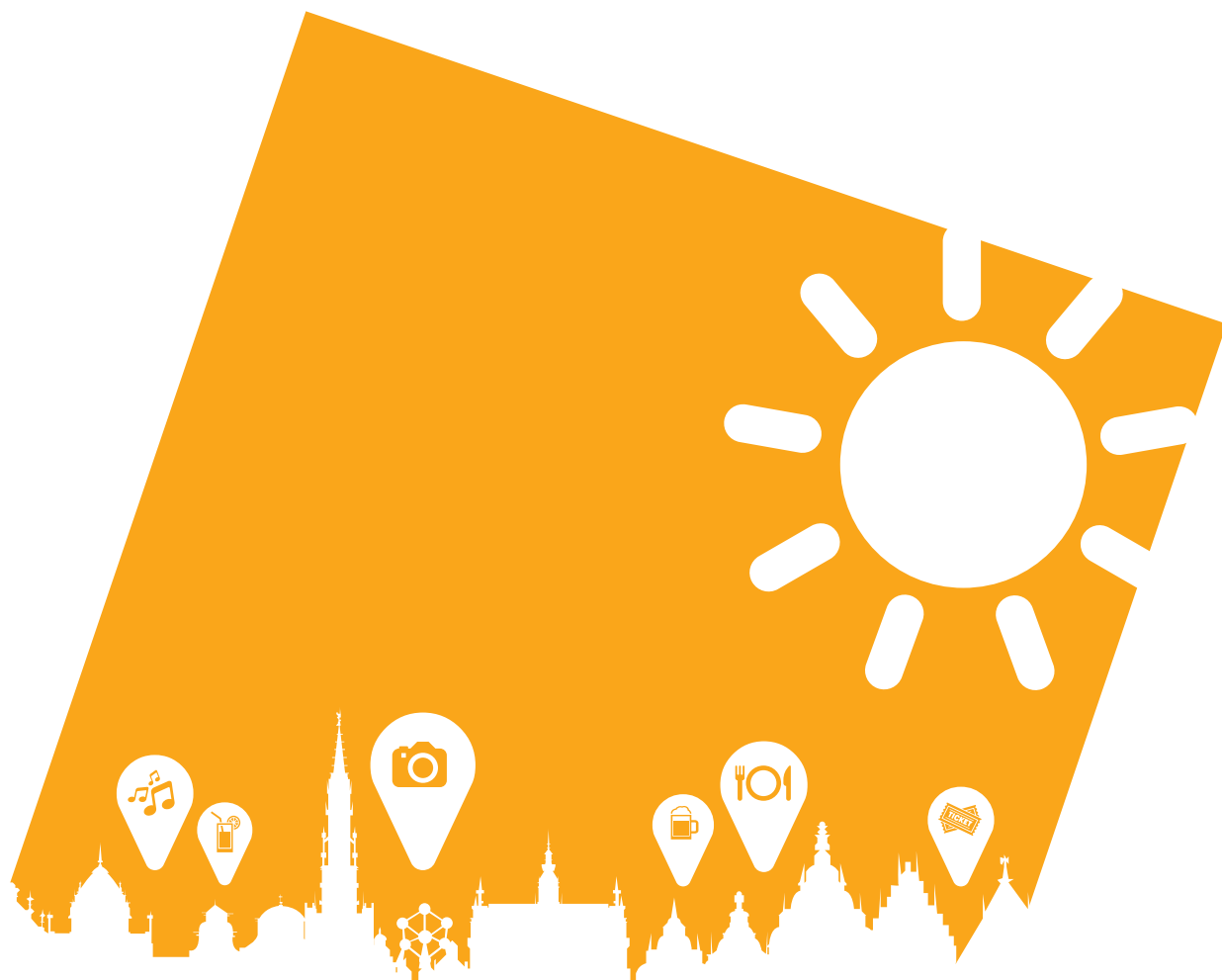




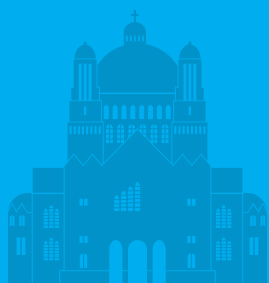
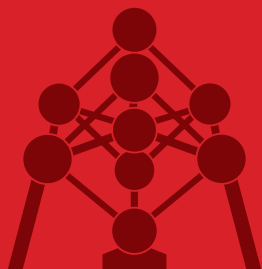
Living here

EXPAT GUIDES TO BELGIUM



SUMMER

in Brussels



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Expat Welcome Desk



Welcome to the capital of Europe. For a place that may appear defined by its international institutions, it's a city that rarely sleeps. During the summer, Brussels adopts a holiday atmosphere: road traffic eases, terraces take on a relaxed Mediterranean atmosphere and festivals and family events flourish. This is an ideal time to dip into the contemporary, melting-pot culture that characterises the city.

For a number of years, tourism authorities have raised Brussels' game by ensuring a full programme of summer activities. Following the security difficulties over recent months, they have stepped up efforts to show that the city is open for business and is alive and kicking.

From walks to live alfresco music and cycles in the park, this e-book offers plenty of ideas for outdoor activities. If the weather proves unseasonal, you'll find plenty of indoor options, including a host of excellent shows and exhibitions. And last but not least, don't miss a round-up of places to enjoy the very best of Brussels' food and drink experiences.

Enjoy the summer and enjoy Brussels!



Contributors

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Photography

P4 Bar Eliza: Hilde Peeters, **P5** Rooftop58: Alohafred, **P6** Bal National: Eric Danhier, **P8** Joachim Koester/The Kant Walks/courtesy of Bozar, **P9** Portrait of Noble Igwe from Iké Udé's, 10 Snapshots of Nigeria Sartorial Temperature, 2015, Dey Your Lane! Second image: Cristina de Middel, This is what hatred did, 2015, SODOMO, **P11** WoW: Th. Hubin/Muséum des Sciences naturelles, Guignolet: Ville de Bruxelles, Brussels beach: Eric Danhier, Sandpit: Kidsgazette, **P14** Facing the Future: SABAM Belgium 2016, **P15** Cigar: Andres Serrano, Photorealism: Roberto Bernardi, **P18** Bikes: WBT/JL Flemal, **P21** Train World: Marie-Françoise Plissart **P22** ADAM: Christophe Licoppe/Befocus, MIMA: ThePickles/MimaMuseum, **P23** Commission statue: OPT/Alessandra Petrosino, **P24** Cinquanteenaire arch: Zunini, **P25** Window: OPT, **P29** Aperro: Joelle Le, **P30** Town hall: ADT, **P31** Wiels: Sven Laurent, **P33** Ludovic Elens, **P34** Studio: Julien Renault. *All other photos courtesy of visit.brussels*



Alfresco drinks

Pop-up bars to enjoy a summer refreshment

When the weather heats up, locals and visitors flock to one of the city's many cafe terraces for a cool beer or cocktail. If you want to rise above street level, head to one of Brussels' rooftop terraces and summer pop-up bars which spring up in museums, parks - and even on top of a car park. Here's just a few of our favourites.



Skybar58

Parking 58 has long been a popular "secret" spot for locals taking visiting friends and relatives to catch a great panoramic view of Brussels city centre. Every summer, the top of this multi-storey car park is decked out with some fake grass and a cocktail bar and becomes Skybar58. On Friday and Saturday until the end of September, spend a chilled evening looking over Brussels at this pop-up café with DJs, picnic tables and mixed drinks. New this year: a pop-up restaurant serving lunch with a 360-degree view, cooked up by Gault & Millau chef of the year Sang Hoon Degeimbre.

Bar open 17.00-1.00, 1 Rue de l'Évêque, Centre

Bozar

Make the most of the evening opening at Bozar until 21.00 on Thursdays and combine a look around the Summer of Photography exhibition with a visit to the rooftop summer bar. Enjoy a panoramic view over Brussels over a glass or two with friends, in the shade of the Lighthouse for Lampedusa, a seven-metre installation made from the debris of refugees' vessels as they disembarked on European shores.

18 August-8 September, 23 Rue Ravenstein, Centre

Play Label Rooftop

You won't need your bowling shoes when you enter Crosly Bowling at the bottom of the Sablon. Skip the lanes and head right on up to the roof where you'll find the Play Label Rooftop, one of the trendiest parties in Brussels. Play Label is a collective of electronic music artists who host parties – often last minute ones – featuring some of the newest musical talents in Brussels. Not open daily; check Facebook for the programme before making a visit.

97 Rue des Alexiens, Centre

Bar Eliza

The instant the sun comes out, Parc Elisabeth in Koekelberg fills to the brim. For years, locals and visitors have dreamt of a place in the park where they can enjoy a drink. Now it's finally happened thanks to a crowdfunding campaign. Bar Eliza is a brand-new pop-up bar that has brought the derelict pavilion back to life. More than just a bar, this community project puts on concerts, screenings, yoga sessions and much more.

Open daily 11.00-21.30, until 4 September, Parc Elisabeth, Koekelberg





Apéros urbains

An annual fixture throughout the summer since a few years, are Friday afterwork parties hosted by apéros urbains. Held in a different park each week, these vibrant summer parties feature music, drinks and street food.



ON

Free outdoor parties by the ON new electronic music party collective. Music by resident DJs. In the canalside district at Parckfarm, Tour & Taxis
202 Boulevard du Jubilé



Coucou Brussels

Free outdoor parties by the ON new electronic music party collective. Music by resident DJs. In the canalside district at Parckfarm, Tour & Taxis
202 Boulevard du Jubilé, Molenbeek



Brüksel Jardin

As part of Brussels' busy summer party season, don't miss electronic DJ music in great outdoor spots around the city. Most events take place during the daytime. Simply sit back in a deckchair, drink in hand and enjoy the music and atmosphere. Free entry.



PiKniK (Elektronik)

These gatherings in the parks of Brussels over the summer are ideal for enjoying a picnic in a green setting while listening to some electro sounds mixed by guests DJs. Every Sunday, weather permitting. City greenspots Parc Duden, Bois de la Cambre, Parc de Forest and Parc Royal are all on the programme.

From 23 July-22 September



Les Apéros LaVallée

The former laundry turned art space hosts free evening aperitifs with music by the house DJ soundsystem. There's a bar, barbecue and you can catch the gallery's latest art exhibition.

39 Rue Adolphe Lavallée, Molenbeek

Sounds of summer

Best music spots in Brussels

The music in Brussels never stops, even if most of the city's concert halls shut up shop for the holidays. There are several music festivals spread across the capital in August and, of course, its bars and clubs keep the beat until *la rentrée* in September.



Brussels Summer Festival

With its two massive open-air stages for international headliners and just as many club stages for local bands, Brussels Summer Festival is the biggest city music festival. Highlights of this 15th anniversary edition of BSF include British pop-rock singer Peter Doherty, French alt-rock veterans Louise Attaque and legendary Belgian underground rock group La Muerte.

5-14 August

Multiple venues

Classissimo

Chamber music festival Classissimo began life in 2007 as a BSF bonus programme before going solo last year. Now a fully autonomous event, it hosts 17 classical ensembles across seven evenings in the Théâtre Royal du Parc. A visit to the beautiful 18th-century edifice is alone worth the price of admission.

4-13 August

Royal Park, Centre

Boterhammen in het Park

The Parc de Bruxelles is also the site (and namesake) of the series Boterhammen in het Park, organised by concert venue Ancienne Belgique in collaboration with the Flemish cultural authorities. Boterhammen boasts five free lunchtime performances by some of Flanders' top pop, rock and folk artists — the perfect soundtrack for a picnic.

22-26 August

Royal Park, Centre

Feeërieën

Feeërieën, also organised by the AB and held in the Parc de Bruxelles, is for folks who take their music seriously. The multi-day festival promotes underground artists from around the world. Genres range from jazz (Chassol) to world music (Imarhan) to left-field electronic music (Visionist).

22-26 August

Royal Park, Centre





Voce & Organo Festival

A few blocks away, the Sablon district's Voce & Organo Festival turns 20 this year. The event celebrates Italian baroque music with the aid of Notre Dame de la Chapelle's impressive Renaissance-style organ and several international choirs.

17-27 August

Sablon area, Centre

Music Village

Brussels' bars and clubs are also humming with live music during the summer months. Music Village takes its name seriously. Every week the centrally located jazz club invites a new Belgian or international artist for a five-night stand (Tuesday to Saturday). Visitors can enjoy dinner or simply sip cocktails while the band plays.

50 Rue des Pierres, Centre

La Machine

Just blocks away, Saint-Géry's newest establishment La Machine proposes free, near-nightly live entertainment from jazz to rock to reggae to electronica. The steampunk-themed bar opened its doors this year and has fast proven itself a valuable addition to the musical landscape.

2 Place Saint-Géry, Centre



Café Central

Neighbouring Café Central has for years been a scene fixture. The late-night hangout puts on one live concert and a handful of DJ sets each week. Artists are picked from the alternative end of the musical spectrum.

14 Rue Borgval, Centre

Chaff

Then there's Chaff. Like the flea market it faces, this cosy neighbourhood café is the place to find stuff you never knew you wanted, until you saw, or heard it. Chaff's sporadic but lovingly curated programme features touring indie bands you've probably never heard of but are well worth the detour. It's a treasure trove of musical discoveries throughout the summer.

21-22 Place du Jeu de Balle, Centre

Under the lens

Contemporary photo in Bozar and beyond

Summer of Photography, the jewel in Brussels' cultural crown this summer, spotlights international urban photography. Every two years the city's leading arts centre, Bozar, stages a major reflection on contemporary photography in a sweeping multi-venue event.

This season is no exception, with exhibitions and events extending beyond the walls of Bozar to museums and galleries across the city, involving 30 partners and more than 65 artists. The event focuses on the relationship between people and space in the unifying theme Urban Vibes.

Open Space/Secret Places

Two years ago the biennial examined gender in a collaboration with Austrian electricity company Sammlung Verbund, which specialises in feminist and public space art from the 1970s. Bozar repeats the successful partnership in the event's central exhibition. Curator Gabrielle Schor selected works by 27 of the international collection's artists, who each employ varying techniques to explore people and space. Many of them are in-depth and highly personal works that blur the lines between contemporary art and architecture.

They are divided into four categories: Historic, which records changing landscapes and memory; Psychological, confronting individual personal fears and aspirations; Spaces in between, signifying an absence of human beings; and Creating spaces, site-specific installations.



In the historical group, German conceptual art duo Bernd and Hilla Becher show their rigorous study of industrial architecture in single images of gas tanks, each one photographed from the same angle, lending the soaring structures a sculptural quality.

In the psychology section, Brazilian Ernesto Neto's installation is a disturbing interpretation of the relationship between the conscious and unconscious. In a tribute to Freud and Vienna, Neto has created two cubes out of mosquito net-style material, one positioned within the other and connected via lycra tubes. In the cage-like interior, a model rocking chair sits atop a stack of books, adorned by a cloth figure, similarly connected to the cube via tubes. Stones lie scattered on the floor, apparently taken from the Sigmund Freud Park in Vienna.

Day your lane! Lagos Variations

How people live together in cities is a burning issue in the biennial's second flagship exhibition, a contemporary snapshot of the energetic Nigerian capital. Lagos is currently undergoing a population explosion, and this is predicted to continue to rise. After the stark vision of urban spaces, this exhibition





is initially an onslaught on the senses: colourful images hang from the ceiling like banners, while prints of photos are pasted to the walls, equally of larger-than-life scenes. For curator Azu Nwagbogu, the show “brings the energy of Lagos”, and explores “the real concern for public space versus the space reserved for the privileged”.

The title of the exhibition is an expression that translates as “mind your own business”, an example of the notion of individuality that equally characterises the city and economic hub. It has stimulated creative energy in fields other than art, such as music, fashion and film. A total of 24 African and international artists show the multiple facets of the city, divided into three sections.



Other shows at Bozar

Among other exhibitions under the Summer of Photography umbrella, **Vincen Beeckman – The Gang**, is a result of the Flemish photographer’s descent on unlikely places in urban Brussels with a ‘gang’ of amateur photographers. Israeli filmmaker Amos Gitai signs off a series on the 1995 death of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in **Chronicle of an Assassination Foretold**. It is also the subject of his latest film Rabin, the Last Day.

On the roof of Bozar, a **Lighthouse for Lampedusa** is an installation by German Thomas Kilpper. The symbolic seven metre makeshift structure is made from the debris of refugees’ vessels as they disembarked on European shores. It serves as a reminder that for many the search for a new place or territory is also a story of survival. Kilpper hopes to eventually build a real lighthouse on the Italian island of Lampedusa.



Around Brussels

Other notable exhibitions across the city include **The Suffering of Light**, a retrospective of US photographer Alex Webb’s work at Le Botanique. The Magnum agency member questions the notion of borders in dramatic, colourful images of Mexico, Haiti, Caribbean and Latin America. In **(Velo)cities** at De Markten, an examination of time and motion in urban spaces provides a vision of the future of cities, with works by Hungarian, Czech Republic, Slovakian and Polish artists.

Summer of Photography also offers a programme of activities, including concerts, talks and guided tours. On Thursdays, exhibitions are open until 21.00. End the evening atop the roof bar and enjoy your favourite tippie while admiring a panoramic view of the city.

*Until 4 September,
Bozar and other locations*

Playtime

Summer activities for kids

Gone are the days when museums meant dusty glass cases stuffed with animals. Bright, modern and child-friendly, nearly all now offer holiday activities - including the **Architecture Museum, Wiels, Cinematek** and the **Musical Instrument Museum**. Until 28 August, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences presents **WoW** (Wonders of Wildlife) - a series of amazing freeze frames made by taxidermists, allowing you to get up close and personal with animals you might have previously only seen in nature documentaries on TV.



Touring the world for the past seven years, the **Harry Potter exhibition's** first stop in Brussels is one of the most eagerly awaited summer kids events in the city. The interactive exhibition features scenes from the Harry Potter films, such as Hogwarts School, Hagrid's Hut and the Gryffindor common room, in addition to thousands of authentic props, costumes and creatures that were used in the film series. Reserve a slot in advance to avoid a long wait at the door.

*Until 11 September, Palais 2, Brussels Expo,
Place de Belgique 1, €15-€20*

Cool down with a splash around at **Océade**, a great outdoor water park for the family. With 14 slides, indoor and open-air pools, Océade has something to entertain everyone. Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays in September.

3 Avenue du Football, Heysel

While you're in the area, **Mini-Europe** is a fun theme park showcasing miniature landmarks from countries across the EU, from Big Ben and the Eiffel Tower to Vesuvius and the Parthenon. On Saturdays from 6-20 August, the park lights up for late-night opening with musical fireworks at 22.30.

Enjoy a trip to the beach without leaving the city. Inspired by the beach on the River Seine in Paris, Brussels transforms the banks of the canal into a real urban beach called **Bruxelles les Bains** with 3,000 tonnes of sand from the North Sea coast, straw huts, palm trees and lounge chairs. Play a game of beach volleyball, cool off under the fountains, or run amok in the secure Kids Zone for ages three to 12 which is open and monitored every day from 12.00-20.00. There are also concerts for teens every Wednesday afternoon, dance workshops and, on the weekend of 6-7 August, a chance for children to make sand sculptures.

Until 7 August, Quai des Péniches, Centre





One of Brussels' biggest and oldest summer events, the **Foire du Midi** is a massive funfair that has set up along the streets near Brussels Midi station since 1880. With 130 diverse attractions, from traditional fairground games to the very latest rides, this is a great day or evening out for the family.

Until 21 August, Boulevard du Midi

The fourth edition of the **Brussels Games Festival** takes over the Cinquantenaire park in the EU district for two days of board-game fun. Hundreds of games are available to share, for children and adults alike.

27-28 August, free

Brussels has a rich tradition in puppet theatre (for adults and children alike) dating back to the 16th century. **Guignolet dans le Parc** is just one event helping to keep that tradition alive, with 50 marionette shows to keep the kids entertained throughout the summer holidays.

Until 31 August, Parc Royal

Also in the Royal Park this summer, enjoy four days of street theatre, music and activity workshops – **Théâtres Nomades** is a packed programme of 30 shows, some in the open air, others under specially set-up marquees.

18-21 August, Parc Royal

Last but not least, check what your local area has to offer in terms of creative and sports workshops for children over the summer. All 19 districts of Brussels put on special activities for pre-schoolers to teenagers. If your child speaks French, see the programme at **bruxellestempslibre.be** - and for Dutch-speakers it's **www.sportinbrussel.be**.

On the cocoa trail

Meet Brussels' alternative chocolate-makers

You can't visit Brussels without treating yourself to some of the finest chocolate in the world. Belgium has elevated the craft to an art form and its capital is choc-a block with stores devoted to the dark delight.



There are shops galore: in the airport, at train stations and in nearly every narrow street surrounding the Grand Place. Many of the country's connoisseur brands fills the pretty Sablon squares, among them, the inventor of the praline and ballotin chocolate boxes, **Neuhaus**. Royal warrant holder **Wittamer** also has a luscious boutique here, as does the pioneer of modern chocolate making, **Pierre Marcolini**. Venture a little further into the city, though, and you'll discover some of the growing army of artisan master chocolatiers.

Frederic Blondeel

Blondeel epitomises bean to bar manufacture. A self-proclaimed cocoa bean roaster extraordinaire, he combines traditional and modern techniques, to create sublime artisan chocolate. His range of products includes ten different single origin chocolate bars, a wide selection of pralines – from fruit and spice to authentic seashells – as well as couverture bars for cooking, cocoa powders and spreads. Blondeel's Dansaert quarter shop doubles as a tempting tearoom.

24 & 36 Quai aux Briques, Centre
32 Rue de la Paille, Sablon

Benoît Nihant

A commercial engineer by profession, Nihant is a successful self-taught chocolatier. His career change was motivated by a passion to make high-quality innovative chocolates and conviction that the country was over-reliant on its chocolate-making reputation. Now forging an empire with stores and workshops around the country, he also supplies and collaborates with some of Belgium's most famous gastronomic restaurants. Nihant's hand-crafted artisan creations are small square dipped in chocolate in the French production style rather than moulded as is frequent in Belgium. Flavours are infused with subtle additions, such as spices, nuts, herbs and seasonal products. There are no artificial additives and the base chocolate, seven times more expensive than the Callebaut product that serves most chocolatiers, is sourced from a secret supplier in France.

506 Chaussée de Waterloo, Ixelles
1359G Chaussée de Waterloo, Uccle
(open beginning August)



Jean-Philippe Darcis

He may be famed for his macaroons, but Darcis' chocolates are no less delicious. Among the distinctive flavourings is a milk chocolate praline imbued with Belgian Owl whisky, a speciality of Darcis' home region of Liège. His patisserie is equally impressive. Darcis, who is expanding his confectionary empire into Asia, is an advocate of sustainable cocoa bean production.

40 Rue au Beurre, Centre

Laurent Gerbaud

The Brussels confectioner's speciality is fusing fruit and chocolate, in a mouth-watering range of deceptively simple yet delicious combinations. The accent is on top-quality ingredients which extends to his house blend of chocolate. Gerbaud is also on a mission is to "open people's eyes and palate", via an appreciation course in which you taste 12 different chocolates. It's coupled with a lesson in making mendiants – slim chocolate slabs topped with a selection of nuts and dried fruit. Gerbaud runs the workshops from his shop, cafe and atelier, in the Mont des Arts area of the city. When not overseeing production, sales and marketing, he sells his wares at Boitsfort market every Sunday, meets fellow gourmands for chocolate pairings, attends fairs and serves as a chocolate ambassador abroad. And the workshops? "I may have done this 100 times, but it's still fun," he says. Workshops for individuals every Saturday, €35pp. Group bookings and teambuilding events via Itinéraires tours. In English or French; translators available for other languages.

2D Rue Ravenstein, Centre



Other chocolate workshops

From professional classes to fun workshops, chocoholics can discover tricks of the trade from the country's top chocolatiers.

Zaabär

Taste the products and have a go at making your own confectionery at this artisan factory on Chaussée de Charleroi, near Place Stéphanie. The speciality is spice, with flavours from exotic places. Suitable for children seven and up.

Planète Chocolat

There are workshops at this artisan chocolate maker in Rue du Lombard, near the Grand Place. Plus demonstrations, tours and teambuilding events.

Choco Story

Learn about the history of chocolate, taste samples and watch demonstrations at this museum dedicated to the sweet stuff in central Brussels. Guided tours are available.

Exciting exhibitions

Four shows you cannot miss!

Summertime is no cultural desert; here in Brussels there's a clutch of must-see exhibitions pulling in the crowds. Here's our pick of the best art currently on show in the capital. From modern and avant-garde, to classic and realist, we've got your next art outing sorted. Don't forget, tourists and expats can benefit from a special promotion with Brussels Card.



Facing the Future. Art in Europe 1945-68

In addition to the outstanding **Summer of Photography** biennial, the city's flagship arts centre stages a pioneering exhibition by artists from Europe and the former Soviet Union. Many of the 200 works have rarely been seen before and together they throw new light on a critical period in modern art. Among the 150 artists, there are familiar names such as Picasso, Léger, Dubuffet, Appel, Moore, Sutherland, Broodthaers and Freud and a host of lesser-known artists, particularly from Eastern Europe and Russia. It was thought that the latter produced only totalitarian art, but here's the proof that avant-garde movements were enjoying a resurgence as in the West. For the first time, it is possible to see that artists followed similar paths. The exhibition is divided chronologically into six sections, from the end of the war, plunging visitors into that dark period via symbolic images of death and destruction. This gave way to widespread shame and mourning, the backdrop of the Cold War, towards new realisms and idealisms as the threat of nuclear war and exploration into space. This is part of Bozar's 2016 thematic, Power of the Avant-Garde, serving as a fascinating and insightful prelude to two major group exhibitions coming up in the autumn.

*Until 25 September,
Bozar, 23 Rue Ravenstein,*

Photorealism. 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Painting

Shining a light on the genre developed by post-war American artists in the wake of Pop-Art, this show pursues these visual critics of US consumerism. It follows the success of an exhibition of hyperrealist sculpture by Duane Hanson. Back in 1963, Robert Bechtle was one of the first to come up with a work that would later be dubbed "photorealist". The work of the first generation of photorealists took the form of distinctive still lifes produced in the US after the Second World War. The consumer society was flourishing and in their canvases, artists depicted skyscrapers reflected in gleaming Chryslers. The curator of the current exhibition, Otto Letze, has divided the 34 artists on show into three generations. In the 'third generation', European artists dominate, including the Italian painter Roberto Bernardi, whose dozens of compositions depicting sugary sweets that are difficult to distinguish from photographs. The Dutch artist Tjalf Sparnaay learned the tricks of the trade as a designer of picture postcards. His lifelike fried egg and hamburger look too good to eat, while his modern version of Vermeer's milkmaid is a





similarly memorable image. His Fleamarket Milkmaid seems to be covered with a shiny layer of plastic, as if you had bought a wrapped reproduction at a flea market. "I want to impress someone with what he already knows; then you're a conjurer with paint, with illusion," says Sparnaay.

Until 25 September,

Musée d'Ixelles, 71 Rue Jean Van Volsem, Ixelles

Andres Serrano. **Uncensored Photographs**

American artist Andres Serrano brings his provocative brand of photography to Brussels. Serrano's irreverent, decades-long exploration of religion and excrement has earned him a reputation as an 'enfant terrible' of the art world. Uncensored Photographs is a retrospective of his entire career, including controversial works that have in the past been banned, vandalised or otherwise attacked. This exhibition proves that freedom can't be censored. The museum does warn, however, that "some images may be disturbing" and are quarantined in a separate room.

Until 21 August,

Royal Museum of Fine Arts,

3 Rue de la Regence, Centre



100 Masters

One hundred exceptional works of art are on show in 41 museums across the capital for precisely 100 days. The campaign is aimed at locals, expats and tourists to promote hidden treasures in the city's permanent museum collections. Some 500 artworks were shortlisted and shown to a jury of cultural, tourism and art experts. The final selection - ranging from ancient to contemporary - include the Fall of the Rebel Angels by Bruegel, Juanma Gonzalez' painted shoes, a remarkably elaborate south Indian shadow puppet, the complete letters between Rimbaud and Verlaine during their Belgian stay, a Merovingian drinking horn, Jacques-Louis David's The Death of Marat, Jan Fabre's ballpoint pen mural L'Heure Bleue and an Ndop statue of a king from the Congolese Kasai region. Visitors are invited to vote for their favourite masterpiece via **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **Instagram** and **www.100masters.brussels**. Tours for adults and children; in different languages on specific countries' national days; speed dates in various museums, slow art and apéro tours.

Until 27 August,

Multiple venues across Brussels

Eating out

Fresh, organic, slow and world cuisine

In addition to gastronomic, brasserie and regional specialities, Brussels' chefs are happy to explore new eating trends that reflect the city's melting-pot cultures. From the slow food movement, communal tables, to the best local (often organic) products at reasonable prices, you'll find a wealth of new places providing fresh, innovative cuisine in a relaxed, very social atmosphere. Here are some of our favourites.



🍴 Les Filles

Based in a four-storey 19th-century townhouse in the Dansaert area in central Brussels, a grand staircase leads up to large dining rooms furnished with communal tables, and bathed in light from ample windows with a view of a landscaped pond. One-price lunch, brunch or dinner of lovingly produced locally sourced food. Peaceful and invigorating at the same time. The address includes a concept store and cooking class atelier.

46 Rue du Vieux Marché aux Grains, Centre

🍴 Mo Mo

Momos are delicious Tibetan/Nepali dumplings made with wheat flour and various fillings served steamed, fried or in broth, and until recently not easily available in Europe. Lhamo has brought them to Brussels in her small but airy restaurant where she serenely oversees her staff of Tibetan women who are former political prisoners. They make the dumplings to order. Communal or counter seating.

27 Rue Defacqz, Ixelles

🍴 Mer du Nord/Noord Zee

Once only known to locals, the fish shop's original Sainte-Catherine street corner counter location serves the freshest seafood as gourmet street food prepared on-the-spot – grilled fish and prawns, fried calamari and scampi, seafood sandwiches, burgers and a new oyster bar. For a quick snack, order the Kibbeling, handmade fish sticks with the best fresh ingredients, deep fried to order and served with homemade tartar sauce. Closed July 17-August 8.

45 Rue Sainte-Catherine, Centre

62-64 Rue du Luxembourg, Centre

🍴 King Kong

A trendy Peruvian joint serving a limited but finger-licking fast-food menu. Choose a hot or cold sandwich – the hamburger and chicken mayonnaise come highly recommended – and opt for a side such as the yuca chips or mixed bean salad. If you're there around lunchtime, go for the rotisserie chicken, with potato salad and apple sauce. Enjoy the jungle interior!

125 Rue de Livourne, Ixelles





YOI Henri & Agnès

Located in a townhouse in the European quarter; you order on the ground floor then make your way up to the terrace on the fifth floor to enjoy your meal with a view. Organic produce turned into innovative but subtle dishes: beetroot mousse with pomegranate, cauliflower, turmeric and almond soup – not to mention some fabulous desserts.

48 Rue Véronèse, Centre

YOI Yeti

Egg and pancake breakfasts with all the trimmings, and for lunch, naan stuffed with a wide variety of ingredients including tahini, mustard and chive sauce, caramelised Belgian endive, radicchio or dried mango.

4-6 Rue du Bon Secours, Centre

YOI Au Bon Bol

If you are a noodle fan and you are familiar with the wonder of freshly handmade Chinese noodles, then you've come to the right place. Most days of the week you can watch the chef, Mr Wu, stretching the dough as he makes noodles. Large servings at very reasonable prices.

9 Rue Paul Devaux, Centre

YOI Eat Brussels! Drink Bordeaux!

In the peerless setting of the Royal Park, dozens of top Brussels chefs will be offering their signature dishes which you can sample while using your wine pass to taste the magnificent array of wines the Bordeaux region has to offer. Participate in workshops or just stroll among the gourmet stands and discover products from the best European craftsmen and confectioners.

8-11 September, Royal Park, Centre

YOI European Canteen

This initiative consists of 70 modular tables that will regularly move around this summer in seven public spaces in the European quarter. The aim is to invite tourists, Europeans and Bruxellois to share a table for a drink, a lunch and a conversation. Participate in a BBQ or simply share sandwiches, but most importantly, meet people.

Closed in August.

Go green

Gardens and parks, on foot and on bike

One of Europe's greenest cities, Brussels is perfect for urban walks, bike rides and weekend runs. The city is dotted with parks and gardens, ranging from the ancient beech forest on the edge of the city to tiny pockets of urban green hidden behind apartment buildings. The city's natural resources are mapped out on a useful **Brussels Gardens** app, so you can easily track down urban green spaces, wildlife spots and plant life in your neighbourhood.

The easiest way to discover the wild side of Brussels is to pick up a **Villo** rental bike at one of 350 docking stations across the city. Traffic in Brussels can be a problem, so urban cyclists need to plan routes that follow quiet side streets and avoid the busy boulevards. But you can avoid almost all the traffic by following the **Promenade Verte/Groene Gordel** – a 60km bike and walking route that runs through quiet parks and woods on the edge of the city.

For inspiring bike adventures in Brussels, check out the monthly video reports on the urban cycling blog **The Ride Life**. The cool young cyclists behind this blog create routes that take you off the beaten track to discover quirky shops, pop up bars and local restaurants.

You can also explore Brussels on foot following one of the three walking trails that form part of the **Grandes Randonnées** long-distance network. These walking trails take you through quiet streets and leafy parks. You can pick up GR guides in the map shop **Anticyclone des Acores**, or just follow the red-and-white route markers posted along the way. The organisation **Trage Wegen** has gone one step further and mapped out all the slow routes for walking in



the city. You can use its online maps to discover thousands of meandering routes across town.

For those who want to burn off some serious calories, there are three forest running trails that start near the **Forêt de Soignes** sport centre, or you can sign up for a **Brussels Sight Jogging** tour to see the city at a gentler pace.

The city's biggest parks are hubs of activity in the summer, with food trucks, concerts and playgrounds. It's worth checking out **Parc Josaphat** in Schaerbeek, where you find a mini golf course, an archery range and the restored **Buvette St Sebastiaan** tavern, run by the people behind **Brasserie de la Senne** beers.

Brussels is now working on a plan to revitalise canalside districts and create more activity on the water. You can discover this hidden district on a **Brussels by Water** boat tour on Sundays or plan your own bike ride along the canalside cycle path.

As part of Brussels' busy summer party season, don't miss **Bruxsel Jardin** - electronic DJ music in great outdoor spots around the city. Most events take place during the daytime. Simply sit back in a deckchair, drink in hand and enjoy the music and atmosphere. Free entry.

Finally, **PiKniK (Elektronik)** is a series of gatherings in the parks of Brussels over the summer - ideal for enjoying a picnic in a green setting while listening to some electro sounds mixed by guests DJs. Every Sunday, weather permitting. City greenspots **Parc Duden**, **Bois de la Cambre**, **Parc de Forest** and **Parc Royal** are all on the programme.

From 23 July-22 September

Brussels Card

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Accompanying the card, is a booklet with discounts for various attractions, tours, shops, restaurants and bars. These discounts are for single use only, but they remain valid even after the Brussels Card has expired.

What to Remember

- As a general rule, it's not a good idea to buy a Brussels Card for children below the age of 12. Children get discounts at most museums and attractions (often free access for children up to five years and free access or discounts of up to 50 percent for children between 6 and 12 years old). Students often benefit from special fees at museums and attractions on presentation of their student card
- Most of the museums are closed on Monday

To obtain a **25% discount on your Brussels Card**, print this voucher and present it at one of the **visit.brussels** tourist offices:

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What's new?

Discover the latest additions to Brussels' museum scene

In the past year, three new museums have joined the capital's cultural landscape. From the history of trains, to retro plastic and contemporary visual arts, they each contribute to the artistic and social fabric of Brussels. Located in Schaerbeek, Heysel and Molenbeek, each of these sites is an opportunity to explore beyond the city centre.

Train World

This is an engaging journey through almost two centuries of train travel, from the early steam engines to the sleek international models that now whisk us around the continent. It begins in the ticket office, light, airy and beautifully preserved. Models of old engines in glass cases satisfy the genuine train buff, while a collection of uniforms and adverts make for an interesting diversion into social history. Visitors then head outside, along the station platform and through a turnstile into a giant shed, bursting with magnificent steam engines and a lovingly restored station worker's cottage from the 1950s. An atmospheric hall full of ticking clocks illustrates the fact that the railways were responsible for the standardisation of time in Belgium. Throughout, there are reminders that the story of the railways is also a story about people. There are recollections from characters such as the little boy who used to catch "Tommy the train" to town with his grandmother, or the son of the railway worker rocked to sleep each



night by the sound of passing trains. The dark shed opens out into an airy, split-level gallery, with vast windows overlooking the tracks where the trains of today whizz past. Step into a luxury wagon-lit with its opulent dining car, or have a go at driving a train in one of the simulators. The visit ends with a cinematic vision of the railway of the future, in seats taken from the first-class carriages of Thalys, ICE, Eurostar and Japan's Shinkansen trains. Audio guides and information panels are in four languages, while children can follow an interactive comic strip as they play the role of a cartoon hero, with a little surprise at the end. The splendid scenography of the museum was designed by Belgian comic-strip artist François Schuiten. Schaerbeek is a natural home for the museum. It is the oldest station in Belgium still in its original state and is on the oldest stretch of track in the first country in mainland Europe to have a railway.

*Open Tues-Sun; ticket office closes at 15.30
Schaerbeek Station, 5 Place Princesse Elisabeth*





ADAM (Art & Design Atomium Museum)

This temple to art and design is set up in a former wholesale market and furniture store next to the unmissable silver spheres of the city landmark. Fittingly, it possesses distinct design features of its own with an eye-catching entrance that include a red and yellow scaffolding-style staircase and some striking plastic statues in the outside gardens. The interior is all understated industrial design. It boasts a permanent exhibition, the Plasticarium, a collection of plastic objects bought from enthusiast Philippe Decelle. It includes riotously-coloured items from the golden age of plastic in the 1960s, Pop Art and the postmodern era. In total, the museum offers 2,000 plastic items, from art objects via design to everyday utility objects. The temporary exhibition space is dedicated to design and contemporary art. It also includes a children's lab where workshops will take place, a lecture programme, film and documentary screenings, guided tours, event rooms for hire, a shop and cafe.

Open Wed-Mon, Place de Belgique, Heysel



MIMA (Millennium Iconoclast Museum of Art)

A cutting-edge showcase of culture 2.0, MIMA is unique in Europe. While focusing on visual art, the museum aims to break down barriers between art and other creative worlds. It explores multidisciplinary art forms that have emerged in the internet era, from musical genres as diverse as punk, electro, hip hop and folk, to street and performance art, graphic design and extreme sports. Eight exhibition halls contain permanent and temporary exhibition space across three floors, while the fourth is reserved for workshops and a brasserie boasting panoramic views. Its first temporary exhibition, **City Lights**, runs until 28 August. It showcases five acclaimed American artists: Maya Hayuk, Swoon, Momo and Faile, the artistic partnership of post-punk pop artists Patrick McNeil and Patrick Miller. The museum is an icon; a highly-visible monument to the city's ability to reinvent itself. Occupying the former Belle-Vue brewery, a vast red-brick industrial building overlooking the Brussels-Charleroi canal in Molenbeek, it is conveniently located near the city centre. The old industrial site also houses the designer **Meininger Hotel**, a budget option for young travellers.

*Open Wed-Sun, 39-41 Quai du Hainaut,
Molenbeek-Saint-Jean*

The capital of Europe

Take a stroll around the EU quarter

How did a small city of one million people get to be a global political hub? You can try to figure this out for yourself on a gentle stroll through the European quarter where thousands of people work for EU institutions, lobby groups and law firms. It seems at first a forbidding neighbourhood dominated by busy roads and office buildings, yet there are interesting spots to discover along the way.



Begin your informal tour on the square that has become known as Piazza Schuman. The square is dominated by the glass and steel Berlaymont Building, designed in 1963 as the seat of the European Commission. Look for the information panels on the walls around the building that explain the steps that turned Brussels into the capital of Europe.

There is also a restored section of the Berlin wall on display in the esplanade. A portrait of US president JF Kennedy is painted on the 3,000kg, 3.6m high section. It was inaugurated in November 2015 to mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of the wall and reunification of Germany.

On the opposite side of the square is the pink marble European Council building named after the renaissance philosopher Justus Lipsius. This is where the 28 European leaders hold regular summits, although the action will soon move down

Rue de la Loi to the distinctive Europa building with its oval meeting hall and façade made from recycled window frames.

The main EU axis runs down the busy Rue de la Loi, but it's quieter to walk down the Rue Froissart that runs down the hill beside the Justus Lipsius building. A right turn at the Exki café leads to the Place Jean Rey where 24 hidden fountains spurt in the summer.

The square is slowly emerging as a café hotspot, with Frederic Nicolay's **Le Grand Central** bringing a cool industrial look to the neighbourhood (pictured, P24). The two-floor bar is open from early morning until late at night with a menu of good coffee, organic lunches and Belgian beers.





Now head across the road to the romantic Parc Léopold where a city zoo opened in 1850. It didn't last long, but you can still see the original entrance pavilions decorated with lion's heads. The site was turned into a science park in the early 20th century with impressive buildings dedicated to different scientific disciplines. The former George Eastman Dental Institute, just inside the park, is soon to reopen as a House of European History.

Now check to see if the organic waffle bike **Le Petit Nuage** is parked in the neighbourhood. The friendly owner Yoan has a favourite pitch next to the pond in the Parc Léopold where he tempts local office workers and kids with the smell of fried waffle sticks. He also sells organic ice cream on the hottest days.

Keep on walking to the top of the hill, where a hidden footpath curves around the steel and glass walls of the European Parliament. This is where the EU's 751 MEPs hold most of their sessions (when they are not meeting in Strasbourg). You can sit in the parliament's public gallery to follow debates, or find out more about how the EU works in the **Parlamentarium** information centre.

You can end the walk in one of the cafés outside the parliament building. One of the best is **Karsmakers**, a bright modern coffee bar with a lively European ambience. If the sun is out, you can sit under the trees in the hidden back garden to reflecting on the astonishing transformation of Brussels from a quiet Belgian capital to a global power hub.

In style

Art Nouveau and Art Deco sightseeing in Brussels

Dotted around Brussels are some spectacular Art Nouveau and Art Deco buildings. The city's love affair with brave new architecture began in the 1890s when architects such as Victor Horta and Paul Hankar launched the Art Nouveau movement. There are still some 500 intact Art Nouveau buildings including department stores, cafes and private houses. Their exquisite details still catch the eye as you wander through neighbourhoods such as Place Saint-Boniface and the Ixelles Ponds.

Less well known are the sleek Art Deco buildings that developed in the 1920s. Many striking apartment buildings have survived from this period, along with landmark Art Deco cultural hubs such as Bozar and Flagey.

It's easy to put together your own walking tour that takes in Art Nouveau and Art Deco highlights. But if you want some help, download the **Tales & Tours app** developed by **visit.brussels** which lists 42 key Art Nouveau and Art Deco buildings in the city, along with text, photos and maps.

You can also book a specialised architectural tour run by the urban action group **Arau**. These informative and often critical tours take you on foot through lively Art Nouveau neighbourhoods like Ixelles Ponds and the Marolles. The same organisation runs a fascinating bus tour on Saturday afternoons that allows you to see inside several sublime Art Nouveau buildings normally closed to visitors.

It's also worth checking out the programmes of art organisations **Arkadia** and **Itinéraires** for their informative architecture tours.



Should you have a burning desire to step inside one of these fabulous buildings, it's worth picking up a copy of the **Voir et Dire Bruxelles** programme from the tourist office. Their tours are focused on getting small groups inside landmark buildings normally only seen from the street.

Look out also for Voir et Dire's Victor Horta season for summer 2016, which offers five different one-hour tours inside the most striking Art Nouveau town houses in Ixelles. One tour allows you to step inside the gorgeous Max Hallet House where the highlights include a sweeping staircase and glass conservatory.

Another tour takes you behind the closed door of the sumptuous **Solvay House** built by Victor Horta for the rich industrialist Armand Solvay. One of Horta's earliest houses, it reveals the architect's attention to the smallest details, from the curve of a staircase to the design of the door handles.

You can also sign up for a tour of the Van Eetvelde House built for an administrator in Leopold II's Congo Free State, where Horta demonstrated his unique skill in combining glass, metal and wood.

The Voir et Dire programme also includes a sneak look inside the **Autrique House** in Schaerbeek. Built by Victor Horta in 1894, this early Art Nouveau house was restored as a museum by the Brussels comic book artist François Schuiten. It is currently closed for renovation work, but is open for groups.

Some Art Nouveau buildings can be visited without a guide, including the **Horta House** in St Gilles, built by Horta as a private home and studio, and the former Waucquez department store in central Brussels, which has been lovingly restored as the **Comic Strip Center**.



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Quench your thirst in Brussels with a local beer

If there's one thing the people of Belgium can agree on, other than the King and the Red Devils, it's beer. Beer is also the thing which has given this smallish country of 11 million souls a worldwide reputation. What's the best way to discover this world of beer for yourself?



Gueuze Museum

Brussels counts three fully-fledged breweries, but Cantillon is the biggest, the best known and the most unusual. The brewery in Anderlecht makes lambic, the sour beer produced with wild yeasts found only in the air of Brussels and the adjacent Pajottenland. Lambic is blended to make gueuze, and this brewery is also a museum, which conserves and demonstrates the special way lambic is made. And of course, there's a tasting after the tour.

56 Rue Gheude, Anderlecht

Brasserie de la Senne

Brasserie de la Senne was started in 2003, and arrived at its present home in Molenbeek in 2010. The two founders have a simple philosophy: they brew the beers they would like to drink themselves. That means fresh, hoppy and relatively low in alcohol. They now have an impressive range, including experimental brews and the occasional collaboration with visiting brewers. They don't do tours, but you can find their beers in any decent wholesaler, beer shop and favoured bars (list on website).

565 Chaussée de Gand, Molenbeek

Best beer tour

Organised beer tours are available, but Brussels city centre is so compact it's easy to do it yourself. And if you get tired or footsore, you can stop whenever you like and have another beer. Begin at **Délices et Caprices**, a beer shop on the Rue des Bouchers run by Pierre Zuber and his wife Ann. Pierre sells bottles of the best of Belgian beers, which you can take away or consume on the premises. He's also a font of knowledge, so if you don't know what you like, he'll advise you. Then move on to **Delirium Café**, which boasts the widest range of beers in the world (more than 3,000), and put your new-found knowledge to good use. From there, move on to **A la Bécasse**, a former staging post, which is one of the few cafes to serve pure lambic (rather than the blended gueuze). From there you can head to **Le Coq** and **Monk** on the other side of the pedestrian zone. Both are city-centre local pubs with an interesting selection of beers. The tour ends at **Chez Moeder Lambic**, famous for its range of taps, its guest beers from around the world, and its expert staff.





Belgian Beer Weekend

Belgian Beer Weekend takes place in September, with a special ceremony on Friday 2 September, followed by the opening of the Bar National behind the Stock Exchange (soon to become the Beer Museum) followed by the full festival on the Grand Place. The weekend continues on Saturday and Sunday. The participants represent a wide range of large, medium and small breweries from across the country. Nearby on 4 September, on Place De Brouckère at 18.00, you can see the arrival of the **Balloons Day Parade**, consisting of giant balloons in the shape of cartoon characters, which set off from Place des Palais at 14.00 to cross the centre of the city. And on 16-18 September, enjoy the traditional festivities of the **Ilot Sacré**, the restaurant quarter close to the Grand Place.



Seasonal beers for summer

Brewers are ready when the sun shines. The saison beer from Hainaut province (Saison Dupont) was originally brewed to quench the thirst of farm workers, and it's fresh, low in alcohol and a perfect session beer. White or wheat beer (such as Sint-Bernardus Wit) is another perfect drink for warmer weather. Further up the alcohol scale is Chimay Triple in the white-capped bottle, a lively and complex beer made to be savoured. Other beers perfect for a summer afternoon on a terrace or in the garden include St-Feuillien Grand Cru, Duvel Tripel Hop and, if you like the tartness of lambic, any Oud Gueuze/Gueuze à l'ancienne from Drie Fonteinen, Boon or Tilquin. Pro tip, from Duvel Moortgat beer ambassador Nicolas Soenen: don't chill your beer so much you lose all flavour. The ideal temperature for a blond beer is around 6-10 degrees, with darker beers served at cellar temperature – 10 to 14 degrees.



Brewdog

Brewdog pub opened in Brussels last autumn, in what used to be the Sabena passenger terminal for Brussels Airport, and is the latest addition to the worldwide empire of two crazy Scottish brewers. The place is enormous by Belgian standards, but it's the beers that are most impressive, with the full range of Brewdog products, and an excellent selection of guest Belgian beers. The staff is knowledgeable and friendly, and there's food available all day.

20 Putterie (Centre)

Explore Molenbeek

It's a lively commune full of history, colour and art

The cradle of the industrial revolution in Brussels, canalside Molenbeek is much maligned for its disaffected immigrant communities. Following Brussels' security concerns, the district has suffered in particular from negative publicity. But Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, to give the commune its full title, is a multi-faceted neighbourhood that is certainly not a no-go zone for tourists. From the vast meadow Scheutbos, to the Karreveld, a beautifully maintained 13th-century château-farm that stages outdoor theatre, to art centres such as the Institut Saint-Luc, La Raffinerie (an ex-sugar refinery that is now a performing arts mecca), La Vallée (an old laundry turned artist space) and the brand-new Mima museum, Molenbeek is open to visitors.



Brasserie de la Senne

Once home to more than 100 breweries, Brussels was down to just one in 2010 when the Brasserie de la Senne opened in Molenbeek and led the way for the gradual re-brewerisation of Brussels. Its beers such as Zinnebir, Taras Boulba and Jambe de Bois have caught on and four years later, the brewery is producing 8,000 hectolitres of beer annually (60% reserved for the Brussels market). The brewery, shop and café are open weekdays from 9.00-15.00.

565 Chaussée de Gand

MCCS

If you really want to experience the proliferation of art in Molenbeek, head for the MCCS (Maison des Cultures et de la Cohésion Sociale de Molenbeek), which, housed in a superb late 19th-century industrial building, is a 6,000m² space for courtyard movies projections, dance recitals, concerts, poetry, exhibitions, workshops and children's activities.

4 Rue Mommaerts

La Fonderie

A museum of industry and labour, La Fonderie occupies the romantically rundown site of a disaffected bronze foundry where many of the city's best known statues were made. The museum illustrates the working history of Brussels and collects objects, documents and oral history on the city's industrial past. It publishes a magazine, organises guided visits and fun children's activities.

27 Rue Ransfort

Les Apéros LaVallée

The former laundry turned art space hosts free evening aperitifs with music by the house DJ soundsystem. There's a bar, barbecue and you can catch the gallery's latest art exhibition.

39 Rue Adolphe Lavallée



Scheutbos

With 110 acres of forest, meadows and wetlands, this park offers an exceptional bio-diversity for an urban location. As well as the cows that still graze here, there are hedgehogs, hares, hawks, songbirds and a wide variety of flowers. From its hilltop location there's a sweeping view of the city and history buffs can imagine the scene in 1695 when the French army lined up its cannons along this ridge to devastate Brussels with Europe's first military attack on purely civilian targets, resulting in the almost complete destruction of the city centre.

Thursday market

The weekly market offers a riotous display of fruits and vegetables, but also spice stands with a huge variety of prepared olives and preserved fruit, as well as clothing, linens, cleaning products, kitchenware and other miscellanea. Winding its way from in front of the town hall through the streets to the square in front of Saint John the Baptist church, the market gives you the opportunity to visit this church, one of three concrete churches in Brussels. It was designed by Joseph Diongre, an architect who is best known for the Flagey building.

Thursday 8.00-13:00



Walking Tours

Molenbeek à la carte, a beautifully illustrated free publication available at most Brussels tourist information centres proposes two architectural tours of the neighbourhood. **Brukselbinnenstebuiten** is offering comprehensive tours of 'Old Molenbeek' aimed at visitors intrigued by the commune's new-found notoriety. Contemporary architecture in the canalside district is the subject of audio walking tours organised by **Archi-Audio**. The tour presents the evolution of urban renovation in the city and presents 12 architectural projects. There's a free download of the tour and map.

Zebrano

Housed in the old Whitbread Brewery buildings, Zebrano is prized for its exceptional setting and its menu of the month: four courses of reimagined classics made with fresh seasonal local products for €36 such as squid stuffed with goat cheese and pepper coulis, or cod filet with caramelised cucumbers and cherry and polenta sauce.

47 Rue de Rotterdam

Le Palais de Balkis

The first and only organic halal charcuterie, this restaurant/shop in an ultra-modern minimalist setting, sells sausages, salamis, and hams made from free range goat, mutton and beef, as well as quiches and other fine delicatessen products.

163 Chaussée de Gand

Head skywards

Seven panoramic views over Brussels

To truly appreciate your surroundings, it can be helpful to change perspective. For an alternative view of the city, take a lift, climb stairs, or take advantage of one of these lofty sites. From museums and national landmarks to the medieval Grand Place, here are a few tips for enjoying an urban vista.



1 MIM

Brussels' Musical Instrument Museum is an impressive art nouveau structure standing tall at the top of the Mont des Arts, with the gilded words "Old England" etched across its bow. Take the period lift up to the top floor for one of the best views over Brussels. Sit out on the sunny terrace and take in all of Brussels below, or find a seat at the glass-sided restaurant.

2 Rue Montagne de la Cour

2 Wiels

The Wielemans-Ceuppens brewery was once an institution, producing lager for the people of Brussels since 1888. Today, the site houses the contemporary art museum Wiels. The venue has recently acquired a new asset: a panoramic rooftop terrace with breathtaking views over the city. It's a great spot to enjoy the late-night openings on the first and third Wednesdays of the month - with performances, talks and drinks.

354 Avenue Van Volxem, Forest

3 Basilica of the Sacred Heart

The fifth largest church in the world, you'll see this vast Art Deco building with its copper domes from all over the city. For just €5 you can take the lift up to the viewing gallery, 52 metres above, for one of the most breathtaking views of Brussels.

1 Parvis de la Basilique, Koekelberg

4 City hall

For three days in August, the balcony of Brussels city hall opens to the public, offering an impressive view over the flower carpet and the Grand Place. The most reproduced photograph of Brussels the world over, the carpet is 75m long, 24m wide, composed of 600,000 begonias and assembled by 100 people in four hours.

*13-15 August, 10.00-22.00. Entry €5
Grand Place, Centre*





5 The Atomium

The Atomium is one of the most widely known landmarks in Belgium. At a height of 102m, it can be seen looming over Brussels from a distance and was built as the central feature of the World Fair of 1958. Visitors move through a cultural museum from sphere to sphere, and a super-fast lift carries you to the top sphere with its viewing gallery and restaurant offering an incredible 360-degree view of Brussels.

Avenue de l'Atomium, Heysel

6 Triumphal Arch

In Brussels' European quarter, you can't miss the beautiful Cinquantenaire park with a towering triple arch accessible via the Army Museum. From the top, there's a wonderful view of the park and the bustling streets below.

Etterbeek

7 Place Poelaert

It's hard to miss the Palace of Justice, a colossal building that dominates the Brussels skyline and the brainchild of architect Joseph Poelaert. The square outside the court buildings, which bears his name, provides one of the best vantage points in the city, looking out over downtown Brussels and as far as 15km to the west. This is also the meeting point for the Friday evening Rollerbike Parade (until 9 September) when streets are closed off for a procession of skaters and cyclists, who follow a different route each week.

Centre

Brussels design

In September, it's all about design!

Brussels Design kicks off again on 8 September: four weeks to indulge in ideas for contemporary living today. **Design September** is jam-packed with exhibitions, conferences, visits to workshops but also art galleries – all with a strong focus on the link between design and architecture. The agenda of the annual event is fantastic. Here are some highlights.



For the second time now, the Arts & Crafts route will focus on artisans in Brussels and their know-how. This sector, usually 'hidden' to the public, is alive and kicking in the capital. Craftsmen and women who specialise in tailor-made furniture will all be happy to welcome design enthusiasts into their workshops. Must-sees include the Niyona leather workshop, but also the studios and showrooms of designer Charlotte Lancelot of the NoMoreTwist label. On 17 and 18 September, the public is invited to join workshops for initiation in textile techniques such as embroidery and painting.

Also not to miss: self-edited objects by Boris Paternostre at the **UGC ArtBox** art gallery and the boutique workshop of Eric Beauduin. You'll be amazed by the results of the fruitful collaboration between this designer and plastic artist Cathy Croëz, which combines leather with ceramics.



Top exhibitions

The fourth edition of the Intersections biennial for contemporary art will team up with the CID of Grand-Hornu, presenting a selection of pieces that the Mons museum acquired over the past five years. They are showing at **ADAM** (Art & Design Museum), located next to the Atomium. At **Bozar** you'll find photos by famous designer Charlotte Perriand, tracing her travels in Japan.

Design lovers will discover the work of six young, emerging designers at **BIP** (Brussels Info Place), who had the honor of representing Belgium recently in Milan (Salone del Mobile 2016). In addition, 13 designers who created a collective business for the 2016 Milan Design Week will join forces again in the **Design Vlaanderen Gallery** during September.





Go and listen!

Three big-name designers have been invited to give a lecture at **Flagey**. The first is Eugeni Quitllet, from Barcelona, who has created furniture for Kartell, Lexon and Vondom. Mårten Claesson is a Swedish architect. In 1995, he co-founded the world-renowned Swedish architecture and design partnership 'Claesson Koivisto Rune' – a multidisciplinary agency in the purest Scandinavian tradition. In addition, there is Carlo Massoud, who gained a Master's degree in industrial design from the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts in Beirut in 2008. Among his key projects are The Autopsy Project, a 2015 collaboration with his sister, ceramist Mary-Lynn Massoud, and with Otto Du Plessis of Bronze Age Foundry and Andile Dyalvane of Imiso (Cape Town, South Africa).



International focus

The Brussels design weeks are zooming in on Polish design in an exhibition arranged as a living room, fitted neatly inside a shipping container with windows, at Brussels' Grand Place. This promises to be a fascinating dialogue between design and the square's flamboyant gothic monuments. The Czech Republic, for its part, will invite design enthusiasts to discover not only its gastronomy, but also tableware art, including glass, china, lighting.



In the city centre

Be sure to visit the exhibition by paper designer Laure Devenelle in the offices of Prisme Editions and **Second Life Festival** – a vintage market where you can buy jewelry, bags, accessories and posters at the renowned **Hôtel le Berger**.

Several contemporary art galleries have a design program scheduled. Piano Nobile Gallery, for example, presents The Forest of Lights, a duo installation by Nathalie Dewez & Kaspar Hamacher. There's also **HD Gallery**, which unites various designers working with wood and **LKFF Art & Sculpture Project**, where you'll love the solo show of Les Deux Garçons.

Definitely don't miss the **Design Market** at Tour & Taxis on 10 and 11 September. It's a unique opportunity to take home a one-off, vintage object.

A helping hand

Expert advice on day-to-day life in Brussels

Whether you're newly arrived or been here for years, sometimes you need help with the day-to-day practicalities of Brussels life. Last year, the Expat Welcome Desk helped more than 1,600 people solve problems with accommodation, residence permits, income tax and much more – making a bridge between the international community and the Belgian administration. Amélie Bovy (pictured), legal adviser at the Expat Welcome Desk for the past five years, explains more...



Who do you help?

It's mainly EU institutions staff, but we are open to anyone coming here; working for an international company, as a journalist, a lobbyist and so on.



What are the most common mistakes that new arrivals in Brussels make?

One is signing your rental contract too quickly, without knowing the law. The trap is to sign the standard nine-year lease when you only plan to stay in Brussels for two years. In that case you'll pay a penalty at the end. That is a big mistake that we see a lot of the time. We check the lease, explain the rules and the law, how to break the contract, how to get back your deposit, and how to deal with any dispute with the landlord. We do not act as a lawyer but we can guide and give a lot of advice.

The other mistake is to forget to bring important documents with you, or not getting them legally translated and certified. Trying to get paperwork from your home country afterwards costs a lot of time and money. There are 19 different communes in Brussels and the system for registering and getting a residence permit is not always the same. They're not supposed to speak English, which doesn't help. We intervene very often in this kind of process.



Is it just for people who are new in town?

We have people contacting us for any problem they face. You could get a fine for your car that you don't understand, or have a problem with your children's school. You might want to know how to get Belgian nationality. Even before the EU referendum in the UK we had people asking this question.





You must get all sorts of other questions?

We get questions relating to any matter, from how to import your car to finding a school and the social security system. We had someone who wanted to find out how to bring their cat with them to Brussels – so, yes, it can be very specific.



Do you see a big influx on new arrivals at certain times of the year?

For interns it's mainly September/October and February/March. For other staff it's really throughout the year. We do have rush periods, such as for the income tax return. We know that during May/June we will face several questions every day.



You help fix people's problems. But can you help prevent them in the first place?

People often try something themselves, and it's at the end that we attempt to solve the problem. It's sad because often it's gone too far. That's why we try to help people in advance, so they can avoid these problems – by knowing the situation, knowing the rules, knowing the law. That's what we do here: taking our time to explain.



Welcome Desk assistants Hélène Jacub and Annick De Bleser



How can people contact you?

We are easily reachable by phone. You can book an appointment to come and see us. Sometimes people just pop in, but as we are a small team, we recommend an appointment. And there are many questions that we deal with by email before people arrive in Brussels. We can give a lot of information by email. We speak English, French and Dutch – and the service is free and independent.

The Expat Welcome Desk reopens after a summer break on 16 August. Call 02.430.66.00, email info@commissioner.brussels or arrange an appointment at 63 Avenue d'Auderghem in the EU district.



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The Bulletin, Belgium's largest website for expats, attract newcomers, soon- to-be-arriving permanent or temporary foreign residents, tourists, cosmopolitan Belgians, the international community living & working in Belgium. As the first International Community oriented website to launch in Belgium (1998), Xpats.com & Thebulletin.be has grown into an interactive community for sharing information, deals, entertainment, references and contacts.

Our newsletters inspires over 18.000 subscribers daily or weekly with highlights from the news, top job ads and guides to living and working in Belgium. The Bulletin offers a daily reach that is unequalled by any. According to our most recent Analytics, we reach over 120.000 unique visitors every month.

Adding numerous publications such as Newcomer and Best of Belgium, The Bulletin is your best gateway to the international community in Belgium.

[More info on www.thebulletin.be](http://www.thebulletin.be)

ABOUT LIVING HERE

With over 250.000 expatriates in Belgium – many of them living close to Brussels – one would assume the country is an international resident's paradise. Unfortunately, as charming and surprising Belgium may be, the obstacles and challenges faced by new and current expats are numerous.

That's where Living Here comes in. Inspired by our partners and the editorial teams of The Bulletin, Xpats.com, Flanders Today, WAB and the other publications within the Ackroyd group, we decided it was time to create a place on the web with one prime directive: "To help expats settling and living in Belgium".



Living here
EXPAT GUIDES TO BELGIUM

So here it is, your spot for all things settling and living in the center of Europe. We hope you enjoy the website and it's many, many guides as much as we did creating them.

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