

Cycling Safaris

Bruges ~ Antwerp ~ Amsterdam 2018

8 days 300 km

Guided Tour (guide cycles with group)



Two countries, Holland and Belgium, united in one route. Combining the highlights of Holland's Golden Age and the heydays of the Flemish trade cities in the Middle Ages.

Variety is the keyword in this tour. Cycling and sailing you will cross different landscapes such as the green Dutch polder landscape with water aplenty and quiet roads and villages, the picturesque countryside between the Flemish cities and of course the rich history of the old city-centers of Amsterdam, Antwerp (city of the painter Rubens), Ghent and Bruges. Also, the large rivers in this part of the Netherlands and Belgium are a prominent feature along the route.

Highlights

- Windmills Kinderdijk
- Rubenshouse in Antwerpen
- Ghent / Bruges



Bruges to Amsterdam

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Itinerary

1. Saturday Bruges, embarkation at 2.00 pm near Central Station. Biking to Ghent, 21 km
2. Sunday Ghent – cycle to Dendermonde – sailing to St. Amands, 47 km.
3. Monday St. Amands - Antwerp, 40 km.
4. Tuesday Antwerp – Kreekrak - Willemstad, 56 km.
5. Wednesday Willemstad – Werkendam - Gorinchem, 45 km.
6. Thursday Gorinchem - Vianen - Utrecht, 50 km.
7. Friday Utrecht - sailing to Breukelen, biking to Amsterdam, 40 km.
8. Saturday Amsterdam, debarkation before 10.00 am near Central Station

All distances are approximate. The above planned itinerary is subject to change due to changing wind and weather conditions and other unforeseen circumstances having to do with mooring requirements, etc.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 (Sat) Bruges – Ghent, 21 km

At 2 PM we will board our comfortable barge and then set off on our bikes for a ride to Ghent along the canal between Bruges and Ghent to Aalterburg. After we warmed up our legs we will board the 'Zwaan' again and make our way to Ghent. After our dinner you will have a chance to visit this stunning medieval city. From our berth you can easily reach the city centre. This lively city with its numerous squares and cozy pubs is an excellent mixture of mediaeval edifices, stylish shopping streets, splendid mansions, working-class quarters from the beginning of the 20th century that now often house students and busy little squares where people eat out until the wee hours on a sultry summer night.

Day 2 (Sun) Ghent – cycling to Dendermonde & sailing St. Amands, 47 km

Early Sunday morning you will cycle through the old centre of Ghent. After coffee you will leave for a nice day along one of the most beautiful rivers of Europe: the Scheldt. After approximately 20 km you'll reach Wetteren, a nice Flemish city which is well known for its rose nurseries. But also a good place to learn what the Belgian word 'staminee' means. Berlare is the last place before Dendermonde so it's a perfect place to taste some Belgian beer before you board the ship again. Your boarding place for today is Dendermonde, a city which is known for the legend of the Beiaart. From Dendermonde you'll sail to quiet village of St. Amand where you will spend the night.

Day 3 (Mon) St. Amands - Antwerp, 40 km

Along the Schelde we will cycle through the nature reserve Schausselbroek. The area has a large variety of landscape and interesting fauna; the Drume Mudflats has unique flora also.

Continuing through Bazel; one of the most beautiful villages in Belgium, and then on to the wooden moving stairs in St Anna tunnel for a unique experience.

In Steendorp we will board the barge, that will take us to the historical centre of Antwerp. We will visit the town. Worth a visit are: the Onze-Lievevrouwenkerk and the Rubenshuis. In the Willemsdok, near the Museum for Modern Art (Museum Aan de Stroom) you will find the barge.

Day 4 (Tues) Antwerp – sailing to Kreekraksluizen and cycle to Willemstad, 56/65 km

This morning you'll sail through the big harbour of Antwerp, a big difference with the nature reserves and quite villages of yesterday. But due to the big sea going vessels and large harbour cranes it's a fascinating journey which brings you to Holland where you start your biketour at the Kreekrak locks. By bike you will make a beautiful tour over the 'Brabantse wal' a sand wall dating back from the times when Mammoths roam the area. Today you won't find any big elephants but the area seemed to be perfect for strawberry and asparagus fields. So be here at harvest time (depending on the weather: around June). From the woodlands around Bergen op Zoom you continue through a polder landscape to the old fortified town of Willemstad, near the Volkeraksluizen (locks) at the Haringvliet, the busiest locks of Europe.

Day 5 (Wed) Willemstad –sailing to Werkendam and cycle to Gorinchem, 45km

From Willemstad you'll sail this morning to Werkendam where you go ashore to continue your tour by bike through the land of Heusden and Altena. Along the Bergse Maas, the south border of the land of Heusden and Altena, you continue your tour along the fortified town of Heusden. From here another river, the 'Afgedamde Maas' leads you back to the river Waal where you started your tour this morning. Here you'll find another beautiful fortified town, Woudrichem. A ferry brings you to the other side of the river where you'll board the ship.

Day 6 (Thurs) Gorinchem – Vianen - Utrecht, 50 km

From Gorinchem you will follow the meandering river the Linge, through the Alblasserwaard to Leerdam, famous for its glass. You will visit a glaze company. You will continue your tour to Culemborg, a peaceful town situated at the Lek and you will follow the river to Vianen. You will sail to Utrecht. After dinner you can take a bus to the old centre of Utrecht.

Day 7 (Fri), Utrecht – sailing to Brooklyn and cycle to Amsterdam, 40 km

During breakfast you will sail to Breukelen from where you will cycle to Amsterdam along the two most beautiful rivers of Holland, the Vecht and the Amstel.

Along the route you will find the magnificent country houses and mansions from the 18th century with their splendid, well-kept gardens. After dinner you have the option to take a canal cruise through the canals of Amsterdam.

Day 8 (Sat) Departure

Amsterdam, end of the tour after breakfast.

ACCOMMODATION / BARGES

Comfort de Luxe: The "**Sailing Home**" started cruising in 2001. This beautiful passenger ship can accommodate 26 overnight passengers. The interior of the salon and bar is decorated in a modern Victorian style and offers a lot of comfort. Wifi on board (free up to 100Mb)

Cabins:

The "Sailing Home" has 13 spacious and comfortable guest cabins for two (lower beds) and each cabin has a private bathroom. All cabins have central heating and air-conditioning.

The "Sailing Home" has two floors. On the top floor you will find the salon, a roomy lounge, a cosy bar and a sun deck.

Electricity: 220 V



Zwaan – Category comfort plus

Hotel boat Zwaan's chef prepares great meals, which are served in the living room or, weather permitting, on the sundeck.

Capacity: 14/18 persons Wifi: on board (only in the Netherlands)

Electricity: 220 V

Cabins: Seven cabins with private hot shower and toilet

2x Family-style room, 2/3 p with double bed + single bed

2x Friends-style room, 2/3 p with 3 single beds (one bunk)

2x Twins-style room, 2 p with two separate beds

1x Lovers Nest, 2 p with double bed



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ACCOMMODATION / BARGES



Category Comfort: The “Liza Marleen” is a luxury motor passenger barge, built in 1997-98 on the completely dismantled shell of a seafaring freight logger. Cabins are being fully renovated for the 2016 season. Capacity: max 22 people.

This robust barge is ideally suited for trips on the wider waterways, like the Dutch Waddenzee, the IJsselmeer and the Zeeland Streams, but it can also be found cruising on the smaller inland waterways of the Netherlands and Belgium. The “Liza Marleen” has 8 double cabins and 2 triple cabins.

All cabins come with a private bathroom and central heating. The triple cabins have one double bed on top and one single bed underneath. The double cabins have two separate beds on top of each other. The “Liza Marleen” has a beautiful, spacious and tastefully decorated salon and plenty of room on deck. The dayroom has audio-equipment and TV. Electricity: 220 V

Anna Antal – Category StandardPlus/Comfort

The “Anna Antal” is a former barge which was converted into a luxury motor passenger ship in the winter of 1994-95.



Cabins: The Anna Antal has 9 cabins each with their own shower, washbasin, toilet and central heating. 5 x 2-berth cabins with low beds (Comfort) 4 x 2-berth cabins with bunk beds (StandardPlus).

Saloon: The Anna Antal is pleasant for a day’s stay and it has a cosy bar.

Our motorised passenger vessels, about 35 - 45 metres in length, are former river vessels especially converted for this kind of holiday. The barges all comply with the strict safety regulations laid down by the Dutch Shipping Inspection Authorities. On board you find a cosy dining room, a sun deck/a deck for the bicycles. All cabins are provided with running water (hot and cold), private shower and toilet, 220 voltage and central heating.

There is limited storage space in the cabin. We recommend 1 suitcase per person. You can slide the suitcase under the bed.

DATES AND PRICES 2018

Ship Zwaan (Category Comfort Plus)

19 May, 2 June, 16 June
2-berth cabin: €1165 -
Single use: € 1650 -
Triple cabin: €1135 -

Ship Sailing Home (Category Comfort Deluxe)

30 June, 14 July, 28 July, 11 August, 25 August, 8 Sept, 22 Sept, 6 Oct, 20 Oct
2-berth cabin: €1165 -
Single use: € 1650 -

Ship Anna Antal (Category Standard Plus & Comfort)

26 May, 9 June, 23 June, 7 July, 21 July, 4 August, 1 Sept, 15 Sept, 29 Sept
2-berth Standard Plus cabin: €900 –
2-berth Comfort cabin: €1055 –
Single Standard Plus cabin €1160.00

Ship Lisa Marleen (Category Comfort)

12 May
2-berth cabin: €1145 –
Large 2 berth cabin €1245
Single use: € 1610 -
Triple cabin: €1055 –

Reduction children: (if child is travelling together with at least 1 one full-paying person)

0-2: free of charge (plus bike trailer cost)
3-11: - 30% on tour price

Additional Costs/Optional Extras

- ▶ Entrance fees to museums – approx €15
- ▶ Helmets available on request at time of booking – €10 (cannot be rented on board)
- ▶ Bike maps (2x): €20 (to be ordered when booking; cannot be rented on board)
- ▶ Bicycle Insurance - €15 per bicycle/e-bike - €40 per bike (can only be ordered at time of booking)
- ▶ Bike trailer €85/trailer bike €50 / bike seat €15 /child bike: €50
- ▶ E-Bike +€80
- ▶ Gluten free meals +€50

If you are traveling on your own we will endeavor to find a room mate for you.

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights (including bed clothes and 2 towels)
- All meals (breakfast and dinner on board) and packed lunch when on the road
- Coffee and tea on board
- 24-speed bicycle (with pannier bags, lock, water bottle)
- Multi-lingual guide
- Route information & road book (1 per cabin)
- Ferry fares on the route

Please note that all charges on the boat must be settled in cash (euro) at the end of the tour.

WHAT TO BRING

Specialized cycle clothing may be handy but not strictly necessary. What you do need (among other things) is the following:

- shorts/ long trousers/ track suit/ legging
- shirts/ sweater/ rain clothing
- gloves (only when you book a tour in April. It can be chilly in the morning that time of year!)
- good shoes
- sunglasses/ cap/ swimming costume
- extra towel
- soap/ insect repellent

BIKES AND CYCLING

On these tours you cycle together as a group with the guide.

After arrival on board you will be allocated a bicycle suitable to your height. This bicycle (a Hybrid bike), is at your disposal during your trip until Friday at 4pm.

There is a good bicycle available for all participants from ages nine and up with 24 gears and handbrakes. All bikes are comfortable lightweight touring bikes.



The bikes are equipped with:

- Pannier bags
- Odometer
- Good lock
- Water bottle
- You will get a repair kit when biking on your own.

Before you make your first tour, the guide will give you instructions about the bike. Can we draw your attention to the fact that you will be held responsible for damage to, or theft of the bike, as long as the bike is not on board (The bike is a **Batabus Galivier** with a value of more than €600). Never leave it unattended. Always lock it and fasten it to a fixed object. You can insure this bike for a fee of €15.00, at the time of booking, or when you arrive on board on the arrival day (payment in cash required).

Should you use your own bike, please bring a good lock with you!

Holland is a cycling country - 16 million inhabitants all with bikes. The number of cyclists necessitates a cycling infrastructure: cycle paths (20.000 km), cycle routes (long and short distance), cycle bridges, cycle tunnels, cycle ferries and special signposts for cyclists.

E-bike

It is also possible to book an E-bike. Your bike has 24 gears, a detachable lithium-Ion battery, hand brakes, pannier bags, a good lock, water bottle and you can get a repair kit. We draw your attention to the fact that you will be held responsible for damage to or theft of the bike, as long as the bike is not on board. (the E-bike has a value of more than € 2000,-). Never leave it unattended. Always lock it and fasten it to a fixed object, and don't forget to remove the information panel from your steering wheel. You can insure this bike with Cycletours for € 40,- per bicycle! If you didn't arrange cycle insurance when booking you can do this on board (the first day). Payment in cash is required

**Bike Insurance:**

Bicycle insurance is available for €15 per bike. The participant is liable for damage or theft as long as the bike is not on board. The bicycle insurance covers the cost of the repair or replacement of bicycle parts in case of an accident. It also protects against theft of the bike while it was locked.

GENERAL INFORMATION**Arrival to tour start**

You will find the boat in Bruges: near the 'Buiten Katelijnevest' (not far from the train station- about 950 metres).

On foot it is between 10 to 15 minutes from the station to the barge.

For travel information from Bruges to Amsterdam: www.b-rail.com

Taxi: A taxi from the station in Bruges takes about 5 minutes to the barges.

Arrival at 2 PM

You are expected on our barge on Saturday the latest at **2 PM**. The barge needs to leave the mooring place in Bruges at **2.15 PM**. So it is very important you are on time.

The barge can't wait due the opening hours of bridges and/or locks.

You can recognise the barge by the banner with Cycletoours written on it. The name of your barge is printed on the voucher, which you will receive separately. After arrival there's coffee and tea on board. Other drinks are also available on cash payment. If you want you can bring your luggage in advance, from 10 AM onwards.

**Train**

For travel information from Schiphol Amsterdam Airport to Bruges by train:

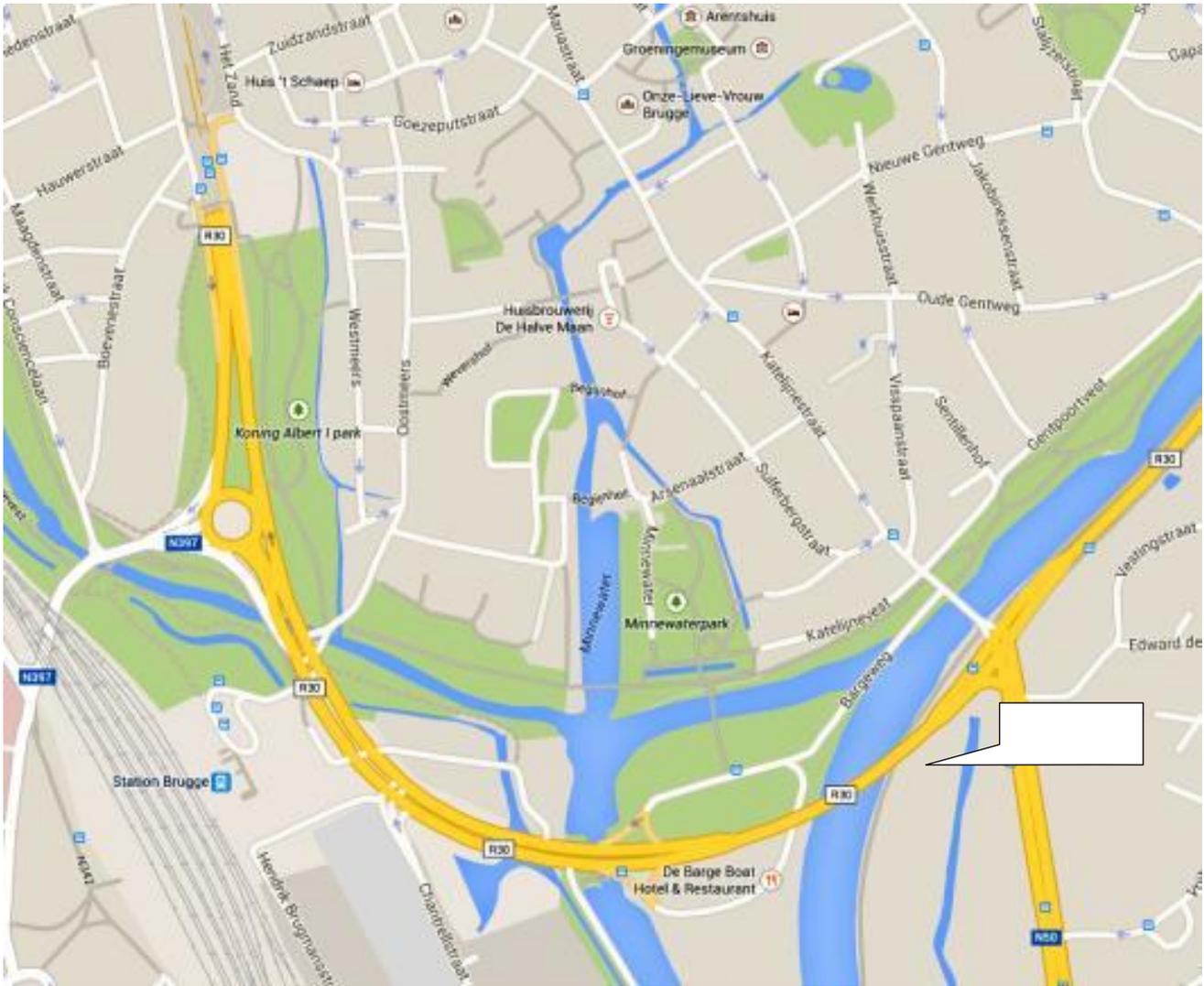
www.nshispeed.nl/en

Travel time by train: appr. 3 ½ hours

On foot it is between 10 to 15 minutes from the station to the barge. Take exit 'centrum' at the station and then turn right. Straight on and after 3rd bridge turn right. See map below.

Taxi

A taxi from the station in Bruges takes about 5 minutes to the barge.



Group

On board you will meet an international party of all age groups, men and women, singles, couples and families together with their children.

Travel Guidance

The crew on board your ship consists of: the skipper and his mate who are responsible for the smooth running of things on board and the cook who is in charge of the catering. A tour leader, who can assist in case of breakdowns, and who can be your guide to point out to you the things of interest along the way, accompanies the participants. He or she is multi-lingual.

Meals

In the morning a substantial cyclist's breakfast is on offer, and the evening meal consists of a dinner with tea and coffee to follow. The midday meal comprises sandwiches/fruit/ snack/drink, which you take with you from the boat after you have prepared this package yourself after breakfast. When you arrive back at the boat after the day's cycling a cup of tea or coffee with a biscuit will be waiting for you. The three-course dinner is different every day. There is a first course, main course and dessert. The meals on board are included in the price, as are coffee and tea. There is a bar on the boat with beer, soft drinks and wine at reasonable prices.

Hotels

If you are booking additional hotel accommodation 3* in Amsterdam and/or Bruges, herewith some suggestions:-

Amsterdam –

Hotel Avenue - www.hotels.nl/amsterdam/avenue/
Prinsengracht Hotel - www.prinsengrachthotel.nl/index.php

Bruges –

Hotel Martins - www.splendia.com/pagehotel.php?hotelid=30399&lang=EN
Hotel Maraboe - www.maraboe.be/
Hans Memling Hotel - www.hansmemlinghotel.com/