

A large Gothic cathedral with a tall spire and a horse-drawn carriage in the foreground. The cathedral is made of light-colored stone and has many windows with gold tracery. The spire is very tall and has a cross on top. In the foreground, there is a horse-drawn carriage with a driver and passengers. The street is paved with cobblestones. There are also some people walking in the foreground.

# **GHENT, DAZZLINGLY AUTHENTIC**

visitor's guide

**Ask for your complimentary map  
at the information office!**



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## SYMBOLS

- Top sight Historical Centre
- Top sight Arts Quarter
- Venue much frequented by Ghent natives
- Panorama
- Reference to the pedestrian signposting



**!** A separate annex with the most recent version of all the practical information (prices, opening hours etc.) and an accompanying map (with the sightseeing musts, the streets where to go out, ...) are available from the information office (see back cover). Just ask for it! The annex can also be downloaded from the website: [www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be).

the circled numbers in the text refer to the Tourist Office street map.





The people of Ghent are headstrong and obstinate. If we were not so proud of these labels, we would regard them as faults.

But we don't. On the contrary. The noose with which Emperor Charles V once subjected us to the ultimate humiliation is now something we wear proudly around our necks on every festive occasion. The fortress in the heart of the city – not built to defend the city, but to protect the authorities from the inhabitants of the city – is now one of our most important attractions. And the top of the Belfry is not adorned by a weathercock that turns into the wind but a mighty dragon who watches over his headstrong inhabitants.

The citizens of Ghent are proud of their city. And rightly so.

As you leaf through this brochure, you will soon see why: wonderful historical buildings and monuments in perfect harmony with more modern additions, and three stately towers form the magnificent skyline. Thanks to the largest pedestrianized area in Belgium, you can admire this unique treasure trove of historical heritage undisturbed.

But leafing through this brochure is, of course, not enough. Only by walking around yourself will you experience what really makes Ghent unique and, once again, that means the inhabitants of Ghent themselves.

Because Ghent is alive and kicking. Its cultural establishments attract full audiences, its shopping streets and markets teem with activity and cafés and restaurants only close their doors in the early hours of the morning. The citizens of Ghent don't wait for the Ghent Festivities to get out of the house and live!

Welcome to our city.

Lieven Decaluwe,  
alderman for Culture, Tourism and Festivities.



# GHENT, WHAT A HISTORY!



In the 15th century, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, became the Count of Flanders. The inhabitants of Ghent fought tooth and nail against his attempts to break the power of the cities in favour of a strong central authority. This ended in the Battle of Gavere (1453) where the Ghent resistance was brutally suppressed.

Over the centuries the inhabitants of Ghent remained true to their reputation of being headstrong and obstinate. They even rebelled against their own child prince, Charles V. But that was a bridge too far: the citizens of Ghent were publicly humiliated and the Klokke Roeland, the symbol of Ghent's independence, was removed from the Belfry. The once powerful city-state had literally and figuratively fallen to its knees.

From the year 1000 to around 1550, Ghent was one of the most important cities in Europe. It was bigger than London and second only to Paris in size. The 60,000 inhabitants it had in the 14th century clung forcefully to their rights: earls and princes discovered that the proud and rebellious people of Ghent would not relinquish their hard-won privileges and freedoms without a fight.

Until the Battle of the Golden Spurs in 1302, the city was ruled by a number of rich merchant families. Because they mostly chose the side of the French king against the Count of Flanders, the people gave them the nickname 'Leliaerts', derived from the lily on the French coat of arms. As the trades and guilds gained more political power in the 14th century, Ghent came to acquire a more democratic government.

Because England blocked the import of raw materials for the vitally important textile industry, Ghent was forced, by sheer necessity, to take England's side (1338-1345) during the Hundred Years' War. Jacob van Artevelde, a rich cloth merchant, led the uprising against Count Louis de Nevers, the vassal of the French king. In 1345, this 'wise man' was murdered by his fellow citizens. His importance is shown by the fact that Ghent is still called the 'City of Artevelde'.





## GHENT, THE CITY OF THE 'NOOSE WEARERS'

Due to its disobedience, Emperor Charles ordered that the insubordinate city be publicly humiliated. On 3rd May 1540, a procession of Ghent residents walked barefoot, dressed only in a shirt and with a noose around their necks, from the town hall to the Prinsenhof. There they were made to kneel and beg the Emperor for mercy. Since that time, the inhabitants of Ghent have been known as the 'Stroppendragers' or 'Stropkes' (noose-wearers), a nickname they today sport with great pride. The black and white noose is the symbol of the city!

The economic situation also gradually worsened. The city lost its passage to the sea and the population decreased by half. Only in the second half of the 18th century was there an economic revival. In 1816, under Dutch administration, Ghent acquired its own university and ten years later the city again became a sea port thanks to the Ghent-Terneuzen canal.

Nevertheless, Ghent still continued to sail against the tide: during Belgium's independence struggle many inhabitants remained loyal to the Dutch House of Orange. Ghent later became the continent's first large industrial centre. As a result, it was here that the socialist movement and the first trade union associations appeared. In 1913, Ghent showed its best side during the World Exhibition. Because it suffered little bomb damage during the two world wars, Ghent's historical heritage has remained largely intact right up to the present.

As you'll be able to see with your own eyes...

## FINDING YOUR WAY ROUND

You'll really have to do your very best to get lost in Ghent. Particularly since the brand new pedestrian signposting is now in place. You will find the easy-reference signposts at no fewer than 114 locations throughout the city.

Henceforth, Ghent is divided into two quarters and each quarter into several sites. Arrows in various colours show you the way from one site to another and, of course, each signpost displays the location of the stations and coach parks.

For the sake of convenience, we will follow the same arrangement in this brochure. All places of interest are classified by site. Things which are found together in this brochure are therefore also close to each other in reality. Names with the pedestrian symbol between square brackets are mentioned identically on the signposts.

And should you still manage to get lost, have a good look around you. There is a good chance that you will come across one or other quiet corner, attractive terrace or hidden monument. And you certainly won't have to go far to find... the next signpost.

## TWO QUARTERS, TOGETHER PROVIDING HOURS OF PLEASURE

Ghent is a compact city. You will find all points of interest within walking distance from each other. The two quarters into which the city has been divided merge seamlessly into one another.

In the Historical Centre, one finds the greatest concentration of historical buildings and monuments and the Arts Quarter contains the most important museums. Of course, in both quarters you will pass inviting little cafés and intimate restaurants. When evening falls, Ghent undergoes a transformation: the whole city centre becomes attractively illuminated and performing artists show the best of their talents in its many theatres. A sojourn in Ghent is therefore not complete without at least one overnight stay! Enquire at our information office or consult [www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be) for the accommodation that suits you best.



# if we really have to choose: **TEN** **TOP SIGHTS IN GHENT**

The whole city is 'worth seeing'.

However, you cannot leave Ghent without at least having admired these eye-catchers.



## **The Castle of the Counts**

Historical Centre / Gravensteen-site, p.11

An imposing medieval fortress in the heart of the city. Enjoy the incredible view from the very top of the keep. Inside, tremble at the sight of the impressive collection of weapons and instruments of torture, from thumbscrews to an authentic guillotine. Philip and Matilda will transport you back to the 12th century and tell you the compelling history of this unique building.

## **Patershol**

Historical Centre / Gravensteen-site, p. 11

The medieval street pattern is original and unique. The many brick buildings are an indication of prosperity. That was indeed the case when the Castle of the Counts was used as a court: the magistracy and the well-to-do citizenry then took over the district. Later, the fortress was used as a factory and the Patershol became a workers' district. Today, it is the place to be for those who love good food and drink.

## **St Michael's Bridge**

Historical Centre / Graslei-site, p. 10

Someone should come up with the idea of chalking a cross on the road here. If you stand on it and slowly turn through 360°, you will enjoy successive views of the three towers (the only place in Ghent where you can get a decent view of them all in a row), the old Post Office (now a shopping centre), the enchanting Graslei, the Castle of the Counts in the distance, the Korenlei and St Michael's Church. Stop in time or else you'll be dizzy.

## **St Bavo's Cathedral and 'The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb'**

Historical Centre / Torens-site, p. 8

Ghent's oldest parish church, first known as Sint-Janskerk, today has no less than 22 altars. The most fervent sermons once thundered from its rococo pulpit, a wonderful marriage of marble and oak. Tombs of the Ghent bishops, Rubens' 'The Conversion of St Bavo' and the world-famous polyptych **The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb** by the Van Eyck brothers are just a few of the many art treasures to wonder at in this cathedral.

## **The Belfry**

Historical Centre / Torens-site, p. 8

Above Ghent, lonely and grey, rises the Old Belfry, a symbol of the past. The dragon at the top scans the horizon. If the enemy was approaching, the Klokke Roeland would notify the burghers of the city. Distinguished visitors, executions and, of course, the beginning of the Ghent Festivities were (and are still) also announced by the carillon. Recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

## **The Stage Circuit**

Historical Centre / Kouter-site, p. 15 / Arts Quarter / Zuid-site, p. 16

We wouldn't quite call it Broadway, but Ghent nevertheless has quite a number of theatres all within walking distance of each other. From the singer-songwriters in the Handelsbeurs to the musical stars in the Capitole, the rock stars in the Vooruit and the divas at the Opera, they all have one thing in common: they love performing in Ghent. Theatre in Ghent begins with NTGent but certainly doesn't end there: dozens of companies perform classic pieces and their own creations in as many auditoriums and halls.



Sint-Baafsabdij - Foto: © Lukas - Art in Flanders, vzw

© Dirk Pauwels

## The Citadel Park

Arts Quarter / Citadelpark-site, p. 18

Hidden away amidst the greenery are two leading museums: the fully renovated Museum of Fine Arts houses classic art and the S.M.A.K. shows what the contemporary artist has to offer. In the nearby congress centre the business world holds meetings, while Het Kuipke is legendary for its six-day cycling spectacular.

## Beguinages

Historical Centre / Gravensteen-site, p. 12,  
Portus Ganda-site, beyond the site, p. 14 / Arts Quarter / Zuid-site, p. 16

You won't find any more beguines in these oases of calm, but the hushed atmosphere of dedication and devotion remains forever hovering between the whitewashed walls. UNESCO declared these marvellous villages-within-the-city as World Heritage Sites.

## St Peters Square cluster

Arts Quarter / St.-Pietersplein-site, p. 17

The centuries-old remains of times long past lie forever buried deep underground. Their locations have been marked in an original way in the brand new underground car park. Above ground you can enjoy the expanse of the square (on quiet days) or the cosy bustle of the circus, fair or other festivities. Here, in the heart of the student district, you will find the St Peter's Abbey Arts Centre and Our Lady of St Peter's Church. Families with children cannot afford to miss a visit to The World of Kina: the House.

## The people of Ghent

The city is its inhabitants. In Ghent, people live and work, celebrate and enjoy. The people of Ghent welcome visitors with an openness of spirit and a glibness of tongue. Looking for a lively spot, a convivial café or a unique moment? Then look for the locals and you'll see where you need to be!

## >TIP! The Museum Pass

Fancy some contemporary art, or are you in more of a nostalgic mood? Follow your heart! With the Museum Pass, you pay once and have immediate access to Ghent's most important museums. Moreover, on presentation of the pass you can use buses and trams for free.



## MUSEUMS YOU CANNOT MISS:

**the Museum of Fine Arts (MSK)**

Arts Quarter / Citadelpark-site / p. 18

**the Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art (S.M.A.K.)**

Arts Quarter / Citadelpark-site / p. 18

**the Design museum Gent**

Historical Centre / Graslei-site / p. 10

**the Museum of Industrial Archaeology and Textiles (MIAT)**

Historical Centre / Vrijdagmarkt-site / p. 13

**the House of Alijn**

Historical Centre / Gravensteen-site / p. 11

**the Dr. Guislain Museum**

beyond the Gravensteen-site / p. 12

**The World of Kina: the House**

Arts Quarter / St.-Pietersplein-site / p. 17

**The World of Kina: the Garden**

beyond the Gravensteen-site / p. 12

**St Peter's Abbey Arts Centre**

Arts Quarter / St.-Pietersplein-site / p. 17



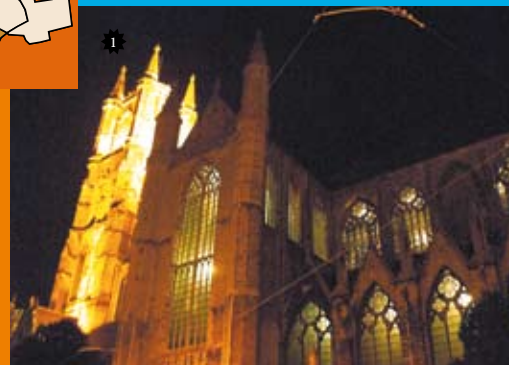
# THE HISTORICAL CENTRE



## Torens-site

You are in the historical heart of Ghent. This is where it all began. Wherever you look you will see important, interesting and impressive buildings and monuments.

Depending on the time of day, first the Belfry and then the steeple of St Bavo's Cathedral will cast its shadow over the Sint-Baafsplein. In between lies the Royal Dutch Theatre, the permanent residence of the Ghent theatre company NTGent.



## ☼ St Bavo's Cathedral [ Sint-Baafskathedraal ]

Sint-Baafsplein - T. +32 9 269 20 45  
[www.sintbaafskathedraal-gent.be](http://www.sintbaafskathedraal-gent.be)

When Charles V was baptised there in 1500, the metamorphosis from a closed Romanesque church to a spacious Gothic one was fully underway. However, despite substantial financial support from the emperor, the cathedral still remained unfinished 58 years later. As a result, the funeral service for the deceased sovereign could not take place there.

All that remains of the original 12th-century Romanesque church is the crypt.

St Bavo's Cathedral houses an impressive number of art treasures: the baroque high altar in white, black and red flamed marble, the rococo pulpit in oak, gilded wood and marble, a major work by Rubens, the 'Calvary Triptych', attributed to Joos van Wassenhove, alias Justus van Gent, tombs of the Ghent bishops, and much more.

However, one work stands out head and shoulders above the rest: the world-famous Adoration of the Mystic Lamb painted by Hubert and Jan van Eyck around 1432.

## ☼ ↖ The Belfry [ Belfort ]

Sint-Baafsplein - T. +32 9 233 39 54  
[www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be)

The Belfry dating from 1313 is the proudest symbol of the city of Ghent's independence. The civil privileges granted to the city in 1180 were preserved in the tower for centuries. Nowadays, these are kept in the 'Zwarte Doos', the modern municipal archives in Gentbrugge. The Cloth Hall was built in 1425 onto the side of the Belfry. In a euphoric Brabant Gothic style, this monument glorifies the industry to which the city owes so much.

At the corner of the Cloth Hall is an old jailer's lodge. The façade is adorned with the 'Mammelokker' which depicts the legend of Cimon who was condemned to starve to death. He was saved by his daughter who fed him daily from her breast ('mamme': breast - 'lokken': suck).

This famous row of towers is completed by that of

## ☼ St Nicholas' Church [ Sint-Niklaaskerk ]

Cataloniëstraat - T. +32 9 234 28 69  
[www.kerk-in-gent.be](http://www.kerk-in-gent.be) - [www.cultuurinkerken.be](http://www.cultuurinkerken.be)

This 13th-century church in Tournai bluestone is one of the most beautiful examples of the Scheldt Gothic style. One of its unique elements is that the tower is not above the entrance, but above the crossing of the nave and transepts. It functions as a sort of natural lantern as the light shines into the transept from the tower.

The current restoration began in 1960 and is still in progress.

## The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb

This unique masterpiece survived the Protestant iconoclasm, fell into French hands under Napoleon and was requisitioned by Nazi Germany during the Second World War. But it has now been hanging peacefully for more than 50 years in the place where it belongs: St Bavo's Cathedral. Though admittedly, the 'Just Judges' panel, which was stolen in 1934, is still replaced by a reproduction.



Sint-Baafskathedraal Gent - Photo: © Lukás - Art in Flanders vzw



**6**  
**Royal Dutch Theatre**  
**[NTGent ⚡]**  
 Sint-Baafsplein 17 - T. +32 9 225 01 01  
 www.ntgent.be

In the façade above the entrance, Apollo and his muses look out over the wonderfully renovated Sint-Baafsplein. Right at the very top, Lady Harmonia keeps an eye on things. Inside the building going back to the end of the 19th century, the NTGent civic theatre, though it is a Ghent institution, looks the world full in the face without restraint.



**4**  
**Masons' Guild Hall**

Sint-Niklaasstraat 2

Opposite St Nicholas' Church, on the other side of the street, is the original 16th-century Masons' Guild Hall. On top of the stepped gable, six dancers turn merrily with the wind. Beneath the building, which is the property of the province of East Flanders and the East Flanders Tourist Office, is a 13th-century cellar.

*The original Masons' Guild Hall, indeed. Because there is also an exact copy on the Graslei. This was rebuilt for the World Exhibition in 1913 using the original plans. As it happens, the original had disappeared behind some ugly walls and had then been... forgotten. Until it was rediscovered during renovation work in 1976.*

**5**  
**Town Hall [Stadhuis ⚡]**

Botermarkt 1

Ghent's town hall resembles an overview of architecture from the fifteenth century through to the eighteenth century. The flamboyant Gothic style of the façade in Hoogpoort contrasts sharply with the rather sober Renaissance style of the Botermarkt side. You can also see many different styles inside the building: the Arsenal Hall with its wooden vaulting, the marvellous Wedding Chapel with the counts of Flanders immortalised in six stained glass windows, the Pacification Hall with its white and black paved labyrinth, a symbol of the quest for justice and happiness, and the Throne Hall, which takes its name from the stately throne on which Joseph II was inaugurated as Duke of Flanders in 1781. The town hall can only be visited with a guide.

**7**  
**Achtersikkel [Achtersikkel ⚡]**

Biezekapelstraat

It is difficult to believe, but less than fifty metres from bustling Sint-Baafsplein you will find an oasis of calm: the Achtersikkel from 1481. With a little luck, your stroll past this beautiful little square with its two towers and well, will be graced by a violin solo or a piano performance by students of Ghent's music academy, which is housed here.

**8**  
**The Castle of Gerald the Devil**  
**[Geraard de Duivelsteen ⚡]**

Geraard de Duivelstraat 1

Despite the name and its grim appearance, the devil has never resided in this 13th-century fortress. Through the centuries, it has been used as a knights' residence, an arsenal, a monastery, a school and a bishop's seminary. In 1623, it became a madhouse for the mentally ill and a home for male orphans. Another part of the building was used as a prison or detention centre.

**9**  
**The Episcopal Palace**

Bisdomein 2

Behind the Castle of Gerald the Devil looms the imposing dome of the National Bank. Opposite is the dazzlingly white Episcopal Palace, finished in 1845. The new Wijdenaard Bridge connects the banks of the Lower Scheldt which was filled in years ago and has only recently been restored to its original state.

**10**  
**Cinema Sphinx**

Sint-Michielselling 3 - T. +32 9 225 60 86  
 www.sphinx-cinema.be

At the eastern end of St Michael's Bridge, you will find *the* place for 'better' cinema. The pleasant brasserie next to it draws you in to sit down and have a good chat.

**KoBra**

KoBra is an acronym for the large-scale refurbishment of Korenmarkt, Belfortstraat and Emile Braunplein. This area in the city centre will undergo a radical makeover and will have completely changed its appearance by the time works are completed in 2012. The eye-catcher will be the multi-purpose open city hall with a large, convivial grand café. And a 300m<sup>2</sup> city park will add a touch of green to the city centre.




**Graslei-site**

Two wonderful rows of houses are reflected in the water of the Leie. Young and old alike enjoy the first rays of sunshine. There is much laughter, lazing about and fun. This is the beating heart of Ghent's city centre.



**St Michael's Bridge  
[ Sint-Michielsbrug 🏰 ]**

Nowhere else can you see so many marvellous buildings in one glance as from St Michael's Bridge. The monumental bridge can itself be better admired from the Graslei.



**Graslei and Korenlei  
[ Gras- en Korenlei 🏠 ]**

The house of the Grain Weighers, the Guildhall of the Free Boatmen, the Spijker... every house on the Graslei has its own history. Together they form the story of the incredible blossoming of Ghent's economy during the Middle Ages. On the other side of the water is the Korenlei. All that remains of some of the original buildings is the outer walls! Behind them is a brand new hotel.



**St Michael's Church  
[ Sint-Michielskerk 🏰 ]**

Sint-Michielsplein - T. +32 9 234 28 69  
www.kerk-in-gent.be - www.cultuurinkerken.be

The steeple of St Michael's Church already in 1440 should have stood out above all the others, but history decided otherwise: the 134 metre high planned 'monument of triumph', has remained at a paltry 24 metres. In 1828, the unfinished tower finally acquired a closed roof. The church contains numerous paintings and sculptures by famous masters, including 'Christ on the Cross' by Anthony Van Dyck.

12

15

14

**Pand [ Pand 🏠 ]**

Onderbergen 1

This 13-century former Dominican friary now belongs to the University of Ghent. Here you can admire, amongst other things, a wonderful collection of stained-glass fragments. The permanent exhibition of full-scale reproductions of works by Hieronymus Bosch is more than worth a visit. This and other collections may be visited upon request.

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**Design museum Gent  
[ Design museum 🏠 ]**

Jan Breydelstraat 5 - T. +32 9 267 99 99  
www.designmuseumgent.be

Behind a charming 18th-century façade lurks a modern, airy building. The central eye-catcher is the enormously tall vase by the Italian designer Andrea Branzi. Temporary expositions supplement the marvellous permanent collection. Also, take a look at the striking toilet wing, even if you don't need to pay a visit.

16

**The School of Yesteryear /  
De School van Toen**

Klein Raamhof 8 - T. +32 9 225 29 03  
www.gent.be/schoolvantoen

Back to the old school benches? The School of Yesteryear is housed in a typical school building from 1901. The permanent collection illustrates how education and teaching was experienced more than 100 years ago.

17

17

**Great Butchers' Hall  
[ Vleeshuis 🏠 ]**

Groentenmarkt 7 - T. +32 9 223 23 24  
www.grootvleeshuis.be

The Great Butchers' Hall was built in 1407. Look up at the beautiful wooden open truss roof and admire the typical Ghent Ganda Ham hanging there. You really should try some! Along with the other specialities in this centre for the promotion of local East Flemish products.

18

**Former Post Office**

Korenmarkt

As soon as the first rays of sunshine announce the arrival of spring, the pavement cafés start appearing on the Korenmarkt. The former post office, built between 1898 and 1909, now houses a shopping centre. Don't forget to admire the beautiful clock tower.



## Gravensteen-site

You are no longer in the historical heart of Ghent (the 'kuip'), but on 's *Gravensgrond* (the count's land). Originally, this area belonged to the count and therefore not to the city. You can get the best 'taste' of the Middle Ages in the splendid Patershol: the old street plan is authentic and the numerous charming little restaurants offer unrivalled culinary variety. Charles V was also born nearby, in the Prinsenhof.



## Castle of the Counts [Gravensteen 🏰]

Sint-Veerleplein - T. +32 9 225 93 06  
[www.gent.be/gravensteen](http://www.gent.be/gravensteen)

'I'll show them who's boss': that's what Philip of Alsace had in mind. So he had the imposing castle rebuilt (1180). Overlooking the city from its battlements high up on the keep, one can sense the feeling of wealth and power that the lord of the castle must have had. Thanks to the movie guide, a unique, interactive computer-controlled guide, this remote history really comes to life. On certain weekends, you may even meet some real knights.

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## Old Fish Market [Vismijn 🏰]

Sint-Veerleplein 5

Opposite the Castle of the Counts on the Sint-Veerleplein lies the monumental gateway (1689) to the Old Fish Market. Neptune keeps watch over the Scheldt (man) and the Leie (woman). At the end of 2010 you will be able to visit the fully renovated complex to obtain, amongst other things, all the tourist information you could desire.



## Patershol [Patershol 🏰]

Thirty years ago, you could buy a little house here for next to nothing. Today, the Patershol is one of the city's most desirable neighbourhoods. For good dining, you can choose from one of the many restaurants which have sprung up in the medieval alleys. From Japanese to Thai, to delicious traditional Flemish cooking, you'll find everything here.

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## The House of Alijn [Huis van Alijn 🏰]

Kraanlei 65 - T. +32 9 269 23 50  
[www.huisvanalijn.be](http://www.huisvanalijn.be)

When you enter the splendid indoor garden of this former hospice from 1363, it seems as if you have left the city. Inside the museum of popular culture, you can go even further back in time and discover in the wonderfully recreated interiors how the ordinary people used to live. Old films from the private collections of the inhabitants of Ghent throw an intimate and surprising light on nostalgia presented in a highly original and contemporary way.

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## Carmelite Friary - Provincial Centre of Art and Culture [Caermersklooster 🏰]

Vrouwebroersstraat 6 - T. +32 9 269 29 10  
[www.caermersklooster.be](http://www.caermersklooster.be)

This friary of the Calced Carmelites goes back to 1329. At the end of the last century, it was fully restored and opened as an exhibition space. Among the things to enjoy is a giant mural.

23

## Augustine Monastery

Academiestraat 1 - T. +32 9 225 16 59

The home of the Augustines was founded in 1296 when the Bishop of Tournai gave these preachers permission to build a monastery. St Stephen's Church has developed into a popular place of pilgrimage where one will find St Rita's listening ear.



## >TIP!

## Prinsenhof [Prinsenhof 🏰]

In the 14th century, Lodewijk van Male swapped the Castle of the Counts, which had grown uncomfortable, for a town house in this neighbourhood. It was here that Charles V was born in 1500. The Prinsenhof, as it was called then (and still is), was around 2 hectares in size and fully walled. Today, hardly anything remains of the enormous complex. However, this does not mean you should bypass the area: it is one of the city's many hidden gems.



## Gravensteen-site

### ☼ Old St Elizabeth Beguinage [ Oud Begijnhof ]

Begijnhofdries  
www.elisabethbegijnhof.be

Ghent has no fewer than three authentic beguinages, all of which are recognised by UNESCO as world heritage sites. This is one of them. Though it is no longer walled and thus became part of the city, it still has a unique atmosphere. Furthermore, it is now more than ever a place of religious tolerance since it contains no fewer than three different churches: Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant.

### 25 Carmelite Monastery

Burgstraat 46 - T. +32 9 225 57 87  
www.karmel-gent.be

The Carmelite friars form a living community in Ghent. The 18th-century monastery church can be visited freely and the adjoining garden by request. Those who enjoy the exceptional peace and quiet can even stay the night here. The guesthouse makes an original base for a stay in the city.

## >TIP! Multicultural Ghent

Turkish pizza or Moroccan pitta, tajine or couscous. Those eager to get to know Ghent in its most colourful way, just have to walk from Oudburg to Sleepstraat and surrender to the temptations of the wonderful mix of cultures.

### 26 Rabot [ Rabot ]

Opgeëistenlaan 1

In 1488, Maximilian of Austria took advantage of a weak point in Ghent's defences to seize the city. When, after 40 days of siege, his army withdrew without having accomplished their mission, the city authorities used the opportunity to strengthen the central building by means of two towers. This splendid building was recently restored.

### 27 New Law Courts

Opgeëistenlaan 401

2007 saw the opening of the new, modern law courts designed by the architect Stéphane Beel. Around 600 people work in this 6-storey building with its eye-catching glass façade.

### 28 Arcatheater [ Arca ]

Sint-Widostraat 4 - T. +32 9 269 37 04  
www.ntgent.be

A theatre in a unique location at the back of the Castle of the Counts. In the bar you are literally suspended above the water.

### 29 Tinnenpot

Tinnenpotstraat 21 - T. +32 9 225 18 60  
www.tinnenpot.be

Yet more traditional theatre pleasure. Young and established performing artists will find the perfect location for their creation in one of the building's seven attractively designed auditoria.

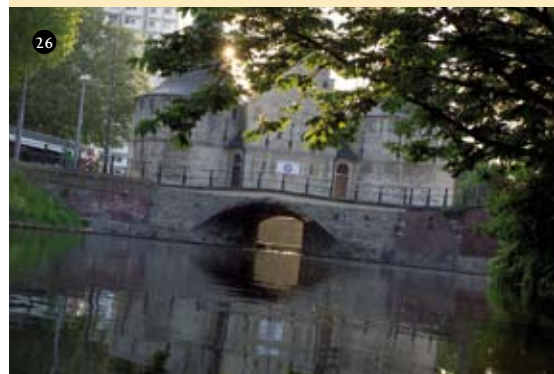
## >TIP!

### 30 Dr. Guislain Museum

(beyond the site)

Jozef Guislainstraat 43 - T. +32 9 216 35 95  
www.museumdrguislain.be

A museum in Belgium's oldest psychiatric hospital, built in 1857: you'd be 'crazy' not to pay it a visit. In this wonderful oasis you will find a permanent collection that illustrates the history of psychiatry and an international collection of outsider art or art brut. The temporary exhibitions are also always worth visiting.



### 31 The World of Kina: the Garden

(beyond the site)

Berouw 55 - T. +32 9 225 05 42  
www.dewereldvankina.be

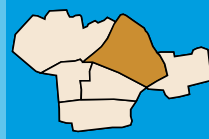
More than 1,000 plant species, a bee colony and live tarantulas in the Garden. Children and youngsters will know where the action is. Brave parents can also tag along.

### 32 Campo Victoria

(beyond the site)

Fratersplein 7 - T. +32 9 223 00 00  
www.campo.nu

An arts centre teeming with ideas. Young artists are given unique opportunities to develop their talents at three different sites: Campo Victoria, Campo Nieuwpoort and Campo Boma. Small-scale or grandiose, national or international, but always with great passion and driven by the creative urge.



## Vrijdagmarkt-site

Jacob van Artevelde became one of Ghent's heroes when he succeeded in reversing the English boycott on wool imports. Thanks to him, the Ghent cloth industry could finally breathe again. It even went on to flourish as never before. Unfortunately, when it later appeared that Edward III was not fulfilling his solemn promises, unrest flared up again and van Artevelde was murdered. From the middle of the Vrijdagmarkt, he has since 1863 and will forever point towards England, the country that both made him great and led to his death.



### Vrijdagmarkt [ Vrijdagmarkt 🚶 ]

In previous centuries, this square – at that time still without the statue of Jacob van Artevelde – was where the greater part of public political and social life took place. It was here that rulers were solemnly received, feasts celebrated and feuds settled. Apart from the Toreken, all the buildings on the Vrijdagmarkt date from the 18th century and the monumental socialist house of the people (Ons Huis, Bond Moyson) even dates from the beginning of the 20th century.

33

### 't Toreken [ 't Toreken 🚶 ]

Vrijdagmarkt 36 - T. +32 9 225 22 25  
www.poeziecentrum.be

Today the 15th-century Toreken, at that time the guild hall of the tanners, is home to the Poetry Centre. Halfway up this small tower is the market clock and on the steeple the mermaid Melusine holds up her mirror to the wind.

34

### The Big Cannon [ Groot Kanon 🚶 ]

Grootkanonplein

This impressive cast-iron cannon weighs 12,500 kg and is known in popular parlance as the 'dulle griet' (Mad Meg). It does have a big mouth but that's as far as the evil goes, as it has never been fired. It was too often used as a rubbish bin or a bed for drunkards (the eponymous café De Dulle Griet proudly sells more than 250 types of beer), so the barrel was permanently closed a few years ago.

## >TIP!

Only real Ghent people know the Werregarenstraatje by name. But ask for 'the graffiti street' and they will all point you in the right direction. We bet you'll get out your camera!



35

### Museum of Industrial Archaeology and Textiles [ MIAT 🚶 ]

Minnemeers 9 - T. +32 9 269 42 00  
www.miat.gent.be

In the Middle Ages, Ghent cloth was known far beyond the national borders. The city remained an important textile centre with an industrial face until the 19th century. The Museum of Industrial Archaeology and Textiles (MIAT) is housed in an old cotton mill and gives a unique picture of the radical technological changes which our society has undergone over the last 250 years. From the upper floor of this light and airy building you can enjoy a wonderful view across the city.

36

### St James' Church [ Sint-Jacobskerk 🚶 ]

Bij Sint-Jacobs - T. +32 9 223 25 26  
www.kerk-in-gent.be

The two towers still date from the Romanesque period (12th century), but since then the church has undergone much devastation, expansion and renovation. The square around it, called Bij Sint-Jacobs, and the Trefpunt café are the true epicentre of the world-famous Ghent Festivities, the annual people's festival in mid-July which really signals the beginning of summer in Ghent.

### Baudelopark [ Baudelopark 🚶 ]

Baudelostraat

In most cities the number of streets keeps on increasing. In Ghent, we get rid of them to make way for greenery. The most recent result of this future-oriented policy is the attractive Baudelopark.

37

### Hof van Rijnove

Onderstraat 22

The restored Hof van Rijnove illustrates the development of seven centuries of domestic culture (from 12th to 19th century) in an authentic Ghent mansion. Between the historic walls, a 'medieval' garden was laid out with a historically authentic range of plants.

38

### Minnemeers NTGent [ Minnemeers 🚶 ]

Minnemeers 8 - T. +32 9 269 36 04  
www.ntgent.be

At this rehearsal and second platform of the civic theatre NTGent, young theatre-makers have a multipurpose hall at their disposal. They are not shy of experimenting here.

39

### Kopergietery

Blekerijstraat 50 - T. +32 9 266 11 44  
www.kopergietery.be

The Kopergietery is a dynamic 'creative centre' for children and adolescents. In this former factory premises, they can work in drama, dance and music

40

### Campo Nieuwpoort [ Nieuwpoorttheater 🚶 ] and Campo Boma (beyond the site)

Nieuwpoort 31-35 - Bomastraat 35  
T. +32 9 223 00 00 - www.campo.nu

A bustling, unconventional hotbed of culture with an emphasis on young people. Together with Campo Victoria, these centres prove that they are more than just the sum of their parts.

41

### Goethals Mills Museum

Meerseniensstraat 20 - T. + 32 9 234 35 00  
www.molensgoethals.be

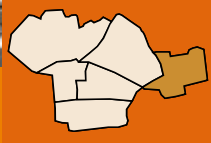
For seven hundred years, millers and brewers worked tirelessly on this site. Today the mills no longer operate, but the last activities were captured on film. The guided tour past the old machinery, the canals and the silos ends in the cosy sandwich and coffee bar. By appointment only.

42

### Intercultural Centre 'de Centrale' (beyond the site)

Kraankindersstraat 2 - T. +32 9 265 98 28  
www.decentrale.be

Music, theatre, film and... culinary specials from all over the world. A passionate plea for a successful multicultural society.



## Portus Ganda-site

Ghent once consisted of an archipelago of no less than 72 islands. Small rivers were constantly being bridged, canalised and diverted. Floods were a matter of course. The open sewers were the cause of many epidemics and from the second half of the 19th century as many of them as possible were closed over. Today, the reverse is happening: watercourses are being reopened to play their part as the pumping arteries of the living city.



### Portus Ganda [Portus Ganda ♣]

Veermanplein / Nieuwbrugkaai / Voorhoutkaai / Rodetorenkaai  
www.portusganda.be

Ganda, as Ghent was originally called, arose at the confluence of the Lys and the Scheldt. On that site there is now a brand new marina for passing boat traffic. The Lower Scheldt, once filled in to make room for the almighty car, has today been restored to its former glory. Bridges and parks, cosy pavement cafés and a wonderfully restored art deco swimming pool all make up one of Ghent's most beautiful (new) little corners.

### 44 Van Eyck Swimming Baths [Zwembad Van Eyck ♣]

Veermanplein 1 - T. +32 9 235 27 40  
Sport line T. +32 9 266 80 00  
www.gent.be

Belgium's oldest indoor swimming pool was fully restored in 2001 so that the splendid art deco design is today more beautiful than ever. Furthermore, the swimming pool also retains its public function as a bathhouse: those without much space at home can pop round and enjoy a long relaxing bath. In the 'Au Bain' lounge bar on the first-floor, you can enjoy a wonderful view of the swimming pool and the marina.

### 43 St Bavo's Abbey [Sint-Baafsabdij ♣]

Voorhoutkaai / Spanjaardstraat

You are on historic ground here. In the 7th century, Amandus van Gent founded St Bavo's Abbey here in an attempt to convert the inhabitants of this city of Ganda. In 1540, Emperor Charles had the Abbey demolished in order to build a fortress in this location, known as Spanjaardenkasteel. The enormous square fortress with its bastions was surrounded by large moats and accommodated 2,500 soldiers. It was demolished in the nineteenth century. Today the abbey's ruins lie submerged amongst the greenery. Neighbourhood residents provide guided tours on Sundays. Ask at the information office for more details!

### Dampoort

Around the busy traffic bottleneck of Dampoort, which is also the location of Ghent's second railway station, modern office buildings and trendy residential areas will soon rise up, providing the neighbourhood with a new impetus. Dampoortstraat is already the destination of choice for alternative shopping, and for an unforgettable party you should ask the way to the famous Culture Club which is well-known to clubbers from afar.

## >TIP!

Ghent is not just a pedestrian-friendly city: cyclists are also treated with due consideration. In the city alone you can follow more than 30 km of signposted cycle paths. Bicycles are of course also a perfect way of exploring the area around the city. You can find out where to hire a bike (or even a tandem!) in the annex with practical information that accompanies this brochure. Brochures with bicycle tours are available from the information office.

## >TIP!

During the evening (and night) the Oude Beestenmarkt buzzes with activity. Many bands have their rehearsal rooms above one of the hip bars. They never go straight home after rehearsals. After all, nearby is the Vlasmarkt with its notorious dancecafés.

### 46 Great Beguinage [Groot Begijnhof ♣]

(beyond the site)

Engelbert Van Arenbergstraat / Jan Roomsstraat  
9040 Sint-Amandsberg - T. +32 9 228 23 08

This exceptionally large beguinage is relatively young: it was built between 1873 and 1874 as a replacement for the St Elizabeth beguinage. In less than two years they succeeded in building eighty houses, fourteen convents, a communal house, an infirmary, a chapel of St Anthony of Padua and a church. The beguines have long since disappeared but the hushed calm is unique – something which many locals know and would actually rather keep to themselves.

### 46 Campo Santo

(beyond the site)

Verkorningsstraat / Visitatiestraat 13  
9040 Sint-Amandsberg

Numerous renowned painters, sculptors and writers went to their final resting place on this 19 metre-high burial mound. However, they had to share it with the traditional Catholic bourgeoisie of Ghent who paid a lot of money to have splendidly sculpted tombs and family vaults installed there. This is a place of rest in more than one sense.

### 47 Illuseum

(beyond the site)

Victor Braeckmanlaan 123 - 9040 Sint-Amandsberg  
T. +32 9 228 28 56 - www.illuseum.be

The illuseum confounds you with tricks of the eye and optical illusions. Just don't believe your eyes!





## **Kouter-site**

If you suddenly decide to wander over the Kouter, make sure it is on Sunday morning. At the weekly flower market, you'll come across the real locals. On arrival they enjoy a delicious espresso and before they go delight in a fresh oyster and glass of white wine at the Blauwe Kiosk.



## **Kouter [Kouter 🚶]**

For centuries the Kouter has been the true meeting place for the people of Ghent. In the Middle Ages it was the site of military parades and jousting tournaments and later of horse fairs and archery competitions. In the 19th century, the well-to-do citizens chose this square for their traditional Sunday stroll, accompanied by a burst of fine music from the bandstand. And that's how it still is today.

## **Flanders Opera Ghent [Opera 🎭]**

Schouwburgstraat 3 - T. +32 9 268 10 11  
[www.vlaamseopera.be](http://www.vlaamseopera.be)

In the first half of the 19th century, rich Ghent industrialists initiated the building of a new and luxurious opera house. It was meant to be the showcase for their newly acquired wealth and no expense was spared. In the splendid, horseshoe-shaped theatre, being seen was just as important as seeing. The impressive chandelier is an attraction in itself, as are the three salons, in all 90 m long.

## **Handelsbeurs [Handelsbeurs concertzaal 🎭]**

Kouter 29 - T. +32 9 265 91 60/65  
[www.handelsbeurs.be](http://www.handelsbeurs.be)

The Handelsbeurs, built in the 18th century, has rapidly developed into the concert hall Ghent had long been waiting for. Pop, rock, singer-songwriters and world music all find this the perfect venue for a standing or seated concert. The foyer, café and toilets are worth a visit in their own right.

## **Veldstraat**

Veldstraat is Ghent's central pedestrian shopping street. Here you'll find all the main retail chains. However, those who can tear their eyes away from the inviting shop windows and look up will see a number of splendid, authentic façades.

## **Museum Arnold Vander Haeghen [Museum Vander Haeghen 🎭]**

Veldstraat 82 - T. +32 9 269 84 60

The interiors of the 18th-century Museum Arnold Vander Haeghen appeal enormously to the imagination. The most attractive rooms include the Chinese Salon and reconstruction of the study of Ghent's Nobel Prize winner in Literature, Maurice Maeterlinck.

## **Hotel d'Hane-Steenhuysse [Hotel d'Hane-Steenhuysse 🎭]**

Veldstraat 55

In his 1767 building application, the German Count Emmanuel Ignace d'Hane asked for permission to rebuild the front of his house, located in the Veldstraat, *for the further adornment of our city*. The result is a splendid façade in typical Ghent rococo style. In 1815, the French king Louis XVIII stayed in this building. Today, on special occasions, you can still admire the luxurious interiors and salons of that period.

## **University Auditorium [Aula 🎭]**

Voldersstraat 9

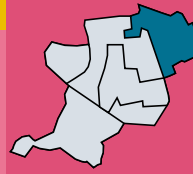
Eight Corinthian pillars crowned with a triangular pediment. In 2000, they inspired the artist Jan Fabre to create an installation which caught the attention of CNN but which received a lot of criticism in Belgium: he wrapped the columns in smoked ham. Unfortunately, the ham did not stay fresh and had to be removed earlier than planned.

## **Law Courts [Justitiepaleis 🎭]**

Koophandelsplein

To solve the permanent lack of space, a modern building for the law courts was erected on the edge of the city (see p. 12). The old, neo-classical style edifice, built between 1836 and 1846, is for the time being also still in use.

# THE ARTS QUARTER



## Zuid-site

Officially, this is called the Graaf Van Vlaanderenplein but all the locals call it *de Zuid* (the South). Trams and buses journey back and forth, bringing residents to the Administrative Centre, where all the municipal services have been centralised, or to the Public Library. The shopping centre opposite houses 40 shops and a supermarket.



## King Albertpark [ Zuidpark 🚶 ]

In the 1930s, a park in neo-baroque style was laid out here on the site of the former Zuidstation. For those entering the city from the motorway, this multi-dimensional park is a pleasant introduction. Tip: go straight to the underground car park and continue your journey on public transport!



## Small Beguinage O.L.V. ter Hoyen [ Klein Begijnhof 🚶 ]

Lange Violettestraat 205 - T. +32 9 224 17 90  
[www.kleinbegijnhof-gent.be](http://www.kleinbegijnhof-gent.be)

The Small Beguinage was founded in 1235. Today, it is one of the best preserved and most attractive beguinages from before the French Revolution.



## St Anne's Church [ Sint-Annakerk 🚶 ]

Sint-Annaplein - T. +32 9 223 80 09  
[www.kerk-in-gent.be](http://www.kerk-in-gent.be)

For years the church (1856) remained hidden behind scaffolding, but you can now – during the services or on special occasions – admire it in its full glory. The monumental murals inside the church give the interior a unique eastern or Byzantine ambience.

57



56

## Capitole [ Capitole 🚶 ]

Graaf van Vlaanderenplein 5 - T. +32 9 233 29 99  
[www.capitolegent.be](http://www.capitolegent.be)

In recent years, this former cinema has been transformed into a Mecca for lovers of musicals. The hall can accommodate 1,500 people and stages cabaret performances, ballet, stand-up comedy, etc.



58

57

## Vooruit Arts Centre [ Vooruit Kunstencentrum 🚶 ]

Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 23 - T. +32 9 267 28 20  
[www.vooruit.be](http://www.vooruit.be)

Dance, theatre, performance, literature and a generous portion of rock 'n' roll. Vooruit has been a household name in Ghent for many years. The spacious art-deco café is a meeting place for all those who are young, progressive and up to the minute.

58

## Minard Theatre [ Minardschouwburg 🚶 ]

Walpoortstraat 15 - T. +32 9 265 88 30  
[www.minard.be](http://www.minard.be)

The founder and architect, Louis Minard, lent his name to the theatre, while Romain De Coninck was the driving force behind it. The much-loved comic keeps a permanent watch over his popular theatre. The wonderful entrance hall has been preserved and the hall fully modernised. In the fine oval bar, theatregoers mull over the evening's performance until the early hours.

59

## The Ghent City Brewery GRUUT

Grote Huidenvettershoek 10 - T +32 9 269 02 69  
[www.gruut.be](http://www.gruut.be)

For centuries Ghent was at the centre of all beer breweries. Now the city brewery is bringing this lost tradition back to life. Whether you're into lager, brown or wheat beer, Gruut always goes down well. Needless to say all group visits to the brewery end with a tasting. Cheers!

## Glass Alley (Glazen straatje)

Pieter Vanderdonckdoorgang

This street is a protected heritage site, which means you always have an excuse to go and take a look. The fact that the girls give you a friendly smile from behind their windows is a pleasant bonus.

60

## Studio Skoop

Sint-Annaplein 63 - T. +32 9 225 08 45  
[www.studioskoop.be](http://www.studioskoop.be)

Ghent's oldest working cinema combines nostalgic cinematic pleasure with modern projection quality. The attractive bar is a favourite place for the locals to stop off for a drink and a chat.



## St.-Pietersplein-site

Ghent is a student city and this is its beating heart. The Book Tower is the symbol of the knowledge accumulated in this university city. Overpoortstraat represents the temptation to which every student is exposed: to reach the 'Overpoort' student restaurant, one must first pass numerous student cafés. Good luck!

## Sint-Pietersplein [ Sint-Pietersplein ✂ ]

Sint-Pietersplein is the city's square for large-scale events. Each year, the Mid-Lent Fair descends on the square. Since 2007 there has been an underground car park. A great many important archaeological discoveries were made in the run-up to its construction. They are symbolised by stainless steel markers.

## 61 Our Lady of St Peter's Church [ O.L.V.-Sint-Pieterskerk ✂ ]

Sint-Pietersplein - T. +32 9 225 44 37  
[www.kerk-in-gent.be](http://www.kerk-in-gent.be)

This imposing church (1629) was built on the foundations of the previous Romanesque abbey church. If it reminds you of Rome, it is no coincidence: the architect Pieter Huyssens was inspired by the great Italian Renaissance churches. The interior is impressive and the art treasures are unique. Not to be missed.



## 62 St Peter's Abbey Arts Centre [ Sint-Pietersabdij ✂ ]

Sint-Pietersplein 9 - T. +32 9 243 97 30  
[www.gent.be/spa](http://www.gent.be/spa)

The refectory wing of St Peter's Abbey is authentically medieval. The splendid garden with its vineyard and ruins is a green oasis in the heart of the city. The St Peter's Abbey Arts Centre holds prestigious internationally-oriented exhibitions every year. You can visit the abbey with a unique movie guide.

## Alison, the secret of the fallen angels

Raphael was found dead in St Peter's Abbey. An accident? Or murder? In seventeen episodes, the digital monk Alison will take you on an exciting journey through the centuries-old passages of the abbey and, with your help, will try to unravel the mystery.



## 63 The world of Kina: the House [ Wereld van Kina - Huis ✂ ]

Sint-Pietersplein 14 - T. +32 9 244 73 73  
[www.dewereldvankina.be](http://www.dewereldvankina.be)

A unique fossil of a pre-historic reptile, a splendid diorama room with native birds and a replica model of Ghent as it was 450 years ago, with sound and lighting effects. The House is a museum where your children will uncover one surprise after another.

## 64 The Book Tower [ Boekentoren ✂ ]

Rozier 9 - T. +32 9 264 38 51  
[www.boekentoren.be](http://www.boekentoren.be)

Ghent's fourth tower is a modernist masterpiece by the Belgian architect Henry Van de Velde, who designed the building in 1933. The 64-metre concrete building has 24 floors that house more than three million books.

## 65 Leopold Barracks [ Leopoldskazerne ✂ ]

Charles de Kerchovelaan / Kunstlaan

With its thick walls, battlements, corner turrets and embrasures, the five-sided barracks still look above all like a fortified stronghold. However, a large part of the building no longer has anything to do with the army. On the contrary: these days the Higher Institute of Fine Arts amongst others has made its home there.

## Muinkpark [ Muinkpark ✂ ]

The modest Muinkpark, laid out in the English landscape style, is the last remnant of the 19th-century Ghent zoo. The surrounding streets still bear the names of the animals who once resided there. Today, you will find their likeness engraved into the ten benches around the park.

## 66 Kinopolis

Ter Platen 12 - T. +32 9 265 06 00  
[www.kinopolis.be](http://www.kinopolis.be)

This was once the largest cinema complex in the world. These days, the 12 screens are only just enough to cater to the demands of Ghent's film-lovers. During the International Film Festival of Flanders, the building very nearly bursts at the seams.



## The Collection of Flemish Art

[www.vlaamsekunstcollectie.be](http://www.vlaamsekunstcollectie.be)

Hieronymus Bosch, Peter Paul Rubens, James Ensor, and many more: their works are on display throughout the world. Nevertheless, nowhere else will you find a fuller picture of these and other world-renowned Flemish artists than in their home country.

The Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp, the Groeningemuseum in Bruges and the Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent tell the story of the visual arts in the southern Netherlands from the 15th to the 20th century. Their collections have shared a parallel historical development and complement each other perfectly. Together they form the Collection of Flemish Art.



## Citadelpark-site

To get from one of the city's two most important art museums to the other, you only have to cross the street. Very handy!

## Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art [S.M.A.K. 🇳🇱]

Citadelpark - T. +32 9 221 17 03  
[www.smak.be](http://www.smak.be)

Dynamic and highly individual. That's Ghent and it also describes its museum of contemporary art. The permanent collection of top national and international works is presented in continuous interaction with original, often daring exhibitions. Keeping a finger on the pulse. But sometimes it's salt on the wound too. You can gradually recover from these many impressions in the museum café.



## Citadelpark

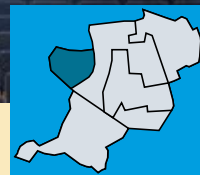
This national park is named after the large-scale Citadel built on this site following the fall of Napoleon. However, this had to be moved when the park was laid as part of the World Exhibition in 1913. Today, you can enjoy its botanical richness even more thanks to the name-plates placed next to all the special trees in 2005.

## Museum of Fine Arts [Museum v. Schone Kunsten 🇳🇱]

Citadelpark - T. +32 9 240 07 00  
[www.mskgent.be](http://www.mskgent.be)

The power and the charm of the 'MSK', which was built in 1798 by Van Rysselberghe and has been completely refurbished in recent years, is the variety of the collection. This ranges from the Middle Ages up to and including the early twentieth century, placing an emphasis on paintings from the Southern Netherlands but without being restricted to them. An auditorium, a library, a children's workshop and a café-restaurant make it into a modern, multifunctional complex where you can spend many happy hours surrounded by things of beauty.





69  
**Ghent University  
 Botanical Garden  
 [ Botanische tuin 🌿 ]**

K.L. Ledeganckstraat 35 - T. +32 9 264 50 73  
[www.plantentuin.ugent.be](http://www.plantentuin.ugent.be)

Yet more flora and fauna on the other side of the Citadelpark. Together with the garden, the tropical and sub-tropical greenhouses belong to the University of Ghent. Student botanists have an enormous variety of living material at their disposal. As a visitor, you can just enjoy the beauty of the many flowers and plants.

70  
**ICC ghent [ ICC ghent 🌿 ]**

Citadelpark - T. +32 9 242 89 00  
[www.iccghent.com](http://www.iccghent.com)

With an auditorium that has room for just under 1,000 people, various multipurpose halls, a spacious entrance hall and a trendy lounge bar, this congress centre offers everything for a successful business event. It is also perfectly located close to the station and the motorway turnoffs.

71  
**Museum for the History  
 of Sciences**

(beyond the site)  
 Krijgslaan 281 (S30) - T. +32 9 264 49 30  
[www.ScienceMuseum.Ugent.be](http://www.ScienceMuseum.Ugent.be)

Nothing can halt the advance of science, and it is continually evolving. This is wonderfully illustrated by an extensive collection of scientific instruments used at the university over the past 200 years.

**Millionaires' Quarter**

(beyond the site)

The Millionaires' Quarter is a unique district: it was here that leading architects from the inter-war period built some of their most prestigious projects. Many of them also owned houses here as a showcase. And although you'll come across the most diverse building styles, the area nevertheless radiates its own unique sort of unity. The Millionaires' Quarter, home of the rich locals, has been protected as a cityscape since 1994.

**>TIP!  
 Bijloke-site**

72  
**City Museum Ghent [ STAM 🌿 ]**

Godshuizenlaan 2 - T. +32 9 269 87 90  
[www.stamgent.be](http://www.stamgent.be)

Ghent has something from every period of history and that also applies to the infrastructure of the STAM: the 14th-century abbey, the 17th-century monastery and adjoining infirmary, the 20th-century gatehouse and the new 21st-century development will together form the City Museum that opens in October 2010. The past, present and future of the city will be presented clearly and enthrallingly so that the STAM becomes *the* place to start a cultural voyage of discovery in Ghent.

73  
**De Bijloke Gent Music Centre  
 [ Concertzaal de Bijloke 🌿 ]**

Jozef Kluyskensstraat 2 - T. +32 9 233 68 78  
[www.debijloke.be](http://www.debijloke.be)

This medieval infirmary was first transformed into a contemporary concert hall. Attending a concert here is a treat for the ear and eye. After years of conversions and alterations, the concert hall has developed into a genuine music centre. For jazz lovers, De Bijloke Gent Music Centre is synonymous with the renowned Gent Jazz Festival.

# EXPERIENCE IT IN GHENT



When you have read this entire brochure and seen all the sights with your own eyes, you could pass as a guide. But then again...

The Royal Guides' Association of Ghent and East Flanders gives an ideal introduction to the city. From May till the end of October, you can participate in their walks departing from the inquiry desk. The culinary theme walks by Vízit on Saturdays are right up your alley if you feel like a relaxed walk, with a stop in due course for food and drinks. Gandante's searches bring out the detective in you and make you discover the city in a playful way.

On foot you will get a fine view of the city's façades and by boat often of its hidden sides too. If you would rather be driven, take a carriage or, if there is a group of you, a vintage 1971 tram.

Those who would rather do it on their own can hire a bike, a canoe or even... a mini-yacht.

## WHAT? WHERE? WHEN?

For all practical information, please refer to [www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be) or our information office.



## GUIDED TOURS

### Royal Association of Guides, Ghent and East Flanders

T. +32 9 233 07 72 (info) - [info@gidsenbond-gent.be](mailto:info@gidsenbond-gent.be)  
[www.gidsenbond-gent.be](http://www.gidsenbond-gent.be)

Well up in welcoming visitors.

### Vízit

T. +32 9 233 76 89 - [info@vizit.be](mailto:info@vizit.be) - [www.vizit.be](http://www.vizit.be)

Original theme walks on measure.

### Gandante

T. +32 9 375 31 61 - [info@gandante.be](mailto:info@gandante.be)

[www.gandante.be](http://www.gandante.be)

The city from an unexpected angle.

### BOEKjeBEZOEK

T. +32 9 269 60 04 - [info@boekjebezoek.be](mailto:info@boekjebezoek.be)

[www.boekjebezoek.be](http://www.boekjebezoek.be)

Guided visits to museums, exhibitions, monuments and events.

## BOAT TRIPS

### Boat trip on Ghent's inland waterways

#### Boat in Gent

Departure: Kraanlei.

T. +32 478 63 36 30 - [info@boatingent.be](mailto:info@boatingent.be)

[www.boatingent.be](http://www.boatingent.be)

#### De Bootjes van Gent - Rederij Dewaele

Departure: Korenlei.

T. +32 9 223 88 53 - T. +32 9 229 17 16

[info@debootjesvangent.be](mailto:info@debootjesvangent.be)

[www.debootjesvangent.be](http://www.debootjesvangent.be)

#### Gent Watertoerist bvba / DMC Gent Incoming

Departure: Graslei.

T. +32 9 269 08 69 - [info@gent-watertoerist.be](mailto:info@gent-watertoerist.be)

[www.gent-watertoerist.be](http://www.gent-watertoerist.be)

#### Rederij De Gentenaer

Departure: Vleeshuisbrug Groentenmarkt.

T. +32 473 48 10 36 - [info@rederijdegentenaer.be](mailto:info@rederijdegentenaer.be)

[www.rederijdegentenaer.be](http://www.rederijdegentenaer.be)

### Viadagio vzw

Ecological boat trips on demand for at least 6 persons.

Departure: Zuivelbrug.

T. +32 9 225 07 86 - [ipman@belgacom.net](mailto:ipman@belgacom.net)

[www.viadagio.be](http://www.viadagio.be)

### Cruise on the Lys from Ghent to its surroundings

#### Benelux Rederij

Departure: Recollettenlei 32.

T. +32 9 225 15 05 - [benelux.rederij@proximedia.be](mailto:benelux.rederij@proximedia.be)

[www.benelux-rederij.com](http://www.benelux-rederij.com)

#### Mini-yachts for rent

#### Minerva Boat Company

Departure: Coupure Rechts 2a.

T. +32 3 779 67 77 - [www.minervaboten.be](http://www.minervaboten.be)

## CARRIAGES AND TRIPS IN HORSE-DRAWN COVERED WAGONS

Departure: Sint-Baafsplein

T. +32 475 82 16 20 - [koetsenvangent@skynet.be](mailto:koetsenvangent@skynet.be)

[www.koetsenvangent.be](http://www.koetsenvangent.be)

## BICYCLE RENTAL

### Station Gent-Sint-Pieters

Koningin Maria Hendrikaplein 1 - T. +32 9 241 22 24

### Biker

Steendam 16 - T. +32 9 224 29 03

[biker-botterman@skynet.be](mailto:biker-botterman@skynet.be)

### Max Mobiel vzw

Voskenslaan 27 - T. +32 9 242 80 46

[max-mobiel@gent.be](mailto:max-mobiel@gent.be) - [www.max-mobiel.be](http://www.max-mobiel.be)



## PANORAMAS

Suppose that during your visit to the city you were only allowed to take three photos. Then let it be the following three: one from St Michael's Bridge, the only place in Ghent where you can capture the three towers in a row. For the second photo, turn 90° to the left and focus the lens on the Graslei. The combination of youngsters socialising and the background of an impressive row of historical houses, with the imposing Castle of the Counts as a backdrop, creates a unique scene. For the third photo, you need to go a little higher. Climb the 386 steps of the Belfry and Ghent will be at your feet.

# SPORT

Ghent is also the place to empty your mind and let your body take over.

When the weather's fine, the beach at the Blaarmeersen sports and recreation park is the place to be. Apart from a large lake for swimming, surfing, diving and waterskiing, there is also an athletics track, a roller-skating track, a skate park, mini-golf course, football pitches, squash and tennis courts and the only five-star camping site in the Ghent area. Indoor swimming is also an option in one of the city's four covered swimming pools.



In the borough of Drongen, you will find a genuine golf school.

Not far to go for top-level sport either: Ghent has its own top sports arena (with an adjoining hotel)! There are another 8 municipal sports centres for a wide range of sports.

Those who would rather scream their lungs out can spend an evening supporting the KAA Gent football team or the Optima Gent basketball team.

## Sports Department

Zuiderlaan 13 - T. +32 9 266 80 00  
[www.gent.be/sport](http://www.gent.be/sport)

## Blaarmeersen Sports and Recreation Park

Zuiderlaan 5 - T. +32 9 266 81 70  
[www.blaarmeersen.be](http://www.blaarmeersen.be)

## Flanders Top gymnastics Hall and Top Sports Hall

[www.topsporthal.be](http://www.topsporthal.be)



## > TIP!

If you love flowers, then get up an hour earlier on Sunday morning: the flower market on the Kouter has been around for centuries.

A little further on, dozens of small bookstalls gather on Ajuinlei and bric-a-brac sellers display their bargains on Sint-Jacobsplein.

Info: Stadsbedrijf de Markten en Foren van Gent  
T. +32 9 221 45 28

## Free market tour with the Belleman, Ghent's town crier

Are you a born market trader? From May to September, a specially devised Sunday-morning tour will show you the city's many markets.

Info: Orde van de Belleman  
[www.towncriers.be](http://www.towncriers.be)

# SHOPS AND MARKETS

In Ghent, you are also in the right place for commercial temptations. You will most definitely find something to your taste in the many shopping streets. In addition to the large chain stores, there are original shops and small boutiques which offer a wide and surprising range of products. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday you will certainly come across one of the many markets where you will find food and clothing, and also pets, antiques and curiosities, art and books. You therefore have no excuse to head home without a souvenir.





## THE NATIVE OF GHENT IS A BURGUNDIAN BON VIVANT

And that is something you'll certainly see for yourself: the number of cafés and restaurants is virtually endless. To pick out just a few here would do a disservice to the others. For further information, you can always apply to the inquiry office.

If you want to try the typical specialities of the city and the province, you should head for the Great Butchers' Hall (see p.10). There you can taste and buy everything.

### THE NIGHT IS YOUNG

The three Michelin stars Ghent received for its illuminations are living proof that if you don't stay at least one night, you haven't really visited Ghent at all.

Because although the city is very beautiful during the day, when darkness falls it comes to life for a second time. The splendid, carefully planned illumination of the buildings and monuments in the city centre will ensure a fairytale snapshot. And another. And another.

With the 'Light Plan Ghent' walking route, you'll be able to discover them all.

And it's not just the lighting that is fantastic. The social and cultural nightlife dazzles as never before. You can stop off in one of the city's many small cafés. Have we already mentioned that in the average Ghent café you can (or must) choose from countless different types of Belgian beer? The city map shows the streets where it all happens at night.

### A CITY OF FESTIVALS, FESTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Anyone who dares to visit Flanders' most agreeable city in the second half of July will land right in the middle of a sensually stimulating popular festival. Performances, street theatre, funfairs and children's entertainment, an opening parade and a closing concert until the early hours. During the Ghent Festivities the city explodes with life for ten whole days.

But it still sparkles like a glass of Sunday-morning champagne for the rest of the year too. Music, theatre, exhibitions, events and an internationally renowned annual film festival: it's impossible to be bored in Ghent.



#### Jazz & Sounds

March

a spin-off from Gent Jazz, with the focus on contemporary creation.

#### The Ghent Festivities

the week of the 21st July  
ten days of fun and *joie de vivre* for young and old alike.

#### The Gent Jazz Festival

July

the best that jazz has to offer.

#### The Festival of Flanders

September/October

the power of classical music.

#### The International Film Festival of Flanders Ghent

October

film event focusing on music.

#### The Six Days of Ghent

November

classic track-cycling event.

#### The Ghent Floralties

every five years - April 2010

royal flower festival.

#### Festival of Light

biannual - January 2011

an art tour that throws new light on the city.



# HANDY RESOURCES FOR EXPLORING THE CITY:



- A free map with walks in eight languages – Dutch, French, German, English, Spanish, Italian, Russian and Japanese – will introduce you to the historic city centre and can be obtained on request from our information office. The map can also be downloaded from the website, [www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be).

- Four cycling routes highlight different aspects of our city. Besides 'Urban religious heritage' and 'Green Inner City', we now also offer 'Rise of a City by the Water' and 'A Green Belt around the City'. Each route will take the visitor on a tour of lesser-known beauty spots in Ghent. The route descriptions can be purchased at [www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be). If you own a bicycle sat nav, you can download the route free of charge as a GPX file.



- The website [www.citytripplanner.be](http://www.citytripplanner.be) will put together a customised visit to Ghent for you in no time at all. It will chart a route based on your answers to a few simple questions. Adapt the trip to suit your needs, print it out or download it to your own mobile device.

- Give your walk an added dimension with a multimedia sat nav-directed guide. Along the route, you will see and listen to cultural-historic information, thrilling tales and fun anecdotes about the sights of Ghent. You can also download this guide at [www.visitgent.be](http://www.visitgent.be).

## GOOD TO KNOW:

**Ghent's city centre has the largest pedestrian area in Belgium.**

The car is taboo there and if you don't want to risk a fine, you had better follow the P-route. This will automatically lead you to one of the 9 car parks less than 300 metres from the city centre. You can also use the P&R car parks outside the city. You won't have to wait long: a scheduled bus or tram service will take you into the centre.

**You can easily reach Ghent by public transport.** From St Peter's, Ghent's main station, there are connections to every Belgian city and a direct line to the airport at Zaventem. You can connect with the European high-speed train network by an easy transfer at Brussels South or at the French city of Lille. There are direct fast connections to Paris every day by Thalys train.



Public transport in the city is well organised. Buses and trams will take you to every possible destination in and around Ghent from early in the morning till late at night. The night buses on Friday and Saturday evenings are free of charge!

Both the ticket for one ride ('biljet') as the one for several rides ('Lijnkaart') are much cheaper bought in advance than on the bus or tram. They are available at the newsagent's, supermarkets, some local shops and at ticket-dispensing machines at some stops. You devalue the ticket in the yellow machine on the bus or tram.

## CHECKLIST

Use this handy list to ensure that you don't miss any of our great city's special highlights.

- A visit to St Bavo's Cathedral and 'The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb' triptych with an audio guide.
- A visit to Gravensteen Castle. Enjoy a splendid view of the city from the top of the keep.
- A summer climb to the top of the Belfry, and another splendid panoramic view. And you'll get some good exercise, too!
- A boat trip in the city centre, followed by a drink on one of the many café terraces along Graslei and Korenlei.
- An evening walk in the beautifully illuminated historic city centre.
- A visit to one of the museums, each outstanding in its own field. Just choose one to suit your own interests.
- A morning walk and oyster tasting in the Sunday flower market.



For more information feel free to contact the organizations listed below  
Our staff are at your disposal!

### **Tourist Office Inquiry desk**

Belfry (Raadskelder) - Botermarkt 17A  
T. +32 9 266 56 60  
(every workday: 8.15 am > 4.45 pm)  
visit@gent.be - www.visitgent.be

15 March > 14 October: 9.30 a.m.> 6.30 pm  
15 October > 14 March: 9.30 a.m. > 4.30 pm  
Closed on 1/1 and 25/12

Accessible to wheelchair users

### **NEW ADDRESS**

From the end of 2010, we will be happy to welcome you to our new information office in the Oude Vismijn (Old Fish Market) opposite the Castle of the Counts (Sint-Veerleplein 5).

### **Gentinfo**

T. +32 9 210 10 10 - www.gent.be/gentinfo  
Monday tot Saturday: 8 am > 7 pm

### **Toerisme Oost-Vlaanderen**

Sint-Niklaasstraat 2  
T. +32 9 269 26 00 - www.tov.be  
Monday to Friday: 9 am > 12 noon  
and 1.15 pm > 4.45 pm

Lay-out / James & Co  
Text / Conception  
Photography / Benny De Grove - James & Co  
Printing / Hoorens Printing nv  
Publisher / Lieven Decaluwe,  
alderman for Culture, Tourism and Festivities.  
Stadhuis, Botermarkt 1, 9000 Gent.



'Investing in your future'  
Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013  
Part-financed by the European Union  
(European Regional Development Fund)  
The document reflects the author's views. The INTERREG IVA  
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### **Accessibility to the disabled**

Are you looking for reliable information about the accessibility of hotels, museums, features?  
The information line 'Toegankelijk Reizen' (Accessible Travel) will gladly answer your personal queries.

Open on working days from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Grasmarkt 61 - 1000 Brussels - Belgium  
T. +32 70 23 30 50 - F. +32 70 23 30 51  
info@toegankelijkreizen.be  
www.toegankelijkreizen.be