

# *A Custom Designed Itinerary to*

## *Brussels and Luxembourg*

*by*

### *IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS*

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**DAY 1: BRUSSELS.** Upon arrival at Brussels Airport, you are met and privately transferred into the city by an English-speaking driver for a panoramic sightseeing tour. Popular sites to visit include the Grand Place (Grote Markt), flanked by Baroque guild houses and the Gothic Town Hall, considered by some as one of the most beautiful squares in the world. On weekends it shelters a flower market and nearby is famous little Manneken Pis.



The Museums of Ancient and Modern Art both house exceptional collections of masterworks and an extraordinary Art Nouveau building, once a department store, is home to the Belgian Center of the Comic Strip, where the actual production of a strip is demonstrated. Striking examples of Art Nouveau are found in houses all over the city. But for the crowning achievement of this style, be sure to visit the Horta Museum. Between visits you may enjoy a rest at a cafe and enjoy one of the many locally brewed beers. Check in for three nights in a deluxe double at **Le Meridien Brussels**, a Neo-Classic-style hotel located in the historic city center.

<http://www.starwoodhotels.com/lemeridien/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=1914>

**DAY 2: BRUGES or WATERLOO and GHENT.** Today we include the services of an English-speaking driver/guide for a full day excursion. The following are two possible options:



**Bruges:** Bruges is considered the "Venice of the North". At one time it was a very prosperous wool and cloth-trading center, but when the river silted up the city fell into decline. Fortunately, it has been restored and flourishes today as it did in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The best way to see the city is by taking a canal tour by boat (not included). Return to Brussels for your overnight.

**Waterloo / Ghent:** Waterloo is the famous site where Napoleon was defeated. There is a monument here built by local farm wives hauling buckets of dirt to form a mound topped by a Belgian Lion. Visit the small museum, and shop devoted to Napoleon.

Then head north of the city to visit beautiful Ghent, often called the “Art City” and one of the few cities in the world with a castle located at its center. The dramatic 12<sup>th</sup> century *Castle of the Counts of Flanders* was once used as a prison. St. Bavo’s Cathedral contains a rare art treasure, “The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb.” One of the most important paintings in the world, it consists of 24 panels depicting some 248 figures in amazingly intricate detail. Return to Brussels for your overnight.

**DAY 3: FLANDERS AMERICAN CEMETERY AND MEMORIAL.** Today we include a private excursion with an English-speaking guide west of Brussels to visit the Flanders American Cemetery and Memorial. Return to Brussels for your overnight.

**DAY 4: LUXEMBOURG CITY.** A private transfer to the rail station this morning for the train to Luxembourg (first class tickets included) and upon arrival you’re met by a local English-speaking guide and taken on a city sightseeing tour.



The historical importance of Luxembourg dates back to the Roman era. Near what is now named the Fishmarket, where two important Roman roads crossed, a watch and observation tower was erected in the 4th century. Count Siegfried also recognized the strategic value of the site in the middle of the 10th century and set up the “*Lucilinburhuc*” - which gave the city its name - on the Bock promontory. Several buildings in the Old Town deserve special attention: the *Grand Ducal Palace* with its Renaissance Front (1574); the *Notre Dame Cathedral* from the 17th century; and a large array of houses in the *Government District* and on *Fishmarket*. Using the so-called “*Wenceslas Circular Walk*”, you may also

get to the picturesque *Rham Plateau* (with its old town gate from 1590 and the military barracks from the Vauban period) or to the colorful town quarter of *Grund* with its medieval houses lining the Alzette river. Check in for four nights at the charming **Romantik Hotel Hostellerie du Grundewald**, situated on the outskirts of the city and with a renowned restaurant on the premises. [www.hotel-romantik.lu](http://www.hotel-romantik.lu)

**DAY 5: CLERVAUX / BASTOGNE / ARDENNES.** A full day of sightseeing with a private English-speaking driver/guide to Clervaux, Bastogne and the Ardennes. First to the charming medieval market town of Clervaux, sunk into a narrow and tortuous valley, surrounded by rugged hills covered with woods. The imposing feudal castle, which dates back to the 12th century, still appears to protect the town. It is the age-old witness to the prestige and power of the knights and counts whose estates stretched far across the countryside. Then head to Bastogne and the Ardennes, site of the Battle of the Bulge and some of the fiercest fighting at the tail end of WWII. Return to Luxembourg City for your overnight.

**DAY 6: VIANDEN.** A half-day with a private English-speaking driver/guide for a visit to Vianden, embedded in the splendid landscape of the Ardennes. Thousands of visitors are charmed each year by the narrow and paved lanes, the gothic churches, the ramparts and fortified towers of this small medieval town, dominated by the magnificent, restored castle. Return to Luxembourg City for some free time to explore on your own.

**DAY 7: METZ / TRIER.** A final day of guiding, as your English-speaking driver/guide takes you south to visit Metz, capital of the Lorraine region.



The city lies at the meeting point of the Moselle River, with the Seilles, which has been a strategic point since Roman times. However, it is mostly remembered for the role it played in the last two wars against the Germans, and during which time it was alternately French and German. It finally became French again after WWII. Its cathedral is one of the finest in France and its stained glass windows have led the cathedral to be known as "God's Lantern", totaling about 60,000 square feet! Then head to Trier, which is especially noted for the Porta Nigra, the finest Roman relic in Germany. The Roman Baths, constructed under Constantine, are among the largest in Europe and appear never to have been used. Return to Luxembourg for your overnight.

**DAY 8: DEPART.** After breakfast this morning a private transfer to the Luxembourg Airport, where our services will end.

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