

Cycling Europe

HOLLAND MEETS BELGIUM

BIKE & BARGE AMSTERDAM - BRUGES or V.V.

8 DAYS/7 NIGHTS MS FLUVIUS OR MS GANDALF

Guided or Self Guided Cycling 2020



During this tour you will explore the most beautiful cities of Holland and West Belgium (Flanders): Amsterdam, Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges, where you can still feel the charm of the days long gone. After embarkation in Amsterdam you will cross through a beautiful part of the Netherlands. After a short cruise, you bike along the winding river Vecht with its impressive castles on its banks. You visit a real Dutch cheese farm and the 19 Dutch windmills in Kinderdijk. Via Dordrecht and the fortified town of Willemstad, the ship cruises through the "Delta" Province of Zeeland to Belgium. There we spend the night in Antwerp, the city of Rubens, whose paintings you can admire in the cathedral. You bike from Antwerp to Ghent along the beautiful tidal river, Lower Schelde. Your final destination is Bruges, the "Pearl of Flanders" with its picturesque medieval town centre.

TERRAIN

Easy flat cycling with distances up to 50kms.

ITINERARY: AMSTERDAM - BRUGES

The writing in blue italics is travelled by boat

Cycling is shown in green

Day 1 (Sat): *Amsterdam – Vianen* | **cycle Vianen**

Embarkation on board the MS Fluvius starts at 1.00pm. Around 2pm the barge sets sail to Vianen, a small fortified town on the river Lek, where you will spend the night. Here the bicycles will be distributed and you can enjoy a short bike ride.

Cycling: 5 - 15km



Day 2 (Sun): **Vianen – Schoonhoven – Kinderdijk** | *Kinderdijk – Dordrecht*

After breakfast you will cycle to Schoonhoven, known as the silver city, then through the Alblasserwaard to Kinderdijk. There an impressive row of 19 large windmills appear. From nearby Alblasserdam you will take the "Waterbus" (ferry), that will take you with your bike in approx. 10 minutes to Dordrecht, one of the oldest towns in Holland.

Cycling: 56km

Day 3 (Mon): *Dordrecht – Tholen* | **Tholen to Kreekrak lock** | *to Antwerp*

During breakfast the ship sails to Tholen. Then a bike tour through a forest area, "the Wouwse Plantage", via Bergen op Zoom, towards the south and the impressive Kreekraksluis (lock). The ship is docked at the end of the dam and from here it will sail through the impressive port of Antwerp to the city. Antwerp is not only known as the diamond city, but also as native city of painter Rubens. You will find some of his paintings in the "Onze Lieve Vrouwe (our lady) Cathedral". After dinner: a visit to the beautiful old city centre.

Cycling: 20 - 36km

Day 4 (Tue): **Antwerp – Temse – Dendermonde**



After breakfast you cycle out of the port to the Zeeschelde. You follow this beautiful but capricious tidal river upstream to Dendermonde. There is a beautiful bike path along the river, and the landscape around the Schelde is magnificent. You will cycle to Dendermonde, a friendly little town along the river.

Cycling: 48 or 64 km

Day 5 (Wed): **Dendermonde – Ghent**

From Dendermonde the bike tour follows again the river Schelde in the direction of Ghent. Ghent is a lively university city, again one with a rich past. The city's position at the junction of the rivers Leie and Schelde has meant it to be a major trading port since Roman Times. The textile industry brought great wealth. There are over 400 historical buildings, more than 100 churches, 18 museums and an opera house. A major attraction is St Bravo Cathedral, with



many masterpieces of medieval art, of which "Adoration of the Mystic Lamb" by Jan van Eyck is the most famous. The ship is docked at the lock in Merelbeke, a suburb of Ghent. **Cycling: 52 km**

Day 6 (Thu): Ghent – Bruges

Today cycle through the pleasant country side of Western Flanders to Bruges. Bruges, also called the Venice of the North, is maybe the most beautiful of all Flemish cities. Its old centre, which dates from the Middle Ages, is almost completely intact. Bruges was at that time a metropolis and center of commerce and art. You can still see this glory in the beautiful buildings. Bruges is a also a nice town for shopping or going out.

Cycling: 45km



Day 7 (Fri): Tour around Bruges to the North Sea

The last bike tour takes you to a quiet canal where you'll find lots of poplars. Cycle through an attractive polder

landscape with small farm houses to the North Sea coast. A 12 kilometer 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.

Cycling: 38 or 51km

Day 8 (Sat): Tour ends in Bruges

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- For both tours *the writing in blue italics* will be covered by the ship.
- On the arrival day it is possible to put your luggage on board **from 9:30 AM**.
- **The cycling is guided**, or you can choice to cycle individually, as tour description and maps are available on board. On some days you can choose between a short or long cycle.
- During the day the tour leader will cycle with you, and be your guide.
- Should you wish to take a break from cycling on any day, you are welcome to stay on board and relax while cruising to the next port.
- Guaranteed departures

2020 SCHEDULE

MS FLUVIUS

Amsterdam to Bruges

18 April; 02,16 & 30 May; 13 & 27 June; 11 & 25 July; 08 & 22 August; 05 & 19 September

Bruges to Amsterdam

25 April; 09 & 23 May; 06 & 20 June; 04 & 18 July; 01, 15 & 29 August; 12 & 26 September

MS GANDALF

Amsterdam to Bruges

11 July

Bruges to Amsterdam

26 September

2020 TOUR COST - EUROS PER PERSON

Twin Cabin Lower Deck	€ 1059
Twin Cabin Upper Deck (Fluvius)	€1259
Double Cabin Upper Deck (Fluvius)	€1359
Twin Cabin Lower Deck SINGLE use	€1559
Triple Cabin (Gandalf)	€1019

**** For departures on 18 April and 26 September DEDUCT €50 per person****

Bike Hire per week (7-speed)	€ 80
E-Bike hire (limited numbers)	€ 180
Helmet Hire	€ 10

Limitation of liability (damage) rental bike €10 per week

Limitation of liability (damage) electric bike €25 per week

NOTE: Prevailing winds often make cycling in the direction Bruges to Amsterdam easier.

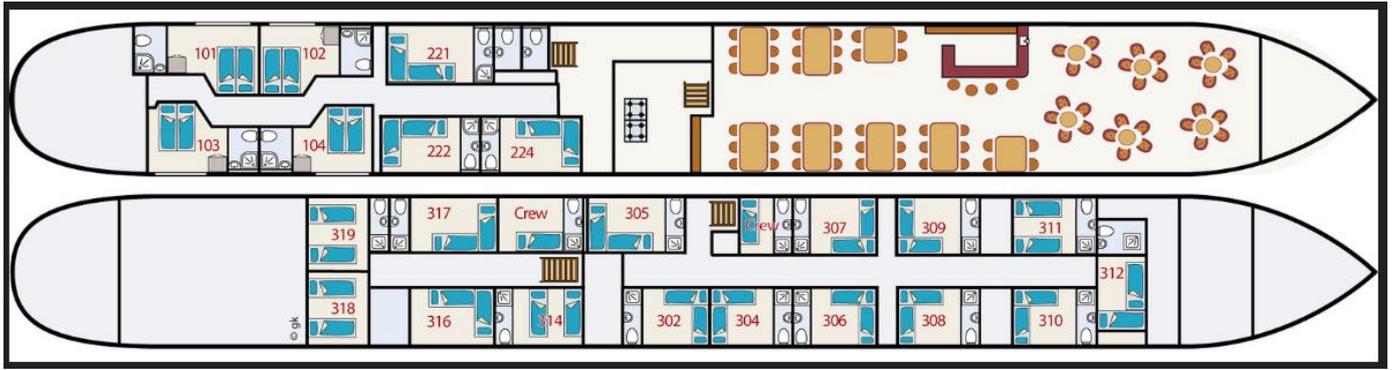
INCLUDED IN TOUR COST

- o Tour and accommodation on board 8 days / 7 nights on MS Fluvius
- o Full board – 7 breakfast, 6 picnic lunches and 7 three course dinners
- o Welcome drink and introduction on day of arrival
- o Tour leader (multilingual) with daily briefings of the bike tours, some short city tours, daily guided cycling.
- o Printed instructions and detailed maps
- o Fees for ferries/waterbus
- o Bed linen & towels
- o Daily short clean of cabin – Fluvius.
- o Daily coffee and tea during breakfast and after cycling tours until 4.00pm
- o Wi-Fi
- o GPS Tracks
- o Some short walking tours
- o Use of waterproof pannier bag

TOUR PRICE EXCLUDES

- o Transfers to/from the docking places in Amsterdam and Bruges
- o Bike rental
- o Entrance fees and excursions
- o Drinks on board
- o Insurance
- o Tips/Gratuities (at your discretion)
- o Helmets are not compulsory on this tour however we do recommend and can reserve one for you
- o Some special dietary requirements may have a surcharge, e.g. Gluten free €50/week to pay onboard. Currently there is no extra charge for Lacto-ovo Vegetarian (i.e. vegetarian that eats dairy & eggs), we will need to check again at the time of booking. Sorry, Vegan meals are not possible on this boat.

YOUR BARGE: MS FLUVIUS (Comfort)



The MS Fluvius offers space for a maximum of 44 guests and is 70m long. It sails under the Dutch flag and management, and has sailed in Holland and Belgium for many years.

There are a total of 22 cabins on board, with 15 two-bedded lower deck cabins (windows cannot be opened), 3 two-bedded upper deck cabins with picture window (cannot be opened) and 4 new

upper deck double/twin cabins with French balcony with opening sliding door. All cabins have an ensuite bathroom, TV and air conditioning that can be individually adjusted.

On the upper deck there is a tastefully furnished salon with restaurant, bar, and lounge. Partially covered sun decks have deck chairs, tables and recliners. The inside of ship is a no-smoking zone. Smoking is only allowed on the sun deck.



YOUR BARGE: MS GANDALF: (Standard) (10 cabins, Max. 22 passenger)

MS Galdalf is a small and comfortable river cruise 45m long. On board this cosy ship are 10 cabins (approx. 8 M²) all with own shower and toilet, 2 low beds and central heating. All cabin portholes can be opened. The salon is a large room for common use and is your restaurant area as well. On the two sun decks are sitting areas with tables and chairs plus a storage room for the bikes. Equipped with a double roof of solar panels, it runs for a great part on green energy! This is not only environment-friendly, but also comfortable for guests: since the ship hardly needs to use a generator to produce electricity. The nights are still and quiet on board. The interior of the ship is a no-smoking zone.



ITINERARY: BRUGES TO AMSTERDAM

The writing in blue italics is travel by boat - Daily cycle tour is shown in green

Day 1 (Sat): Arrival and embarkation in Bruges

Arrival and embarkation between 1.00pm and 2.00pm. in the beautiful city of Bruges, also called "Pearl of Flanders". Bicycle fitting and short test ride in the countryside around Bruges. You will have plenty of time to discover the beautiful historical city of Bruges. After dinner there will be a city tour in Bruges.

Day 2 (Sun): Bruges – Ghent (57 kms)

Today, your day starts on the water and the barge will leave Bruges early. Just outside, your first bike tour to Ghent via the flat land of West-Flanders will start. Your destination today is the historical centre of Ghent. Enjoy beautiful Ghent during an afternoon stroll. The barge is docked in Merelbeke (a small suburb of Ghent).

Day 3 (Mon): Ghent – Dendermonde (40 kms)

Today, the barge will sail from Schelde to Dendermonde, a friendly town on the junction of the rivers Dender and Schelde. The bike tour leads along one of the most beautiful parts of the Schelde, a tidal river. Dendermonde has a beautiful town hall located in the main square, an ideal place for a drink after your ride!

Day 4 (Tue): Dendermonde – Antwerp (48 or 63 kms)

Today we will follow the Schelde further downstream over Baasrode and Temse to Antwerp. There is a beautiful cycling track along the river with magnificent scenery. Antwerp is well known as a major sea port, is famous for handling up to 80% of the worlds rough diamonds, and is also the city where the famous painter Rubens was born. Don't miss the City Hall, one of the several majestic buildings built during the Renaissance period, the historical City Square Grote Market, the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe Cathedral and the medieval Steen Castle.

Day 5 (Wed): *Antwerp – Kreekrak locks* – Kreekrak locks - Tholen - Willemstad (20 or 36 kms)

The barge will sail along the Schelde-Rhine Canal and over the huge Kreekrak lock system. From here you will cycle through the lovely Wouwse Plantage forest to Tholen, a former fishing village amidst the large streams in the province of Zeeland. From Tholen join the boat for a picturesque sail to Dordrecht, one of the oldest towns in Holland. Enroute see the impressive Volkerak lock system. Enjoy a guided evening walk through Dordrecht.

Day 6 (Thu): *Dordrecht – Alblasserdam* – Alblasserdam - Kinderdijk – Schoonhoven – Vianen (57 kms)

Today a fast ferry will take you to Alblasserdam. From here cycle to Kinderdijk, the most famous windmills with 19 windmills in a row (don't forget your camera!). The windmills were constructed in the 18th century to pump water out of the low Alblasserwaard polder. You are able to visit one of the windmills. Continue your bike tour via the silver city Schoonhoven to Vianen, a small fortified town on the river Lek. In the evening you can explore this town.

Day 7 (Fri): *Vianen – Breukelen* | Breukelen - Amsterdam (38 or 48 kms)

First the ship cruises to Breukelen, where you disembark and your cycling tour begins. Ride along the small Vecht river: this area is well known for its beautiful mansions, small castles and beautiful houses with large gardens and parks. Cycle via the small villages of Nieuwersluis, Loenen and Vreeland to Nigtevecht, where you can visit a traditional cheese farm. Continue over Abcoude and Ouderkerk on the Amstel river to reach Amsterdam. You will meet your barge again in the harbour of Amsterdam.

Day 8 (Sat): Amsterdam

After breakfast: end of the tour and disembarkation by 9.30am.

If you wish, you can purchase a discounted ticket for an Amsterdam canal tour onboard (not included).



BOOK THROUGH

A Walker's World

Don't just see the world. Experience it.

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