



Flanders
State of the Art

Micro-adventures in the Lys Region

EXPERIENCE THE NATURE IN FLANDERS

Dear friends of Flanders,

Small moments of happiness are what make your holiday or day out complete. And in the **Lys Region**, there is plenty to experience. Perhaps when paddling on a waterboard or a packraft. Or while enjoying a picnic on the riverbank, with a local beer you just bought at a nearby brewery. Perhaps when watching the sunset after a long and pleasant walk. Or perhaps, in your tree house in the morning, as you slowly wake up to the sound of birds chirping happily.

The Lys Region has something for everyone. Lovers of art and culture will want to explore the many museums, both in the cities and outside. Cyclists and walkers can enjoy the hundreds of kilometres of safe and comfortable trails to their hearts' content. And, for lovers of good food and drink, there is plenty to enjoy - whether in a restaurant or in a village pub.

Read on, let yourself be inspired and go on a micro-adventure in the Lys Region!



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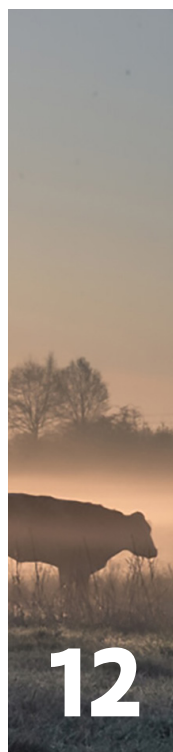
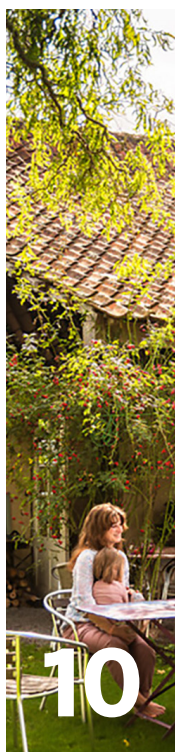
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ACCESSIBILITY AND LOCATION

The Lys rises in northern France and merges with the Scheldt in Ghent. For 200 kilometres, it meanders through a very diverse landscape: charming villages, plenty of greenery and nature, but also bustling cities where lovers of culture and good food and drink will feel right at home.

The Lys used to be known as 'the golden river'. Not only because of the stunning sunrises and sunsets, but also because of the great wealth generated in the flax industry. It remains a very entrepreneurial and creative district. You will notice this in the original nature experiences offered to you on and next to the water.

You can explore the region by bike, on foot, by car or by public transport. The four cities of the **Lys Region** - **Kortrijk**, **Roeselare**, **Deinze** and **Ghent** - are easily accessible by train. Many other municipalities also have a railway station. If you come by car or campervan, there are three major motorways that pass through the **Lys Region**: the A19, the E17 and the E304.

Vibrant cities



KORTRIJK

Kortrijk has something for everyone. On the lookout for trendy coffee shops, unique boutiques and top restaurants and cafes? This city on the River Lys has it all. Or are you more interested in culture and history? Then pay a visit to the flax museum, Texture, or visitors' centre '1302. Opstand, slag, keerpunt' (1302. Uprising, battle, turning point), where you can find out all about the Battle of the Golden Spurs. Or why not take a boat trip on the Lys?



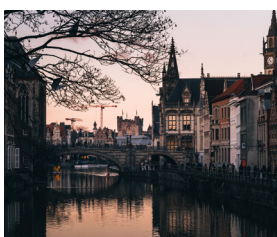
ROESELARE

Roeselare will surprise you - not only is it a shopper's paradise, but it offers more than enough activities to fill a day trip. A visit to Rodenbach brewery, for example, or the cycle racing museum 'Koers. Museum van de wielersport'. You can also go rowing with the family on the Grote Bassin. And if you're a foodie: round off the day at restaurant Boury, the best restaurant in the country.



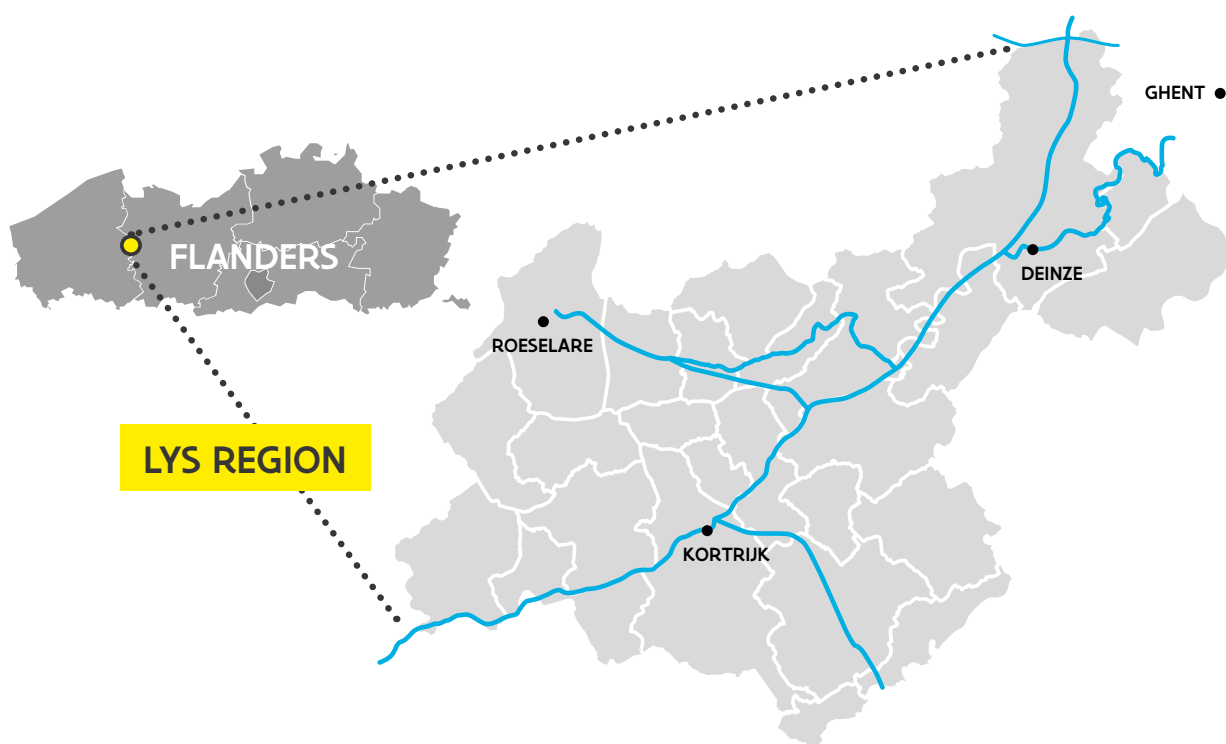
DEINZE

Deinze is an excellent starting point for a cycling trip: along the way, you will get to discover the region that inspired artists such as Emile Claus. You can see their works in mudel, the museum of Deinze and the Lys Region. Or hire an electric boat and explore the Lys yourself! More than a day trip in mind? Then spend the night at enchanting Ooidonk Castle.



GHENT

Ghent is the ideal destination for a city break - at least that's what British newspaper The Guardian says. Their correspondent was particularly charmed by the mix of heritage and contemporary creativity in just about all areas: culture and museums, shopping, food and drink, overnight accommodation, you name it. But if you want a more active day, Ghent also has much to offer. Head to the Blaarmeersen for some sporting activity, or rent a boat and explore the city from the water!



MICRO-ADVENTURES IN THE LYS REGION



— On the trail of Flemish masters

The Lys Region has long been a source of inspiration for artists - from Roger Raveel to Emile Claus. Via **themed walking and cycle routes**, you can get to know their world and their work. The many street art routes and art-themed walks in Kortrijk and Ghent show just how creative the region still is today. Still looking for some inspiration for your trip? Be guided by the unforgettable moments captured by painters like Emile Claus.



— 101 hotspots

Every two years, a jury selects **101 surprising and creative spots in the Lys Region**: cosy coffee bars, top-notch eateries, atmospheric pubs, interesting shops and more!



— Standup paddleboarding in the Lys Region

Standup paddleboarding (SUP) is the perfect activity, really something for those who like to be active: you stand upright on a large surfboard and paddle over the water. It's a great way to explore the Lys Region's many waterways at your own pace and in complete freedom.

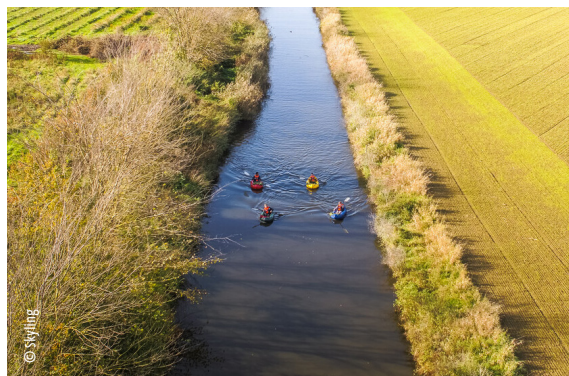


— Cruise down the River Lys in a tank

Tanking originated in Nebraska: you paddle down the river in a large metal barrel, or you just let yourself drift with the current. A tank accommodates 2 to 6 adults and is very easy to control. You can even bring a coolbox, radio or aperitif/lunch with you. In good weather, you can set sail every day from mid-May to the end of October. A journey takes 1 to 2 hours. Ideal for groups and families!

— Packrafting on the Mandel

Packrafting is a sport that comes from Alaska, a **combination of rafting and hiking**. The packraft itself is a stable, portable boat. From Dentergem, you explore the Mandel - one of the tributaries of the Lys - on foot (8 km) and by boat (4 km). An original, active, yet very accessible way to get to know the Lys Region.



FLEMISH MASTERS IN SITU

In Flanders, you can still admire many paintings and other works of art in the places for which they were originally created. Especially in the Lys Region, where so many artists have lived and found inspiration - just think of the renowned painters' village Sint-Martens-Latem. Art lover? Then explore the region by bicycle, on foot, or even by boat. Marked cycle and walking routes are available that take you to the artists' ateliers, museums and the region's most picturesque spots. No better way to combine nature with culture.



Wake up in the midst of nature

The first rays of sunlight slipping through the leaves, while the birds begin to chirp softly: there's nothing so relaxing as waking up in the midst of nature. In the Lys Region, there are many original places where you can stay. Here are some ideas!



Achiel & Hector

From May to September, stay in the middle of nature in an imaginatively decorated canvas tent.



Hemelgem

Have you ever slept in a real tree house in the midst of nature? At B&B Hemelgem, you can!

De dag des Heeren

This is a B&B in a beautifully renovated rustic farmstead, wholly furnished with antiques. Everything that you see there is also for sale.

Ter Wallen Castle

An overnight stay in the midst of nature, but also in the middle of town? Check! In a real castle? Check!



Ooidonk Castle

Prince or princess for a night? That is possible at the breathtakingly beautiful 16th-century Ooidonk castle.

't Bed en de tafel

Looking for rest and relaxation as well as good food? Hotel 't Bed en de tafel is surrounded by greenery, close to an old arm of the Scheldt.

Vakantiewoning Trimaarzate

Planning an excursion with family or friends? This unique holiday home can accommodate up to 16 people.



Nenuphar

Restaurant Nenuphar is a name that resonates in Ghent gastronomy. You can also stay there overnight, with a view of the Lys.

TASTE THE NATURE

Short chain is all the rage! Because what you purchase locally is tasty, fresh, healthy and honest. Looking for the most sustainable food and drink venues, restaurants and farm shops? Then be sure to check out these lists below. You can also explore the short-chain routes that criss-cross the Lys Region by bike: one in Mid-West Flanders, one in East Flanders and one in the border region.

— Beer experiences

The Lys Region has everything for the beer lover: breweries, atmospheric pubs and unique beer cycle routes.

BREWERY OMER VANDER GHINSTE

Omer Vander Ghinste founded this brewery in 1892 and it still brews according to his recipes. Discover the beers and history of this family-run business during a guided visit.

BREWERY RODENBACH

Rodenbach is known far beyond Flanders - beer guru Michael Jackson even proclaimed it the most refreshing beer in the world. It is a typical example of Flemish red-brown; a mixed fermentation beer, aged in upright oak barrels. During your visit, you not only learn more about the brewery, but also about the Rodenbach family.

BREWERY VERHAEGHE

You can take a guided tour at Brewery Verhaeghe every day. You learn all about their brewing process, the commitment of the brewery to quality, and the traditional South-West Flanders brewing method.

VAN HONSEBROUCK BIERKASTEEL

Kasteel beer needs no introduction. It is brewed in Van Honsenbrouck beer castle, Europe's most modern brewery. Well worth a visit!



— Self-pick gardens

Explore the most beautiful gardens in the Lys Region and pick your own fruit, vegetables or flowers, all without a subscription.

PURFRUIT

Pick your own organic fruit on an island in the Lys. There is also a farm shop with a wide selection.

O'BIO

Fancy picking organically grown berries and then taking a breather with a smoothie or ice cream? You can do that here!

LAMBRECHT-BAART

You can come and pick apples and pears here from the beginning of August. The farm shop offers 100% pure juice and also farm dairy products and bread.

WASSEDE MAAN

Biodynamic farm De Wassende Maan has been growing organic vegetables since 1979. Also, there is De Bloemenwijd, an organic self-picking flower meadow.



And so much more...

A quick selection of what else the Lys Region has to offer: the renowned Tierenteyn Mustard; Brokkeloud Roeselaere, the cheese that made it to space; advocate and gin from Filliers distillery; the famous neuzekes or cuberdons; or - less well known, but no less traditional - the sweet klaaskoeken, baked to celebrate Saint Nicholas or Saint Martin.

Ticked off:

3 bucket list experiences



1. THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOTS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SUNRISE OR SUNSET

What could be more magical than a sunrise or sunset over the water? And certainly, over the Lys, the golden river. Discover **the spots** where you can experience the most beautiful moments and take the most sensational photos.



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2. A DAY OF ISLAND HOPPING

Island hopping is also possible in Flanders! Here and there, in the rivers of the Lys Region, you can find small but idyllic islands. Explore the seven most beautiful and extraordinary ones.



© Paint&Sip

3. PAINT&SIP

The Lys Region has been immortalised by landscape painters such as Emile Claus. Would you like to have a go at painting such an idyllic scene yourself, of course while enjoying a local drink? Then sign up for a Paint&Sip workshop.

FOR CYCLISTS AND WALKERS



Cycle routes

Beer cycle routes

The Lys Region has no fewer than three beer cycle routes. These take you to local breweries and cosy pubs and, along the way, you get to enjoy some beautiful scenery.

Flanders' Finest Lys Region Route

The 58 km Lys Region Route starts and ends in Ghent. Along the way, you pass nature reserves, abbeys, artists villages and castles, and take the ferry across the Lys.

Flanders' Finest Cycling past Castles

This route also starts and ends in Ghent. For 57 km (35 miles), you cycle through the greenery, passing one castle after another.

Tiegemberg cycle route

The rather challenging Tiegemberg route traverses the beautiful rolling countryside between the Lys and the Scheldt. Is 48.3 km (30 miles) a bit too far for you? Then you can also opt for shortened versions of 38.6 (24 miles) or 19.3 km (12 miles). You can take the loop from Waregem, Anzegem, Deerlijk or Avelgem.

Flax Lys route

This 42 km (26 mile) route follows the course of the Lys, taking you past abandoned flax retting works and flax museum Texture in Kortrijk. There are five starting points from where you can take the loop.

Scheldt cycle route

Cycle through the rolling Scheldt countryside on towpaths, the beds of old railway lines and rural roads. The 45.9-km (28.5 mile) route weaves together breathtaking views and green areas of nature. It also passes Transfo, the site of an old power plant, which now houses a fascinating visitors' centre for those interested in renewable energy.

Tiny Tip

Do you require an adapted bike, a parent-child tandem or a rickshaw (three people)? You can find them in Kortrijk at a distribution point.

In the Lys Region, you can cycle or walk from one captivating spot to the next. We have picked some of the most enjoyable routes for you.



Walking routes

Walking through nature, from scenic view to museum, with a break along the way in a village pub or a picnic by the waterfront? A short walk with the wheelchair or buggy, a day trip, or even a multi-day route? The Lys Region has an extensive range of walking options suitable for all. All routes are easy to reach by public transport. Many accommodation providers are happy to take your luggage to your next place of stay.

Mortagne walking route

A 12.7 km (8 mile) loop that lets you explore the Scheldt countryside around Spiere-Helkijn. You walk along the bed of an old railway line, on rural roads and along the banks of the Scheldt.

Afsnee-Keuze walking route

This route consists of two loops, both of which start from Afsnee. One takes you through the Keuzemeersen nature area; the other lets you explore the open farmland on the other side of the Lys. The loops have a combined length of 9.3 km (5.7 miles).

Kleine Kluis walking route

Gijzelbrechtegem, now part of Anzegem, used to be the smallest municipality in Flanders. It is the starting point for the 7.7 km (4.7 miles) long Kleine Kluis walking route. The landscape unfolds before you from the viewing platform at St Matthew's Church. You walk through a green, rural region and pass through a forest where bluebells grow in the spring.

Ooidonk walking route

This 7.7 km (4.7 miles) route introduces you to the village of Bachte-Maria-Leerne, beautiful Ooidonk Castle, and the Leiemeersen and open fields or 'kouters' around the village centre. Recommended: Bathio, a self-service ferry that crosses an old arm of the Lys.

Old Lys walking route

This walk runs partly along the straightened Lys and partly along the old, cut-off river bends. These are now true natural paradises, especially rich in water birds. You also pass valuable heritage sites, such as old flax retting works and Ooigem Castle. Along the way, you cross the Lys via an S-shaped cycling and walking bridge. The walk is 13 km (8 miles) in length and has two starting points: one in Harelbeke and the other in Waregem.



In the mood for a **multi-day walking adventure**? Then you're spoiled for choice in the Lys Region!

ACCESSIBLE WALKING ROUTES

Are you heading out with a wheelchair or buggy? In the Lys Region, there are **10 accessible walking routes**, some in the city and some in the countryside.

Sensory routes in Kortrijk

Kortrijk has three relatively short walks (2 to 4 km) (1 to 2.5 miles) that are accessible for everyone: strollers and wheelchair users, young and old. They introduce you to creative Kortrijk, historic Kortrijk (including the shopping area), and musical Kortrijk.



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