemporary dining habits."



Constant innovation and evolution are key to the success of Flemish gastronomy

Our region is seeing a dynamic revival of culinary crafts. Small-scale microbreweries are emerging, young chefs are innovating in the kitchen with zero waste, chefs are experimenting with local ingredients, chocolatiers are redefining the classic praline, and street food is taking over our streets. "Expertise and know-how are passed down from parent to child. And while traditions aren't forgotten, a creative young generation is breathing new life into them. That's what keeps our culinary heritage alive."

and respect our local ingredients enormously; they are the DNA of my kitchen and they share responsibility for the unique quality of the food I make. It's a wonderful challenge to allow the taste, aroma and the texture of our local products to really come into their own."

No innovation without tradition

While never losing sight of classic techniques, Peter creates refined, contemporary dishes. For him, constant innovation and evolution are key to the success of Flemish gastronomy.

Explosion of flavours

"Good taste is rooted in our DNA, and we have our grandmothers and great-grandmothers to thank for that. They were constantly occupied with food, in accordance with the seasons. There was always something simmering away in their kitchen. **Love of food and flavour is in a Fleming's blood.**" Thanks to the distinct seasons, Flanders' culinary landscape has grown to become one of the world's most varied and interesting. "When the first white asparagus pops up with the spring, our kitchens are dominated by light plates that are full of flavour. In the dead of winter, when it's freezing cold, we warm ourselves up with hearty stews and nutritious soups," Peter adds. "In Flanders, we enjoy life and we love to eat, and you can experience this wherever you choose to dine."



In Flanders we don't hesitate to take our traditions and adapt them to contemporary dining habits



Peter Goossens is performing at an international level with some of the biggest names in the culinary world

Visit Peter Goossens at his restaurant
 The three Michelin star restaurant Hof van Cleve, set in the countryside in East Flanders, was included in "World's 50 Best Restaurants 2017" by Restaurant Magazine.
Hof van Cleve * | GM 19,5/20**
 Riemegemstraat 1
 9770 Kruishoutem
www.hofvancleve.com

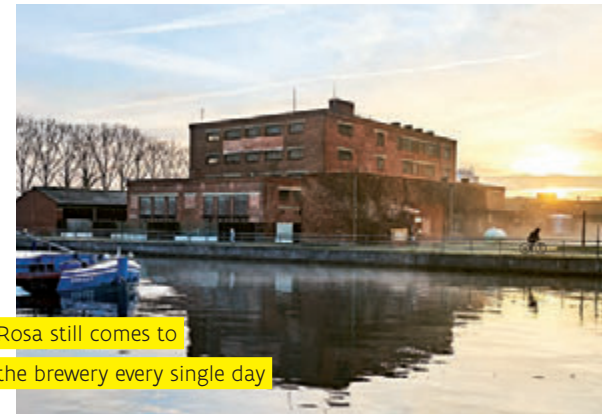


93-year-old Rosa Merckx is a true brewing legend. She was Belgium's first female head brewer, laying the foundations more than half a century ago for the contemporary taste of the award-winning Liefmans beer.

Well-developed senses are the brewer's most valuable tools
Rosa Merckx

When Rosa Merckx went to work as secretary for the Liefmans brewery in Oudenaarde, just after the Second World War, she was a one-off. "In those days, it wasn't the done thing for a girl from a good home to go out to work," says Rosa. "I could have taken ballet lessons or volunteered at the Red Cross, until I met a man. But I wasn't waiting around. I wanted to have lots of experiences, and so I came to Liefmans." For years, she worked alongside Paul van Geluwe de Berlaere, owner and head brewer of Liefmans. As she helped more and more with the brewing, she picked up the tricks of the trade. "I learned things like how the best hops should smell, how to check the temperature of the brew and how to measure the acidity. Along the way, my interest grew and I fell in love with beer. **Because beer lives, it has a soul.** You see it ferment and transform."

When, at her boss's request, Rosa tasted the beer, she gave them her blunt opinion. "It tasted far too sour and it really wasn't very nice," she recalls. Sour beers were traditionally brewed in the area, but Rosa wanted a beer that young people and women would also enjoy.



Rosa still comes to the brewery every single day

"A woman just has her opinion," Rosa says with a laugh, and under her influence, the taste of the drink became softer and more rounded. When van Geluwe de Berlaere died suddenly in 1972, the young woman rose to become head of the business. She made the recipe her own and introduced a pretty paper wrapping around the bottle. The feminine touch was a hit, and the beer grew into the success it is today. When Liefmans Goudenband took gold at the 2014 Brussels Beer Challenge and was named Best Belgian Beer, Rosa says it was the culmination of her life's work.

Visit Rosa Merckx at the brewery
Try the whole Liefmans range in the brewery and sample the unique character of this important Belgian beer heritage.

Aalststraat 200
9700 Oudenaarde
www.liefmans.be


MEET FLANDERS' BREWERS ROSA MERCKX

Flemish brewing culture through the centuries

Flanders has a **centuries-old brewing tradition**. As early as the Middle Ages, beer was being made by monks and nuns. Because of disease, the water wasn't safe to drink, so a weak table beer was brewed for the people. "When I was young, every village had a brewery," says Rosa. "They were operated by the mayor, but not many people know that it was usually the wife of the mayor who did the brewing. When I started working for Liefmans in the 1940s, there were more than 3,000 breweries in Belgium! We didn't have any rules about water purity and so on, everyone just did what they wanted. Sometimes it tasted good, sometimes not." Due to growing regulation, takeovers and the high cost of investment, lots of small breweries disappeared, until there were just a hundred or so left. **Today the industry is enjoying a real revival** and the Flemish beer tradition lives on in young, passionate brewers, trendy microbreweries and a new generation who are keen on homegrown beer. The University of Leuven even offers a course called 'technology of beer brewing'.



A female beer brewing pioneer



UNESCO World Heritage

It was no surprise when Belgian beer was declared an important part of the cultural heritage of humanity by UNESCO in November 2016. Beer has always been a vital part of Flanders' rich history, tradition and culture. Since time immemorial it has been an unmistakable part of everyday life, and is intrinsically linked to our society. The first pub in Flanders opened in 1515, and ever since then we have been enjoying a beer at the café after work or at the weekend. Birthdays and other social events are held in the bar too – it's where friends choose to meet for a fun evening.

But it's not just in bars that beer is consumed. You'll find our liquid gold in every restaurant and at numerous beer festivals, folk events and on the shelves of shops. Our huge range of beers always catch the eye. From pils and Trappist beers to Flemish Red Ales and geuze: **our Flemish beer diversity is unmatched!** We are so devoted to our homegrown amber nectar that we even incorporate it into our dishes: just think of the classics like a Flemish beef stew (stoofvlees) or rabbit with prunes.

Tradition and technology together

Traditional production methods are handed down from generation to generation, systematically complemented and strengthened by the latest technological know-how and scientific developments. This is why our beer tastes – and keeps – better than ever. "On the one side, brewing beer is a question of emotion, and on the other it's about scientific detail," says Rosa. "You can't have one and not the other; the two go hand in hand. You can have all the technological know-how, but if you can't taste and smell properly, you'll never brew a delicious beer."

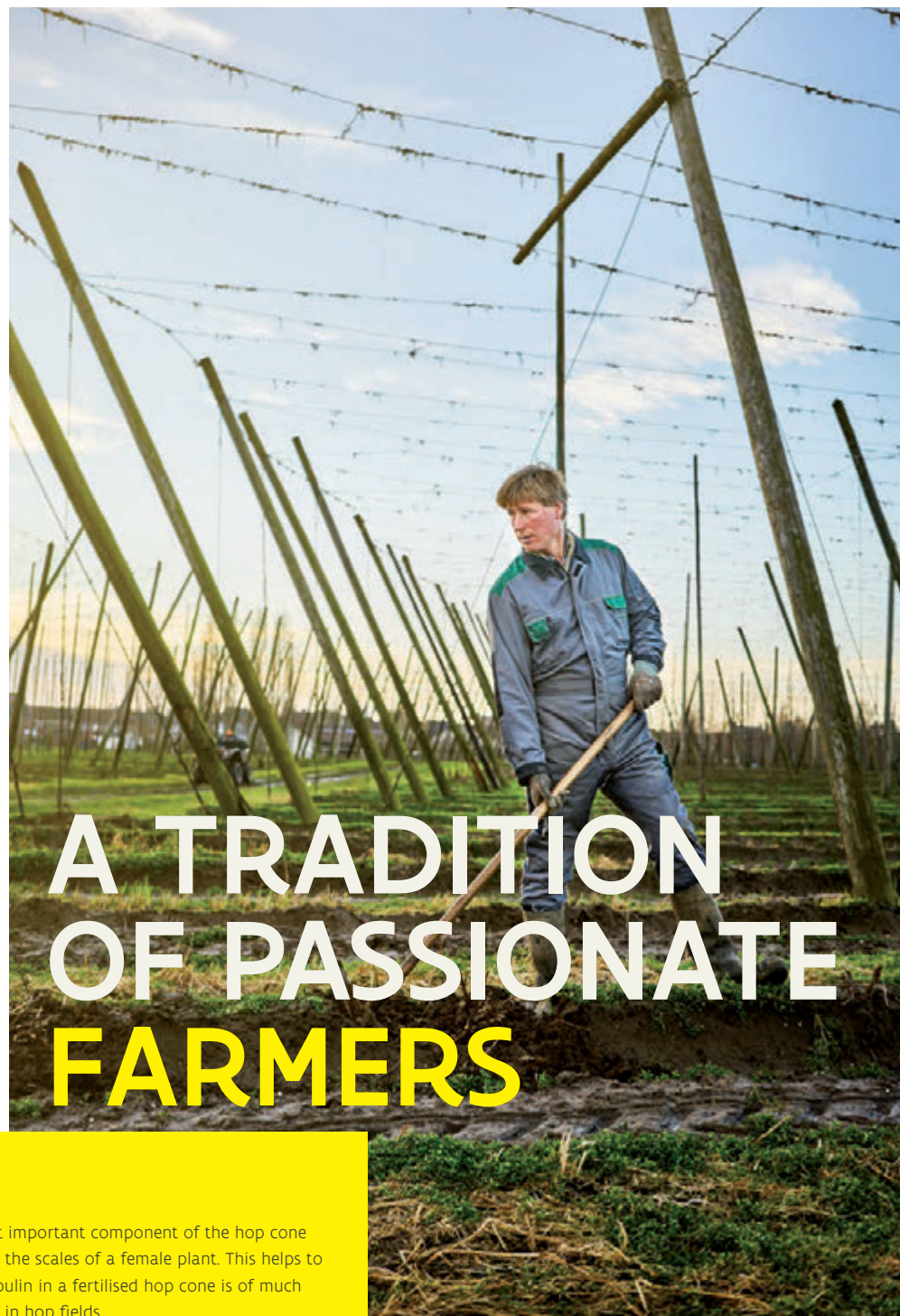
About 't Hoppecruyt

For four generations, the Desmyter family has been growing the finest hops for our Belgian brewers. The 't Hoppecruyt hop farm is in the heart of Proven, in the renowned Poperinge hop-growing region. Farmer Benedikte will happily give you a tour of the hop fields, and up to six people can stay the night at a cosy holiday home nearby.

www.hoppecruyt.be



When you rub the hop flowers between your hands, they release a delicious aroma



A TRADITION OF PASSIONATE FARMERS

4 facts about hops

- 1 The hop cone is the fruit of the hop plant. The most important component of the hop cone is a bitter yellow powder called lupulin found under the scales of a female plant. This helps to preserve the beer and gives it its bitter taste. The lupulin in a fertilised hop cone is of much lower quality, which is why there are no male plants in hop fields.
- 2 You can actually see hops growing. In early summer the plant can grow up to 10 cm (4 inches) a day, making it the fastest growing climbing plant in Western Europe.
- 3 The hop plant prefers a nutrient-rich, permeable and damp soil. The sandy loam ground of Poperinge offers an exceptional growth medium.
- 4 Botanically, the hop is part of the hemp family. Its scientific name is *Humulus lupulus*. source: www.hopmuseum.be

POP cycle route 14-18

In light of centenary commemorations for the First World War, Westtoer (the tourism agency for West Flanders) has created 12 new cycle routes in the Westhoek with the Great War as the connecting theme. They offer a fantastic mix of scenery, visits to important WWI sites and scenic cycling routes. www.toerismepoperinge.be



Regional products and hop labels

For centuries, family businesses in Flanders have been growing hops with love and expertise. Today the hops industry is concentrated primarily around Poperinge, West Flanders, a region with the ideal soil for this exceptional plant. Thanks to their high quality, Poperinge hops are a recognised regional product. Beers made with at least 50% hops from here receive the circular 'Belgian hop' label.

www.belgischehop.be



“To brew a speciality beer you need good malt and top-quality hops. A speciality or artisan beer with high fermentation is best drunk at room temperature, so the aromas are more pronounced and you can taste the quality of the ingredients,” Rosa explains. “Hop cones, the fruit of the hop plant, look a little like dried flowers. Before, when a delivery used to come into the brewery, I would rub the hops between my hands. The aroma released defined its quality. To this day I can still conjure up the smell; it was delicious!” Pure water and yeast also play an important role in the brewing process. Every brewery has its own unique yeast culture that has an impact on the eventual taste.

While hops are one of the best-known ingredients in beer, what many people don't know is that, historically, it was often replaced by **gruit**. This mixture of herbs varied from region to region, but commonly contained myrtle, sage, yarrow and juniper berries. At the time, breweries on the left bank of the river Scheldt were obliged to buy gruit from the gruihouses. This was an early form of excise duty on beer and the spice mix was responsible for taste and for slowing down acidification. Meanwhile, the breweries on the right bank of the Scheldt added a good dose of hops to their beers as a natural preservative. Along with evolutions in working methods and the changing laws through the centuries, these **historical and regional differences** are the basis of our current varied range of beers.



Hops are an essential ingredient in beer. They act as a natural preservative and are responsible for head stability, providing a bitter taste and a distinct aroma.

Hop Museum

Hops were once weighed, tested and stored in what is now the Hop Museum. Here you'll find an extensive collection of authentic equipment and discover the history of this great product. During a tasting tour, you'll have the opportunity to enjoy the flavour and craftsmanship of beer from our Belgian hop growers and brewers. www.hopmuseum.be

“ Good beer begins with honest ingredients of the highest quality ”

Rosa Merckx



Natural ingredients

Alongside 90% water, beer has three main ingredients



Malt

Malt is germinated and dried grain, mainly barley. It's an important ingredient of beer, as well as jenever and whisky.



Hops

Hops give beer its characteristic flavour, are a natural preservative and ensure head stability.



Yeast

Yeast turns the sugars into alcohol and carbon dioxide. High, low and wild fermentation each have their own aroma.



White gold

In Flanders, it's not only our beer that makes use of the hop plant. The white, crunchy **hop shoots** that grow at the base of the plant are a **seasonal delicacy** in Flemish kitchens. With their mild, earthy flavour, they have become one of the world's most exclusive and expensive vegetables. This is due to a small number of hop farmers, and a short harvesting period. Incredibly, the first kilogram of hop shoots, auctioned every year in December, often sells for €1,000! This is especially significant when you remember this humble vegetable was once food for paupers in the Middle Ages.

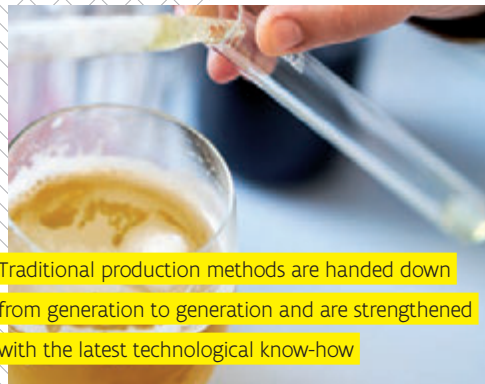
www.hopscheuten.be



The mixed fermentation at Liefmans still occurs just as it did 100 years ago

In figures

- Belgium has around **1,500 beer brands** and more than 700 different taste profiles
- Our country produces 1% of the world's beer, a staggering amount considering Belgium's relatively small population
- **62%** of our beer production is destined for export
- Belgians consume around 200 million gallons of beer a year, equal to **72 litres** or more than 125 pints per inhabitant
- The **Belgian Beer Weekend** has been named as one of the world's top 10 beer festivals and has been praised for its scope and relevance



Traditional production methods are handed down from generation to generation and are strengthened with the latest technological know-how



You create beer like an artist would create a painting

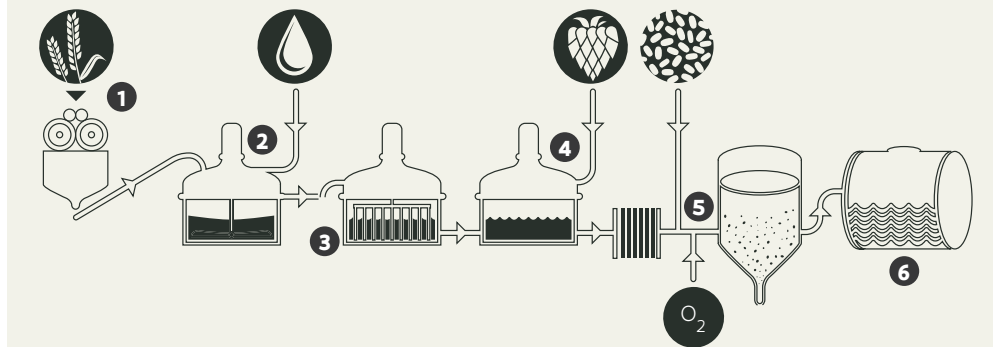
Rosa Merckx



To get the perfect blend, different vintages stored in maturation tanks are mixed together

THE ART OF MAKING BEER

Beer is made from natural ingredients, in which there can be slight variations. One hop harvest is not the same as another, and minor fluctuations can have a big effect on the eventual taste of the beer. To avoid these differences, and put a standardised beer on the market, you can use blends. Sometimes different batches of beer (as many as five types) are mixed together to make a **perfectly balanced beer**. Just like wine and champagne, the mix of different vintages adds depth and character to the beer. The drink is not only blended like wine, it's also tasted in the same way by swirling the glass to release the aroma.

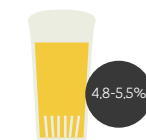


From grain to beer: the brewing process

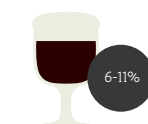
- 1** Malt is made in a malt house. This is grain that has germinated and is then dried. The malt largely determines the beer's colour.
- The crushed malt is mixed with water, turned into a mash and then warmed to 78°C (172°F), so **the starch in the malt is converted into sugar**, which will later act as food for the yeast.
- The mixture is then **filtered** to give a clear liquid (the wort) and the malt residue (the draft).
- The wort is boiled with hops and, depending on the type of beer, the mixture will simmer for anything from a few hours to a whole day. **The longer the liquid boils, the darker the colour.**
- The wort cools to the correct temperature for fermentation. For most beers, the yeast is added in this phase, and the **fermentation** can begin; the **sugars** in the wort are converted into **alcohol and carbon dioxide** by the yeast, which then results in beer.
- The last step in the brewing process is the **maturation**. The brewed beer is stored in maturation tanks and its aroma develops further.

A selection of beer varieties

Flemish beer comes in all colours, flavours and alcohol percentages: from high and low to spontaneous and mixed fermentation, from light to dark and from fruity to sour – there's something for everyone! Here are five major categories:



Pils
Low-fermentation or pils beers are the best-known. It's a light, golden-coloured beer that can be lightly or heavily hopped.



Abbey Beer
Abbey beers have a historical link with a Norbertine or Benedictine abbey. The best-known are a relatively sweet dark brown (the 'double', 'dubbel' in Flemish beers) and a sharper, generally heavier blonde (the 'triple' or 'tripel').



Witbier
Witbier is an often unfiltered and cloudy wheat beer with notes of coriander and orange peel.



Lambic & Geuze
Lambic is a copper- to amber-coloured beer produced by spontaneous fermentation. Geuze is made by blending young and old lambics.



Speciality beer
Anything else falls into the speciality beer category. In terms of flavour, they vary enormously. There are sweet, bitter, fruity, smooth and strong speciality beers available.

Trappist beers in Belgium

Trappist beers are brewed by the monks of the Cistercian order. To be worthy of the name Trappist, a beer must meet strict conditions: they must always be brewed within or near the abbey and under the supervision of the religious community. No fewer than six of the world's 12 recognised Trappist beers are brewed in Belgium: Westmalle, Westvleteren, Achel, Chimay, Orval and Rochefort.



Land of brewers

Belgium has 168 active breweries, from major players to small microbreweries. You can visit lots of them to see the brewing process up close.



Brussels Beer Project

Innovative co-creation in an urban brewery.

Antoine Dansaertstraat 188
1000 Brussels
www.beerproject.be



Het Anker

A fifth-generation family brewery.

Guido Gezellelaan 49
2800 Mechelen
www.hetanker.be



Gruut

A city brewery that replaces hops with medieval spices.

Rembert Dodoensdreef 31a
9000 Ghent
www.gruut.be



De Halve maan

Thanks to a 3 km beer pipeline, city beer Brugse Zot flows beneath the streets.

Walplein 26
3000 Bruges
www.halvemaan.be



Stella Artois

With six centuries of brewing tradition, this is one of the biggest breweries in the world.

Aarschotsesteenweg 20
3000 Leuven
www.visitleuven.be



The perfect draught

Tapping a beer is a real art form. Follow these nine steps to pour a perfect cold beer with a good head.

- 1 The purification**
Rinse the glass thoroughly with cold water, to bring it to the same temperature as the beer
- 2 The offering**
Open the tap and let the first head, 'the sacrifice', flow away
- 3 The swirling alchemy**
Hold the glass at a 45° angle. That way, the beer will swirl and you'll get the right amount of head
- 4 The collar**
Slowly straighten the glass until it is upright
- 5 The removal**
Close the tap and take the glass away
- 6 The beheading**
Use a skimmer to remove the head that comes above the rim of the glass
- 7 The judgement**
The perfect head is three centimetres deep and protects the beer from the air, helping it retain its taste for longer
- 8 The final cleansing**
Rinse the base and sides of the glass clean
- 9 The presentation**
Finally, set the perfectly tapped beer down, and enjoy

(Source: Stella Artois)



Most beers taste best at temperatures between 7°C and 10°C (45-50°F).
Complex, dark or wood-aged beers are ideally enjoyed at a slightly higher temperature, about 12°C (54°F).



Plan Beer

With 12 cycle routes and nine walks, Plan Beer leads visitors around 29 breweries and more than 200 local cafés. Cycle through the rolling landscape of the Flemish Ardennes, beside the waters of the Scheldt or the green Waasland region – and right on cue, quench your thirst with a cool beer!

www.planbier.be

SERVED WITH LOVE

The diversity of our beer landscape is unlike anything you'll find elsewhere, and that's why Flanders is known around the world as such an important beer region. Throughout the ages, every part of Flanders has had its own traditions, materials and production methods; something reflected by **the hugely diverse and high-quality offering**. Whether it's a distinctive local beer, a famous Trappist brew, high or low fermentation, mixed or spontaneous fermentation, we have something for everyone! The same is true of our pubs, where trendy bars offer artisan beers and traditional brown cafés keep time-honoured classics on tap for their regular customers. Our beer culture is everywhere. Whether you're in a café, a restaurant, or at home with friends – a cool beer always tastes good!



Beer is a natural and brilliant product that all generations can enjoy

Beer tasting in 5 steps

- 1 Look**
Small, fine bubbles often indicate good quality
- 2 Smell**
80% of the taste experience comes from the nose, so swirl the glass to release the aromas
- 3 Feel**
Hard or soft bubbles, creamy or light? The warmer the beer, the higher the alcohol percentage
- 4 Taste**
Can you taste sweet, sour, bitter or a combination?
- 5 Aftertaste**
Which flavours linger? Does it feel sharp and harsh, or soft and harmonious?

Source: Beer sommelier Sofie Van Rafelghem
www.sofiesworld.be

Rosa's favourite

"My favourite beer is of course Goudenband. I made it my own, and I really enjoy drinking it. But I'll sometimes order a Trappist or a glass of wine!" says Rosa. In the world of the true beer lover, Goudenband is a name that resonates. This dark brown beer has grown over the decades to become the brewery's most popular beer. It's a traditional and strong Old Brown that, like most Flemish beers, is the perfect marriage between tradition and modern technology. Liefmans Goudenband is designed to be laid down in storage, and just like wine it gets better with age. On the nose there are aromas of caramel, apple, rhubarb, cherry and malt. In the mouth, you can taste apple and cherry, combined with notes of wood. The slightly sour taste and grilled, bitter elements make this beer a perfect match for blue cheese.



Beer and food pairing

Beer is the best companion for a good meal. Its complex aromas pair perfectly with food, just as wine does – or perhaps even better. The right beer with the right dish elevates both to a higher level. Our versatile beer landscape has the perfect match for every flavour!

The famed ABC method offers three approaches. A is for Accentuate. This is the most obvious method, wherein you look for the same principal flavours. A sweet beer with caramelised meat, for example. Using the Bridge method, you find similar flavours that complement each other; the citrus notes of a witbier with the salty taste of fish, for example. The Contrast approach brings together opposing flavours, such as a refreshing pint with spicy food.

Rosa's favourite beer, Goudenband, is itself served in several excellent restaurants, including The Jane in Antwerp.
www.thejaneantwerp.com

Top 5 beer tasting pubs



1 Het Goudblommeke in Papier

Famous hangout of René Magritte. Cellebroersstraat 55, 1000 Brussels
www.goudblommekeinpapier.be



2 M-Café

The best beer menu in Leuven. (before or after a visit to Museum M). Savoyestraat 10, 3000 Leuven
www.museumcafe.be



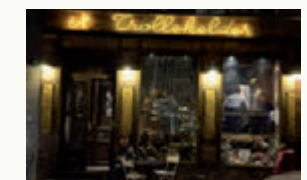
3 Als ik mijn ogen toedoe, ben ik in Honoloeloe

The café with the longest name in Belgium. Grote Markt 11, 2800 Mechelen
www.honoloeloe.com



4 't Brugs Beertje

The full-on café experience. Kemelstraat 5, 8000 Bruges
www.brugsbeertje.be



5 De Dulle Griet

This authentic café offers the largest beer selection in Ghent: more than 350 local and international beers. Vrijdagmarkt 50, 9000 Ghent
www.dullegriet.be

You only get three Michelin stars once in your life. It's Olympic gold, the very top.

Gert De Mangeleer

More than 10 years ago, Gert De Mangeleer and his culinary soulmate, master sommelier Joachim Boudens, began the story of their restaurant Hertog Jan. They took a remarkable path, following a unique vision, and fuelled by endless perseverance. Today, on an impressive farm site in West Flanders, the pair run an internationally renowned three Michelin star restaurant.

HOME OF WORLD-CLASS CHEFS GERT DE MANGELEER

“When I started in hospitality, I'd never heard of Michelin, and I knew nothing about fine dining. I wanted to open a jazz café with a grill, but it all turned out a little differently,” says Gert De Mangeleer, laughing. “During my training at Den Gouden Harynck in Bruges, which still has a Michelin star, everything changed. My tutor Philippe Serruys dazzled me with culinary creations and awoke my passion for gastronomy. After that I became chef of 't Molentje in Zeebrugge. I met Joachim and three years later the business was awarded two Michelin stars. That was when we both started to get the urge to open our own restaurant.” And so the two of them bought a dilapidated bistro called Hertog Jan. “There were houseplants on the windowsill, wicker chairs in the dining room and paper placemats on the tables. Everyone said we were crazy. But we believed in it, and with the few resources we had, we made something of it. In the year that we opened, we received our first Michelin star. From there everything has happened so quickly.”

The way to the top

From the beginning, the goal was clear: three Michelin stars. “We hoped to achieve it within 15 years. We didn't talk about it with anybody, but we knew we could do it. After seven years, we got there,” says Gert. “Getting that third star was the most emotional moment in my career. It's impossible to describe the feeling; my colleague Peter Goossens from Hof van Cleve can confirm that. **You only get three Michelin stars once in your life. It's Olympic gold, it's the very top.**”

Of course, the path to the top wasn't a smooth one. “It's been a tough road, almost unbearable at times,” says Gert. “Everyone sees the good side, but chefs have to give up so much to be able to offer the same top quality, day in, day out. It makes unbelievable physical, personal and financial demands on a person. There were many times I was ready to throw in the towel. But I really believe that everything in life goes in waves. After a downward wave, an upward wave will follow.”

Vision, drive and identity: the key to success

There's no formula for success. Every chef has their own vision of how to get there. **Good chefs step out of their comfort zone to find their identity.** Through extreme discipline and by striving for the ultimate perfection, that's how they excel. Top Flemish chefs are characterised by their drive: their will to attain something is one of the most important factors for success in this sector.”

Gert also sees identity as something that should guide a chef. “As a chef, it's normal to be inspired by certain movements or techniques, but it's important not to be taken over by them. Leading chefs translate this inspiration into their own vision, leading to a truly personal dish, their own signature. For example, I'm particularly inspired by Japan, by its simplicity, but that doesn't mean I'll be implementing Japanese cutting techniques or preparations at Hertog Jan. I'm trying above all to bring simplicity into our kitchen, and to reflect that in the presentation on the plate – simple and pure, with no frills.”



Since July 2014, visitors have been experiencing Gert De Mangeleer's concept in Zedelgem



There's no formula for success. Every chef has their own vision of how to get there

Visit Gert De Mangeleer at his restaurant

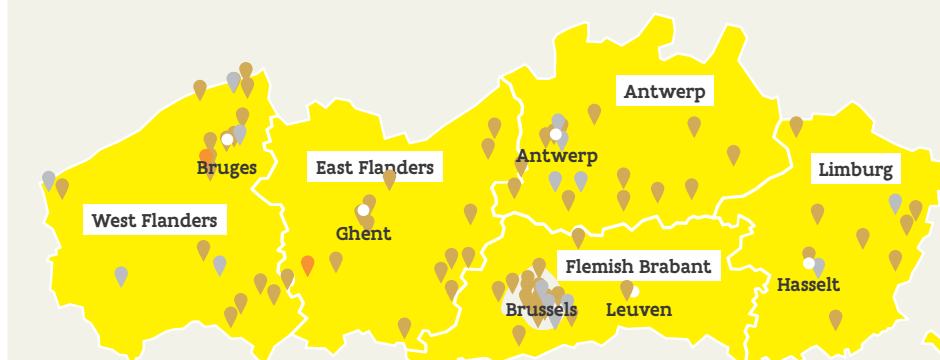
Three Michelin starred Hertog Jan is in rural Zedelgem, a picturesque town not far from Bruges.

Hertog Jan * | GM 19/20**
Loppemsestraat 52, 8210 Zedelgem (Bruges)
www.hertog-jan.com

Michelin-starred restaurants in Flanders and Brussels

With 97, Flanders and Brussels have the greatest concentration of Michelin-starred restaurants in the world. Bruges alone has more than the whole of Denmark!

1 star restaurant 2 star restaurant 3 star restaurant





A WALK IN THE GARDEN

Agritourism
 More and more people are looking for peace and tranquillity in the countryside during their holiday. Agritourism is on the rise in Flanders, and farmers are throwing open their doors to the public. With a farm stay, you can immerse yourself in farm life. Get close to the animals, learn how to make cheese, go for a walk in the country and join your host family around the table for a typical Flemish meal with farm products. Slow tourism at its best!
www.hoeveroerisme.eu/belgie



Flanders has a rich terroir thanks to its impressive artisans

The dining room at Hertog Jan looks out on to an extensive vegetable garden that's not just beautiful, it's functional, too. "At this level, you need to offer a certain exclusivity, and for us that means the Flemish vegetables that we grow which can't be found anywhere else," Gert explains. "Of course, freshness plays a big part. There's nothing better than a freshly picked tomato; the flavour is so intense." The kitchen garden has a big impact on his cooking. "Your cooking is more elegant and fresher with a vegetable garden. It's a huge source of inspiration. Nothing raises the spirits like going out in the morning to pick vegetables and herbs from the garden. This connection to nature and to the Flemish terroir is reflected on the plate. It also teaches you to cook according to the seasons, and to plan ahead. In summer, we're already thinking about winter. Anything we have left over is pickled and preserved so that even in the colder months, we can put a bit of sunshine on the plate. Peppers we can roast, confit and preserve. With tomatoes, we make sauce and powdered tomato and some of it is fermented. People are sometimes surprised by how many types of radish and turnips the fields give

us in winter. Our Flemish soil produces many lovely vegetables. Just think of our world-famous sprouts, or our classic dish, endive with cheese and ham. But our watercress is also phenomenal; you won't find better anywhere else in the world."

The complete package

"The vegetable garden is a massive part of our farm concept. The experience of a Michelin star restaurant is about much more than just food. People come for a story, they come to listen to what the chef has to say," Gert says. "The power of restaurants lies in the big picture, and the effort the chefs make to surprise their customers. These days, chefs don't just use the plate to begin a dialogue with their guests. Their cooking philosophy comes through in the design, and the surroundings in every little detail. That's how a concept is created. Our guests are given a tour of the kitchen and can stroll in the gardens with a cocktail based on garden herbs they see growing there. It all adds to the experience."

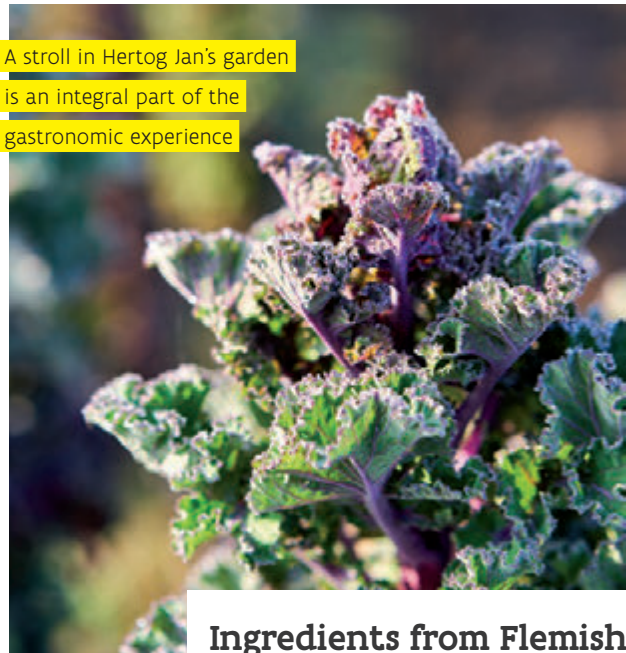
Listen to your customer

Vegetables play a very important role, but Gert stresses that Hertog Jan isn't a vegetarian restaurant. "In creating a dish, the starting point is what the garden is offering at that moment, but I always combine our vegetables with another ingredient from the sea or the land. Like delicious shrimps, cuttlefish and langoustines from the North Sea, or our outstanding local pork, from producers like Duroc d'Olives and Duke of Berkshire."

"Above all, Flemish ingredients in their entirety are the thread connecting my cooking. When we first opened on this site, I tried to give vegetables a starring role on our menu, but customers weren't ready for it. So, as an entrepreneur, I was prepared for that. A restaurant can only be a success if the chef listens to their guests. If I'd stubbornly carried on as I had started, nobody would come. It's so important to stay connected to your clientele. Being a chef relies on finding a good balance between doing what you enjoy doing and the entrepreneurship that's involved."



The vegetable garden is a huge source of inspiration
 Gert De Mangeleer



A stroll in Hertog Jan's garden is an integral part of the gastronomic experience



Nothing raises the spirits like going out in the morning to pick vegetables and herbs from the garden

Ingredients from Flemish soil

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Endive</p>  <p>Our region is known for its outstanding endive, a winter vegetable that's characterised by its crunchy leaves and lightly bitter taste.</p> | <p>Asparagus</p>  <p>Our snow-white asparagus, also known as white gold, is world renowned for its flavour. It's a top seasonal product that we feast on from April until the end of June.</p> | <p>Brussels sprouts</p>  <p>Brussels sprouts are known far beyond our borders. The bright green little cabbages brighten up the winter and go perfectly with smoked ham.</p> | <p>Strawberries</p>  <p>Every year we look forward to the start of the new strawberry season at the start of April. Nothing beats the taste of our juicy, sweet strawberries.</p> | <p>Parsnip</p>  <p>For a long time, parsnip was a 'forgotten vegetable', but the white root has well and truly been rediscovered! It tastes delicious both raw and cooked.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Renowned restaurants that celebrate vegetables

Graanmarkt 13
 Urban farming pioneer with a roof garden and beehives; chef Seppe Nobels puts the emphasis on local ingredients.
 Graanmarkt 13, 2000 Antwerp
www.graanmarkt13.be

Vrijmoed * | GM 16/20
 In the heart of Ghent, starred chef Michaël Vrijmoed makes an impression with his creative menu.
 Vlaanderenstraat 22, 9000 Ghent
www.vrijmoed.be

Humus x Hortense
 Nicolas Declodt is a spirited vegetable cook with a passion for products from Brussels. At Humus x Hortense, you can enjoy cocktails as well as refined vegetarian dishes.
 Vergniesstraat 2, 1050 Brussels
www.humusrestaurant.be

Souvenir
 For Vilhjalmur Sigurdarson, a sustainable relationship with local farmers and producers is essential. Nature is the thread running through his balanced seasonal cooking.
 Surmont de Volsbergstraat 12, 8900 Ypres
www.souvenir-restaurant.be

Vous lé Vous
 Giovanni Oosters produces gastronomic food with regional products and the freshest vegetables from his own garden. The cosy farmhouse also houses five guest bedrooms.
 Wimmertingenstraat 76, 3501 Hasselt
www.vouslevous.be

SIMPLICITY ISN'T SIMPLE



We set the bar very high, and we're demanding. It's all about the details.

Gert De Mangeleer



Behind every plate there's a huge process

Flanders' top chefs present complex dishes in the simplest way. They impress with layers of flavour and varied textures rather than exaggerated presentation on the plate. **Some dishes look deceptively simple: the thought process and preparation that goes into them can't always be seen.** An idea often has to mature; it can sometimes take years for it to become a concrete dish," Gert explains. "For example, since 2008, there's always been a tomato salad with different tomato varieties on our menu. That might sound simple, but the preparation is immense, to say the least. The process begins a year in advance, with the selection of more than 130 different seeds. The tomato plants are grown and tended with real care and precision. Months later, we pick the ripe fruits by hand, at just the right moment, so that after complex preparations they can be put on the plate. You might not see it at first glance, but behind every plate there's an enormous amount of preparation in place."

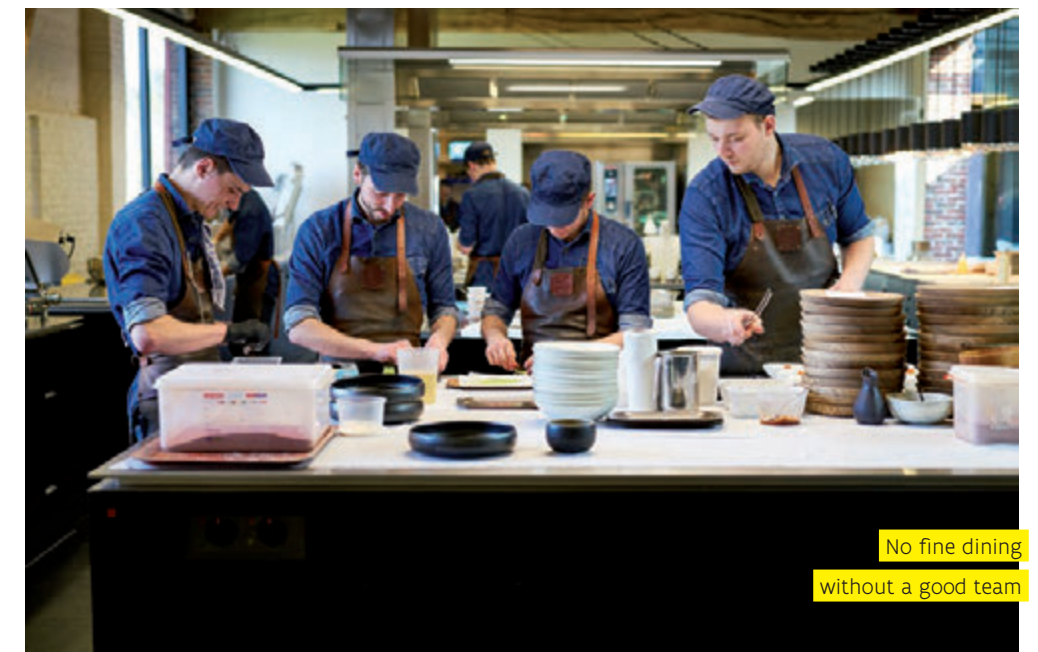


The family meal

Every evening at Hertog Jan, just before the restaurant opens for service, all the members of staff sit down to enjoy dinner together. This 'family meal' is one of the rare moments of the day where the chef and his team can take a moment to relax. Given the sort of food the three-star restaurant is renowned for, the bill of fare is simpler than you might expect, without a foam or a pair of tweezers in sight. Well, ok, maybe just one foam...

Teamwork brings results

There can be no top gastronomy without a good team. "Every chef must know his weaknesses. For example, I'm really creative, but I'm not a good organiser, so I surround myself with people who are. In the kitchen, too, I'm lucky enough to work with some fantastic people who understand our vision and philosophy. **Real talent without whom Hertog Jan would not be what it is today.** We set the bar very high, and we're demanding. It's all about the details in this business. For me it's also very important to take care of our people. There's fresh coffee all day, and we also make sure there's an afternoon snack and tasty, nutritious meals. We've recently started closing for an extra evening during the week. These are little things, but I hope they make a difference."



No fine dining without a good team



A day in the life of Gert De Mangeleer

7.00

Get up and spend time with the children

8.30

Meeting with Joachim at Hertog Jan. We're both addicted to coffee and during the meeting we'll drink four or five espressos

10.00

I arrive at the kitchen, and I usually won't leave before 23.00

23.00

Time to check my emails and take care of some admin

1.30

I try and exercise a lot, and four times a week I go running about this time

2.45

Finally home, but I'm too wound up from the shift to sleep, so I watch some TV

3.00 - 4.00

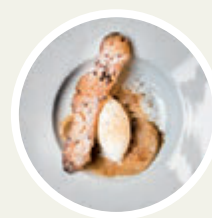
Bedtime!

Every chef has their own style

You can read a top chef's unique signature in their plates. Culinary craftsmanship of the highest level and flavoursome local products are what unite the creations of these five experts.



The Jane ** | GM 17/20
Food is Sergio Herman's religion. This chef transformed an old chapel into an impressive restaurant. On the plate, his right-hand man Nick Brill offers surprising dishes with deep, balanced flavours.
Paradeplein 1
2018 Antwerp
www.thejaneantwerp.com



Publiek * | GM 15/20
An accessible starred restaurant where Olly Ceulenaere is in charge. He gives local vegetables, by-catch and less glamorous cuts of meat the platform they deserve.
Ham 39
9000 Ghent
www.publiekgent.be



La Buvette | GM 15/20
La Buvette is in a former butcher's shop in the Brussels district of Sint-Gillis. Chef Nicolas Scheidt delights the senses with his unusual combinations and creative flavours.
Alsebergsesteenweg 108
1060 Sint-Gillis (Brussels)
www.la-buvette.be



Hof van Cleve * | GM 19.5/20**
The cream of the crop! This three Michelin star restaurant is one of the top 50 in the world. Chef Peter Goossens serves gastronomic creations of the very highest order with an emphasis on Flemish products.
Riemegemstraat 1
9770 Kruishoutem
www.hofvanclave.com



Het Gebaar * | GM 18/20
The restaurant of Roger Van Damme is known for its revolutionary desserts: true works of art for the eyes and the taste buds.
Leopoldstraat 24
2000 Antwerp
www.rogervandamme.com

GASTRONOMY AT EVERY LEVEL

Side projects by top chefs

L.E.S.S.

By Gert De Mangeleer
Torhoutse Steenweg 479
8200 Sint-Michiels
www.l-e-s-s.be

Zet'joe

By Geert Vanhecke
Langestraat 11
8000 Bruges
www.zetjoe.be

De Superette

By Kobe Desramauts
Guldenspoorstraat 29
9000 Ghent
www.de-superette.be

Comptoir

By Dennis Broeckx
Volkstraat 27
2000 Antwerp
www.lepiciereducirque.be

Brasserie Julie

By Thomas Locus
Dorpsplein 3
1700 Sint-Martens-Bodegem
www.brasseriejulie.be

Amen

By Pascal Devalkeneer
Franz Merjaystraat 165
1050 Brussels
www.amen.restaurant

Café De Paris

By Christophe Van den Berghe
Van Bunneplein 29
8300 Knokke
www.cafedeparisknokke.be

Frites Atelier

By Sergio Herman
Korte Gasthuisstraat 32
2000 Antwerp
www.fritesatelieramsterdam.com

With its 97 Michelin-starred restaurants, Flanders has one of the world's highest densities of top-class eateries. There are more restaurants with a Michelin star in Bruges alone than in the whole of Denmark. So, anyone who wants to eat at the highest level in Flanders will have no difficulty. There's no doubt that your taste buds will be spoilt in our incredible restaurants, but even food-lovers with a more limited budget won't stay hungry for long. Michelin has awarded 179 Flemish restaurants with a Bib Gourmand, a distinction for businesses that offer a three-course menu that favours seasonal products for less than € 37. Happily, fantastic flavours aren't reserved only for top restaurants. "The good thing in Flanders is that for such a comparatively small region we have so many goodies to offer," says Gert. "Everything is close together and you can discover so many good things at every level. When I go out to eat, I want to feel that boundaries are being pushed. That the chef isn't afraid of a challenge, and is always perfecting their dishes – that can happen even in a simple café."

Pots on the table

If you think Gert enjoys fine dining at home, you'd be wrong. "In my kitchen at home there's no overlap with Hertog Jan. Before, I used to try things out at home and invite friends over, but I'm done with that. Home is home. One plate and a pot on the table, something like a stew made with Duke of Berkshire pork, from a breed of pig that's raised here in West Flanders."



What's next?

With its three Michelin stars, Hertog Jan is right at the top, but that doesn't mean Gert has no more ambition to evolve. "Until now we have always grown upwards, vertically, but there are limits. Physically, this level is unbelievably difficult. How long can I keep this up? I hope to be able to for a long time, but it's something to think about. I don't want to fall into a black hole if the Hertog Jan story ever finishes. Now we're at the top, I think it's time to invest our knowledge and experience in some young people from our team so we can start to grow horizontally. Chefs have the name and the fame to put their weight behind new projects and open doors. It's our duty to give something back."



Chefs have the name and the fame to put their weight behind new projects and open doors.



Even in a three Michelin star restaurant like Hertog Jan the serving staff no longer wear suits

Don't mind your manners

"I don't attach much importance to table manners myself. My wife always says I'm like a farmer at the table. Anyway, the etiquette in restaurants has evolved in recent years, and even in a restaurant like ours the serving staff no longer wear suits. Confusing cutlery is vanishing from tables, too. Contemporary restaurants are becoming calmer and homelier. People are sometimes surprised by how cosy it is here. They are immediately at ease and can be themselves; that's the future."



Contemporary restaurants are becoming calmer and homelier

Bib Gourmand

Michelin has honoured 179 Flemish restaurants with a Bib Gourmand, a distinction for establishments that offer a three-course menu for less than € 37, with a focus on seasonal products.
www.viamichelin.com

Gault&Millau

The renowned Gault&Millau culinary guide has chosen more than 1,200 restaurants in Belgium that are most definitely worth visiting.
www.gaultmillau.com

Sleeping under the stars

Hostellerie St. Nicolas ** | GM 17/20
Veurnseweg 532
8906 Elverdinge (Ypres)
www.hostellerie-stnicolas.com

Sea Grill ** | GM 18/20
Wolvengracht 47
1000 Brussels
www.seagrill.be

Boury * | GM 17/20
Rumbeeksesteenweg 300
8800 Roeselare
www.restaurantboury.be

Hofke Van Bazel * | GM 14/20
Koningin Astridplein 11-13
9150 Bazel
www.hofkevanbazel.be

The Glorious * | GM 15/20
De Burburestraat 4a
2000 Antwerp
www.theglorious.be



Creating a unique experience that you can't get anywhere else: that's fine dining
Gert De Mangeleer



Deceptive simplicity that gives an unforgettable flavour experience



“ I get such a kick when we turn supposed waste into something delicious ”

Dennis Broeckx

Dennis Broeckx is one of Antwerp's unorthodox food masters. He's part of the Flanders Kitchen Rebels collective and represents a new generation of top Flemish chefs who want to do things differently. With his strong focus on zero waste, sharing food and casual service, he's redefining classic cuisine.

MEET FLANDERS KITCHEN REBELS DENNIS BROECKX

A Michelin-starred restaurant

It was always Dennis Broeckx's dream to open his own restaurant, and it happened much faster than he first expected. "One evening we were in the café and heard that the premises were for sale: we decided there and then to go for it. Young and foolish, aged just 21, we set off on this adventure. Eleven years later, we're still here," he says with a smile. Today, his restaurant L'Épicerie du Cirque is a household name in Antwerp and for discerning diners further afield. **In this unconventional restaurant, rock music plays out from the speakers** and there's no sign of the stereotypical white tablecloths here. In the kitchen, too, Dennis does his own thing. It's not just the prized parts of the animals that are turned into original creations, even the less obvious cuts like pig's ears and calf's brains find their way on to the plate.

Many young, eager chefs are looking to follow in the footsteps of Dennis and L'Épicerie du Cirque, marking out a new breed of restaurateurs. However, while having a reputation as a pioneer is an honour, it also means clearing a path, as he states, "It's not always easy to convince certain diners, who for the past thirty years have been eating out with very particular expectations of classical dining, but young people get it straight away. And that's why I love the Flanders Kitchen Rebels initiative so much."



Dennis Broeckx represents a new generation of pioneering chefs



Antwerp, Dennis's beloved city on the water

Imparting knowledge

"These are the best two months of the year," says Dennis, beaming, when he's asked about the Flanders Kitchen Rebels youth programme, in which top chefs introduce 18- to 30-year-olds to Flemish gastronomy. "Young people are a really appreciative and enthusiastic audience. They're curious about creative dishes and open to innovative ways of serving. Our younger customers don't care about waiters in suits and strict table manners. The only things that count are good food and a nice atmosphere." **Being a Flanders Kitchen Rebel is something close to his heart.** "It's great to represent a generation. This new class of chefs has different responsibilities from the chefs of yesteryear. Problems such as overfishing are relatively new. The previous generation didn't have to think about it, but today it's our duty to make clients more aware of what they're eating. In fact, **I think it's our responsibility to ensure that fish stocks grow again by putting lesser-known species and bycatch on our menus, before it's too late.**"

It's not only on the table that there's a noticeable evolution – the strict hierarchy of the kitchen is gradually disappearing too. "In the heat of the moment, sometimes I still want to run away, but the continual shouting and screaming in the kitchen is over. You don't achieve anything that way. On the contrary, everyone becomes nervous and that results in worse performances. As chef, it's your job to get the best out of your team, to fire them up and encourage them to experiment. Everyone has an input; only then can a restaurant grow."

Flanders Kitchen Rebels

The new generation of young chefs is fiercely proud of the Flemish terroir, and the unique local products that spring from it. They know what they want, and they have a fearless cooking style without frills, with sustainable, high-quality ingredients running through everything they do.

Between March and October, a select group of Flanders Kitchen Rebels aged up to 35 treat young diners between 18 and 30 to a sample of unforgettable gastronomy at a knock-down price.

This new generation is bringing fresh blood to our culinary heritage with a dose of courage, ambition, the right skills and, above all, burning passion to reinforce Flanders' place on the culinary map!

Visit Dennis Broeckx at his restaurant
 Dennis Broeckx's two restaurants are in Antwerp's Zuid district.

L'Épicerie du Cirque ★ | GM 15/20
 Volkstraat 23, 2000 Antwerp
www.lepicerieducirque.be

Comptoir
 Volkstraat 27, 2000 Antwerp
www.lepicerieducirque.be/comptoir

LOCAL HEROES AT WORK

“I’m really inspired by the surroundings I find myself in. When my family has a weekend away at the coast, the following week I’ll invariably work grey shrimps into the menu,” Dennis says. “Everywhere I go, I want to taste

the best products. If we’re near Melsele, then I’ll bring strawberries home. Of course we get asparagus from Limburg, which are the best. If you buy everything from the same shop, you get uniformity so it’s important to seek out specialist shops.” High-end products like lobster and caviar have a supporting role on the menu at L’Épicerie du Cirque but the starring role is reserved for bycatch, vegetables and offal. “We have such a wealth of good products here, it would be a sin to only work with the luxury ingredients. From the start it was my aim to offer affordable cuisine. **With celery root and pumpkin you can easily make a great dish. You just have to accept the challenge.**”

Close to home

“In Flanders, ‘local food’ can take on new proportions,” says Dennis. **“We have a fantastic climate here, which delivers such great vegetables. Just think of asparagus, sprouts, endive... vegetables that are hard to find anywhere else in the world. It’s the same with grey shrimp and fish from our beloved North Sea.”** We should be more proud of them and really convey that. Soon I’ll be cooking for the embassy in London and I’m sure I’ll surprise the guests with my pure, vegetarian dishes based on our unique vegetables. Their potential is limitless, and I love to let them take a starring role. For example, we have a dish on the menu whose sole ingredient is pumpkin. When you move away from classic patterns and ways of thinking, anything is possible.”



There can be no fine dining without good ingredients

In search of passionate craftspeople

There can be no fine dining without good products and ingredients. “We’ve been working with the same suppliers for eleven years; every one of them is passionate about their work. A chef has to be able to trust completely the farmers and craftspeople they work with. They mean so much to the smooth running of a restaurant,” he says. **“People often think that the chef is the most important person, but the whole system has to work, and that starts with the basics: good ingredients of consistent quality.”** It’s a difficult thing that only passionate artisans can offer.”

“For example, my cheese expert Frederic Van Tricht is such a craftsman, in his heart and soul,” Dennis smiles. “He selects cheeses with the greatest care and really values quality. In all this time, I’ve never once had from him a cheese that wasn’t properly ripened, even when I asked for one.” Dennis adds, “I’m crazy about his Kempense Geitenkaas Polle (goat’s cheese) and the Pas De Bleu (blue cheese). We have a cheese trolley, to give our Flemish cheeses a nice platform, but we also work it into desserts to offer an original alternative.”

When it comes to meat, Dennis is similarly picky. “The phenomenal matured Belgian Blue beef from Antwerp butcher Luc De Laet is known for its exceptional flavour. He also gives pride of place in his shop to Duroc d’Olives pork, a regional product from Lochristi. In Luc’s workshop, he transforms these Flemish products into delicious charcuterie.”

Even when it comes to drinks, he insists on local commodities. “We serve local products as much as possible. For example, our Belgian beer is undergoing a real revival. That’s good, because it makes the offering even more diverse. We have so many great, unknown beers here. For me, it’s important to support and offer a platform to small-scale projects and brewers. But culinary entrepreneurship isn’t limited to beer. There’s lots happening here in relation to other drinks, such as gin. So in our restaurant we serve Havn Gin, a concoction of rhubarb, star anise and cinnamon, developed by entrepreneurs from Antwerp. SFFRN, a gin infused with organic saffron from the Kempen, is the latest addition to my drinks cabinet.”

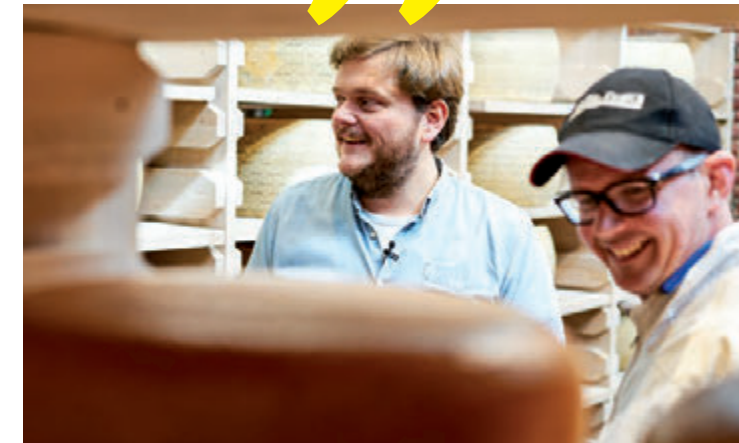
Indispensable items in Dennis’s pantry



All year round, Siroperie Seniow in Borgerhout makes delicious syrups with fruits and herbs, according to the seasons. Organic farmers and pick-your-own initiatives provide the

Siroperie with healthy, natural ingredients from which they can make delicious syrups. They’re the ideal base for cocktails or iced tea. www.siroperieseniow.be

“Everywhere I go, I want to taste the best products”
Dennis Broeckx



Matured Belgian Blue beef has an exceptional flavour



Belgium has more than 300 fine cheeses with outstanding flavours



Visit the De Koninck City Brewery

The renovated De Koninck city brewery houses numerous culinary experts. Go there for Flemish cheeses, delicious Belgian meat, 100% natural sourdough bread baked on site and the freshest vegetables straight from the field, not to mention a wide range of Belgian beers. www.dekoninck.be

Culinary artisans



Only Cheese

By Kaasaffineurs Van Tricht
For years, Michel Van Tricht and his son Frédéric have been supplying almost all our top restaurants. De Koninck City Brewery Boomgaardstraat 1/3, 2018 Antwerp www.kaasaffineurs-vantricht.be



Butcher’s Store

By De Laet & Van Haver
Cheerful rock’n’roll butchery in the De Koninck City Brewery. Boomgaardstraat 1/3, 2018 Antwerp www.thebutchersstore.com

Elsen Kaashandel

By Fried Elsen
Artisan cheese ripener and refiner. Mechelsestraat 36, 3000 Leuven www.elsenkaasambacht.be

Dierendonck

By Hendrik Dierendonck
A passionate butcher who breeds the rare West Flemish Red cow. Strandlaan 331, 8670 Sint Idesbald Albert I Laan 106, 8260 Nieuwpoort Katelijnestraat 24, 1000 Brussels www.dierendonck.be

Horseback fishermen

By the shrimp fishers
Oostduinkerke’s horseback shrimp fishers are recognised as immaterial cultural heritage. Oostduinkerke beach www.paardevissers.be

Le Monde des Mille Couleurs

By Dries Delanote
A colourful world of wild farming that cultivates and honours historical herbs, beautiful flowers and forgotten vegetables. Zwaardstraat 6, 8900 Ypres www.millecouleurs.be

Ginderella

By Jan and Geert Heyneman
Gin made from local Ghent weeds, such as storksbill, Japanese knotweed and swine cress. Coupure Links 625 D, 9000 Ghent www.heynsquare.com/ginderella



A ZERO WASTE MINDSET

Cooking and food waste often go hand in hand, but Dennis is proof that it needn't be so. He makes a game of throwing away as little as possible and strives for a zero-waste kitchen. "Around the world so much food is wasted, and I do my best not to do that here. **Zero waste is something I'm fanatical about.** So, I keep a detailed list, of everything that goes in the bin each day. I add up the cost and work out how many people we could have fed. It's a way of confronting my cooks with the hard facts.

"I get such a kick when we turn supposed waste into something delicious. So, at L'épicerie du Cirque we serve cold pressed juices. We use the leftover pulp to give our vegetable sauces depth and character. When we roast celery root in the oven, we collect the liquid that's released. It has an intense flavour. It's really this quest for zero waste that keeps me awake and makes me creative. **Kitchen Rebels is a fantastic platform to get this message out** to other chefs so they can start working this way too."

Nose-to-tail cooking

For Dennis, the same philosophy applies to meat preparation. He prefers to replace sumptuous fillets or tenderloins with less obvious cuts of meat, to make use of the whole animal and not just the most desired parts. "It's really interesting to work with the lesser-known parts of the animal. We make use of every bit of the pig: the head, the tongue, the snout... We even make crackers from the ears and tail, and grilled pig's tongue is delicious. Everything gets used, we throw nothing away. **I realise that perception among diners needs to change. If we put calf brains on the menu, no one's going to order that. But if we make it into croquettes, people suddenly find it delicious.** It's an accessible way for me to introduce my clients to the lesser-known parts of the animal."

North Sea Chefs

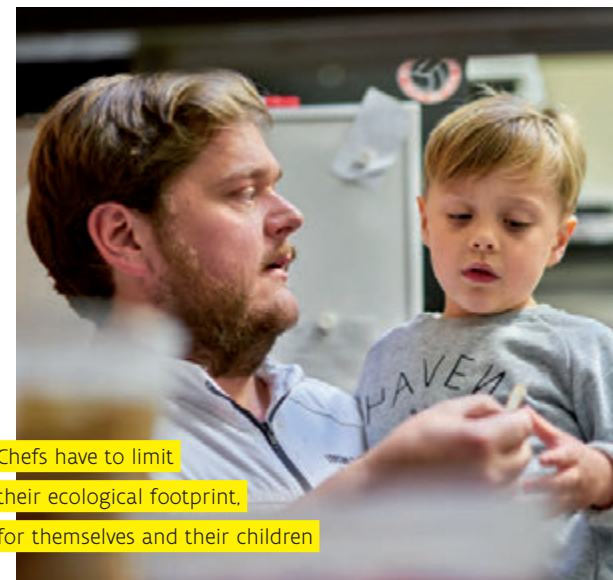
The North Sea Chefs initiative encourages chefs, hobby cooks and consumers to explore unpopular and lesser-known fish, caught by Belgian fishermen, in a responsible way. The organisation is supported by a number of established chefs who act as ambassadors, such as Bruges restaurateur Filip Claeyns and Vilhjalmur Sigurdarson. www.northseachefs.be

We must learn to work with what our farmers, fishermen and butchers offer us

Dennis Broeckx



Dennis strives towards a waste-free kitchen, with no bit of vegetable lost



Chefs have to limit their ecological footprint, for themselves and their children



The quest for zero waste keeps the team awake and drives creativity

Zero-waste philosophy

More and more chefs and concerned Flemings are trying to limit their impact on the environment, but there's still lots of work to be done. Worldwide, a third of the food we produce is lost.

Fortunately, Flemish consumers are aware of the problems and are engaging in initiatives to tackle food waste: packaging-free shops, stores that offer 'ugly' vegetables and apps that help us throw less food away. And the problem is high on the political agenda.

Using educational campaigns and by supporting innovative packaging materials, the government of Flanders aims to reduce food waste by 15% by 2020.

Zero waste in action

Oficina

In this organic soul-food restaurant, just about everything is environmentally friendly. The interior comes from second-hand shops and only local, organic ingredients are used in the kitchen.

Aalststraat 16, 1000 Brussels
www.facebook.com/OficinaBrussels

Mary Pop-In

This pop-up restaurant puts food scraps on the menu, supports social employment and organises cooking workshops to show people how to make the most of leftovers.

Henegouwenkaai 41-43, 1080 Brussels
www.marypop-in.be

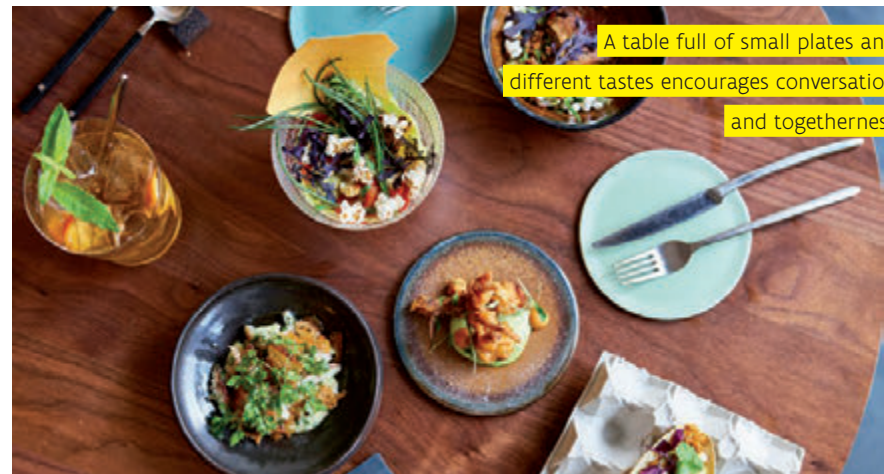
Wonky

Wonky makes tasty, healthy dips packed with 'ugly' vegetables. Available in delis and other food businesses in and around Ghent

www.wonkyfood.be

PLEASURE AT EVERY TABLE AND EVERY BAR

“Eating brings us together, and a full table is one of the cornerstones of our society. It’s the place where we chat, discuss and laugh, the place where we make memories that last a lifetime. “For me it’s important to really make time for each other. The best place for that is at the table, round a delicious meal,” says Dennis. “It seems to me that smartphones should stay in your pocket or your handbag. In our restaurant, we start every meal with dishes to share. A table full of small plates and many different flavours encourages conversation and a cosy family feeling between diners – that’s what going to a restaurant is all about.”



A table full of small plates and different tastes encourages conversation and togetherness



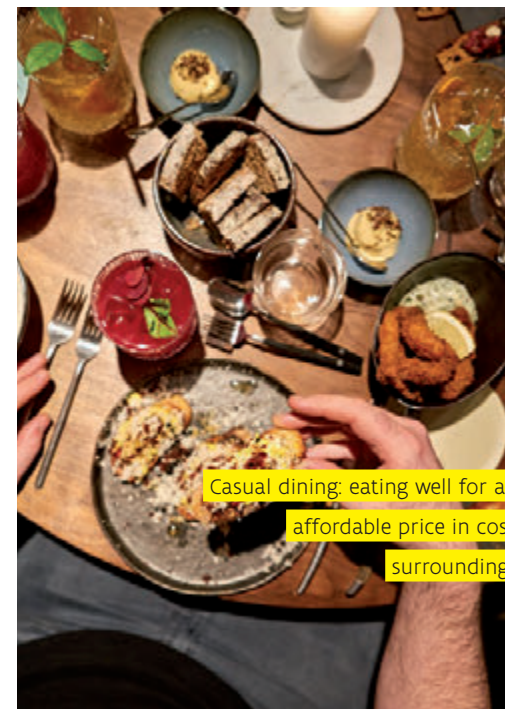
In Flanders, large and small events are celebrated around the table

Live to eat

Love comes through the stomach, and the Flemish take this literally. We live to eat, something that’s reflected in our sparkling food culture. Living well is a way of life for us, where pride, hospitality and conviviality come together. It’s no surprise then that small and big events often happen around a full table. There are countless places to eat in Flanders, with something for everyone. From a café to a brasserie or a fabulous restaurant – you’ll find pleasure at every table and every bar.

Dennis’s pick

Bistrot du Nord is an intimate spot where discerning diners come for excellent food. The cooking style is robust, pure and without frills, and fits perfectly with the retro interior and the old house. www.bistrotdu nord.be



Casual dining: eating well for an affordable price in cosy surroundings

Popular bars in Flanders and Brussels

These bars and cafés all serve delicious comfort food



Ganzerik

A trendy, cosy café with no fewer than 12 beers on tap, in the Ghent neighbourhood of Rooigem. Druifstraat 29, 9000 Ghent www.facebook.com/ganzerik



Café Stanny

Casual neighbourhood café with the freshest daily specials on the menu. Stanleystraat 1, 2018 Antwerp www.facebook.com/cafestanny



Monk

One of Brussels’ most popular cafés, where you can enjoy a cool pint and spaghetti bolognese. Sint-Katelijnestraat 42, 1000 Brussels www.monk.be



De Hoorn

This bar is housed in the cool surroundings of the former Stella Artois brewery in Leuven. Sluisstraat 79, 3000 Leuven www.dehoorn.eu



Brasserie Het Anker

Mechelen’s city brewery stands for good beer and Flemish classics, such as beef stew and shrimp croquettes. Guido Gezellelaan 49, 2800 Mechelen www.hetanker.be



Brasserie Cambrinus

An authentic tavern in the heart of Bruges, with more than 400 beers and numerous dishes featuring beer on the menu. Philipstockstraat 19, 8000 Bruges www.cambrinus.eu

Café Baron

Chef Dennis Broeckx at the bar of his local Café Baron. Good music, relaxed service and a nice terrace for the summer. www.cafebaron.be

Living well is a way of life for us, where pride, hospitality and conviviality come together

Dennis Broeckx

Flanders Kitchen Rebels from the city to the countryside

Our chosen Flanders Kitchen Rebels have restaurants across the whole of Flanders and Brussels. You can find the whole list of more than 50 chefs at www.flanderskitchenrebels.com



Davy De Pourcq Volta

Culinary sparks in beautifully renovated electric power station with open plan kitchen. Nieuwewandeling 2b 9000 Ghent www.voltagent.be



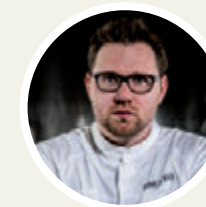
Matthias Speybrouck Va et Vient

Informal, affordable restaurant concept along the Leie river. Handboogstraat 20 8500 Kortrijk www.vaetvient.be



Niels Brants EssenCiel

Intimate restaurant with an innovative range of flavours. Muntstraat 23 3000 Leuven www.essenciel.be



Koen Verjans Innesto

Luxury restaurant in the green De Barrier domain. Grote Baan 9 3530 Houthalen www.innesto.be



Julie Baekelandt C-Jules

Refined cuisine on Zottegem’s market square. Markt 15 9620 Zottegem www.c-jules.be



Five years ago, Wim Ballieu said goodbye to exclusive gastronomy and launched a more open food concept. He's now become a champion of honest and accessible food and was awarded 'Best Food Concept in Europe' in 2013. In his Balls & Glory restaurants and food truck, this philosophy is translated into simple, tasty Flemish fare in a new, trendy guise.



Street food is totally honest. As a street food chef, food is all you've got to make an impression with.

Wim Ballieu



FLANDERS' STREET FOOD

WIM BALLIEU

In Flanders, you don't have to go to an expensive restaurant to eat good food. Without having to spend too much, you can find culinary treats on the corner of every street. "Quality street food is strongly rooted in our food culture," says Wim Ballieu. "Just think of the stalls in Brussels selling snails, or the freshly filled sandwiches you can get at almost every bakery, or, the mother of all street food, our irresistible golden fries from the frietkot (fries kiosk). Eating good food is a right, and it must be accessible to everyone. I believe it's our duty to defend that. Street food ensures that going out to enjoy food isn't an elite experience." In days gone by, Wim ran a high-level catering company, but five years ago he changed direction and opened Balls & Glory, an accessible meatball concept. "I wanted to go back

Street food is honest. As a street food chef, ingredients are all you have to make an impression with. It's about the essentials," says Wim. "It's only what you put on the tray or wrap in the serviette that counts. There's no trendy décor or pretty plates to make up for poor quality: what you see is what you get."

"One misconception about street food is that it's fast food, in the negative sense of the word, but in fact it's the opposite. It takes lots of time and energy to prepare. Try making your own shrimp croquette at home! Even the perfect chip takes a lot of work. They have to be sliced well, have time to cool properly and so on. Most preparation takes place behind the scenes, so orders can be served quickly," he explains. "Street

food is often the sort of food you don't make at home and that you literally go to the street to eat, either because it's time-consuming or it needs specific skills. Chips from the frietkot, nothing can compete with that. You just can't make it at home."



The street vibe in Brussels adds extra colour to the street food experience

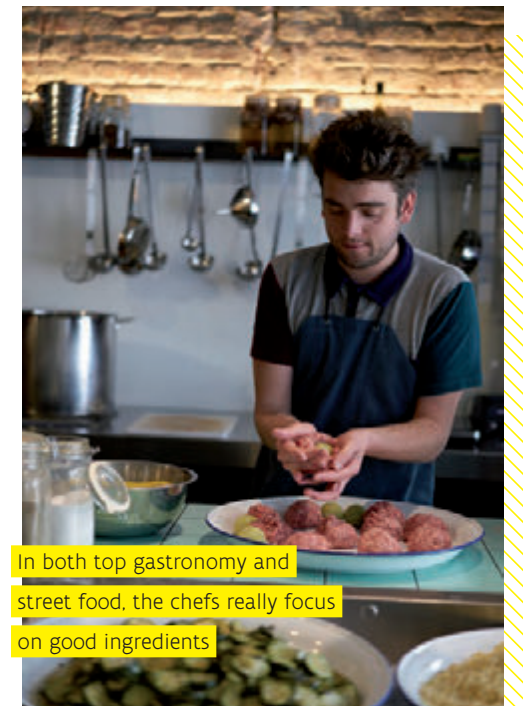
to basics and cook for a wider group of people. With tasty filled meatballs, stoemp and free water and fruit, it works really well. But fundamentally, there's not such a big difference between fine dining and street food. In both sectors, you create good food through your respect for quality ingredients."

Slow food, served fast

Street food chefs are niche chefs. They often specialise in one dish, perfecting every detail until the taste is perfect.

The city atmosphere

"Street food is inextricably linked to the city. It's something that you experience together in the hustle and bustle. Street food in a forest, that's not street food, that's a picnic. You need the chaos of the city: the busker playing guitar nearby, the street art on the walls. In Brussels, the street vibe is lively, and it all adds to the experience," says Wim. "On Friday afternoon, after work, heading to the Noordzee fish shop together for shrimp croquettes in the sun... it doesn't get any better than that. For me, street food is a kind of haven in an eternally busy existence. Between two meetings, standing at the bar, drinking a coffee, it all breaks up the daily grind."



In both top gastronomy and street food, the chefs really focus on good ingredients

Visit Wim Ballieu at one of his restaurants

Balls & Glory, Wim Ballieu's stuffed meatballs concept, has five restaurants in Belgium. Be sure to try them in Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels (KVS and Beurs) or Leuven!

www.ballsnglory.be



Eating good food is a right, and it must be accessible to everyone

BELGIAN FRIES

THE ROOTS OF FLEMISH STREET FOOD

Street food through the years

While street food may be a relatively new word, the phenomenon of eating in the street has long been ingrained in our culture. **Lots of authentic Flemish dishes were the forefathers of the trendy, street food that has become so popular in recent years.** says Wim. "Twenty years ago, they would go around with soup. That was street food. Dried sausage, wrapped in a napkin, at the café or at the sausage fair, for me that's also street food. These are habits and traditions that have been going for generations. People don't realise how deeply ingrained street food is in our lives."

A pillar of Flemish street food culture

Quality materials, know-how and hospitality are the pillars of our street food culture. "We are blessed with a wealth of ingredients. Fish comes fresh from the North Sea, and we know how to breed good pigs, cows and vegetables," says Wim. "We have the knowledge to make seemingly simple dishes delicious. And our hospitality is unique, too. Passion and pride is what our friet sellers and street food vendors stand for."

If you take pride, then you care about what you do. You can compare it with a 90-year-old woman who still takes care of herself and puts on makeup every day. She does it because she is proud, because she cares. **You also find that sort of pride among our friet sellers. They just want to cook the most delicious fries for their customers.** Going the extra mile, that's what distinguishes the Flemings. There's nothing more beautiful than giving people food made with love. For me, this is the most beautiful sector there is."

Straight from the farm

Thanks to farm shops, farmers' markets, pick-your-own farms and vegetable boxes, consumers can buy fresh, high-quality products straight from the farm, without contributing to food transport distances or packaging waste.

National pride

Crispy, golden yellow fries, they're our national pride. To this day there's speculation about their origins, but what's certain is that they've been commonplace here since 1900, and have since become part of our cultural heritage. The name 'friet' comes from patates frites, Belgian-French for 'fried potatoes'. In all probability, our bilingual landscape ensured that our Flemish fries are best known overseas as French fries. Whatever you call them, Flemish fries, made from our bintje potatoes and

according to tradition, are the tastiest! We're so devoted to them that since 2000, an annual Week of the Friet has been organised every spring, when we go en masse to the frietkot. For a Fleming, a visit to the frietkot is the best way to round something off: the working week, a day out or a holiday. **Above all, the Flemish 'friet' belongs to everyone.** From the beginning, the workers, the middle class and even the court have been hooked on this delicacy. (Source: Vlam) www.freshfrombelgium.com/en

Flemish street food avant la lettre



Sausage fair

In the days before fridges, when a pig was slaughtered, people would organise an event at which all the pieces of the meat that couldn't be kept would be turned into sausages.



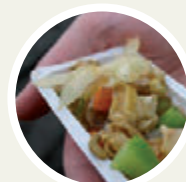
Gentse waterzooi

During the Middle Ages, the waters of Ghent were filled with fish. Gentse waterzooi is originally a peasant's dish based on seven kinds of river fish. Since the 18th century, this typical Flemish meal has been made with chicken, cream and finely chopped vegetables.



Shrimp croquettes

Grey shrimps were once eaten at every meal by people living on the coast. Horseback fishermen would catch them with nets from the North Sea and, once ashore, they would be packed into half-kilo (1.1lbs) bags.



Winkles

On cold days, Brussels natives will always find their way to the winkle vans. These are a typical Brussels phenomenon; for many a long year they've been cooked on the street in a warming, herby broth. Every seller prepares them according to their own secret recipe.

The bintje, the cook's potato of choice

Our regional products are the heart of Flanders' street food. You only need think of the grey shrimps in a shrimp croquette, or friets, made so delicious because of the bintje potato. The bintje is a large, floury potato that doesn't turn dark when cooked. As well as fries, you can also make mashed potato with them. **The bintje has the ideal structure, the best size and the perfect starch content for making delicious fries:** not too hard, not too soft, and large enough. Fries have this potato to thank for their bite," according to Wim.

Another indispensable ingredient is beef dripping. "Beef fat gives the fries their typical, characteristic taste and makes them that little bit crisper. Everyone has their preference when it comes to fries. That's what makes it so interesting. One person prefers chunky chips, the other likes them wafer-thin. When they're hand-cut, you get so much variation: big, small, thick and thin. Food preferences are often linked to nostalgia, and they take you to a specific emotion. I was brought up with fries cooked in beef dripping, so for me that's just the best."

French fries or Belgian fries?

The name French fries implies that this ubiquitous dish can be traced back to France. However, its origins are in Belgium. It's rumoured that French fries got their name during the First World War, when American soldiers were introduced to fried potatoes in Belgium. Because they thought they were in France (as part of Belgium speaks French), they nicknamed them French fries.

“
Going the extra mile,
that's what distinguishes
the Flemings
Wim Ballieu



High-quality ingredients are one of the pillars of our street food culture



Our regional products are at the heart of Flanders' street food



The bintje is the friet potato of choice: not too hard, not too soft, and just big enough

THE ART OF COOKING FRIES

For the Flemish, fries are anything but a side dish. That's also the reason why we're so good at making them. **As well as the best potatoes, the Flemish have the pride and the skills to make the best fries in the world.** We don't see fries as fast food, but as art. "We take the time to prepare them as they should be. From the correct chopping technique to the second cooking, we don't take any shortcuts. In other places, they don't take fries as seriously. Here, the crunchy, golden batons get the platform they deserve, and we serve them as they should be: very simply, with just a little salt and mayonnaise."



Just under the skin is the tastiest part of the potato

The art of cooking fries, according to Wim Ballieu

- 1 Peel the bintje potato thinly. The part just beneath the skin has the most flavour.
- 2 Slice by hand into chips about 1 cm thick.
- 3 Rinse the fries very briefly, so enough starch remains.
- 4 Heat the fat to 155-160°C (310-320°F) and fry the chips for the first time for 5 - 6 minutes. This is the pre-cooking; the fries will be poached so that the inside becomes soft.
- 5 Take them out of the fat and let them cool completely.
- 6 Heat the fat to 170°C (340°F) and add the fries for a second cooking. Once the fries are in the fat, increase the temperature to 185°C (365°F).
- 7 Remove the fries once they have a nice golden yellow colour and sprinkle them immediately with salt, as once the fat has dried the salt will no longer stick. Shake the fries to distribute the salt.
- 8 Serve with homemade mayonnaise.

Friet facts

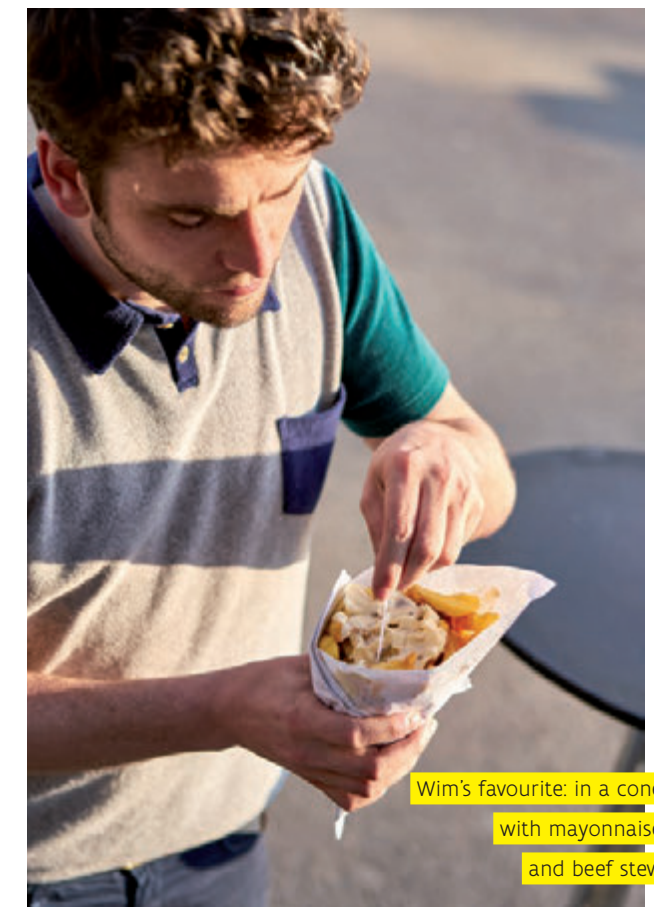
- In 2016, Belgium had 5,247 fries stands. That means you can find one in every district and village
- According to recent research, 95% of Flemish people go to the frituur at least once per year, 85% eat fries at least once a month, and more than 60% eat them at least once a week
- Almost half (48%) of the fries we eat are cooked at home, 27% are takeaway, and 25% are eaten outside the home
- The most popular order is a small portion of fries with mayonnaise, sometimes supplemented with a frikandel (minced meat hotdog) also known as currywurst
- Our favourite sauce is mayonnaise (40%), followed by gravy (32%), tartare sauce (13%), ketchup (9%) and Andalouse (7%)

(Source: www.navefri-unafri.be)



We don't see fries as fast food, but as art. We take the time to prepare them as they should be.

Wim Ballieu



Wim's favourite: in a cone with mayonnaise and beef stew



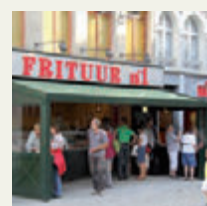
Fries are shaken so the salt is evenly distributed



Eating fries beneath the Atomium

Flanders' favourite 'frietkot'

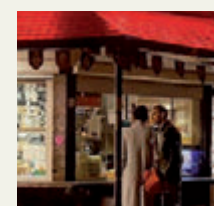
Belgium has more than 5,000 'frietkot'. Visit one of these authentic establishments for the ultimate friet experience!



Number one

You can enjoy freshly cooked crispy fries at this legendary Antwerp frituur until the early hours.

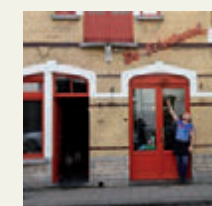
Hoogstraat 1
2000 Antwerp



Maison Antoine

This Brussels institution has been frying since 1948. It serves our national pride the way it should be.

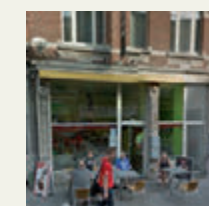
Jourdanplein 1
1040 Brussels



De Frietketel

Vegans and vegetarians come here too, as the fries are cooked in vegetable oil and it even serves vegan vol-au-vent!

Papegaaistraat 89
9000 Ghent



De Smullende Heks

A firm favourite in Leuven, where you can smother your fries in homemade stew.

Diestsestraat 250
3000 Leuven



Frituur Korenmarkt

For 40 years, Ingrid and Guido have been sharing their passion for fries at their frietkot on Mechelen's Korenmarkt.

Korenmarkt
2800 Mechelen

ON EVERY STREET CORNER

Fries are the ultimate comfort food: pretty much everyone loves them. But they're so much more than just good food. For many families, they're part of a weekly ritual. Above all, the frituur is a meeting place. It's not for nothing that our frietkot culture is recognised as immaterial cultural heritage. **Queuing at the frietkot is a really social event. It's one place where rank and position count for nothing.** The place where you quickly start talking while you wait with a beer in your hand, watching football together," says Wim. "Only in Flanders do we know this phenomenon of the frituur; they have defined our streetscapes forever. Even the tiniest hamlet has at least one. In other countries, fries are often only served in restaurants; you can't find frietkots as we know them. Here, frietjes stand on their own as a dish and have the platform these crispy gold morsels deserve. But we don't just eat fries at the frituur – they also belong among the Flemish classics at home or in a restaurant. Just think of vol-au-vent, stew, mussels, meatballs in tomato sauce; all of them are delicious with fries."

Tray vs cone

"It's a tricky question. I often eat tasty fries from a cardboard tray, but in a cone they taste that little bit better. On the one hand this is because the cone fits nicely in your hand, and also because in a cone the sauce sits on top. At the start you're greedy, appreciating the richness of the mayonnaise. As you go on, and your hunger is quenched, you come to the plain fries, which are ideal to finish with."

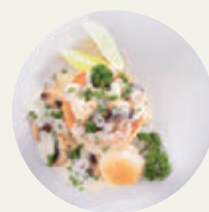


At the bottom of the cone you come to the 'pure' fries, without sauce. They're ideal to finish with



Passion and pride is what our friet sellers and street food vendors stand for

Flemish classics with fries



Vol-au-vent

A nostalgic classic that makes us long for winter. Creamy and full of flavour, it's the ultimate comfort food!



Mussels

Mussels and fries are a match made in heaven. Traditionally the season for these North Sea delicacies runs from July until February, and we just love to eat them.



Steak tartare

A dish based on finely minced Belgian Blue beef mixed with capers, gherkins and creamy egg yolk.

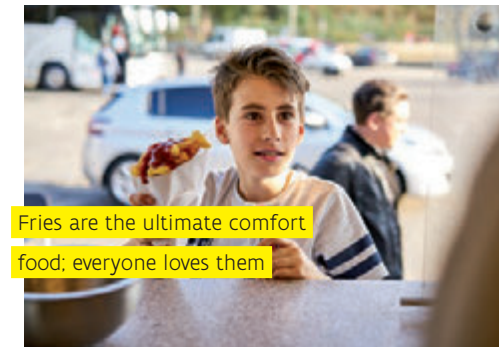


Beef stew

This dish brings together the best of what Flanders has to offer: tender delicious meat and a good beer.

Wim's favourite spots for street food

"The first place I go when I come back from a holiday is the frietkot **Maison Antoine**, on Jourdanplein in Brussels. Here they serve our national pride as it should be. I also can't resist the **shrimp croquettes at Noordzee**. **Au Suisse** is my favourite place for a sandwich with préparé (raw steak mince). In Ghent I can't go past the **cuberdon** (cone-shaped candy) stall without buying some: so sweet, but so good. When we take a trip to the flower market in Ghent, we inevitably eat **bysters at De Blauwe Kiosk**. I hardly ever eat them usually, but it just goes with the atmosphere. Street food is often linked to a particular place or mood. A white sausage with caramelised onions between a crispy bread roll only works at the fair."



Fries are the ultimate comfort food; everyone loves them



The frituur is a meeting place for young and old



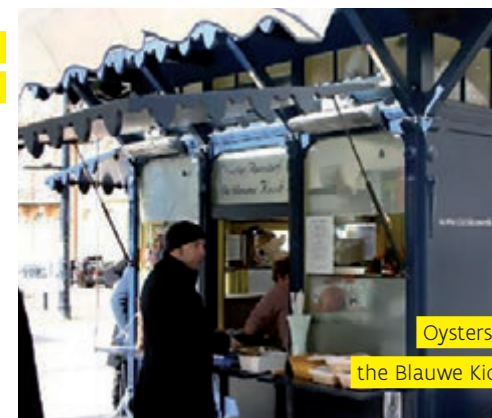
A sandwich filled with préparé at Au Suisse



You find street food on every square and on every street corner in Flanders



Fresh fish from De Noordzee



Oysters at the Blauwe Kiosk

Street food tips

Mercado

Paradise for food-lovers. A covered market with 13 street food stands in the heart of Antwerp.
Groenplaats 43
2000 Antwerp
www.super-mercado.be

Lizzie's Wafels

The place to go in Bruges for scrumptious homemade waffles and fresh coffee.
Sint-Jakobsstraat 16
8000 Bruges
www.lizzieswafelsbrugge.be

De Noordzee

On a sunny day, this is one of the most popular meeting places in Brussels. Come here for fresh shrimp croquettes and warming bouillabaisse with rouille.
Sint-Katelijnestraat 45
1000 Brussels
www.vishandelnoordzee.be

Au Suisse

Pure nostalgia. This iconic sandwich bar opened back in 1873!
Anspachlaan 73
1000 Brussels
www.ausuisse.be

Pistolet Original

The contemporary equivalent of Au Suisse. The same concept with a cooler look.
Joseph Stevensstraat 24
1000 Brussels
www.pistolet-original.be

De Blauwe Kiosk

After a Sunday visit to the flower market, Ghent natives flock to this oyster and aperitif bar.
Kouter
9000 Ghent
www.deblauwekiosk.be

Holy Food Market

Covered food heaven with lots of stalls in the impressive 16th-century Baudelokapel.
Beverhoutplein 15
9000 Ghent
www.holyfoodmarket.be

Würst

This place transforms ordinary hot dogs into 'haute dogs' with a variety of toppings and sauces.
Margarethaplein 1
3000 Leuven
www.wurstdogs.be



Flemish pralines are elegant flavour bombs with refined textures

Herman Van Dender

Almost 30 years ago, Herman Van Dender took over his father's patisserie-chocolaterie. Thanks to his passion for chocolate and his drive to elevate the business to the next level, today he is one of the world's best chocolatiers. His sophisticated pralines are enjoyed by people as far away as Japan and by those important as members of the Belgian Royal Family.

CUTTING-EDGE CHOCOLATIERS

HERMAN VAN DENDER

It's no secret that Flanders has a long and rich tradition in chocolate. **Chocolate know-how has been passed from generation to generation.** So it was for Herman Van Dender, who learned the art of making pralines from his father. "Flemings are gourmards. We love to eat and drink; it's been rooted in our culture for generations," he says. "And over the decades, the craftsmanship around chocolate and pralines has really developed. Another important factor is that two of the world's biggest chocolate factories, Callebaut and Puratos, are here. Flemish chocolatiers have always had easy access to chocolate, and we're known around the world for our exceptional pralines."

to see what chocolatiers from other countries and other continents are doing. Everyone working with chocolate comes together and the energy and inspiration is unbelievable."

Less sugar, more flavour

Like any industry, the chocolate sector is subject to evolution and trends. **Over the past twenty years, the Flemish praline has moved forward.** First and foremost, the chocolate we use has become much less sweet – a trend which includes the filling. Heavy buttercreams are making way for refined flavour combinations and complex textures," Herman explains. "These days they are more layered and nuanced. When you reduce the sugar content, you let the pure chocolate flavours really come into their own. You can clearly taste the various ingredients used in the pralines, such as raspberry ganache or hazelnut praline. Sugar makes the taste superficial and flat; it lowers the quality." Not only has chocolate



Herman won the 'World Cup of Pastry' in Lyon, as well as taking home six medals on three separate occasions as a candidate

A proven world champion

Competitions are a big part of Herman's life. He's won countless prizes, including the Patisserie World Cup in Lyon. As a renowned member of the jury at the World Chocolate Masters, he judged the creations of chocolatiers from across the globe. "I've learned so much from these competitions. **As a participant, because you have to push yourself to innovate in terms of flavour as well as presentation,**" he says. "For the showpieces we make, I derive a lot of inspiration from art, sculpture and painting. As a judge, it's enormously rewarding

become purer, there are also many more types of chocolate on the market now. "Before, there was white, milk and dark chocolate, and that's all you had to work with. Today, the varieties and distinctions of taste are much wider. In our workshop we create three kinds of milk chocolate and a dozen or so types of dark chocolate with varying cacao content and beans from various origins."



In the workshop, technological innovation and craftsmanship go hand in hand

Taste Herman Van Dender's chocolate

Atelier
Robert Dansaertlaan 17J
1702 Groot-Bijgaarden
www.vandender.eu

Shop
Leuvensesteenweg 416
1030 Brussels

Facts & figures

- The average person in Belgium consumes **6kg (13.2lbs)** of chocolate a year
- Including confectionery, the total turnover of the Belgian chocolate industry is almost **€ 4.2 billion**
- Belgium produces **661,673 tonnes** of chocolate a year, of which **578,043 tonnes** is exported
- The total retail sales value of the Belgian chocolate market is **€ 700 million** a year
- There are **320** chocolate and patisserie factories in the country
- **190,000 tonnes** of raw cacao arrives at the port of Antwerp each year
- Belgium accounts for **11.2%** of the world's chocolate and confectionery exports
- The proportion of the Belgian workforce employed in chocolate industry: **8.5%**
- Number of employees involved in producing chocolate and confectionery: **7,619**



There's so much craftsmanship involved in making pralines

Herman Van Dender



From bean to chocolate in seven steps

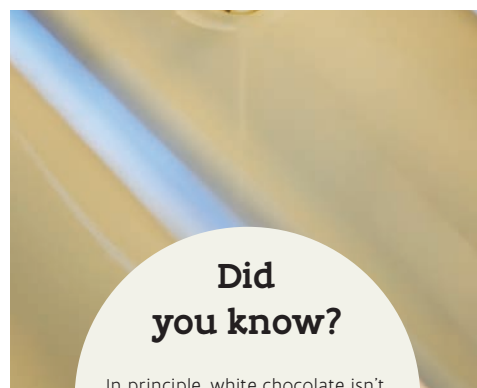
- 1 Roasting the beans**
The chosen beans are roasted slowly at a low temperature, so they are roasted right to the core without burning. They are then quickly cooled to stop the cooking process at exactly the right moment
- 2 Breaking and peeling the skin**
The roasted beans are broken into 2-3 mm pieces. The skin comes loose and is hoovered up by a suction system so only the cacao nibs remain
- 3 Grinding the nibs**
The nibs are ground and the friction causes the cacao butter to be released. A bean consists of about 50% cacao butter and 50% cacao powder
- 4 Adding the sugar**
The liquid mass, also known as cacao liquor, is put in a tank to which sugar is then added
- 5 Conching**
At this stage, the cacao mass is still very bitter. The acidity is reduced by agitating the mass for about 24 hours (conching) and keeping it warm. At this point, the chocolatier determines the ideal bitterness and taste
- 6 Grinding and storage**
The chocolate is finely ground and stored in liquid form in tanks, at 40-50°C (105-120°F)
- 7 Tempering**
The final step is tempering, to allow the mass to crystallise. The melted chocolate is cooled to 30°C (85°F) and takes on a fixed, homogenous structure



A few years ago, Herman took control of the whole production process, from bean to chocolate. "Like the vast majority of chocolatiers, I've spent twenty years working with chocolate from the main factories. That means the creative process of the praline begins with the supplied dark, milk or white chocolate. This has always been fine, but three years ago I had the urge to take things a step further, and start a small production line to make my own chocolate. **It's the only way to maintain complete control over the product, and allows me to put my own stamp on the flavour of the pralines,**" he explains. Initially, Herman continued producing in the small workshop of his praline shop, but soon it became too cramped. "Chef Peter Goossens discovered my homemade chocolates and wanted to serve them at his three Michelin star restaurant, Hof van Cleve. So, the ball began rolling, and other top restaurants followed suit. To meet demand, I had no choice but to move to a bigger site." Herman doesn't shy away from innovation and technological developments in the chocolate sector. "Our chocolate is made by incredibly precise and detailed high-tech machines, which means we can guarantee a consistent quality. There's still so much craftsmanship involved in making pralines. And, of course, the machines must be installed and monitored by craftsmen with experience and expertise. Making chocolate is so much more than just pressing a button."

Not all cacao beans are equal

Making chocolate begins with choosing the right bean. **There's an awful lot of variation between different sorts of beans,** Herman explains. "Every year I visit two cacao plantations in different countries, to find the best ingredients and to see with my own eyes where the produce I work with comes from, and under what conditions it's grown. Alongside quality, fair trade is one of the biggest reasons I make chocolate myself. In every business, it's important to know the origins of your materials."



Did you know?

In principle, white chocolate isn't really chocolate at all. It contains no cacao powder, only cacao butter, sugar and milk powder.



Let's talk about dark chocolate

The days when we had just one sort of dark chocolate are gone. **Today, packaging increasingly specifies the origins of the cacao content** So, a 70% chocolate contains that exact amount of cacao, with the rest being sugar. 80% chocolate contains more cacao and will therefore have a different, more bitter taste. The origin of the bean is also very important. Just like wine, there are various terroirs and varieties that all have an impact on the taste of the end product.

Chocolate museums

Belgian Chocolate Village

At 900 m², the biggest chocolate museum in Belgium.
De Neckstraat 20-22, 1081 Brussels
www.belgianchocolatevillage.be

Choco-Story

Immerse yourself in the history of cacao and chocolate.
Wijnzakstraat 2, 8000 Brugge
www.choco-story-brugge.be

Choco-Story Brussels

Come and learn everything about chocolate, from origins to end product.
Guldenhoofdstraat 9-11, 1000 Brussels
www.choco-story-brussels.be

REFINED PRALINES IN THE MAKING

Flanders scores highly around the world not just for its quality chocolate, but also the refined pralines made with it. Brussels-based chocolatier Van Dender exports a large part of its pralines to Japan, but the production deliberately remains in Belgium. **The quality of Flemish butter and cream – crucial ingredients for pralines – is great. You won't find better anywhere else.** Our butter is very rich and contains very little moisture, which is crucial for the creation of pralines," Herman explains. "It means the filling has a creamy, full flavour. We also use summer fruits such as strawberries and raspberries – little flavour bombs that go perfectly in a creamy ganache. The Flemish ingredients we use in our pralines really make all the difference."

Taste buds in training

"New praline creations can come from discussions with other chocolatiers, particularly at competitions," he says. "You can learn a lot from each other. Another very important factor is developing a wide-ranging palate – learned from lots of tasting. In this way, you create a firm foundation to judge ingredients and come up with new, original creations. **You can train your taste buds.** Not only do you need to taste a lot, it's also important to do it consciously and to concentrate on what you're doing. Use all your senses; this is how you begin to taste the essence."

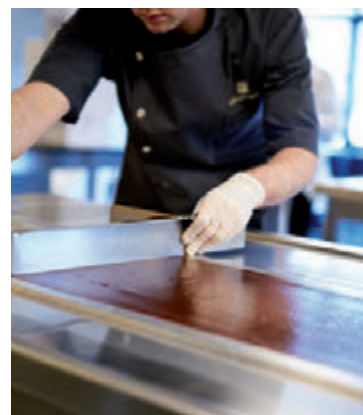
Use all your senses, it's the only way to really taste the essence
Herman Van Dender

Top secret

In days gone by, a chocolatier would keep their recipes securely guarded from the competition. Today, praline recipes are no great secret. "When I was young, I did an internship with a top chocolatier," Herman recalls. "On my last day I was allowed to choose one of the chef's recipes to take home with me. What he didn't know was that during a break, hiding in the toilet, I had already copied out the entire cookbook. **In those days, everyone worked with more or less the same ingredients and the same machines, so it was the recipes that made the difference; they were worth their weight in gold.** Today, it's about so much more than the recipe. It starts with the beans that we choose ourselves on the plantation, the way in which we make the chocolate, the personalised machines we use. These all play a huge role in the final result."



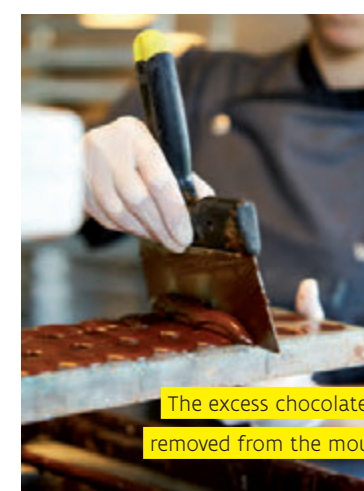
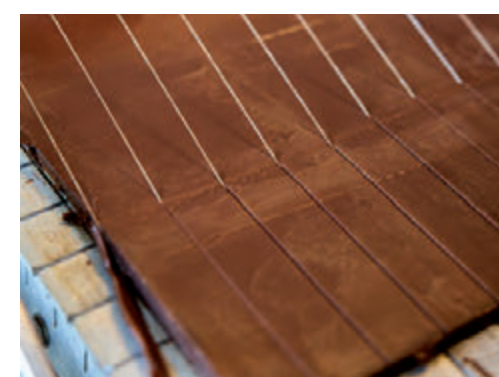
The ganache is still worked by hand



Tasting pralines is best done consciously and with concentration



The finishing touch: placing the logo on the pralines



The excess chocolate is removed from the mould

The history of the praline

In 1857, Jean Neuhaus opened a pharmacy in Brussels' prestigious Galeries Royales Saint Hubert. To make his medicines taste nicer, he coated them in a thin layer of chocolate. His grandson, Jean Neuhaus Jr, inherited his passion for chocolate and had the idea of replacing the medicine with a delicious soft filling. So, in 1912, he developed the first praline. A few years later, in 1915, his wife, Louise Agostini, developed the elegant cardboard box (ballotin) that transformed pralines into a luxury gift.

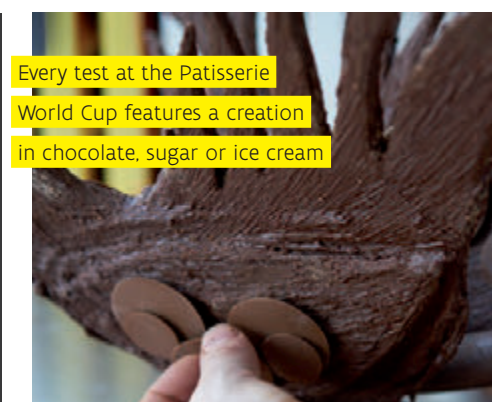
In 1925, chocolatier Charles Callebaut learned something equally important: how to transport liquid chocolate. Ten years later, Basile Kestekidès, the nephew of the founder of Leonidas, created the legendary Manon, a large praline based on coffee-flavoured butter cream enrobed in white chocolate – and it's still a hit today. Chocolate spread is also a Belgian invention and was brought to market by chocolate producer Côte d'Or for the first time in 1952.

At the cutting edge

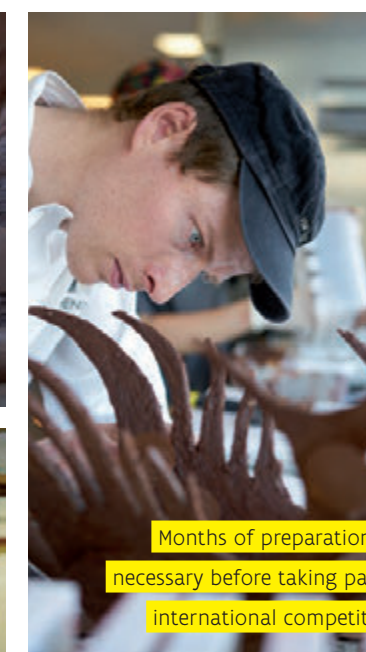
The Patisserie World Cup is one of the most important international competitions for patisserie, chocolate, ice cream and desserts.

Every two years since 1989, promising young creators in the world of sweets have headed to Lyon, to impress the jury and an enthusiastic audience with their spectacular creations.

Top Belgian chocolatiers such as Pierre Marcolini and Herman Van Dender made their names there.



Every test at the Patisserie World Cup features a creation in chocolate, sugar or ice cream



Months of preparation are necessary before taking part in international competitions

Chocolate workshops in Flanders and Brussels

There are lots of places offering educational and fun chocolate workshops for anyone who enjoys getting their hands dirty. Under professional guidance, you can learn the tricks of this sweet trade.



Chocalicious

Dream up and create your own chocolate products in the heart of Antwerp.

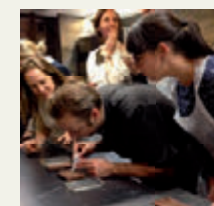
Korte Vlierstraat 13
2000 Antwerp
www.chocalicious.be



Laurent Gerbaud

Discover the wonderful world of chocolate and pralines in the workshop of Laurent Gerbaud.

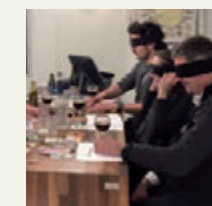
Ravensteinstraat 2D
1000 Brussels
www.chocolatsgerbaud.be



Chocolato

Learn how to make delicious chocolate bars, drinks, truffles and pralines here.

Sint-Michiëlsheiling 7
9000 Ghent
www.chocolato.be



Beer hop

Discover the magical combination of beer and chocolate.

Tiensestraat 5
3000 Leuven
www.beerhop.be/en/trips



Sjolaa

Sjolaa immerses you in the world of our beloved black gold.

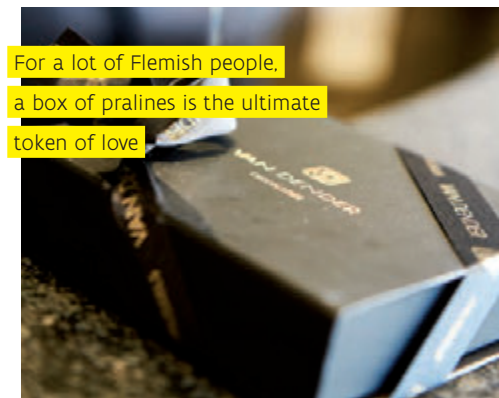
Geerdegemvaart 137
2800 Mechelen
www.sjolaa.be

FLANDERS, SWEET AS CHOCOLATE

Our culture and traditions in Flanders are imbued with chocolate. On Valentine's Day we surprise our sweethearts with a box of pretty pralines, a gift of love. Sinterklaas (Saint Nicholas) brings good children chocolate figurines every year, and at Easter we hide tiny chocolate eggs in the garden. Belgians also enjoy chocolate as a treat with our coffee on a Sunday.

Flemings are simply devoted to their chocolate and pralines: we eat at least 6kg (13.2lbs) of them a year.

"Enjoying a praline is an experience full of flavours, textures and emotions. The sensation in the mouth is also a part of the experience. That mouthfeel is all about how a praline and the filling fuse on the tongue," Herman says. A delicious praline has layers of different elements. Hazelnut praline or vanilla cream are softer than the surrounding chocolate, and so they melt differently. The variation in textures, such as soft ganache with crunchy nuts or nougat, are part of the mouthfeel. Layers are the key to success. I particularly like a fresh note, too. We add a small amount of acidic fruit to our Origin pralines, to strengthen the chocolate taste. You don't taste the fruit itself, but it has a positive effect on the flavour."



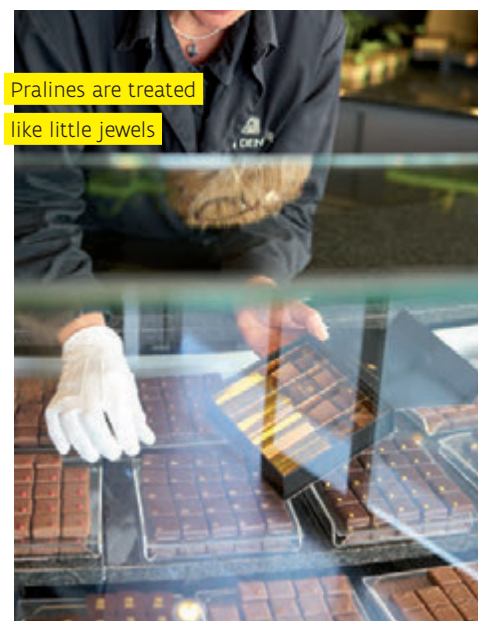
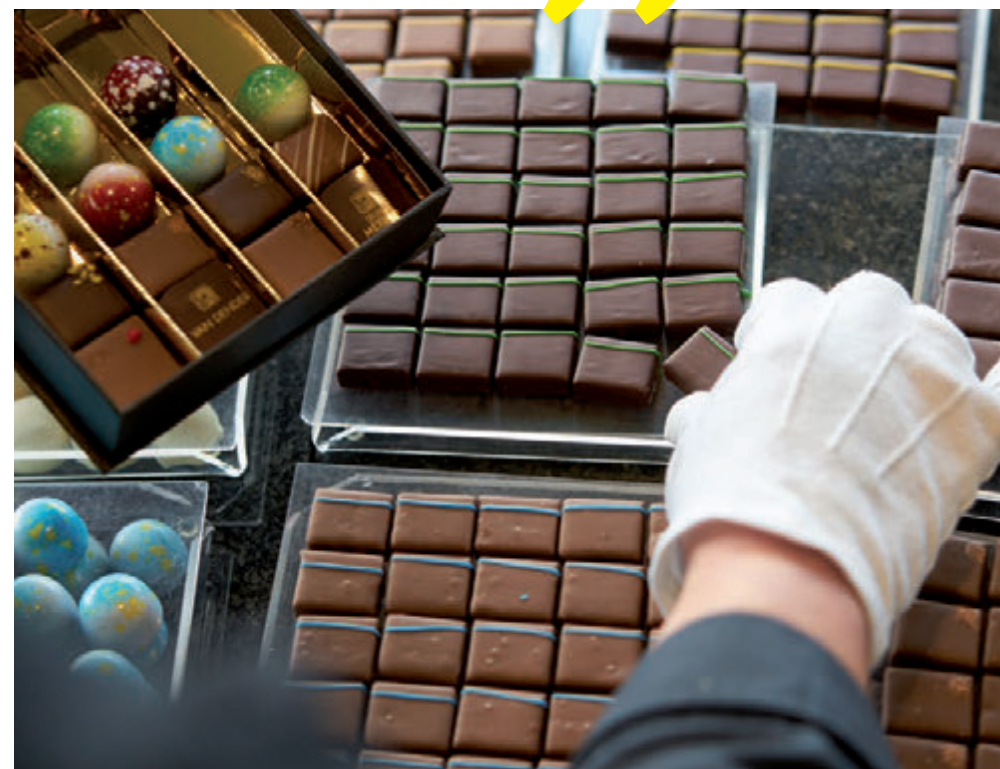
Van Dender's favourite chocolate

"I'm proudest of our Origin pralines. We have four in our collection. Maya is made with a powerful, bitter ganache with chocolate from the Caribbean. Peru is lightly bitter with an aroma of pear and hazelnut. In the Venezuela, the Trinitario bean is central, with a mix of nuts, fruit and caramel. The final one, Madagascar, is made with the Forastero bean, with subtle aromas of red fruit, banana and spices. When you taste them alongside each other, the different flavour nuances really come out."



Enjoying a praline is an experience of flavours, textures and emotions

Herman Van Dender



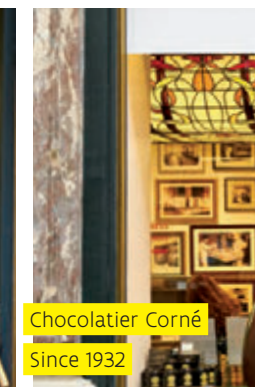
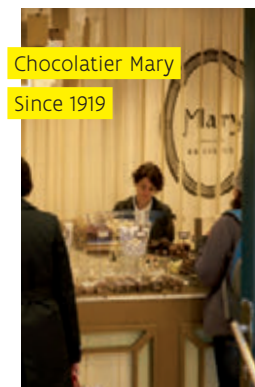
Tip

Keep chocolate and pralines cool and dry. The fridge is too moist, which results in condensation. The ideal temperature is about 12-13°C (53-55°F). Restaurants, for example, keep their pralines in wine fridges.



Galeries Royales Saint Hubert

The domed Galeries Royales Saint Hubert, built in 1846, consists of three parts: the King's, Queen's and Prince's galleries. This architectural pearl with its roof of iron and glass – modern for its time – forms a link between the Grand Place and La Monnaie opera house. Here you'll find exclusive shops, cafés and the best chocolatiers.



Easter eggs: a Flemish tradition



Alongside bread, cakes and fresh coffee, the breakfast table at Easter is dominated by colourful decorated Easter eggs and chocolate figurines. Hunting for eggs in the garden is a centuries-old tradition. Eggs, a symbol of fertility, were once buried to give a rich soil and an abundant harvest. Today, children go on a treasure hunt with their baskets on Easter Sunday morning.



Classic chocolate houses

Neuhaus
The founder of the Flemish praline.
Koningsgalerij 5
1000 Brussels
www.neuhauschocolate.com

Godiva
This chocolate house represents refinement and luxury.
Grote Markt 21
1000 Brussels
www.godivachocolates.eu

Mary
Founded in 1919 and the certified supplier to the court. Known for their beautiful packaging.
Koninginnegalerij 36
1000 Brussels
www.mary.be

Innovative chocolatiers

Jitsk
A master chocolatier with a passion for pure flavours. Jitsk has also developed a chocolate pairing with beer from De Koninck.
De Koninck City Brewery
Boomgaardstraat 1/3
2018 Antwerp
www.jitsk.com

The Chocolate Line
Dominique Persoone, 'enfant terrible' of the Belgian chocolate scene. Gastronomy and science meet in his creations, which feature some surprising flavour combinations.
Simon Stevinplein 1
8000 Bruges
www.thechocolateline.be

Pierre Marcolini
Pierre Marcolini creates innovative pralines with a light taste, complexity and an eye for texture.
Koninginnegalerij 9
1000 Brussels
www.marcolini.com

Joost Arijis
Perfection and innovation are the watch words at patisserie and chocolatier Joost Arijis.
Vlaanderenstraat 24
9000 Ghent
www.joostarijs.be

A wide, green field under a bright, hazy sky. In the distance, a church spire is visible among trees. The sky is filled with wispy clouds and several white contrails from an airplane. The sun is low on the left side, creating a soft glow.

THE STORY CONTINUES
VISITFLANDERS.COM

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- 2 Central Station
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- 6 Meir
- 7 Plantin-Moretus Museum
- 8 Rubens House
- 9 Vlaeykensgang
- 10 Zoo Antwerp

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| 12. Aux Viex Port | 29. Ferrier 30 | 46. Mon |
| 13. Barchel | 30. Finjan | 47. Nathan |
| 14. Bart-À-Vin | 31. Frites Atelier | 48. Nemo |
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| 26. De Veranda | 43. Le Zoute Zoen | 60. Umami Antwerp |
| 27. Divin by Sepi | 44. Maritime | 61. Yam Thai |



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www.toerisme-leiestreek.be
www.visitbruges.be
www.westtoer.be

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- 4 Church of Our Lady
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- 21 Zet'Joe



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SIGHTS

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- 2 Bozar
- 3 Broodhuis
- 4 Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula
- 5 Cinquantenaire
- 6 Comic Strip Center
- 7 Grote Markt
- 8 Manneken Pis
- 9 Royal Palace
- 10 Town hall

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| 11. Amen | 27. La Belle Maraîchère |
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| 13. AUB-SVP | 29. La Paix |
| 14. Au Cor de Chasse | 30. La Villa in the Sky |
| 15. Au Vieux Saint Martin | 31. Le Pré Salé |
| 16. Balls & Glory | 32. Les Filles |
| 17. Belga Queen | 33. Le Vismet |
| 18. Bia Mara | 34. Maison Antoine |
| 19. Bozar Brasserie | 35. Mary Pop-In |
| 20. Colonel | 36. Oficina |
| 21. Comme chez Soi | 37. Pistolet Original |
| 22. De Noordzee | 38. Quartier Leopold |
| 23. Fin de Siècle | 39. San |
| 24. Frituur René | 40. Sea Grill |
| 25. Humphrey | 41. Senzanome |
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“GRUUT IS GHENT’S VERY OWN CRAFT BREWERY, SET UP IN 2009 BY FEISTY LADY BREWER ANNICK DE SPLENTER”

Visit Gent

“TIERENTEYN MUSTARD, A TASTY TRADITION THAT PACKS A PUNCH”

Visit Gent

“Ghent is a wonderful place to live for vegetarians and vegans. The city is a pioneer when it comes to meat-free restaurants and was the first to introduce Thursday Veggie Day”

chase.be

“There is a food revolution taking the kingdom of Belgium by storm, and its unofficial capital is the city of Ghent. This is where the Flemish Foodie movement first set down roots, offering an exciting alternative to classic Michelin-style restaurants.”

John Brunton

A cuberdon a day keeps the doctor away

“GHENT, EUROPE’S BEST KEPT SECRET”

Lonely Planet

GHENT

Capital of East-Flanders

Get to know Ghent & East-Flanders:

www.visitgent.be

[f gentfan](https://www.facebook.com/gentfan)

[@visitgent](https://www.instagram.com/visitgent)

[visitgent](https://www.instagram.com/visitgent)

www.tov.be

[f ToerismeOostVlaanderen](https://www.facebook.com/ToerismeOostVlaanderen)

[@ToerismeOVL](https://www.instagram.com/ToerismeOVL)

SIGHTS

- 1 Belfry
- 2 Castle of the Counts
- 3 Graslei & Korenlei
- 4 Korenmarkt
- 5 Patershol
- 6 St. Bavo's Cathedral
- 7 Sint-Pietersplein
- 8 St. Michael's Bridge
- 9 S.M.A.K.
- 10 Vrijdagmarkt

FOOD

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 11. A Food Affair | 25. Lof |
| 12. Alberte | 26. Maison Elza |
| 13. Café Ventura | 27. Martino |
| 14. Cochon de Luxe | 28. Oak |
| 15. De Blauwe Kiosk | 29. Papaya Song |
| 16. De Frietketel | 30. Plus+ |
| 17. De Gouden Saté | 31. Potatolicious |
| 18. De Raadkamer | 32. Publiek |
| 19. De Superette | 33. Roots |
| 20. Frituur Bij Filip | 34. Sorelle |
| 21. Ganzerik | 35. Volta |
| 22. j.e.f | 36. VOS |
| 23. Jilles | 37. Vrijmoed |
| 24. Karel De Stoute | |



LEUVEN

“LEUVEN IS TRADITION AND CHARACTER”

Lonely Planet

Leuven, the place to beer

» “The Grote Markt is a perfect place to enjoy the sun on a terrace overlooking Leuven’s extraordinary architecture.” «

Reisgenie

“A MUST-SEE IN LEUVEN ARE THE BEGUINAGES: QUINTESSENTIALLY FLEMISH”

Travelwriter

“WHATEVER YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN A CITY, IT CAN BE FOUND IN LEUVEN.”

ArrivalGuides

“With the charming Muntstraat as a major foodie hub and a sleep-deprived student population in need of wholesome nourishment, Leuven has become a haven of cozy lunch spots.”

Nana Van De Poel - The Culture Trip

LEUVEN

Capital of Flemish Brabant

SIGHTS

- 1 University Library
- 2 Botanical Garden
- 3 Groot Begijnhof
- 4 Grote Markt
- 5 M Museum
- 6 Oude Markt
- 7 Park Abbey
- 8 St. Peter’s Church
- 9 Stella Artois brewery
- 10 Town Hall

FOOD

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| 11. Balls & Glory | 21. Tafelrond |
| 12. Baracca | 22. Taste |
| 13. De Smullende Heks | 23. Trente |
| 14. Couvert Couvert | 24. Würst |
| 15. EssenCiel | 25. Zappaz |
| 16. Gainsbourg | |
| 17. Het land aan de Overkant | |
| 18. Noordoever | |
| 19. Officina Clandestina | |
| 20. Rossi | |

Get to know Leuven & region:
www.visitleuven.be
www.toerismevlaamsbrabant.be



MECHELEN

MECHELEN

In the region of Antwerp

SIGHTS

- 1 St. Rumbold's Tower & Cathedral
- 2 Museum Hof van Busleyden
- 3 Kazerne Dossin
- 4 Palace Margaret of Austria
- 5 Groot Begijnhof
- 6 Het Anker Brewery
- 7 Boat trip on river Dijle
- 8 Toy Museum
- 9 Grote Markt
- 10 Dillepad

FOOD

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 11. Bar Marie | 27. L'Artista |
| 12. Bokes & co | 28. LAM'EAU |
| 13. Brocante Nostradam | 29. M-Eatery |
| 14. Café Belge | 30. Noen |
| 15. Cosma FoodHouse | 31. Pintxos |
| 16. De Cirque | 32. Puro |
| 17. De Witten Vos | 33. Ronda |
| 18. Foom | 34. SAVA |
| 19. Frituur Korenmarkt | 35. Stassart II |
| 20. Frituur Veemarkt | 36. Vê Manger |
| 21. Funky Jungle | 37. ViaVia Mechelen |
| 22. Gamine | |
| 23. Graspoot | |
| 24. Helti | |
| 25. Il Cardinale | |
| 26. La Boya | |

Get to know Mechelen & region:
www.visitmechelen.be



“The Mechelaar is proud of Gouden Carolus, the award-winning beer brewed here for centuries and Charles V’s favourite Tripel back in the sixteenth century”

ArrivalGuides

THE TOP CULINARY SPECIALITY FROM MECHELEN IS MECHELEN COUCOU OR MEHELSE KOEKOEK. IT HAS FIRM MEAT AND IS A CROSSBREED OF THE CUCKOO-COLOURED DOMESTIC CHICKEN AND THE ASIAN CHICKEN

“PART OF WHAT MAKES MECHELEN SO CONVIVIAL IS ITS HUMAN SCALE.”

ArrivalGuides

BREWERY HËT ANKER STARTED BREWING BEER 5 GENERATIONS AGO IN THE GRAND BEGUINAGE OF MECHELEN

» “With Belgium’s foremost cathedral, a superb central square and a scattering of intriguing museums, Mechelen (Malines in French) is one of Flanders’ most underrated historic cities.” «

Lonely Planet

From Flanders with Food Ambassadors

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and Leuven

www.ballsglory.be

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Content

VISITFLANDERS, Kitchenet, Sally Tipper & Mo Ka

This folder has been put together based on information that we requested from our partners. Over the course of time, some information could change. For this reason, we request that before you visit a restaurant, brewery, museum or event, you kindly check the company's website. VisitFlanders cannot be held responsible for errors that we might have missed or unintended omission despite various checks.

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