

## Bike and Barge Tour Belgium: Bruges - Brussels

### MS Magnifique

#### 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
- Daily coffee and tea till 4 PM



#### Additional costs:

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

#### Tour description:

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

On a daily basis you will cycle along old tow paths next to small canals and rivers and via quiet country lanes to ancient villages steeped in history. Enjoy a coffee or one of the many village beers in an authentic Belgian pub where the locals approvingly raise their glass, especially when you arrive by bike. Your home away from home for the duration of the Bruges to Brussels tour is the premium barge MS Magnifique which has a capacity of 32-35 guests. One of the most luxurious barges cruising Dutch and Belgian waterways, the MS Magnifique, following a major 14 metre extension in 2012/13, now boasts 11 twin cabins, four premium twins, two single cabins and a beautiful large salon with restaurant, bar and lounge area.

#### MS Magnifique

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#### Tour details Belgium: From Bruges to Brussels | MS Magnifique

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

Individual arrival in Bruges. Embarkation and check-in is from 1 PM. The barge MS Magnifique awaits you in the Bruges harbour where the crew will welcome you on board. After check-in take the opportunity to explore this lovely city of art, which is widely described as the "Venice of the North". You can enjoy the ambience of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed historical centre during a leisurely walk, visit one of Bruges many museums or simply take in the stunning beauty and culture of this unforgettable city from the comfort of a sidewalk café.

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

Finally after the distribution of bicycles you are off and riding! You will cycle along a quiet canal and past beautiful poplar trees through an attractive polder landscape (a polder is a low-lying tract of land enclosed by embankments) dotted with small farm houses to the North Sea coast via the small city of Damme. Here you will have the opportunity to get your feet wet along an inviting 12 kilometre sandy beach, visit any one of numerous cafés and see the attractive dune landscape of "Het Zwin" (a unique nature reserve). On the return ride to Bruges you will cycle along a small picturesque canal.

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

While you enjoy breakfast the barge MS Magnifique will sail to Moerebrugge where you will start your day's cycling. With the historical city of Ghent your destination today you will cycle via Oostende along the Ghent canal through the beautiful Flemish landscape. The town centre of Ghent features lovely illuminated streets that are a must to explore, while the architectural richness in the historical centre of the city has to be seen to be believed (during the Middle Ages Ghent was the 2nd largest European city after Paris). The MS Magnifique will dock for the night at the Merelbeke lock, a suburb of Ghent and approx. 15 cycling minutes to the city centre

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

After breakfast in Ghent you will cycle to Dendermonde which is located at the mouth of the river Dender where it flows into the Schelde River. Here you can enjoy some time off your bicycle with a coffee or a cup of tea at 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 Tuesday). This part of the route is along the most beautiful and twisting section of the Schelde River. After departing from St. Amands you will pedal past the water tower and over the Brussels-Rupel canal. The tour continues to an historical brick factory situated between Boom and Niel where bricks have been manufactured since the Middle Ages. After cycling through the countryside to Rupelmonde and later Hemiksem you will finally reach Antwerp, your destination for the night. Antwerp is a harbour city situated on the river Schelde famous for handling up to 80% of the world's rough diamonds. There are many highlights in the city to discover including: the City Hall, one of several majestic buildings constructed during the Renaissance period, the historical City Square Grote Market, the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe Cathedral and the medieval Steen Castle. Dinner for the night will be in a restaurant of your choice.

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

After breakfast you will cycle through the leafy suburbs of Antwerp and past typical Belgian villa's with manicured gardens to Lier. From here you cycle along the small river Nete and on to Willebroek where the MS Magnifique will be waiting for you once again.

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

While the barge sets sail along the Willebroek canal, your final day's cycling will see you pass through the picturesque countryside via Mechelen to Vilvoorde. Mechelen is a remarkable city that boasts more than 300 buildings that are historically listed. Of these 8 are churches - all on less than 3 square kilometres of land! From Vilvoorde you will board the MS Magnifique for the trip to Brussels where you can walk through the historical city centre, visit the Grote Markt square (Great Market square), arguably Europe's most beautiful medieval square lined with guild houses or marvel at the Gothic town hall.

Day 8 (Sat): Disembarkation: Brussels

Disembarkation after breakfast until 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 9:30 AM.

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 Belgium: From Brussels to Bruges | MS Magnifique

Day 1 (Sat): Embarkation: Brussels

Individual arrival in Brussels. Check-in is from 1 PM. The barge MS Magnifique awaits you in the Brussels harbour where the crew will welcome you on board. Take some time to explore the capital of Belgium: walk through the historical city centre, visit the Grand Place, arguably Europe's most beautiful medieval square lined with guild houses or marvel at the Gothic town hall.

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

During breakfast the barge will sail to Vilvoorde. Following the distribution of bicycles you will cycle to Mechelen a remarkable city that boasts more than 300 buildings that are historically listed. Of these 8 are churches - all on less than 3 square kilometres of land! Cycle on from Mechelen past picturesque villages and large country estates to Willebroek where the MS Magnifique, your floating hotel for the night, will be waiting with a warm shower and a delicious meal.

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

Today you will cycle from Willebroek via Lier to Antwerp. Antwerp is a harbour city situated on the river Schelde famous for handling up to 80% of the world's rough diamonds. There are many highlights in the city to discover including: the City Hall, one of several majestic buildings constructed during the Renaissance period, the historical City Square Grote Market, the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe Cathedral and the medieval Steen Castle. Dinner for the night will be 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 take you upstream along the Schelde River to Hemiksem where after just a short ascent you will cycle on to Rupelmonde where the Schelde River joins the Rupel River. After following the Rupel for a few kilometres you will reach the village of Niel and the Walenhoek Nature Reserve. You will continue cycling on to an historical brick factory situated between Niel and Boom where bricks have been manufactured since the Middle Ages. Further along the Rupel you will reach your destination for the day, the beautiful city of Dendermonde. A "must" is a short stop for a drink at Dendermonde's beautiful Flemish market square Grote Market.

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

Today you will cycle to the beautiful city of Ghent, where the MS Magnifique will be moored in the suburb of Merelbeke which is approx. a 15 minute cycle from the city centre. You will enjoy being able to explore the pedestrian area in Ghent's town centre, partly by bike and partly on foot. Ghent features lovely illuminated streets that are a must to explore, while the architectural richness in the historical centre of the city has to be seen to be believed (during the Middle Ages Ghent was the 2nd largest European city after Paris).

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

Part of the day's cycling will be along the Ghent canal to Oostende through the beautiful Flemish landscape, until you reach Bruges a lovely city of art which is widely described as the "Venice of the North". You can enjoy the ambience of the UNESCO World Heritage-listed historical centre during a leisurely walk, visit one of Bruges many museums or simply take in the stunning beauty and culture of this unforgettable city from the comfort of a sidewalk café.

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

Your final day of cycling takes you along a quiet canal and past beautiful poplar trees through an attractive polder landscape (a polder is a low-lying tract of land enclosed by embankments) dotted with small farm houses to the North Sea coast via the small city of Damme. Here you will have the opportunity to get your feet wet along an inviting 12 kilometre sandy beach, visit any one of numerous cafés and see the attractive dune landscape of "Het Zwin" (a unique nature reserve). On the return ride to Bruges you will cycle along a small picturesque 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 available on these tours by prior request (by booking) and confirmation as a very limited number are available. 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 is 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).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The General Conditions (travel conditions) of Boat Bike Tours apply to cycling cruises, as well as to confirmation and cancellation of such tours. In principle, children are very welcome on board. However, before booking, we advise you to satisfy yourself that your child is able to manage a cycle trip of ca. 55 km. Of course you may stay one or more days longer on board (children under the age of 18 years must be under supervision). Child discount on request. The interior of the ship is a non-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 non-smoking areas.

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