

## Brussels

### Overview

Historic and contemporary city, gastronomic and shopping paradise, capital of Belgium and of Europe: Brussels has many faces, all equally breathtaking. Brussels is a cosmopolitan city where many cultures live together and where a different language can be heard on every street corner. The city is an ideal short-break destination and with other Flemish historic cities nearby, it's the perfect starting point for an exciting getaway.

The main focal point and a must on your tourist agenda is the splendid Grand Place, a UNESCO world heritage site with magnificent merchant guild houses and the impressive gothic beauty of the Town Hall. It is also the ideal spot to while away the hours and watch the world pass by as you sit and dine al fresco or sip your Belgian beer on one of the many pavement terrace cafes.

Besides being an historic and royal city, Brussels is also a booming fashion and design metropolis. Unusual fashion and design, walking tours and loads of trendy events will certainly please fashion victims and those just dying to find out the latest trends. Head for the Louizalaan/Avenue Louise if you want to splash the cash or even the flea markets for antiques, stop by the Sablon square for trinkets and keepsakes alike.

The many exciting exhibitions, festivals and parades make the city a great place to be all year round, from the Jazz Marathon in May to the cosy Christmas Market in December, from the historic Ommegang Procession in June to the various music festivals in summer.

Brussels is a city that loves to be discovered on foot or by bike. From gothic cathedrals to art nouveau villas, leafy green spaces to fashionable areas, traditional little café-bars to trendy restaurants every district has its own treasures.

The cities' many museums include Fine Arts to comic strips and musical instruments, are sure to satisfy every cultural appetite, while your gastronomic appetite will not stay unsatisfied for long. Brussels is a fine representation of the many Belgian culinary delights: hundreds of different kinds of Belgian beer, the finest of Belgian chocolate, the inimitable Belgian fry and much more, are not to be left undiscovered. Be sure to stop by Beenhouwerstraat/Rue des Bouchers, which has to be seen if not experienced, with its endless rows of specialist seafood restaurants.

Would you like to dust off your French or fine tune your pronunciation of the Flemish language? That's no problem in bi-lingual Brussels, where English is spoken and understood almost everywhere as well.