

Bicycle Tours in Belgium: Bike and Barge: Amsterdam to Bruges

OVERVIEW



The Netherlands and Belgium are a cycling paradise with bike paths, flat terrain and plenty to see and do along the way. On this bike and barge tour you will discover the southern region of Zeeland in the Netherlands and dip into the West Flanders region of Belgium. By day you'll bicycle through polders (reclaimed wetlands rich for agriculture or pastureland) and small villages, in the evening you'll sleep on a luxury barge. Cruise through canals and pedal along bike paths between the world famous cities of Amsterdam, Antwerp, Ghent, and Bruges. Visit iconic places like Gouda (pronounced Gowda) and taste its famous cheese. Pedal past the famous windmills of Kinderdijk and delve deep into local culture when we meet small cheese farmers and visit a working windmill in the small town of Tholen.

If this sounds great but you prefer a longer trip, check out our [Bike and Barge: Amsterdam to Bruges Plus! Belgium's Breweries tour](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

9 days, 8 nights (1 hotel night in Amsterdam, 7 nights aboard our luxury barge); meals as noted in itinerary; windmill visit; guided canal cruise of Ghent; guided visits in Antwerp and Bruges

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	 Bike and Boat: Learn more about our Bike and Boat tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/bike-and-boat-tours
Includes	9 days, 8 nights (1 hotel night in Amsterdam, 7 nights aboard our luxury barge); 6 dinners with wine or beer, 7 lunches (packed), all breakfasts; windmill visit; 1 beer tasting; guided canal cruise of Ghent; guided visits in Antwerp and Bruges; and the usual (see below).
Countries	Belgium, Netherlands
Begin/End	Amsterdam / Bruges
Arrive/Depart	Amsterdam (AMS) / Brussels (BRU)
Total Distance	366km (226 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	52km (32 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	 You'll enter and exit larger cities on bike paths. Expect a mix of dedicated bike paths and country roads.
Keep in Mind	<p>We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour.</p> <p>There are only 4 single supplements available. Cabin space is limited so consider the size of your luggage. A 25 inch suitcase will fit under the bed. WiFi may be sporadic onboard the barge.</p> <p>For more questions about the Barge check out our Bike & Boat FAQ</p>

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the  [online itinerary](#) for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/guided-bike-tours/belgium/bike-berge-amsterdam-bruges>

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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
☑ May 7-15, 2021	☑ USD\$4195	☑ USD\$1150 - Will share option not available.

*We are happy to match solo travelers who would like to share a room with someone of the same gender. If no match exists, due to hotel pricing, we will charge 50% of the single supplement rate. This fee will be collected at the time of the final payment. If a roommate assignment is available this fee will be refunded at the conclusion of the tour.

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	61km / 245m (38mi / 804ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
3	55km / 166m (34mi / 544ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
4	47km / 86m (29mi / 282ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
5	37km / 135m (23mi / 443ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
6	55km / 243m (34mi / 797ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
7	50km / 156m (31mi / 512ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
8	50km / 174m (31mi / 571ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
9	Last day			

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ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#). The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We recommend flying into Amsterdam (AMS).

How to get to the Day 1 Hotel:

- Taxi from the airport to the Day 1 Hotel (40 min/EUR 60-75)

Or public transportation:

1. Commuter Train from the airport to "Amsterdam Centraal" (15 min/EUR 4-5)
2. Taxi from the Station to the Day 1 Hotel (10-15 min/EUR 15)

View Dutch train schedules at www.ns.nl or trainline.eu. On commuter-type and regional trains, pre-booking of tickets is not necessary.

Note:

As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, [check with us](#) if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

DEPARTURE INFO

Tour ends with a guided walk of Bruges, which will end at 11:30 a.m.:

- [Crowne Plaza Hotel in Bruges](#) - for the May 7, 2021 departure
- [NH Hotel in Bruges](#) - for all other departures

We recommend you book your homebound flight for the next day.

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#).

We recommend flying out of Brussels (BRU).

- [Bus to Brugge/Bruges](#) (5 min, every 3-5 min/EUR 4), or taxi (10 min/EUR 13) train station
- Train from Bruges to Brussels Airport (1.5 hours/fares vary)

View Belgian train schedules at belgianrail.be or Trainline.eu. On commuter-type and regional trains, reservations are not necessary.

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Arrive Amsterdam

Highlights Amsterdam, bike fitting and test ride, welcome dinner

Welcome to the vibrant capital city of Holland, Amsterdam! We hope you arrived a few days early to visit some of the highlights of this colorful city — between its museums, canals, hip locales and lively night scene there is plenty to explore. Settle into our hotel where we'll have our safety meeting and bike fitting followed by our first spin on the bikes before a special dinner together.

DAY 1

Meals Dinner

Lodging  Hotel Room Mate Aitana

Bicycling along the Hollandic Waterline

Highlights Forts of Muider slot and Weesp, town of Muiden, Utrecht, dinner on board

Follow bike paths out of Amsterdam and head into the region of the Hollandic Waterline, a defense system born in the 17th Century where castles and military forts with integrated systems of flooding could be used to turn Holland into an island to keep out invaders. A century later the water froze creating a bridge for the French army to attack. This plan has left several imposing forts including Muider slot and Weesp which we'll cycle past today. Enjoy local farmland and beautiful canals flanked by villas before entering the tiny, quaint center of Utrecht. This university town is home to unique bars dug into old working tunnels. Later, we'll cruise toward our landing spot for the night and enjoy dinner on-board.

DAY 2

Distance 61 km (38 mi)

Gain 245 m (804 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging  Fleur Barge

Bike to town of Gouda and Kinderdijk windmills

Highlights Schoonhoven - famous for its silversmiths, Gouda cheese museum and tasting, UNESCO World Heritage Kinderdijk windmills

This morning our barge will cruise for a few hours to reach the town of Schoonhoven, famous for its silversmiths and carillon makers. Bicycle through town and check out the town hall's clock-tower bells before heading to Gouda, famous for its orange cheese. Enjoy a visit to the town's cheese museum, and pick-up some picnic supplies (cheese anyone?) to enjoy at your next stop: the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kinderdijk. Here 19 majestic windmills are aligned to form a stunning sight. After exploring we'll keep pedaling south to rejoin our boat in Dordrecht. Enjoy dinner on-board and perhaps a leisurely walk in town to enjoy the center.

DAY 3

Distance 55 km (34 mi)

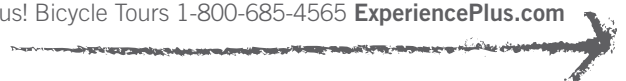
Gain 166 m (544 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging  Fleur Barge



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Breakfast cruise and bicycle to Tholen

Highlights Willemstad, a do-it-yourself-moving-bridge; picnic lunch; Roosevelt heritage museum; Tholen; working windmill visit

Another breakfast cruise takes us to Willemstad, a strikingly star shaped fortified town on the shores where the Holland Diep river splits into multiple rivers as it rushes out to sea. Experience the do-it-yourself-moving-bridge before reaching the town of Oud Vossemeer, where the Roosevelt name was very present in the 17th and 18th centuries (and still is), leading many to theorize that the American Roosevelt family whose Dutch ancestor arrived in the US in 1650 was probably from this town. Next we'll pedal south to Tholen which was once an island in this giant estuary-like environment, but is now connected to the mainland. We'll enjoy a visit to a working windmill this evening.

Pedal and cruise into Antwerp, Belgium

Highlights Dairy visit and tasting; cruise into Antwerp; visit "Onze Lieve Vrouwe (Our Lady) Cathedral" home to several of Rubens' paintings

Set off on bikes for a morning ride which includes stopping at a local dairy farm where ice cream and cheese tastings are a must! We'll get back to the boat before lunch to cruise into Antwerp, enjoying a unique view of the port and harbor as our barge makes its way to the city of diamonds. We'll enjoy a guided visit of Flemish painter Peter Paul Rubens' art in the city's Cathedral. After which you can head off to visit the rest of the city, including the historic city center, the diamond district, or the Red Star Line Museum from where 2 million emigrants shipped off to North America between 1873 and 1934. Explore the city and enjoy dinner on your own this evening before returning to our boat for a restful night's sleep.

Antwerp to Sint Amands

Highlights Schelde riverbank bike path; Sint Amands; Bosteels Brewery

We'll leave the city of Antwerp and return to the countryside cycling on small roads and along the Schelde river bike path. We've arranged a special visit of a 200 year-old brewery, family-run now by the 7th generation. We will continue pedaling along the tidal river until we reach the quaint town of Sint Amands.

DAY 4

Distance 47 km (29 mi)

Gain 86 m (282 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging  Fleur Barge

DAY 5

Distance 37 km (23 mi)

Gain 135 m (443 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

Lodging  Fleur Barge

DAY 6

Distance 55 km (34 mi)

Gain 243 m (797 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging  Fleur Barge

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Bicycle and Cruise into Ghent

Highlights Bicycle beside stately villas; Ghent's rich historic center

This morning we will continue to cycle along the river before branching north through historic marshes. These marshes are where sheep production thrived due to the nutritious grasses. Subsequently, Ghent became one of the richest cities in the world during the Middle Ages because of its woolen industry. A bike path along the Schelde river brings us to our boat, which we'll board for lunch as it cruises closer to the city center. While we are docked in a suburb, we'll transfer into the historical center for a visit. This lively university city is still one of the prettiest cities in Belgium. Admire its traditional, tall Flemish buildings towering over the small streets and plazas. Enjoy dinner on your own in one of the many restaurants or cafés.

DAY 7

Distance 50 km (31 mi)

Gain 156 m (512 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

Lodging  Fleur Barge

Bicycle Ghent to Bruges

Highlights Breakfast cruise, Bruges, UNESCO World Heritage Site Medieval City Center

Start the day with a short breakfast cruise before setting off on your bicycle to ride into the crown jewel of Belgium, Bruges. We'll be moored in the city center, providing excellent access to Bruges's many treasures. Stroll along the canals that were once main arteries of the city and don't miss a visit to the medieval square and City Hall. This city is characterized by its fantastic architecture. Bruges is bustling with additional sites to see including the stepped gable houses, market square with the belfort, and historic neighborhoods such as the "Beguinage", a community of lay women from the 13th century to visit. We'll enjoy dinner together on board our boat tonight.

DAY 8

Distance 50 km (31 mi)

Gain 174 m (571 ft)

Terrain Gentle

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging  Fleur Barge

End of our bike and barge tour

Highlights Guided walk of Bruges

Enjoy a guided walk of Bruges this morning before heading off on your own. We recommend that you spend a few more days enjoying Bruges's many sites and museums including a chocolate, diamond, and Belgian fry museum. Enjoy!

DAY 9

Meals Breakfast

INCLUDED

WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations.

Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include the three most important aspects of a guided bike tour.

- Superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling. More details on our [bikes page](#).
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel.

PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our [Travel Planning Pages](#).
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing ExperiencePlus!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Not included on Explorer Tours.)

ON TOUR

- See "What's Included" on your tour Itinerary for tour-specific inclusions.

BICYCLES

For a full list of what's included with your bike see [Our Bikes page](#). If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer tours we include a GPS device on all bikes. We ask that you bring your own helmet to ensure the best fit. Please ask if you would like us to provide you with a gently used helmet and we will do so.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

Each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map and daysheet (print or digital) that includes information on the day's activities, meals and ride. Daily information also includes Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information.

You'll receive a highlighted route map each day or a briefing with the GPS tracks. On Classic, Bike and Boat, Spotlight and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks.

Before each tour we offer the opportunity to download GPS tracks of most tour routes to your personal GPS device or smartphone using RideWithGPS.com. We do not provide GPS tracks for tours in South America.

On tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths.

Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM:

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler – this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know. *Tips are included in Expedition pricing.

PHOTOS:

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or taken by our guides or travelers free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you on tour, you must inform your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

STYLES **OUR TOUR STYLES**

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers. No matter what you are looking for in a cycling vacation, we have a tour with just the right pace for you.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? then our Classic style bike tours are for you! Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars, most itineraries include at least one two-night stay at the same hotel.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Explorer Tours: Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars, occasional multi-night stays at the same hotel.
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Group riding and GPS
- Price: \$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Spotlight Tours: Multi-nights stays, loop rides, choose from a selection of activities or enjoy hotel amenities during your free time.

- Tour Length: 6-7 days
- Hotels: 3-5 stars, typically 3-nights spent in one hotel and 2-nights in the other.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Multi-night Stays: Min 2 night stays
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Bike and Boat Tours: Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Expedition Tours: Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars, typically there is a 2-night hotel stay every 5-7 days.
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

**LEVELS**

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

LEVEL 2 - 2.5

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 - 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITIONPLUS!)

Our ExpeditionPlus! tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

CHECKLIST

TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- Complete the Customer Information Form: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/customer-information-form/>
- We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/travel-insurance/>
- Choose a bicycle training program: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>
- Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Review the arrival and departure information under the "Travel Information" tab to see meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, and other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- Begin your chosen training program
- Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Deposit Payment Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail you have received for detailed instructions.

6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists on our website at <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/packing/>
- We'll email your Hotel Itinerary, the Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date.

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!