

Cycling Safaris

Bruges ~ Ghent ~ Antwerp ~ Amsterdam

2024 Guided Tour (guide cycles with group)

From Thursday to Thursday



Two countries, Holland and Belgium, united in one route which combines the highlights of Holland's Golden Age with the heydays of the Flemish trade cities of 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 in Kinderdijk
- Rubenshouse in Antwerpen
- the magnificent town of Ghent and Bruges and the iconic city of Amsterdam

Itinerary

1. Thursday Bruges, embarkation at 12.30 - 1.30pm near Central Station. Biking to Ghent, 21 km
2. Friday Ghent
3. Saturday Ghent - Middelbrug, 45 km
4. Sunday Middelbrug - Zierikzee, 50 km
5. Monday Zierikzee - Willemstadt, sailing to Dordrecht, 55 km
6. Tuesday Dordrecht, sailing to Gorinchem, cycling to Vianen, 50 km
7. Wednesday Vianen, sailing to Breukelen, cycling to Amsterdam, 40 km
8. Thursday Amsterdam, debarkation before 10.00 am near Central Station

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 (Thursday) Bruges - cycling to Aalterbrug, sailing to Ghent **21 km**

The barge is moored near Bargeweg just outside of Bruges city centre near the Bruges train station. You are expected to arrive at our barge on Thursday between **12.30 PM- 1.30 PM**. When you arrive on board, you can settle in and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. It is also a good moment to become acquainted with the tour leader, skipper and crew and of course your fellow passengers. The barge leaves dock at 2pm. Your first bike ride is along the canal from Bruges to Ghent. Easy riding on towpaths and quiet roads. At Aalterbrug the barge picks you up and sails to the bustling city Ghent. During dinner aboard the ship, the program for the next day and the global planning of the week are discussed. Instructions on cycling and safety procedures will also be given.

Day 2 (Friday) Ghent

Today you will have the day at your free disposal. The city of Ghent is proud of its rich past, the many well-preserved guild's and patricians' houses as well as old warehouses, Gravensteen (a mediaeval castle), St Nicholas Church (with 13th century foundations), St Bavo's Cathedral and the 'Belfort' (Belfry;14th century). But Ghent is much more than just a museum town. This lively city with its numerous squares and cosy pubs is an excellent mixture of mediaeval edifices, stylish shopping streets, splendid mansions, working-class quarters from the beginning of the 20th century which now often house students and busy little squares where people eat out till the wee hours on a sultry summer night.

You can also choose to go cycling with your guide. The castles and luxurious villas in and around Destelbergen, at a stone's throw from Ghent, are silent witnesses of the rich history of this municipality along the banks of the river Scheldt.

Day 3 (Saturday) Ghent - Middelbrug **45 km**

Today you will leave Belgium and arrive in the Netherlands. During breakfast you will sail to Sas van Gent and cycle through Zeeuws-Vlaanderen (Dutch-Flanders). With a short ferry trip from Breskens to Vlissingen (Flushing) you cross the Westerschelde. From Vlissingen it's just 30 minutes cycling to Middelbrug, the capital of Zeeland. Modern Middelburg has preserved and regained much of its historic and picturesque character. There are lavish 17th and 18th century merchant houses and storehouses standing along canals. The medieval abbey is still in use today, as a museum and as the seat of the provincial government.

Day 4 (Sunday) Middlebrug - Zierkzee **50 km**

First you will ride to the town of Veere, formerly an important trading place. From Veere you will cycle over the Veersgatdam (here you have the possibility of a beach visit) to North Beveland. Soon you will reach the Oosterscheldedam. The enormous locks are built in this embankment and can be closed during storms and high tides protecting the south-west of the Netherlands against the sea. This embankment was one of the last in a series of barriers against the sea. When cycling along the embankment, one will realize why this has been one of the most difficult and costly challenges to protect the country now and in the future and to let seawater into the widespread Delta area. It is precisely why the Deltaworks are referred to as the one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World by the American Society of Civil Engineers. After this dam you will peddle to Zierikzee.

Day 5 (Monday) Zierkzee - Willemstadt, sailing to Dordrecht **55 km**

A nice ride on the island of Schouwen-Duiveland is on the program. You ride to Bruinisse. The village is known as a very isolated community. The main source of income is the mussel fishery, on the dike to the Grevelingen you will find a statue of an opened mussels. You will ride on to Willemstad (an old fortified town) and go on board there. Sailing to Dordrecht, one of the oldest cities of Holland and located at the crossroads of busy waterways.

Day 6 (Tuesday) Dordrecht, sailing to Gorinchem, cycling to Vianen 50 km

From Gorinchem you will visit Woudrichem (an old fortified town) and most famous castle in the Netherlands, Loevestein. You follow the meandering river Linge through the Betuwe. This area is known for the large amount of orchards and therefore will be covered with blossoms in May. Along the city of Leerdam, famous for its glass, you continue your tour in northern direction towards Vianen.

Day 7 (Wednesday) Vianen - sailing to Breukelen, cycle to Amsterdam 40 km

During breakfast we sail to Breukelen (Brooklyn) from where we cycle to Amsterdam along the two most beautiful rivers of Holland, the Vecht and the Amstel. Along the route we pass 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 (Thursday) Departure

Amsterdam, end of the tour after breakfast before 10AM.

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.

DATES AND PRICE 2024

Barge	Dates	Low Season pps	Standard Season pps	High Season pps	Single Supp
Sailing Home	May 16, 30 June 13, 27 July 11, 25 Aug 8, 22 Sept 5, 19 Oct 3, 17	€1380 (twin cabin)	€1535 (twin cabin)	€1685 (twin cabin)	€1995 low season €2220 (standard) €2420 (high)
Liza Marleen	June 20 Sep 26		€1470 (twin cabin) €1700 (superior cabin) €1350 (triple cabin)		€2110 standard
Wending	May 23 July 18 Aug 15, 29 Sep 12, 26	€1210 (twin cabin) €1130 (triple cabin)	€1335 (twin cabin) €1250 (triple cabin)	€1460 (twin cabin) €1370 (triple cabin)	€1530 low season €1695 standard €1840 high season

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights on board (incl. bed linen and 2 towels)
- Route information/road book (1 set per cabin)
- Breakfast & Dinner on board
- Picnic Lunch packages when on the road
- Ferry fares on route
- Coffee and tea on board
- Tour guide who cycles with the group
- Minimum of 3 city walks with tour guide
- Free Wi-Fi (limited availability in lounge and on deck)
- GPS tracks (on request)

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

Not included

Bike hire is separated out / not included in the tour price

Bike Hire

€110.00 21 speed touring bike with water bottle cage, lock and a small pannier bag, bike helmet, bike insurance included

€220.00 Electric - bike with water bottle cage, lock and a small pannier bag, bike helmet, bike insurance included

(we do not allow private e-bikes on board, due to safety regulations)

- Entrance fees to museums; approx €25 per tour
- Gluten free or Vegan meals : €75 supplement (to be ordered in advance. When ordered upon arrival the charge is €100)

Please note that tour prices are based on current fuel price.

Should the fuel price increase more than 5% (reference date March 2023) then we need to ask a supplement. Even for reservations already made.

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

ACCOMMODATION / BARGES

Our motorized passenger vessels are about 35 - 45 metres in length and 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 which you can slide under the bed.

Do not expect a cruise ship with its passive luxury. The Bike & Barge Holidays are for people who really enjoy the physical activity of cycling and who value sociability more than wholesale luxury.

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)

The "Sailing Home" has capacity for 26 pax in 13 spacious and comfortable guest cabins for two (lower beds), twin beds which can be placed together, and each cabin has a private bathroom. All cabins have central heating and air-conditioning. Windows can open.

The "Sailing Home" has two floors. On the top floor there is the salon, a roomy lounge with cozy bar and a sun deck. Wi-Fi on board



Category Comfort Plus: The "Liza Marleen" is a luxury motor passenger barge, built in 1997-98 on the completely dismantled shell of a seafaring freight logger. Cabins were fully renovated for the 2016 season.

The "Liza Marleen" has 8 double cabins and 2 triple cabins (Capacity: max 22 people)

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. There is air conditioning and windows cannot open, Wi-Fi on board

Wending - Category StandardPlus/Comfort

The Wending has a roomy and cosy saloon, equipped with a complete music installation. After a strenuous bike ride it is a great place to relax. An extensive range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks is available for the "après de velo". Outside there is a sun deck/a deck for the bicycles. The crew consists of a skipper, a cook and a sailor/hostess. There is limited WiFi on board.

Cabin plan

- 10 Twin cabins, beds can be placed together
- 2 Triple cabins (with upper bunk)

All cabins are provided with:

- private bathroom,
- central heating,
- 220 voltage,
- soap,
- windows that open.

Hair dryers are available on board. There is limited storage space in the cabin. We recommend 1 suitcase per person. You can slide the suitcase under the bed.



BIKES AND CYCLING

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

Bikes are available to rent on the tour:

- €110 Hybrid Bike rental includes helmet, pannier bags, lock, water bottle, helmet, bike insurance
- €220 E-Bike rental includes helmet, pannier bags, lock, water bottle, helmet, bike insurance
- €60 Childs bike for children 9 years or older
- €55 Trailer bike, suitable from 5 - 9 years
- €15 Bike seat suitable from 11 months to 5 years approx

Hybrid bikes

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 Wednesday at 4pm.

There is a good bicycle available for all participants, from ages 9 and up, with 24 gears and handbrakes. All bikes are comfortable lightweight touring bikes.



The bikes are equipped with:

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

E- bikes

It is also possible to book an E-bike. Your bike has 24 gears, a detachable lithium-Ion battery, handbrakes, pannier bags, a good lock, water bottle and you can get a repair kit.

(We do not allow private e-bikes on board, due to safety regulations)



Bike Insurance:

Bicycle insurance is included.

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 12.30 - 1.30 PM

You are expected on our barge on Thursay the latest at **BETWEEN 12.30 - 1.30 PM**. The barge needs to leave the mooring place in Bruges at **2 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 Cycletours 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:

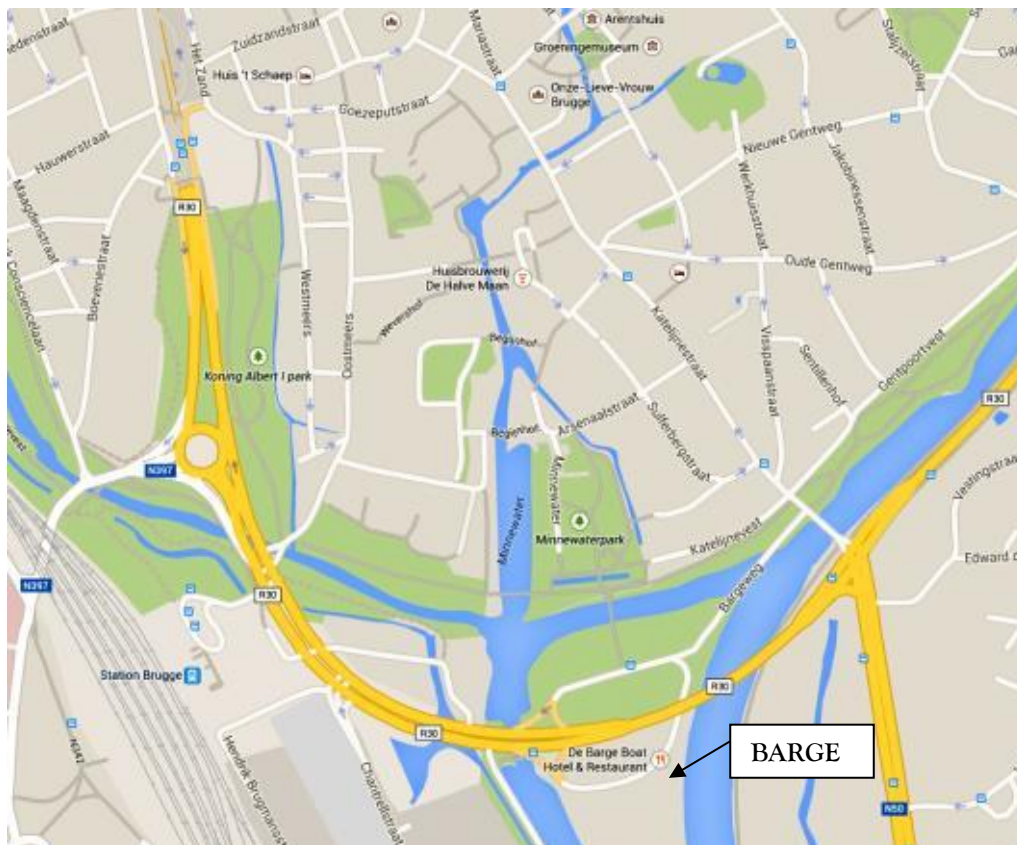
www.nshispeed.nl/en

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 -
Prinsengracht Hotel -

www.hotels.nl/amsterdam/avenue/
www.prinsengrachthotel.nl/index.php

Bruges -

Hotel Martins -
Hotel Maraboe -
Hans Memling Hotel -

www.splendia.com/pagehotel.php?hotelid=30399&lang=EN
www.maraboe.be/
www.hansmemlinghotel.com/