

## Bike and Barge Belgium: Bruges - Brussels

### MS Magnifique II

#### Characteristics:

*Operator:* Boat-Bike Tours

*Participants:* up to 35

*Tourtype:* guided

*Children:* no

*Regions:* Antwerp, Bruges, Brussels, Flanders, Ghent, North Sea, Ostend, West Flanders

*Countries:* Belgium



#### Benefits:

- Tour and accommodation on board in the booked category 8 days/7 nights (Saturday-Saturday) from/to Bruges or Brussels
- Full board
- 7x breakfast, 6x lunch or picnic lunch during bike tours, coffee or tea in the afternoon, 7x three course dinner
- Use of bed linen and towels (change of towels daily possible)
- daily short cleaning of the cabin
- Welcome drink, presentation of barge + crew and briefing on the first evening
- Tour leader (multilingual) with daily briefings of the bike tours, some short city tours (free), during the day the tour leader is cycling the daily bike tour and reachable on his cell phone for individual cyclists
- daily complete guided bike tours
- Printed instructions and detailed maps for daily bike tours, 1 set per cabin



#### Additional costs:

- All other costs: on request (bikehire, cabin categories, additional nights, transfers and so on)

#### Tour description:

During this tour by bike & barge you can enjoy the most beautiful art cities of Flanders: Brussels, Mechelen, Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges are wonderful and interesting historical cities. The daily guided bike tours will lead you through a variety of beautiful flat landscapes and along the river Schelde. You will also visit many



picturesque small towns. The largest Flemish "art cities", like Brussels, Mechelen, Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges are showing their Flemish art treasures. You can make relaxing bike tours over old tow paths along small canals and rivers and via lanes with a lot of poplars to ancient villages, where beer is still being brewed like in grandfathers times. And when one tries this local village beer in a authentic pub or in an outside street café under the trees, the people approvingly raise their glass, especially when one arrives by bike. Make a combination of beautiful cycling tours, various highlights and a very nice stay aboard your "floating hotel". You will travel on board of the brand new premium barge MS Magnifique II for 35 guests, a newly built barge in classical style, operated by the owner of the very successful and beloved barge Magnifique. Among the highlights of the new barge are four upper deck suites with a 2 meter wide window.

On this classic bike and barge cycling tour along the Schelde River you will experience the best of what the Flemish Region of Belgium - also known as Flanders - has to offer. During the course of the 8 days, 7 nights tour you will visit the world famous cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Mechelen and Bruges, will cycle through the beautiful Belgium landscape and will have the opportunity to be immersed in Belgium's well-deserved reputation for superb food and drink. As well as cycling through many picturesque villages each day, you will:

- Enjoy the best of Brussels
- Visit Antwerp, a city famous for its vibrant nightlife
- Get the opportunity to explore Ghent
- Be able to explore the UNESCO World Heritage-listed historical centre of Bruges
- Visit Mechelen, a small and picturesque city

#### MS Magnifique II

The 63 meters (209 ft) long and 7.10 meters (23.3 ft) wide barge was built in 2015/2016 and as many as 35 guests can be accommodated on board to enjoy a very pleasant stay during their tour. The lower deck has 14 cabins: 12 twin cabins (approx. 11 M<sup>2</sup> | 118 sq.ft, 2 single beds next to each other), 1 premium twin cabin (approx. 13 M<sup>2</sup> | 139 sq.ft, 2 single beds next to each other and a small sitting area) and 1 single cabin (approx. 8 M<sup>2</sup> | 86 sq.ft). Each cabin is equipped with a shower, toilet and basin. The comfortable beds are fitted with box spring mattresses. You adjust can the air conditioning and ventilation as you see fit. All cabins on lower deck have portholes, they are fixed for safety reasons. Your cabin also features WIFI and flat screen satellite-TV. If requested, an extra bed is available in some twin cabins (above one of the other beds).

The upper deck has 4 elegant suites with a 2 meter wide window (a part of the windows can be opened). In addition to beds and bathroom, these truly spacious cabins (approx. 14 M<sup>2</sup> | 151 sq.ft, 2 single beds next to each other) are equipped with a cozy seating area.

On the upper deck there are a tastefully furnished salon with restaurant, bar, lounge with wide screen TV, large windows and Wi-Fi (limited use of data). The big windows offer an exceptional view of the landscape. The sliding doors in the lounge open up in good weather and providing access to the partly covered teak wooden sun deck with chairs and tables. A cycle shed is on the front deck. The Magnifique II is the sister ship of the Magnifique and sails under Dutch flag and management too. The hospitable crew looks forward to welcoming you on board.

#### Tour Details Across Flanders: From Bruges to Brussels | MS Magnifique II

##### Day 1 (Sat): Embarkation: Bruges

Individual arrival in Bruges. Embarkation and check-in as from 1 PM. The barge MS Magnifique II awaits you in the Bruges harbour where the crew will welcome you on board. Take some time to explore this lovely city. The "Venice of the North" is well known as city of art and museums. Its city centre with lots of canals is put on the World Cultural Heritage List of UNESCO. Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea while over viewing the "Grote Markt" square with its hustle and bustle.

##### Day 2 (Sun): Bruges - Damme - Blankenberge - Bruges (Approx. 55 km/33 mi.)

The first bike tour takes you first to a quiet canal along where you'll find lots of poplars, through an attractive polder landscape with nice small farm houses. Then via the small city of Damme to the North Sea coast. A 12 kilometre long sandy beach, numerous cafés and the attractive dune landscape of "Het Zwin" (an unique nature reserve) provide enough variety during your lunch break. Then back to Bruges while riding along a small canal.

##### Day 3 (Mon): Bruges - Moerebrugge | Moerebrugge - Oostende - Ghent (Approx. 40 km/24 mi.)



During breakfast the barge will sail to Moerebrugge. Today's bike tour follows the canal of Ghent to Oostende, through the stretched Flemish landscape to Ghent. The lovely illuminated streets of the town centre invites for a walk. The architectural richness in the historical centre of the city of Ghent (during the Middle Ages the 2nd largest European city just after Paris), has been maintained well. Docking place is the lock of Merelbeke, a suburb of Ghent and approx. 15 cycling minutes to the city centre of Ghent.

Day 4 (Tue): Ghent - Dendermonde (Approx. 48 km/29 mi.) | Dendermonde - St. Amands

After breakfast you will cycle to Dendermonde. Here you can't escape a coffee or tea break on the beautiful Flemish Grote Market square. Depending on availability of mooring space, the barge may sail to St. Amands for the night.

Day 5 (Wed): Dendermonde - St. Amands | St. Amands - Temse - Antwerp (Approx. 42 km/25 mi.)

During breakfast the barge will sail to St. Amands (or on Tue.). This part of the route is the most beautiful and twisting part of the river Schelde. Your bike tour starts here. You will cycle past the water tower and you cross the Brussels-Rupel canal. The tour continues through an historical brick factory area between Boom and Niel where bricks are still manufactured since the Middle Ages up to now. From Rupelmonde you will have a lovely cycle tour to Hemiksem, to reach Antwerp in the end. This harbour city on the river Schelde is one of the worlds major diamond cities and has many highlights: the City Hall is one of several majestic buildings constructed in the Renaissance, the historical City Square Grote Market, the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe cathedral and the medieval Steen Castle. Dinner in a restaurant of your choice.

Day 6 (Thu): Antwerp - Lier -Willebroek (Approx. 45 km/27 mi.)

Just after breakfast you will cycle through the quiet suburbs of Antwerp with nice villa's and manicured gardens to Lier. From here you cycle along the small river Nete further to Willebroek, where the MS Magnifique II is waiting for you again.

Day 7 (Fri): Willebroek - Mechelen - Vilvoorde (Approx. 40 km/24 mi.) | Vilvoorde - Brussels

While the barge is sailing over the Willebroek canal, you will cycle your last bike tour through green, soft slanted hilly country via Mechelen to Vilvoorde. A remarkable thing about Mechelen are the over 300 buildings listed as a historical building, 8 of these are churches, on less then 3 square kilometres. From Vilvoorde you will sail with the barge to Brussels. Just take a walk through the historical city centre, along the gothic town hall and the beautiful guild houses on the Grote Markt.

Day 8 (Sat): Disembarkation: Brussels

Disembarkation just after breakfast till 10 AM: End of your trip.

All distances are "approximate distances" of recommended bike tours.

When a guest does not want to cycle one day, he can skip the bike tour and relax on board while cruising to the next town.

Program and details barring changes, a.o. as a result of nautical, technical or meteorological reasons.

On the arrival day it is possible to load your luggage on board from 9:30am.

A guide will guide the bike tour daily, however it is also possible to ride the bike tour individually (self-guided).

Tour descriptions and maps are available on board for anyone interested in taking the self-guided option.

The guide can be reached on his/her mobile phone in cases of emergency or technical breakdown of the bicycle.

#### Tour Details Across Flanders: From Brussels to Bruges | MS Magnifique II

Day 1 (Sat): Embarkation: Brussels

Individual arrival in Brussels. Check-in as from 1 PM. The ship awaits you in the Brussels harbour where the crew will welcome you on board. Take some time to explore the capital of Belgium: Just take a walk through the historical city centre, along the gothic town hall, the beautiful guild houses on the Grote Markt.

Day 2 (Sun): Brussels - Vilvoorde | Vilvoorde - Mechelen - Willebroek (Approx. 40 km/24 mi.)

During breakfast the barge will sail to Vilvoorde. During your first bike tour you will visit Mechelen; remarkable about Mechelen are the over 300 buildings listed as historical building, 8 of these are churches, on less then 3 square kilometres. Continue through green, soft slanted hilly country, along picturesque villages and large country estates to Willebroek. In the mean time the barge will sail over the Willebroek canal to today's destination.

Day 3 (Mon): Willebroek - Antwerp (Approx. 45 km/27 mi.)

Tour from Willebroek via Lier to Antwerp. This harbour city on the river Schelde is one of the world's major diamond cities and has many highlights: the City Hall is one of several majestic buildings constructed in the Renaissance, the historical City Square Grote Markt, the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe cathedral and the medieval Steen Castle. Dinner in a restaurant of your choice.

Day 4 (Tue): Antwerp - St. Amands / Dendermonde (Approx. 42-56 km/25-34mi.) | If necessary St-Amands - Dendermonde (or the next morning)

Today's bicycle tour will lead you upstream the river Schelde to Hemiksem: after just a short ascent you can easily continue cycling to Rupelmonde. Here, where the Rupel flows into the Schelde, you follow the Rupel for a little while and after a few miles you will reach the village Niel, that lies next to the nature reserve Walenhoek. Between Niel and Boom is a historical area where bricks are being manufactured since the Middle Ages. Cross the canal Brussels-Rupel to the water tower of St. Amands. Further again along the Schelde till you reach the beautiful city Dendermonde, the destination of today's bike tour. A "must" is a short stop for a drink on the beautiful Flemish market square Grote Markt of Dendermonde.

Day 5 (Wed): Dendermonde - Ghent (Approx. 40 km/24 mi.)

Today's cycling tour will lead you to the beautiful city of Ghent, where the MS Magnifique II will be moored in Merelbeke, a suburb. Explore the pedestrian area in the town centre of Ghent, part by bike and part on foot. The architectural richness in the historical centre of the city of Ghent (during the Middle Ages the 2nd largest European city just after Paris), has been maintained well. (docking place is the lock of Merelbeke, ca. 15 cycling minutes to the city centre of Ghent).

Day 6 (Thu): Ghent - Vinderhout - Bruges (Approx. 45 km/27 mi.)

After breakfast, you will leave for Vinderhout. Part of the cycling tour leads along the canal Ghent to Oostende through the stretched Flemish landscape, until you reach Bruges. The "Venice of the North" is well known as an important city of art and museums. Its city centre with lots of canals is put on the World Cultural Heritage List of UNESCO. Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea while over viewing the Grote Markt square with its hustle and bustle.

Day 7 (Fri): Tour around Bruges to the North Sea (Approx. 50 km/32 mi.)

The last bike tour takes you first to a quiet canal along where you'll find lots of poplars, through an attractive polder landscape with nice small farm houses. Then via the small city of Damme to the North Sea coast. A 12 kilometre long sandy beach, numerous cafés and the attractive dune landscape of "Het Zwin" (a unique nature reserve) provide enough variety during your lunch break. Then back to Bruges while riding along a small canal.

Day 8 (Sat): Disembarkation: Bruges

Disembarkation just after breakfast, at 10 AM: End of your trip.

All distances are "approximate distances" of recommended bike tours.

When a guest does not want to cycle one day, he can skip the bike tour and relax on board while cruising to the next town.

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#### BICYCLES:

The bicycles on board are mostly unisex touring bicycles of the German brand VSF with normal mount (ladies model), 7 gears, hand brake and/or pedal brake and pannier bag. Other bikes (e.g. children's bikes, "slip streamers", tandems, etc.) and child's saddles (rear) are on these tours only available after prior request (by booking) and confirmation and in very limited numbers. Bike rent is optional. Guests are also allowed to bring their own bicycles or E-bikes (at no extra cost). However, the crew or tour operator are in no way responsible for any damage, loss or theft of such bicycles. In Belgium bikers are not obligated by law to wear a bike helmet. There are some bike helmets available on board (free use).

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The General Conditions (travel conditions) of Boat Bike Tours bv apply to cycling cruises, as well as to confirmation and cancellation of such tours.



In principle, children are very welcome on board. Children's bikes, tandems, parent-and-child tandems, slip streamers etc. or child's saddles are available on request and at surcharge. Of course you may stay one or more days longer on board (children under the age of 18 years must be under supervision).

The interior of the ship is a no-smoking zone: smoking is only allowed on the sun deck. As a safety measure, a statutory smoking ban applies in all cabins; this means that all cabins and rooms on board are no-smoking zones.

<https://www.boat-and-bike.com/tour/bike-and-barge-belgium-bruges-brussel.html>