



Flanders
State of the Art

Mechelen

**ACCESSIBLE
FOR EVERYONE**

A city walk which takes
in the Burgundian and
contemporary sights in
Mechelen.

VISITFLANDERS



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARGARET.

Welcome to the walking city of Mechelen. Historical monuments, eye-catchers nestled among the greenery, charming locations near the water? Everything lies within an accessible (walking) distance.

We are focussing the spotlights on a golden era in the story of Mechelen: the Burgundian period. The time of Margaret of Austria and Margaret of York. Two fascinating women who made their mark on this city on the Dijle. This walk will follow the footsteps of these strong women.

Just imagine... 500 years ago, Mechelen was the capital city of the Netherlands. It was the location of the court, the Grand Council, and was home to the Burgundian noblemen. In short, Mechelen was a hugely important location. This golden age left many traces in the city. Today, you can discover the city palaces, historical churches, wooden façades and richly decorated guildhalls.

Feeling thirsty? Release your inner Burgundian and enjoy a Gouden Carolus, the beer that has put Mechelen on the world map!

Older tourists, pedestrians with a temporary or permanent disability or those with special requirements in terms of comfort or care can also visit Mechelen without worrying. This brochure was created in collaboration with VISITFLANDERS, Inter, Stad Mechelen and Visit Mechelen. It offers all of the information you'll need to prepare your visit to Mechelen. The walk around the famous attractions starts at the Schepenhuis and is 2,5 km long.

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HOW SHOULD YOU USE THIS BROCHURE?

We created an attractive route with a minimum of obstacles. You'll find many small cobbled streets in the historical centre of Mechelen. This walk is largely on cobblestones, but usually they are flat and evenly laid. There is often an additional route that is more accessible. Rounded cobblestones were avoided to the greatest extent. The handy removable map with descriptions tells you exactly which route you should take to avoid obstacles.

Every aspect of an accessible tourist visit to Mechelen was mapped out. This brochure provides information about museums and attractions, pubs, restaurants and public toilets. The numbers on the map refer to more detailed information in the brochure itself. You can also read all about accessible

accommodation, care, mobility aids, transport and parking.

Our information is based on objective expert inspections on the spot. For more detailed information about each building or site, you can view the detailed report on **www.toevla.be** (available in Dutch only). Some of the locations were added based on tips and good experiences of people with disabilities.

We do not claim that all listed initiatives are autonomously wheelchair accessible. We made a selection of the more accessible businesses and facilities in Mechelen. On the basis of the descriptions, you can decide for yourself which locations are more or less suitable or which preparations you can make to make it work.

HANDY TIP



Tourist buildings that are not (entirely) accessible can be viewed on **www.virtualmechelen.be** as a 360° image, with all the tiniest details. We will indicate these buildings in the brochure with this icon.

VISIT AND EXPERIENCE

The detailed descriptions show to what degree a certain attraction or parts of the attraction are accessible to visitors with limited mobility. They also indicate which obstacles you can encounter or where you might possibly need a helping hand. If an attraction or museum has amenities for visitors with a visual or learning disability, this is also stated and indicated by means of the following headings:



**Facilities/possible obstacles
for visitors with limited mobility**



**Facilities for visitors
with a learning disability**



**Facilities for people
with visual impairments**



**Facilities for deaf
or hearing impaired persons**

Any questions or remarks on the route or information in the brochure?

Let us know via

accessible@visitflanders.com

RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS AND PUBLIC TOILETS

Using the thumb system for the most important measurement data and the detailed pictures of the adapted toilets you can decide if a cafe, restaurant or toilet is suitable for you. Because of continuous changes in restaurants, cafes and toilets, it is possible that some information may be out of date. We therefore recommend you contact the business before your visit.

If you note that a location has been moved, renovated or closed, you can notify this fact to **Inter** at **sint-niklaas@inter.vlaanderen** or **+32 3 766 49 68**.



accessible



accessible with assistance



this is an access problem



n.a.

not applicable



ACCOMMODATION, INFORMATION OFFICES AND VISITOR CENTRES

For accommodation, information offices and visitor centres VISITFLANDERS has developed accessibility labelling:



The label A+ means that the building is accessible in a comfortable and independent way.



The label A means that we consider the building to be basically accessible; that it can be used by most people with limited mobility, but that it is possible that extra effort or a helper is required.

LEARN MORE?

Learn more about the accessibility labels?

Navigate to
[www.visitflanders.com/
accessibility](http://www.visitflanders.com/accessibility)



VISIT & EXPERIENCE

On the walk

1. Aldermen's House
/ Tourist information office
2. Statue 'Our Margret'
3. Grote Markt
4. Statue 'Opsinjoorke'
5. Town hall
6. Rik Wouters garden
7. Church of St. Peter and St. Paul
8. Palace of Margaret of York
9. Palace of Margaret of Austria
10. 't Schipke
11. Hof van Busleyden
12. Church of St. John the Baptist
and St. John the Evangelist
13. Klapgat
14. Groen Waterke
15. Archbishop's Palace
16. St. Rumbold's Cathedral
and St. Rumbold's Tower

17. Statue 'Den Uil'
18. Cultuurplein
19. De Cellekens
20. Melaan
21. Haverwerf
22. Lamot site + Vismarkt
23. Hof van Cortenbach
24. Hof van Schoofs
25. IJzerenleen

Close to the walk

26. Kazerne Dossin
27. Toy museum
28. Church of
Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-over-de-Dijle
29. Basilica of
Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-van-Hanswijk

Not to be missed

30. ZOO Planckendael

On the walk

1

ALDERMEN'S HOUSE / TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE The oldest town hall



The Gothic Aldermen's Hall is one of Flanders' oldest town halls. The aldermen would often meet in open air before this building was erected. A larger wing was added onto the thirteenth-century building in Schoenmarkt in 1375. It was here that Charles the Bold founded the Parliament of Mechelen in 1473. As a result, Mechelen became the legal centre of the Burgundian Netherlands. The Grand Council, the successor to the Mechelen Parliament, was located here between 1504 and 1616. Afterwards the gunners' guild of the "colveniers" held its guild meetings in the hall. It was subsequently used as a theatre, a fencing school, a prison, an archaeological museum and a municipal archive. Since 2018 the building is home to the tourist

information office of Visit Mechelen.

The building is accessed via an automatic sliding door and plateau lift. The spaces are a little narrow here and there but are passable. The different floors are accessed by lift. The reception desk and the experience elements are accessible for wheelchairs. There is also an adapted toilet. The text of the Burgundian app has been narrated for blind and visually impaired persons. Contrasts and fonts have also been applied.

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2

SCULPTURAL MECHELEN

'Our Margret' – What a woman she was



You can find "Our Margret" or "Ons Margriet" as the locals call her, in Schoenmarkt, in between St. Rumbold's Tower and the Aldermen's House. She is of course Margaret of Austria, the governess of the Netherlands (1506-1530) and what a woman she was. She had a huge impact on the city. In 1849, Jozef Tuerlinckx received the commission to create a large statue of Margaret of Austria. Many of the cities in the newly-established nation chose to honour their "national heroes" with statues. But Mechelen was the only Bel-

gian city to choose a woman. Initially, Margaret's statue was installed in Grote Markt. She was moved to her current location when the weight of her statue proved too much for the underground car park that was built in the square. The governess now has a better view of Grote Markt, from her new location, which now looks larger than ever.

The statue is easily accessible. The surface is constructed of small, fairly smooth cobbles.

3

GROTE MARKT

A centuries-old square



For centuries, Grote Markt has been the main square in Mechelen's city centre. It is dominated by St. Rumbold's Tower, which you can see from wherever you stand. The town hall stands at the opposite end. Don't forget to have a look at the houses that line Grote Markt. These historic dwellings date from different eras and were built in different styles, including the sixteenth-century Renaissance and the eighteenth-century Rococo. Huis Keulen ("House Cologne" at no. 26) is an interesting example of early sixteenth-century civilian

Brabant Gothic. According to some, Mechelen's city architect Rombout II Keldermans designed this step-gabled house. He was widely regarded as one of the most important architects of the Brabant Gothic and was the city's municipal architect at the time of its construction.

The surface is constructed of small, fairly smooth cobbles. You can cross the Grote Markt without encountering any thresholds.

SCULPTURAL MECHELEN

Opsinjoorke – The story of a doll



The bronze statue in front of the town hall is called Opsinjoorke and represents a doll from 1647, which the people of Mechelen carry with them in processions and parades. The doll is tossed in the air and caught in a large linen cloth. But what does it all mean? Originally the doll was called Sotscop ("Crazy head") or Vuilen Bruidegom ("Dirty groom"), a reference to drunkards who abused their wives. They are publicly and symbolically punished for their bad behaviour, with this doll. But where did the name Opsinjoorke come from? For that, we have to travel back in time to 4 July 1775. On that occasion,

Sotscop landed in the crowd that lined the streets for the procession for the millennium celebrations of the veneration of St. Rumbold in the city. An Antwerper in the crowd fended off the doll that fell on top of him whereupon the crowd immediately accused him of trying to steal Sotscop. Punches flew. As the Sotscop had fallen on a "Sinjoor" (the nickname of the Antwerpers), he is since called Opsinjoorke.

The statue is easily accessible. The surface is constructed of small, fairly smooth cobbles.



5

TOWN HALL

A town hall from two eras



The tumultuous history of the current town hall starts with an early fourteenth-century cloth hall (the section to the right). The cloth hall was supposed to have a belfry, which was the symbol of urban power, like the cloth hall in Bruges. This is where the city kept important documents that were relevant to the city and where guards stood watch over the city. But Mechelen's belfry was never completed. In the fourteenth century, the cloth trade soon declined and the city ran out of money for the completion of the tower. St. Rumbold's Tower was used as a belfry instead. The unfinished belfry of the town hall was used as a prison instead. To the left of the belfry, you can see the Palace of the Great Council. But the council never convened here. This wing was only completed in the early twentieth century, according to the original sixteenth-century plans of the

master architect Rombout Keldermans, with some neo-Gothic additions. Have a look at the 36 medallions on the side of the building in Befferstraat, which portray several rulers, from Pepin of Landen (622-639) right up to Philip the Good, the Duke of Burgundy (1478-1506).

Mechelen's town hall courtyard is accessible for visitors. Both access paths are constructed in cobblestones. On the side of the Befferstraat these are flat cobblestones; along the side of the Grote Markt they are slightly more rounded. Most of the threshold-free courtyard is constructed in flat cobblestones. There is also a public bathroom with adapted toilet, directly accessible from the courtyard. The Keldermanszaal is also easily accessed, directly from the courtyard.

Grote Markt 21, 2800 Mechelen



6

RIK WOUTERS GARDEN

A tribute to a Mechelen artist



The Rik Wouters Garden, a small city garden, pays tribute to this Mechelen artist. Here you can relax as you gaze at the canal that was opened up again. There is a bronze bust of the artist in the park and the street artist Gijs Van Hee created a striking mural, which is inspired by Wouters's well-known, exuberant sculpture of The Mad Maiden. The location of the garden, which you can get to

from Befferstraat or Rik Woutersstraat, is no coincidence. The artist lived in his parents' home (at no. 41-43) in Rik Woutersstraat for ten years.

The Rik Wouters Garden is easily accessed, without thresholds, via good paths.

A.t.h. of Befferstraat 38, 2800 Mechelen

7

PALACE OF MARGARET OF AUSTRIA

A hub of art and science



In 1507, Margaret of Austria moved to Mechelen, after becoming governess of the territory. Under Margaret, Mechelen became the capital of the Low Countries. Her newly-built city palace, Court of Savoy, was one of the first buildings with Renaissance elements in the Low Countries. It was designed by the prominent Mechelen architects Antoon and Rombout Keldermans. The court was a meeting place for humanists, scientists and artists. In 1616, the Great Council moved into the building. Until then, it had held its sessions in the Aldermen's House. Since the nineteenth century, the building is

occupied by the court of first instance. Margaret's coat of arms is still displayed on the façade, alongside her cousin's, Emperor Charles V, and a sculpture of Lady Justice.

The building cannot be accessed from this side. You can reach the courtyard via the entrance to the court building at Voochtstraat 7, but the route includes several thresholds and a steep slope. During this walk you will mainly see the exterior in the Keizerstraat.

Keizerstraat 20, 2800 Mechelen



PALACE OF MARGARET OF AUSTRIA

8

PALACE OF MARGARET OF YORK **A bishop's palace becomes a theatre**

Initially this was the location of “Hof van Kamerijk”, the palace of Bishop John VI of Burgundy. In 1480, Margaret of York, who was the widow of the Burgundian duke Charles the Bold, transformed the residence into a real palace. Her court attracted many powerful people to Mechelen, which only enhanced the city's reputation. The Jesuits used the remnants of this palace, also called “Imperial Court” because Charles V spent his youth here, as a convent in the seven-

teenth century. In the nineteenth century, the building was transformed into a city theatre. You can still spot Margaret's diamond-shaped coat of arms on the façade (to the right of the entrance), alongside that of her husband.

The building is not freely accessible. So you will only see the outside during this walk.

Keizerstraat 3, 2800 Mechelen



CHURCH OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL

Margaret's church



During the years she lived in Mechelen, Margaret of Austria had a special relationship with the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, which no longer exists. It was located close to the Palace of Margaret of Austria. A wooden bridge connected Margaret's palace with her own prayer space in the medieval church. Her intestines were buried here after her death. When the church was demolished at the end of the eighteenth century, the parish church relocated to the vacant, Baroque Jesuit church on the opposite side of the street. The lead urn with Margaret's intestines moved to the "new" Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, where it was given a new place,

near the main altar.

There are four steps at the entrance. Unfortunately, there is no alternative entrance. Both the crossing and the walking route, from the crossing to the entrance of the church, are equipped with guide lines. The visitor areas inside are accessible (i.e. without a threshold). You can visit the church virtually via www.virtualmechelen.be.

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'T SCHIPKE

World-famous

Het Schipke actually consists of two houses: a corner house and the adjacent house in Frederik de Merodestraat. They were only combined during their renovation in 1772 in the run-up to the grandiose festivities to mark the 1000th anniversary of the death of St. Rumbold. This also explains their current Rococo appearance. This striking corner house became worldfamous

as it was occupied by Jef Denyn's internationally acclaimed carillon school from 1947 until 2013. The school has since moved to a new building in Bruul.

You will only see the exterior of the building. The route is free of thresholds and constructed in small, smooth cobblestones.



HOF VAN BUSLEYDEN

Burgundians, the Renaissance and our time



Shortly after 1500, Hieronymus van Busleyden was an important humanist in the Netherlands. He built a magnificent palatial residence for himself in Mechelen, as a member of the Great Council of Mechelen, for his vast collection of books and art. Here he received prominent intellectuals, such as Erasmus and Thomas More. While the house's Gothic style is rather traditional, several elements also reveal the mindset of a man who was inspired by the new ideas of the Renaissance on his European travels. The new Museum Hof van Busleyden introduces its visitors to Mechelen's Burgundian past and how it still impacts the modern-day city today.

The museum is easily accessible via the courtyard garden along Sint-Janstraat. There is a lowered counter that is accessible for wheelchairs. The passages are sufficiently wide and the doors open automatically. The floors are accessible via a good lift. Gentle slopes and an innovative plateau lift bridge any differences in levels between the galleries. Most of the experience elements and exhibits are easily accessible and usable. Most of the gallery texts are easy to read. The shop is also accessible although the furniture is

somewhat high. There is an adapted toilet with ample space and grab rails. Portable stools and a wheelchair are available. There are various resting points throughout the museum. There is an audio induction loop system at the reception desk. You'll find a mixture of sound and images everywhere. The main spoken films feature subtitles. The lift has an audible and visual signal and the buttons are also labelled in braille. Most of the time there are clear guide strips and contrasts, such as lines in LED lighting or differences in colour. This is slightly more difficult to achieve in a room that is predominantly white and in the darker room containing the Enclosed Gardens. Signage is clear and also tactile to some extent. A system of letters, colours and symbols is used to keep everything simple and recognisable. In the next phase, the range of facilities for visitors with a visual and auditory impairment will continue to be developed, for example via modified audio tours and the heritage app.

Sint-Janstraat 2a, 2800 Mechelen

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www.hofvanbusleyden.be

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

A treasury and a church



The Church of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist – a Gothic building with a Baroque interior – was built from the end of the fourteenth century until the mid-fifteenth century. Two larger than life patron saints stand guard at the foot of the western tower: the murals represent St. Christopher who protected the faithful from an unexpected death and St. George who fought evil in the form of a dragon. They can only be visited with a guide. St. John's Parish was one of the wealthiest parishes in Mechelen. After the Great Council moved to Court of Savoy, Margaret of Austria's former palace, many counsellors relocated to the parish. They invested both in the parish and the church. Rubens's Baroque triptych The Adoration of the Magi, on the main altar, is perhaps the most resplendent of the church's many treasures.

The entrance to the west tower is wide and there are no thresholds. The access point behind the spacious portal has heavy access doors, but there is plenty of room for manoeuvre. The church is very spacious with plenty of circulation space in the side aisles, the main aisle and the transepts. The three-aisled nave and the transepts are on the same level. The Sacrament chapel and the chancel are two steps higher, but a slope has been installed. You may need some assistance, however. Most of the sights are visible from the side aisles, the main aisle and the transepts. You can visit the church and the murals virtually via www.virtualmechelen.be.

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HOF VAN BUSLEYDEN



13

KLAPGAT**Catching up under Christ's watchful eye**

Het Klapgat is a tiny alleyway opposite the tower of the Church of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. Church-goers used to gather in this alley after Mass to catch up ("klappen" or chat). But they did this so often and so loudly that the alley was soon called Klapgat. The Hofje van Olijven or Mount of Olives, an ensemble which dates from before 1578, stands at the entrance to Klapgat. The masonry was renovated

in 1874. These sixteenth-century wooden sculptures portray Christ and his three favourite apostles on the eve of Christ's Passion. In the past, the faithful would convene here to pray in difficult times. They would drop a 'suske' (1 centime) or a 'cent' (2 centimes) in the collection box.

The surface is constructed of small, fairly smooth cobbles.

14

GROEN WATERKE**An urban idyll**

Het Groen Waterke is one of the many idyllic beauty spots around Mechelen. The canal owes its name to the water surface which is covered with duckweed. In effect, this is a part of the Melaan canal, which was not covered or filled in. Here you can really sense how quiet it must have been in the city in

the old days. You are also quite near the Refuges of the Abbeys of Sint-Truiden and Tongerlo.

You can see the Groen Waterke from the Ankerbrug, which is easily accessible via the pavement.

15

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE Italy in Mechelen

You can find this classic eighteenth-century palace, which was commissioned by Cardinal Thomas Philippe d'Alsace, in Wollemarkt. It owes its Italianate influences to an unknown Italian architect. Typical classicist features include the simple façade structure, a lot of horizontalism and the U-shaped floor plan. Originally there were two patrician houses here, which were used as the Refuge of the Abbey of Affligem.

During this walk you will only see the exterior of the building. The Archbishop's Palace garden will be opened to the public in 2019 as a new green resting point in the city. All buildings and structures in the garden - the garden sheds, the Lourdes cave, the garden pavilion and the garden wall - will have been restored to their former glory.

Wollemarkt 15, 2800 Mechelen





Work started on the present-day cathedral as early as the thirteenth century. It was consecrated in 1312 and construction on St. Rumbold's Tower commenced around 1450. In 1559, the church became a cathedral, a church where the archbishop has his "seat". The cathedral has many stunning artworks, starting with the Gothic choir and the tombs of the archbishops. The coats of arms of the knights who participated in the Fifteenth Chapter meeting of the prestigious Order of the Golden Fleece, in 1491, presided by the thirteen-year old duke, Philip the Good, also hang here.

St. Rumbold's Tower is the quintessential symbol of Mechelen. The founding stone of this imposing monument was laid in 1452. Originally, the tower was supposed to stand 167 metres tall, but construction stopped in the early sixteenth century at 97 metres. The city's most important documents were preserved here and the bells sounded the alarm in case of imminent danger. The panoramic view from the top of the tower made it easy to spot any threat.

To the side of the Grote Markt there is a threshold-free entrance. The access path is built in fairly rounded cobblestones. The entrance door is sufficiently wide. The other doors are heavy to open. The nave, the aisles and the transept are easily accessible. The large Sacrament chapel is accessible via a fairly steep slope. The open side chapels all have a step. A steep slope is provided on the steps in front of the cathedral museum in the choir aisle. The tower itself is not wheelchair accessible, but you can visit it virtually via www.virtualmechelen.be.

In the cathedral there is a wooden model of church and tower that you can touch. Outside and next to the cathedral (Onder den Toren side) there is also a miniature bronze version of the tower which you can slide your fingers along.

Onder den Toren, 2800 Mechelen

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www.visitmechelen.be



17

SCULPTURAL MECHELEN

Den Uil statue

“Let’s meet at Den Uil?” Recently a lot of locals have taken to saying this. The owl – the work’s official name is The Great Vivisector – stands in the square between the Post Office and St. Rumbold’s Cathedral and is a meeting place for people of all ages. The imposing 3.25-metre tall bronze sculpture weighs over a ton. The artist Johan Creten

(b. 1963) is the first Belgian artist to exhibit his work in the Louvre during his lifetime. Take a seat on the work and pose for a picture.

The statue is located close to the cathedral’s accessible entrance. The surface is constructed of rounded cobblestones.

18

CULTUURPLEIN

From poor relief to a cultural centre



The cultural centre, the academy, the city’s conservatory and De Garage, a contemporary art space, are all located around Cultuurplein. You can still recognise the nave of the church of the former convent of the Friars Minor, which once stood here and which has since been incorporated in the cultural centre. The church was used as a hayloft for a long time. You can see the medieval Chapel of the Holy Spirit to the left of this building, where the poor

begged for assistance. Every parish had so-called Tables of the Holy Spirit. Once a week, usually on Sunday, the benefactors, who were in charge of overseeing the parish’s poor relief effort, would provide food and other aid to the poor, in return for a token, which proved that they had gone to Mass first.

The Cultuurplein was built without thresholds using small, flat cobblestones.



19

DE CELLEKENS**From almshouse to artist's residence**

You can visit a unique monument near St. Rumbold's Tower. From 1854 onwards, De Cellekens was an almshouse for poor, single women. The three wings come together in a U-shape around the lovely courtyard garden. The Convent House is the central building, with two rows of typical almshouses with arched doorways to the left and right of it. Each door originally gave access to two small rooms, with a bed, wardrobe, chair and table. The institution's name refers to these "cells". The building remained

vacant for many decades, after which the new owners, the artist Mariette Teugels and her husband, the photographer Herman Smet, restored it. They received the prestigious Europa Nostra award for their efforts in 2002. You can see works by Teugels in the new garden.

You can see through the fence from the street. The surface here is constructed from small, flat cobblestones (behind the gate, they are somewhat more rounded) and there are no thresholds.

20

MELAAN**A place by the water**

Every local loves to take a stroll along the banks of Melaan. This tributary of the River Dijle was one of the last visible canals in the city and was only covered in 1913. Until 2007, when it was uncovered thanks to a European project to restore "Water in Historic City

Centres". Sit down on one of the many benches and gaze at the water.

The path along the Melaan is easily accessible. You may need some assistance for some of the slopes on the second part.



21

HAVERWERF Three attractions



Originally oats were unloaded and traded here. Oats were synonymous with cereals and Mechelen had the exclusive staple right for this. This meant that cereal barges had to moor in Mechelen and offer their goods for sale here for three days. The skippers then loaded the grain that had not been sold back onto their barge and moved on. The houses near the bridge will immediately catch your eye. They date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and are the main attraction in Haverwerf. The corner house is called Het Paradijske or “The Little Paradise” and the reliefs above the windows reveal why. They represent “The Garden of Eden” and “The Tree of the knowledge of good and

evil”. The middle house is called De Duiveltjes and has one of the most beautiful wooden façades in Belgium. It used to be called “The Prodigal Son”. This parable from the gospel is shown above the front door. Nowadays it is named after the satyr sculptures, which act as supporting columns on the first floor. The Baroque house of Sint-Jozef stands to the left of it, and features a relief of Saint Joseph and Jesus in the centre of its façade. Continue your walk along the water and enjoy the surroundings!

The houses are best viewed from the other side. There are some cobblestones, but you don’t need to worry about them.

22

LAMOT SITE + VISMARKT Hip and trendy



Enjoy the view of the Lamot Congress and Heritage Centre from Haverwerf. The industrial heritage of this former brewery has been preserved in a contemporary manner, transforming it into one of Mechelen’s hotspots. Fish was first traded in 1531 in Vismarkt on the opposite side, after the fishmongers had been banned from Ilzerenleen, by Margaret of Austria among others. Why, you ask? Because people couldn’t stand the fish odour. Until a few decades ago, there was a large concentration of fish shops here. Nowadays it is one of Mechelen’s nicest squares, with fish and other shops and plenty of pubs and restaurants. At night, Vismarkt and

adjoining Nauwstraat are always busy. Head to the laidback traditional pubs, the stylish modern lounge bars and the trendy restaurants to meet the young and the young at heart of Mechelen.

During this walk you will mainly see Lamot from the outside. The building is accessible via good lifts, and has an accessible toilet (see later on in this brochure). The Vismarkt can be reached via the steep bridge, or later in the walk via the small, fairly flat cobblestones of the Nauwstraat.

Van Beethovenstraat 8-10, 2800 Mechelen
www.lamot-mechelen.be

23

HOF VAN CORTENBACH

A hidden gem

Hof van Cortenbach is an early sixteenth-century city palace. This gem is somewhat hidden in the inner area behind Huis Den Drake, also known as Den Breckpot, held by Ywein van Cortenbach. His son Jan IV built a home for himself in the courtyard of his father's house. He may have commissioned it from the famous architect Rombout II Keldermans. In any event, he confirmed his status as a prominent citizen with this imposing house. He was a member of the town council and even served as mayor several times.

After the interior restorations, the building will be re-used. From then on, you will simply need to pop in through the gate at Den Breckpot, but for the time being you can view the building via the Ziekeliëdenstraat (the first street on the right when you look at Den Breckpot).

The Korenmarkt is easily accessible. The surface is constructed of flat cobblestones. There are no thresholds to cross.

Korenmarkt 23, 2800 Mechelen

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HOF VAN SCHOOFS

A prestigious building

This monumental city palace was built for the noble Schoofs family. In the fifteenth century, they combined two existing houses, called Het Schaakbord (The Chess Board) and De Leeuw (The Lion). Around 1474, Jean Carondelet, the president of the Parliament of Mechelen, may have also briefly lived here. Around the 1550s, the building was purchased by the wealthy wine merchant Claude Ritz, who probably added the impressive

high tower. Afterwards, the city palace was used as the guild house of the guild of the old crossbow, as a shop, hotel and ironmonger's.

The Korenmarkt is easily accessible. The surface is constructed of flat cobblestones. There are no thresholds to cross. You will see this building from the outside.

Korenmarkt 8, 2800 Mechelen



According to the locals, IJzerenleen is really the “Champs Elysées” of their city. Fortunately there is less traffic but the façades are imposing, the window displays of the shops highly appealing and you can also see one of Flanders’ oldest town halls here. In the past, there used to be a small canal here, which ran from the River Dijle to Koolvliet. This is also where the fish market was held. IJzerenleen was named after the iron railings along the canal, which are still here. The

canal itself was covered in the sixteenth century. While the façades may look like they date from the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively, they are not original. Many of them were destroyed during World War I. They were rebuilt in a variety of old styles, after many discussions and an architectural competition.

The footpath is wide and is constructed from small, fairly flat cobblestones.



Close to the walk

26 KAZERNE DOSSIN



Kazerne Dossin is a special place for commemorating the Holocaust in Belgium. More than 25,000 Jews and Gypsies were brought together and put on a train to Auschwitz- Birkenau. Less than 5 percent survived. An impressive museum has given these forgotten people a face and brings their sad stories back to life. Every visit evokes sorrow, distress and makes you reflect. The museum building is designed by the well-known Belgian architect Bob Van Reeth.

At the entrance, security panels limit the passage to 82 cm. The museum is otherwise easily accessible and has a spacious elevator. In the temporary exhibition areas, some doors are quite heavy to open by yourself. Most of the experience elements, texts and exhibits are easily accessible and usable. Both accessible toilets have ample space and

grab rails. The shop is also accessible. An audio guide is available. Most films can be watched with subtitles for hearing-impaired visitors.

The Memorial opposite the museum is also easily accessible. Some doors are quite heavy to open by yourself. A plateau lift takes you to the floors. For one room, you have to pass through a narrow passage that is 80 cm wide. There is an adapted toilet with ample space and grab rails here too.

You'll find full details on accessibility here: www.kazernedossin.eu/EN/Bezoek/Praktisch/Toegankelijkheid.

Goswin de Stassartstraat 153, 2800 Mechelen

+32 15 29 06 60

info@kazernedossin.eu

www.kazernedossin.eu



27 TOY MUSEUM



Discover the biggest collection of toys in Europe, of the past and the present. Fall under the spell of the amazing world of games and toys, with puppets, party games, trains, teddy bears, building toys and so much more. The playful and interactive presentation of the permanent collection and the temporary exhibitions will make every visit a unique experience.

The museum is accessible for wheelchair users. You may need assistance to open the heavy entrance door. You

may need a push on the long and steep slopes to the first floor too. If you let them know by phone, an employee can come and pick you up at the entrance to take you to the first floor. There are special tours and workshops for people with a learning disability.

Nekkerspoelstraat 21, 2800 Mechelen
+32 15 55 70 75

info@speelgoedmuseum.be
www.speelgoedmuseum.be

28 CHURCH OF ONZE-LIEVE-VROUW-OVER-DE-DIJLE



This church was built in the fourteenth and fifteenth century on the site where the Mechelen parish church presumably once stood. There is a wealth of exceptional art treasures to be discovered in the Dijle Church, with Rubens' The Miraculous Draught of Fish as the high-point. Many works of art were commissioned by the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, a cult that supported Philip the Fair and Margaret of Austria, among others.

The entrance to the church below the west tower is wide and has no threshold. The vestibule behind the spacious porch has two heavy entrance doors and there is little room to manoeuvre. The church is very spacious with plenty

of space to circulate in the side aisles, transept and choir aisle. The three-aisle nave and the transept are located on the same level. The choir, choir aisle and choir chapels are located higher. The choir aisle can be accessed next to the steps with a dangerously steep sloping surface. Many of the attractions can be viewed from the nave, the side aisles and the choir aisle. Two choir chapels with display cases can only be accessed via a step. You can visit the church virtually via www.virtualmechelen.be.

Onze-Lieve-Vrouwkerkhof,
2800 Mechelen
+32 15 29 40 32

sarah.luyten@mechelen.be
www.torensaandedijle.be



BASILICA OF ONZE-LIEVE-VROUW-VAN-HANSWIJK



The Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-van-Hanswijkkerk is one of the most important creations of sculptor-architect Lucas Faydherbe. The original building concept testifies to his inventive spirit. It is one of the first domed churches in the Low Countries. At the foot of the dome, you can see two impressive pictorial reliefs referring to the Seven Joys and Seven Sorrows of Mary. At the heart of the church is the miraculous statue of the Virgin Mary, which is carried in the annual Hanswijk procession.

The entrance to the church has no threshold and has a wide door and spacious porch. Only the vestibules offer

insufficient free space when the doors are closed. The basilica is very spacious and has plenty of free space to circulate. All attractions, including the miraculous statue of Our Lady, are easy to access and view. The separate candle chapel with reproduction panel of the statue of Our Lady has a slightly narrower entrance door (80 cm) and the space at the candle tables is restricted. You can visit the church virtually via www.virtualmechelen.be.

Hanswijkstraat, 2800 Mechelen

+32 15 29 40 32

sarah.luyten@mechelen.be

www.torensaandedijle.be

Not to be missed



ZOO PLANCKENDAEL



ZOO Planckendael is so much more than a just a zoo. You can admire exotic animals, take an adventurous trip over hanging bridges, or stroll beneath the tree tops in this 40 hectare domain. There is loads of space for playing children, playing animals and meandering visitors.

The park is easily accessible. There are accessible toilets throughout the park, except in De Ooievaar. 10 wheelchairs

are available (please reserve in advance). The De Ooievaar, De Gazelle and Toepaja restaurants are accessible. There are reserved parking spaces (for a fee) near the entrance. Guide dogs are welcome. More information at the reservation service: +32 3 224 89 10.

Leuvensesteenweg 582, 2800 Mechelen

+32 15 41 49 21

info@kmda.org or groepen@kmda.org

www.planckendael.be





RESTAURANTS & CAFÉS

1. Brasserie De Met
2. Steakhouse Angus
3. KUUB
4. Ellis Gourmet burger

1

BRASSERIE DE MET

Grote Markt 29 / +32 15 20 68 81

www.demetmechelen.be - info@demetmechelen.be**ENTRANCE**

Height of the step n.a.

Width of the narrowest entrance door 76 cm 👉

HALL

Table: wheelchair accessible Limited 👉

TOILET

Width of the narrowest passage to the toilet (door or hallway) 88 cm 👍

Toilet door 85 cm 👍

Free space in front of the toilet 74 cm 🚫

Free space next to the toilet 100 cm 👍

Number of grab rails 1 👉



2

STEAKHOUSE ANGUS

Wollemarkt 16 / +32 15 56 95 21

www.steakhouse-angus.be**ENTRANCE**

Height of the step n.a.

Width of the narrowest entrance door 97 cm 👍

HALL

Table: wheelchair accessible Limited 👉

TOILET

Width of the narrowest passage to the toilet (door or hallway) 78 cm 👉

Toilet door 87 cm 👍

Free space in front of the toilet 150 cm 👍

Free space next to the toilet 125 cm 👍

Number of grab rails 0 🚫




3 KUUB

Minderbroedersgang 3 A / +32 472 60 00 81


www.dekuub.be - info@dekuub.be

ENTRANCE


Height of the step n.a.

Width of the narrowest entrance door 90 cm 

HALL

Table: wheelchair accessible yes 


TOILET

Width of the narrowest passage to the toilet (door or hallway) 92 cm 

Toilet door 70 cm 

Free space in front of the toilet 50 cm 

Free space next to the toilet 100 cm 

Number of grab rails 2 




4 ELLIS GOURMET BURGER

IJzerenleen 10 / +32 15 14 01 60


www.ellisgourmetburger.be

ENTRANCE


Height of the step n.a.

Width of the narrowest entrance door 100 cm 

HALL

Table: wheelchair accessible yes 

TOILET

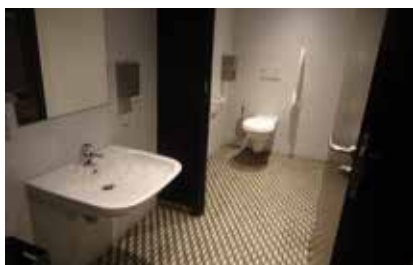
Width of the narrowest passage to the toilet (door or hallway) 80 cm 

Toilet door 87 cm 

Free space in front of the toilet 100 cm 

Free space next to the toilet 97 cm 

Number of grab rails 2 







PUBLIC TOILETS

1. Grote Markt
2. Huis van de Mechelaar
3. Lamot, congres- en erfgoedcentrum
4. Sociaal Huis

1 PUBLIC TOILET GROTE MARKT

Grote Markt z.n.
2800 Mechelen

PATHWAY




ENTRANCE



TO THE TOILET

TOILET DOOR


Clearance in front of the toilet door 145 cm 

Width of the toilet door 87 cm 

INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space 184 x 166 cm

Clearance space in the toilet area 150 cm 

Free space in front of the toilet 110 cm 

Free space next to the toilet 150 cm 

Number of grab rails 1 

Sink 



2 PUBLIC TOILET HUIS VAN DE MECHELAAR

Reuzenstraat 1
2800 Mechelen

PATHWAY



ENTRANCE



TO THE TOILET



TOILET DOOR


Clearance in front of the toilet door 150 cm 

Width of the toilet door 87 cm 

INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space 220 x 153 cm

Clearance space in the toilet area 150 cm 

Free space in front of the toilet 91 cm 

Free space next to the toilet 60 cm 

Number of grab rails 2 

Sink 



3 PUBLIC TOILET LAMOT CONGRES- EN ERFGOEDCENTRUM

Van Beethovenstraat 8 -10
2800 Mechelen

PATHWAY



ENTRANCE



TO THE TOILET



TOILET DOOR

Clearance in front of the toilet door 150 cm



Width of the toilet door 90 cm



INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space 186 x 175 cm

Clearance space in the toilet area 150 cm



Free space in front of the toilet 30 cm



Free space next to the toilet 120 cm



Number of grab rails 2



Sink



4 PUBLIC TOILET SOCIAAL HUIS

Lange Schipstraat 27
2800 Mechelen

PATHWAY



ENTRANCE



TO THE TOILET



TOILET DOOR

Clearance in front of the toilet door 150 cm



Width of the toilet door 82 cm



INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space 270 x 180 cm

Clearance space in the toilet area 150 cm



Free space in front of the toilet 180 cm



Free space next to the toilet 77 cm



Number of grab rails 2



Sink







WHERE TO STAY

1. Jeugdherberg De Zandpoort
2. Hotel Mercure Vé
3. Novotel Mechelen Centrum

At the moment, in Mechelen, only Youth Hostel De Zandpoort has an accessibility label. Detailed accessibility information and photos of Youth Hostel De Zandpoort and other accommodation in and around Mechelen can be found in one of the brochures 'Accessible holiday accommodation in Flanders and Brussels' via www.visitflanders.com/accessibility. Feel free to ask for a printed copy.

**1 Jeugdherberg
De Zandpoort**

Zandpoortvest 70,
2800 Mechelen
+32 15 27 85 39
mechelen@vjh.be
www.jeugdherbergen.be



2 Hotel Mercure Vé

Vismarkt 14, 2800 Mechelen
+32 15 70 07 00
info@hotelve.com
www.hotelve.com

3 Novotel Mechelen Centrum

Van Beethovenstraat 1, 2800 Mechelen
+32 15 40 49 50
H3154@accor.com
www.accorhotels.com





CARE AND MOBILITY AIDS

YOU NEED MEDICAL CARE WHILE ON HOLIDAY?

As a tourist in Flanders you can call upon a regional service or independent nurses who operate near your holiday address. Contact a nursing service as quickly as possible so that you can discuss the possibilities and conditions on time. A few big organisations that can help you include:

> The **Wit-Gele Kruis** (White-Yellow Cross) is a home nursing organization with branches all over Flanders. You can find the contact addresses per province on www.wgk.be (in Dutch).

> The **Flemish Association for Independent Nurses** (VBZV) lists where you can go for home nursing on the website www.verplegingthuis.be (Dutch). You can contact a nurse directly to discuss your concrete requests.

> **Home nursing** and other forms of care can also be arranged via a local or regional social service or joint venture. Het Vlaams Agentschap Zorg en Gezondheid (Flemish Agency Care and Health) familiarises you with the offerings via this website: www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/thuiszorg (in Dutch).

YOU NEED MOBILITY AIDS WHILE ON HOLIDAY?

You need a hospital bed, hoist, scooter mobile, etc. at your holiday address? Then you can obtain your requirements from a local lending service. Some devices, usually lighter items, must be collected; other items can be delivered to and/or installed at your holiday address.

In Mechelen, you can turn to one of the lending services below. Not all mobility aids are available in every lending service. We advise you to contact them in advance.

Assist Thuiszorgwinkel Mechelen
(Non-members pay an additional fee)
Antwerpsesteenweg 259, 2800 Mechelen
+32 15 28 30 70
assist.mechelen@assisttzw.be
www.thuiszorgwinkel.be

Medishop Mechelen
(Non-members pay an additional fee)
Dés. Boucherystraat 19, 2800 Mechelen
+32 800 97 520
mediotheek.304@devoorzorg.be
www.devoorzorg.be



TRAVELLING TOWARDS FLANDERS

BY TRAIN

Eurostar, TGV & Thalys

In 1st class on Eurostar, TGV and Thalys, there are one or more locations for wheelchairs. This means you can travel in comfort without having to move out of your wheelchair. These positions are alongside spacious toilets laid out especially for wheelchair passengers. Ask to have one of these locations allocated to you when you make your booking. The sales staff will reserve one for you, subject to availability. So that these facilities can be accessible to everyone, Eurostar, Thalys and TGV provide special rates so that wheelchair passengers and their attendants can travel in first class for a second class fare.

ICE

ICE trains (Brussels-Cologne-Frankfurt connection) also provide facilities for wheelchair travellers. However, in ICE trains, these are in second class, near special toilet facilities.

Facilities and assistance at stations

The main international stations comply to high standards of accessibility (elevators, escalators etc...), and offer assistance service on request to facilitate your arrival or departure.

For detailed information, booking and assistance, go to: www.b-europe.com
> **Customer Service** > **Reduced-mobility passengers.**

BY AIR

> Antwerp Airport

Read more about travelling with a reduced mobility on Antwerp Airport:
www.antwerp-airport.be
> **Passengers** > **Reduced mobility people.**

> Brussels South Charleroi Airport

Read more about travelling with a reduced mobility on Charleroi Airport:
www.charleroi-airport.com
> **Passengers** > **PRM.**

> Brussels Airport

Read more about travelling with a reduced mobility on Brussels Airport:
www.brusselsairport.be > **Passengers**
> **Passengers with reduced mobility.**

BY FERRY

Travelling to Flanders by ferry is easy and relaxing, with frequent departures, and the chance to enjoy a meal, do a little shopping – or just enjoy the cruise!

➤ **P&O Ferries – 08716 64 21 21**

P&O sails from Dover to Calais in about 90 minutes, as well as offering a daily overnight service from Hull straight into Flanders at Zeebrugge.

Read more about travelling with a reduced mobility on P&O Ferries:

www.poferries.com/en ➤ **Select a route**

➤ **Travelling with us** ➤ **Accessibility**

➤ **DFDS Seaways – 0871 574 7235**

DFDS Seaways sails from Dover to both Calais and Dunkirk. The services to Calais take 90 minutes, and to Dunkirk, the journey time is around 2 hours. From Dunkirk, you're just a few miles from the border with Flanders.

Read more about travelling with a reduced mobility on DFDS Seaways:

www.dfdsseaways.co.uk ➤ **Customer service** ➤ **Passengers with reduced mobility.**



TRANSPORT AND PARKING IN FLANDERS

BY TRAIN (NMBS)

You will find all the necessary information on traveling by train on www.belgianrail.be/en > **Stations and on-board services** > **Passengers with reduced mobility**.

Belgian Rail provides assistance when boarding or disembarking a train in 131 stations. Find out which stations offer (free) assistance and how long in advance you have to reserve on the website. Make your request for assistance online or by phone: **+32 2 528 28 28**. Also find out about the discounts that are available for Belgian Rail passengers with a disability on the website.

BY BUS (DE LIJN)

The new De Lijn buses are equipped with a low floor, ramp and hydraulic kneeling device. The ramp can only be used safely at an accessible (raised) stop. If you want to take a regular bus, you must make a reservation one day (24 hours) in advance by phoning the dial-a-bus switchboard. That way you can be sure that your ride is wheelchair accessible.

The bus also includes places reserved for people with reduced mobility. These places are located at the front of the bus near the driver and at the wheelchair-accessible door. They are marked with pictograms.

You will find all the necessary information on : www.delijn.be/en > **Accessibility**.

PARKING

Search for a reserved parking space

On the map, we indicate where you can find reserved parking spaces in Mechelen. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the surface and dimensions of this parking space are suitable for you. Tip: find out in advance where you want to park via www.mechelen.be/voorbehouden-parkeerplaats-voor-personen-met-een-handicap-2 and use the Google Street View feature to view the car park.

Free or paid?

If you have a European disabled parking permit, you can park in Mechelen free of charge and without any restrictions in all parking spaces (not just those reserved for people with disabilities). This is also stated on the payment terminals.

Please note that the permit is not valid in underground car parks.





Colophon

Publisher

Peter De Wilde, VISITFLANDERS,
Grasmarkt 61, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Legal depot

D/2018/5635/14/4

Contact

accessible@visitflanders.com
visit@mechelen.be

More information

www.visitflanders.com/accessibility
www.visitmechelen.be

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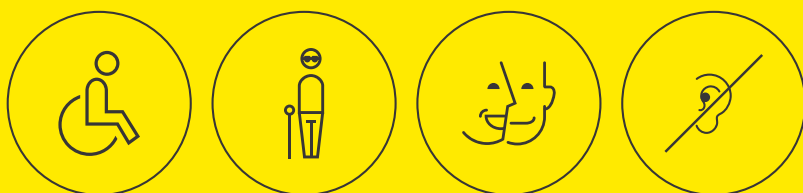
Design & lay-out

Heren Loebas

Special thanks to

Inter, city of Mechelen, Visit Mechelen,
Monumentenzorg Mechelen

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