

A photograph of three women standing in a courtyard in Mechelen, Belgium. They are looking at a large map spread out on a surface. The woman on the left is wearing a black and white patterned jacket and white pants. The woman in the middle is wearing a blue jacket, sunglasses, and white pants, and is using a white cane. The woman on the right is wearing a floral jacket and white pants. In the background is a large, historic brick building with a tall tower and arched windows. A large white checkmark is superimposed over the image.

**MECHELEN,  
ACCESSIBLE  
FOR EVERYONE**

# **IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARGARET**

**VISITMECHELEN.BE**

**VISIT**   
**MECHELEN** 



# A CITY WALK TAKING IN MECHELEN'S BURGUNDIAN AND MODERN-DAY SIGHTS.

Welcome to the walkable city of Mechelen, to its historic monuments, charming waterside locations and hidden gems! And all within reach of pedestrians and wheelchair-users.

This walk puts the spotlight on a golden age in Mechelen's fascinating history: the Burgundian period. The time of Margaret of Austria and Margaret of York. The walk follows in the footsteps of these two strong and intriguing women, who left their imprint on this city-on-the-Dyle.

Just imagine... 500 years ago, Mechelen was the capital city of the Netherlands. The court, known as the Grand Council, was located here and the Burgundian noblemen made the city their home. In short, Mechelen was a hugely important location. There are still traces of that golden age, including city palaces, historical churches, wooden façades and richly decorated guildhalls. Feeling thirsty? Release your inner Burgundian and enjoy a Gouden Carolus beer – something else that put Mechelen on the world map!

Older tourists, visitors with a disability or reduced mobility or with special care requirements need not be apprehensive about visiting Mechelen. Produced by VISITFLANDERS, Visit Mechelen and Inter, this brochure is designed to provide all the information you need to prepare your visit to Mechelen and give you peace of mind.

We have put together a walk that is approximately 2.3 km long and takes you from the starting point at the Schepenhuis to the main places of interest. Along the way you will be given the option of extending the walk.

**If you'd like to see even more of what our city-on-the-Dyle has to offer, you'll find plenty to inspire you at [www.visitmechelen.be](http://www.visitmechelen.be).**

If you don't immediately find what you are looking for, email your question to the Visit Mechelen team at [visit@mechelen.be](mailto:visit@mechelen.be) or phone +32 15 29 76 54



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# USING THIS BROCHURE

We put together an attractive route designed to keep obstacles to a minimum. The historic city centre has many narrow cobbled streets and in fact this walk will take you over some cobbled streets, but most of them are flat and well maintained. In putting together the route, we avoided rounded cobblestones wherever possible. The brochure tells you what you will see along the way and at the back is a fold-out map of the route and the locations described.

The brochure also provides information about museums and sights, cafés, restaurants, public toilets and even an address where you can have your wheelchair repaired if necessary. It also gives you pointers about accessible accommodation, mobility aids, care services, transport and parking.

The information is based on objective inspections carried out on site by experts. For more information about each building or location, you may like


to consult the detailed report you'll find at [www.toevla.be](http://www.toevla.be) (available in Dutch only). Some of the locations were included in the walk on the basis of recommendations by people with disabilities.

We chose Mechelen's more accessible locations. Some may not be suitable for autonomous wheelchair-users, for example. Hopefully the descriptions will help you decide for yourself which locations you will find manageable.

We would just like to add that we made every possible effort to ensure that the published information is accurate and up-to-date. However, things do change occasionally, or it is possible that work is being carried out on the route at the time of your visit. You will find any updates at [www.visitmechelen.be/updatebrochures](http://www.visitmechelen.be/updatebrochures).

We hope you enjoy a carefree visit!

TIP!



Some buildings that are not accessible or fully accessible can be viewed in detail in 360° images at [www.virtualmechelen.be](http://www.virtualmechelen.be). In the brochure this icon is used to indicate these buildings.

## VISIT AND EXPERIENCE

The detailed descriptions show to what extent a certain attraction or parts of the attraction are accessible to visitors with limited mobility. They also mention any obstacles you may 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 the visually impaired**



**Facilities for the deaf or hearing-impaired**

## PUBLIC TOILETS

The thumb system below should help you decide if a toilet is suitable for you.



**Accessible**



**Accessible with assistance**



**Access problematic**

n.v.t.

**N/A not applicable**

**If you have any questions or comments about the route or about information provided in the brochure, please do get in touch at [visit@mechelen.be](mailto:visit@mechelen.be).**



## A WORD ABOUT COBBLESTONES IN MECHELEN

Streets in the centre of Mechelen are paved with three different sorts of cobblestones. In the brochure these are indicated as follows:

- **Round:** rounded cobblestones require the most effort of wheelchair- users
- **Flat:** flat cobblestones are navigable with a wheelchair
- **Small cobblestones:** small cobblestones do not present a problem for wheelchair-users

## ON WHEELS – APP

The ON WHEELS app helps wheelchair, mobility scooter and rollator-users navigate Mechelen's accessible shops, restaurants, cafés and parking places.

The app allows you to create your own accessibility profile based on the width of your wheelchair, the height of the kerbs or ramps you can manage, etc. Select one or more of the 20 categories to obtain detailed and verified information. You can also add new locations or report any information that is no longer accurate. The app is available for Android and iOS operating systems and comes in eight languages. Visit [www.onwheelsapp.com](http://www.onwheelsapp.com) for more information or email your question to [info@onwheelsapp.com](mailto:info@onwheelsapp.com).





## ACCOMMODATION, INFORMATION OFFICES AND VISITOR CENTRES

Visit Flanders uses two labels to indicate accessible overnight accommodation, tourist information offices and visitor centres:



The A+ label indicates that the building can be accessed with relative ease and independence.



The A label indicates that we consider the building to be accessible by most people with limited mobility, but it may require extra effort or a helper.

### TIP!

Want to know more?  
To find out more about the accessibility labels,  
go to [www.visitflanders.com/accessibility](http://www.visitflanders.com/accessibility)

# VISIT AND EXPERIENCE

# ON THE WALK

The walk starts at the Schepenhuis or Aldermen's House **1** at the entrance on Vleeshouwersstraat, where the tourist office is located.



## ALDERMEN'S HOUSE / TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE

One of Flanders' oldest town halls

The Gothic Schepenhuis, or Aldermen's House, is one of Flanders' oldest town halls. Before this building was erected, the aldermen would often meet in the open air. In 1375 a larger wing was added to the thirteenth-century building on the Schoenmarkt and it was here that Charles the Bold established Mechelen's Parliament in 1473, thereby making Mechelen the juridical centre of the Burgundian Netherlands. Between 1504 and 1616, it was the seat of the Grand Council, the successor to the Parliament. After that the guild of arquebusiers held its meetings in the hall. It was subsequently used as a theatre, a fencing school, a prison, an archaeological museum and a municipal archive.

These days it is Visit Mechelen's information office. Here you will find answers to all your tourism-related questions, so it's the ideal place to start your walk.



The building is accessed via an automatic sliding door and plateau lift. Some spaces are rather narrow but they are passable. A lift provides access to the different floors. The reception desk and the experience elements are accessible by wheelchair. There is also an accessible toilet. The Burgundian app was produced specifically for use by the blind and visually impaired.

**Vleeshouwersstraat 6**  
**+32 15 29 76 54**  
**visit@mechelen.be**  
**www.visitmechelen.be**

Keep the Schepenhuis on your left and go straight on until you come to the statue of Margaret of Austria **2**.

## SCULPTURAL MECHELEN: 'OUR MARGRET'

What a woman she was!

You will find "Our Margret", or "Ons Margriet" as the locals call her, on the Schoenmarkt, in-between St Rumbold's Tower and the Aldermen's House. She is of course Margaret of Austria, governess of the Netherlands from 1506 to 1530. And what a woman she was! Her impact on the city was significant. In 1849, Jozef Tuerlinckx was commissioned 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 Belgian city to choose a woman. Initially, Margaret's statue graced the Grote Markt. She was moved to her current location when the weight of her statue proved too much for the new underground car park. From her current location, the governess has a better view of the Grote Markt, which now looks larger than ever.



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

Continue to the right and onto the Grote Markt **3**.  
 Go straight across the market square to the town hall.



2

3

## GROTE MARKT

### An ancient square

For centuries, the Grote Markt has been the main square in the city centre. It is dominated by St Rumbold's Tower, which you can see from wherever you are standing. The town hall is located at the opposite end. Do take a look at the houses that line the Grote Markt. These historic dwellings date from different periods and were built in a variety of styles, including sixteenth-century renaissance and eighteenth-century rococo.

Huis Keulen ('House Cologne' at No. 26) is an interesting example of early sixteenth-century civic Brabantine Gothic. Some believe this step-gabled house was designed by Rombout II Keldermans, who was city architect at the time of its construction. He was widely regarded as one of the most important exponents of Brabantine Gothic.



*The road surface is constructed of small, fairly smooth cobbles.*



In front of the town hall you see the Opsinjoorke statue 4.

4

## 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 ceremonial and religious processions. The doll is tossed into 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 Bridegroom"), a reference to drunkards who maltreated their wives. The doll was symbolically punished in public (thrown into the air) for the sins of these men.

But where did the name Opsinjoorke come from? The doll acquired its name on July 4th 1775 when, during a religious procession, the doll went beyond the reach of the cloth and landed among the crowd. An onlooker from Antwerp put out his arms to ward off the doll, but was accused of trying to steal the Sotscop and received a sound thrashing from the patriotic people of Mechelen. As the accused was a "Sinjoor" (the nickname of the people of Antwerp), the doll came to be known as Opsinjoorke.



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



**Toilet: there is an accessible toilet T1 in the town hall 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. It is where the city kept important documents relating to the city and where guards stood watch over the city. But Mechelen's belfry was never completed, the reason being that the cloth trade declined in the fourteenth century and the city could not afford to complete it.

When building work came to a standstill, St Rumbold's Tower served as the belfry and the unfinished belfry of the town hall became a prison. To the left of the belfry, you can see the Palace of the Great Council, the highest court of law in the Southern Netherlands. But the council

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5



never convened here. This wing dates from the early twentieth century when it was completed in accordance with master architect Rombout Keldermans' original sixteenth-century plans with a few neo-Gothic additions.

Note the 36 medallions on the side of the building in Befferstraat, which portray several rulers, from Pepin of Landen (622-639) right through to Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (1478-1506).



*The courtyard of the town hall is accessible for visitors. Both access paths are cobbled. On the Befferstraat side the cobblestones are flat. Just before the path leading from the Grote Markt the cobblestones are rounder and therefore present slightly more of a challenge for wheelchair-users. Most of the courtyard is made up of flat cobblestones and there are no changes of level. There is also direct access from the courtyard to an accessible toilet.*

**Grote Markt 21**  
**+32 15 29 76 54**  
**visit@mechelen.be**  
**www.visitmechelen.be**



From the inner courtyard of the town hall, go back to the Grote Markt and through the gallery to the left of the building into Befferstraat, where you have a 2 to 3-cm-high threshold. You leave the gallery via a short slope adjacent to a large entrance gate. And you find yourself back on the street.



**Toilet:** You'll find an accessible toilet **12** in the Huis van de Mechelaar in the street behind the town hall, Reuzenstraat.

Follow Befferstraat until you come to building number 38, where you go through a gateway to the right. That passageway leads to Rik Wouters' Garden **6** where you will find several benches. At the end of the garden go left and over the little bridge. Then turn left again into Rik Woutersstraat.

## RIK WOUTERS' GARDEN

### Tribute to a Mechelen artist

Accessed from Befferstraat or Rik Woutersstraat, Rik Wouters' Garden pays tribute to this Mechelen artist. Running through this tranquil place is a recently uncapped canal. You'll see a bronze bust of the artist and a striking mural by the street artist Gijs Van Hee, inspired by Wouters' exuberant sculpture of The Mad Maiden. The location of the garden is no coincidence. The artist lived with his parents for ten years at No. 41-43 in what is now Rik Woutersstraat.



*The Rik Wouters Garden is easily accessible. There are no changes of level and the paths are good.*

You come out on the Veemarkt, where you see the Church of St Peter and St Paul **7** on your right.





7

## CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL

### Margaret's church

Margaret of Austria had a special bond with the former Church of St Peter and St Paul, which was located near her palace. A wooden bridge connected the palace with her own prayer space in the medieval church. Her viscera or intestines were buried there 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 containing Margaret's viscera was moved to the 'new' Church of St Peter and St Paul and installed near the main altar.



*There are four steps at the entrance. Unfortunately, there is no alternative entrance. Ground surface indicators mark the route from the crossing to the entrance to the church. Inside there are no thresholds in the parts open to visitors. You can visit the church virtually at [www.virtualmechelen.be](http://www.virtualmechelen.be).*



**Veemarkt 44**  
**+32 15 29 40 32**  
**info@torensaandedijle.be**  
**[www.torensaandedijle.be](http://www.torensaandedijle.be)**



You can now go to the palaces of Margareta of York **8** and Margareta of Austria **9** or leave out this part of the walk (+/-500m) all together, if you prefer. If you would like to go to the palaces, continue to follow the route. If you choose to leave them out, go to page 18.



Go to the right for a closer look at the Church of St Peter and St Paul. After the Veemarkt, go along Keizerstraat, and on the other side you will see the Palace of Margareta of York **8**, now the municipal theatre.

8

## PALACE OF MARGARET OF YORK

### From bishop's palace to theatre



Originally the 'Hof van Kamerijk' belonging to Bishop John VI of Burgundy occupied this site. In 1480 Margaret of York, who was the widow of the Burgundian duke Charles the Bold, had the building transformed into a veritable palace. Her court attracted many powerful people to Mechelen and earned the city great prestige. From the seventeenth century, the remains of the palace - also known as 'Keizershof' or the 'Imperial Court' because Charles V spent his youth here - served as a Jesuit monastery. In the nineteenth century, the building was repurposed as the municipal theatre. Margaret's diamond-shaped coat of arms still graces the façade (to the right of the entrance), alongside that of her husband.

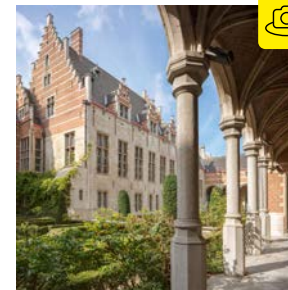
*The building is not normally open to visitors so on this walk you will only see it from the outside.*

**Keizerstraat 3**

Walk a little further and you'll see the Palace of Margareta of Austria **9** on your right.

## PALACE OF MARGARET OF AUSTRIA

### A hub of art and science



In 1507 Margaret of Austria moved to Mechelen, after being appointed governess of the Habsburg Netherlands. Under Margaret, Mechelen became the capital of the Low Countries. Her newly-built city palace, the Court of Savoy, was one of the first buildings in the Low Countries with renaissance elements. It was designed by the prominent Mechelen architects Antoon and Rombout Keldermans.

**Keizerstraat 20**

9

A little further along on the other side, you see Margaretaplein 10. Return along the same route until you come to Rik Woutersstraat.

10



## MARGARETAPLEIN

### Gold rocking horse

There used to be a hospital around Margaretaplein. Mechelen's Augustinian nuns ran the hospital for almost 500 years and took care of the largest collection of retables known as 'besloten hofjes' - or 'enclosed gardens' - in Europe, probably the largest in the world. The seven retables now on display in the Hof van Busleyden Museum are Mechelen products of the highest quality.

On the square you will notice a striking gold statue of a young boy on a rocking horse. It recalls the childhood of Emperor Charles V, who grew up in Mechelen at the court of his aunt, Margaret of Austria. The contemporary artwork 'Powerless Structures' is by the Scandinavian artist duo Elmgreen & Dragset. The original bronze version is four metres high.

*You only see the square from the other side. The route is made up of small, flat cobblestones and there are no changes of level.*

**+** Are you leaving out the palaces? Cross the road and go to the right across the red and pink square, keeping to the left. At the end go round the statue to the left. You now have the bus shelters on your right. Here you will find several benches. Now walk straight on. From here on, the ground consists of small cobblestones.

Further along this street at the Holiday Inn Express hotel turn left into Varkensstraat. Go straight on and you come out on Jan De Smedtplein where you turn right. Follow it to the end and then go to the right into Frederik De Merodestraat. Follow this street to the junction. Here you turn left into Sint-Janstraat. On the corner on your right-hand side you'll see 't Schipke 11.

## 'T SCHIPKE

### World-famous



Het Schipke is actually two houses: a corner house and the adjacent house in Frederik de Merodestraat. They were only combined during renovation in 1772 in the run-up to the festivities to mark the 1000th anniversary of the death of St Rumbold. This also explains the rococo style.

This striking corner house became world famous as the home of Jef Denyn's internationally acclaimed carillon school from 1947 to 2013. The school has since moved to a new building on Bruul. Restoration work on this historic

monument got under way in 2021. It will soon house the Hof van Busleyden Museum's café.

*You will only see the outside of the building. The route is level and made up of small, smooth cobblestones.*

**Frederik de Meroderstraat 63**

Next to 't Schipke 11 is the Hof van Busleyden Museum 12.

## HOF VAN BUSLEYDEN

### Burgundians, the Renaissance and the 21st century

Shortly after 1500, Hieronymus van Busleyden was an important humanist in the Netherlands. As a member of the Great Council of Mechelen, he had a magnificent palatial residence built, partly to hold his vast collection of books and art. Here he would receive prominent intellectuals like Erasmus and Thomas More. While the style of the building is fairly traditional Gothic, a number of elements reveal the mind of a man who was inspired by the spirit of the renaissance as he travelled round Europe.

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In the museum you will discover authentic chefs d'oeuvre, some by Flemish masters. You will hear stories about Mechelen's golden age when the city was the capital of the Burgundian Netherlands. You will come face to face with the intriguing 'Besloten Hofjes' or Enclosed Gardens made by anonymous female artists in the sixteenth century.



*The museum is easily accessible via the courtyard garden along Sint-Janstraat. There is a lowered counter with sufficient clear knee space below it for wheelchair-users. The corridors are sufficiently wide and the doors open automatically. The various floors are served by a good lift. Gently sloping ramps and an innovative plateau lift bridge any changes in level between the rooms. Most of the experience elements and exhibits are easily accessible and usable. Most of the gallery texts are easily legible. The shop is also accessible, though the furniture is rather high. There is an accessible and spacious toilet with grab rails.*

*Portable stools and a wheelchair are available. The reception desk is fitted with an audio induction loop system. There are audio-visual displays throughout the museum and the main spoken films are subtitled.*

*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 colour differences. This is slightly more difficult to achieve in a room that is predominantly white and in the darker room containing the Enclosed Gardens.*

*The signage is clear and some of it is also tactile. A system of letters, colours and symbols is used to keep everything simple and recognisable. In the next phase, further work will be done to extend the facilities for visitors with a visual and hearing impairment, including the modification of audio tours and the heritage app.*

**Sint-Janstraat 2a**  
**+32 15 29 40 30**  
**hvb@mechelen.be**  
**www.hofvanbusleyden.be**

**A little further along you'll see Sint-Janskerk - the Church of Saint John 13 - on the left-hand side. You'll find benches here too.**



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## 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 between the end of the fourteenth century and the mid-fifteenth century. Two larger-than-life patron saints stand guard at the foot of the western tower: the murals represent Saint Christopher who offered protection against sudden death and Saint George who fought evil in the form of a dragon. They can only be visited with a guide. The parish of St John was one of the wealthiest in Mechelen. After the Great Council moved to the Court of Savoy, Margaret of Austria's former palace, many counsellors relocated to the parish. They invested in both the parish and the church. Rubens' 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 wide portal has heavy doors, but there is plenty of room to manoeuvre. The church is very spacious with ample room to circulate in the side aisles, the main aisle and 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 ramp has been installed. However, you may need some assistance. Most of the treasures are visible from the side aisles, the main aisle and the transepts. You can visit the church and the murals virtually at [www.virtueelmechelen.be](http://www.virtueelmechelen.be).*

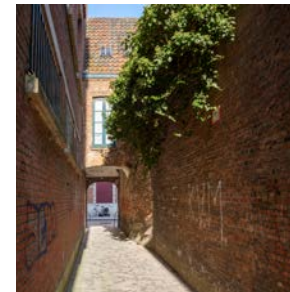
**Sint-Janskerkhof**  
+32 15 29 40 32  
[info@torensaandedijle.be](mailto:info@torensaandedijle.be)  
[www.torensaandedijle.be](http://www.torensaandedijle.be)



Follow the street to the end, and you'll be in Goswin de Stassartstraat. Turn left and walk on the left-hand side. A little further along you come to the Klapgat 14.

## KLAPGAT

### A chinwag under Christ's watchful eye



The 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 for a chat after mass. But they did this so often and so loudly that the alley soon became known as the Klapgat (lit. Chat Hole).

The Hofje van Olijven or Mount of Olives, a wooden group sculpture which dates from before 1578, stands at the entrance to the Klapgat. It portrays Christ and his three favourite apostles on the eve of Christ's Passion. In the past, the faithful

would gather here to pray in difficult times and drop a 'suske' (1 centime) or a 'cent' (2 centimes) into the collection box. The structure around the sculpture was renovated in 1874.



*The road surface is constructed of small, fairly smooth cobblestones.*

Walk straight on. On the other side you'll see 't Groen Waterke 15.

## 'T GROEN WATERKE

### An urban idyll



The Groen Waterke (lit. Green Water) is one of many idyllic spots around Mechelen. The canal owes its name to the duckweed covering the surface of the water. It is actually a part of the Melaan canal that was not covered over or filled in. Here you really get a sense of how quiet it must have been in the city in the old days. You are also quite near the Houses of Refuge of the Abbeys of Sint-Truiden (Trond) and Tongerlo.

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*You will see the Groen Waterke from the other side of the street. However, if you can, you may like to cross over for a closer look. Then return to the other side of the street.*

Further on on the right on the bend you will find the Archbishop's Palace 16.



16

## ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE

### Italy in Mechelen

On the Wollemarkt is a classical palace commissioned by Cardinal Thomas Philippe d'Alsace in the eighteenth century. It owes its Italianate influences to an unknown Italian architect. The classicist features include the simple façade, the horizontalism and the U-shaped floor plan. Originally there were two patrician houses here, which served as the Abbey of Affligem's House of Refuge.

On this walk you will only see the outside of the building. The private garden of the Archbishop's Palace is now opened to the public on a regular basis to provide a quiet, green oasis in the busy city. All the buildings and structures in the garden - the sheds, the Lourdes cave, the pavilion and the wall - have been restored to their former glory.

Follow the slight bend to the left. In front of you you'll see St Rumbold's Cathedral and St Rumbold's Tower 17. On the right you will find the park with the large yellow Opsinjoorke as well as a number of benches. Keep the cathedral on your left and follow the gravel path.



If you want to visit the cathedral, walk past the front of the cathedral. Further on, it is best to go past the vegetation on the street side. Towards the end of this vegetation, you will find the accessible entrance on your left.

## ST RUMBOLD'S CATHEDRAL AND ST RUMBOLD'S TOWER

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Work started on the present-day cathedral back in the thirteenth century. It was consecrated in 1312 and the construction of St Rumbold's Tower commenced around 1450. In 1559, the church became a cathedral, a church where the archbishop has his 'seat'. The cathedral boasts many stunning artworks, starting with the Gothic choir and the tombs of the archbishops. Also hanging here are 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 over by the thirteen-year-old duke, Philip the Fair. St Rumbold's Tower is the symbol of Mechelen. The founding stone of this imposing monument was laid in 1452. Originally, the tower was to have been 167 metres high, but construction stopped at 97 metres in the early sixteenth century. The city's most important documents were preserved here and the bells sounded the alarm in the event of imminent danger. The panoramic view from the top of the tower made it easy to spot any threat.

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To the side of the Grote Markt there is a threshold-free entrance. The access path is made up of 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 ramp. The open side chapels all have a step. A steep ramp is provided on the steps to the cathedral museum in the choir aisle.



*The tower itself is not wheelchair accessible, but you can visit it virtually at [www.virtualmechelen.be](http://www.virtualmechelen.be). In the cathedral there is a wooden model of church and tower which you are allowed to 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**  
**+32 15 29 76 54**  
**[visit@mechelen.be](mailto:visit@mechelen.be)**  
**[www.visitmechelen.be/toren](http://www.visitmechelen.be/toren)**  
**[www.kathedraalmechelen.be](http://www.kathedraalmechelen.be)**

Leave the cathedral via the same door, and walk over to the Owl statue - den Uil **18**, which you will see in front of you slightly to the left a little further along. Retrace your steps to the park with the yellow Opsinjoorke.

## SCULPTURAL MECHELEN: THE OWL STATUE

18

“Shall we meet at Den Uil?” Recently locals have taken to saying this. The Owl – the work’s official name is ‘The Great Vivisector’ – stands on 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-high bronze sculpture weighs over a ton. The artist Johan Creten (b. 1963) is the first Belgian artist to have his work in the Louvre during his lifetime. Go and sit on the sculpture and pose for a picture.

*The road surface is constructed of rounded cobblestones.*



**Are you leaving out the cathedral?**  
**Cross the almost flat street. You will see De Garage **19** in front of you.**

## DE GARAGE Space for contemporary art

19

De Garage is a space for contemporary art within the Hof van Busleyden Museum. De Garage provides a sanctuary for both established and up-and-coming artists, and artist and oeuvre are the central focus. This approach very much reflects the spirit of the Hof van Busleyden Museum as a place where the original humanists emphasized the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively, and built a safe haven for rational thinking and experimentation. The humanists provided plenty of scope for talent development and dialogue and De Garage is only too happy to carry that through to the present day.

*Wheelchair-users wishing to visit De Garage should use the entrance on the right, which is level.*

**Onder-den-Toren 12**  
**+32 15 29 40 30**  
**[hvb@mechelen.be](mailto:hvb@mechelen.be)**  
**[www.hofvanbusleyden.be](http://www.hofvanbusleyden.be)**

On the corner next to De Garage **19** you will find the Heilige Geestkapel or Chapel of the Holy Spirit **20**.



20

## CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

### The Art Hour House (Thuis van Het Kunstuur)

The poor used to come to this medieval building to seek help. Every parish had so-called Tables of the Holy Spirit. Once a week, usually on a 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 they had been to mass first.

Old masters are currently on show in The Art Hour exhibition in the atmospherically-lit Chapel of the Holy Spirit. Each painting is accompanied by a story told by a well-known or lesser-known Fleming and complemented by well-chosen music by Dirk Brossé. This makes for an extraordinary experience, a magical hour of art in a magnificent historical location.



*The building is accessible via a removable, steeply sloping, 80-cm-wide surface. The entrance door is fairly heavy, but there is always someone at the desk to assist. The desk itself is partly lowered. Inside there is sufficient circulation space. The corridors are wide enough and the doors open automatically. The corridor between the second and third exhibition spaces slopes. Folding museum chairs and two wheelchairs are available. The accessible toilet has grab rails. Help is always on hand if required.*

**Minderbroedersgang 1-3**  
[info@hetkunstuur.com](mailto:info@hetkunstuur.com)  
[www.hetkunstuur.com](http://www.hetkunstuur.com)



On the corner, turn left into Minderbroedersgang and continue straight on. You come to Cultuurplein 21, passing several benches along the way.

## CULTUURPLEIN

### From poor relief to cultural centre

The cultural centre, the academy and the city's conservatory 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 into the cultural centre. The church was used as a hayloft for many years.

Cultuurplein is a good place to listen to carillon concerts performed on the carillon in St Rombold's Tower 17 on Monday evenings from June to September. Seats are provided on the square.



*The Cultuurplein was laid without level differences using small, flat cobblestones.*

Retrace your steps and keep to the left until you reach Minderbroedersgang, where a little further along on your right-hand side you will see De Cellekens 22.

## DE CELLEKENS

### From almshouses to artist's residence



In the shadow of St Rumbold's Tower is a unique historical monument, known as 'De Cellekens'. From 1854 De Cellekens were almshouses for poor, single women. The three wings form a U-shape around the lovely courtyard garden. In the centre is the convent with two rows of almshouses with arched doorways to the left and right of it. Each door provided access to two small rooms furnished with a bed, wardrobe, chair and table. The institution takes its name from these little 'cells'.

&gt;&gt;&gt;

21

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The building stood empty for many decades, before being restored by its new owners, the artist Mariette Teugels and her husband, the photographer Herman Smet. In 2002 they were awarded the prestigious Europa Nostra prize for their work. Some of Mariette Teugels' work is displayed in the garden.

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

**Continue on your way. At the end of the street, cross the little bridge and turn left immediately onto Melaan 23. Here you will find a kerb several centimetres high. You will find more benches. Follow the water a little further.**



23

## MELAAN

### A place by the water

Every local loves to stroll along the banks of the Melaan. This tributary of the River Dyle was one of the last visible canals in the city and was only covered over in 1913. It was uncapped in 2007 as part of a European project to restore 'Water in Historic City Centres'. Sit yourself down on one of the many benches, gaze at the water and reap the benefits of mindfulness.



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

**At the end, cross the street diagonally to Persoonshoek. At the end turn left and cross the water via a short slope and the Kraanbrug (Crane Bridge). Mind the traffic! Here you have a lovely view of three houses: Huizen Sint-Jozef, De Duiveltjes and Het Paradijs. Turn left onto Haverwerf 24.**

## HAVERWERF

### A picture-postcard wharf



Originally oats were unloaded and traded here. Oats were synonymous with grain and Mechelen had the exclusive staple rights to grain. This meant that barges carrying grain had to tie up in Mechelen and offer the whole cargo for sale here for three days. The skippers then loaded any unsold grain back onto their barge and took it elsewhere.

You can't fail to notice the three houses near the bridge. They date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and are the main attraction on the Haverwerf. The corner house is called Het Paradijske or 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 house in the middle is called De Duiveltjes, The Little Devils, and has one of the most beautiful wooden façades in Belgium. It used to be called The Prodigal Son because that parable is depicted above the front door. Nowadays it is named after the satyr sculptures, which act as supporting columns on the first floor. On the left is the baroque house known as Sint-Jozef. It features a relief of Saint Joseph and Jesus in the centre of its façade.

Continue your walk alongside the water and enjoy the surroundings!



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Follow Haverwerf to the Lamotsite **25**, where you will see a statue of Ludwig van Beethoven. You will pass several benches on the way. On the other side of the water you can see the Vismarkt **25** or Fish Market.



You will find an accessible toilet **T3** in the Lamot building itself.

25



## LAMOT SITE AND VISMARKT

### Hip and trendy

Enjoy the view of the Lamot Conference and Heritage Centre from the Haverwerf. The industrial heritage of this former brewery was given a contemporary twist, transforming it into one of Mechelen's go-to places.

On this square you will also find the statue of Ludwig van Beethoven, designed by Mechelen sculptor Jean-Paul Laenen. This group sculpture is in two parts: the young Ludwig holding a rose behind his back and his grandfather Lodewijk with a score. The link between Mechelen and this world-famous name? Grandfather Van Beethoven was born in Mechelen in 1712 and lived in what is now known as Van Beethovenstraat.

Fish was first traded at the Vismarkt on the opposite side in 1531, after the fishmongers had been banned from IJzerenleen by (among others) Margaret of Austria. Why, you ask? Because people couldn't stand the stench of fish. Until a few decades ago, there was a large

concentration of fish shops here. Nowadays it is one of Mechelen's most vibrant squares, well served by a whole variety of shops, cafés and restaurants. At night, the Vismarkt and adjoining Nauwstraat are always busy. Head for the laid-back cafés, the stylish modern lounge bars and the trendy restaurants and rub shoulders with Mechelen's young and young at heart.



Lamot Conference and Heritage Centre has lifts and an accessible toilet (see further on in this brochure).



**Van Beethovenstraat 8-10**  
**[www.lamot-mechelen.be](http://www.lamot-mechelen.be)**

Now you can extend your walk either via Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat (+/-2km) or the Dyle Path (+/-2km).



- The Dyle Path **26** extension is ± 2 km long. Follow the route from **26**.
- The Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat extension is ± 2 km long and we would advise this option for wheelchair-users. The description starts on page 34.

If you don't want to follow either of those extensions, you are nearing the end of your walk. Go past the Lamot site and along Van Beethovenstraat, which slopes. Keep to the left-hand side and then go via Guldenstraat and cross over the Grootbrug **27** – the Big Bridge. You come out on IJzerenleen **34**. Walk all the way along IJzerenleen until you reach the Schepenhuis **1**, where your walk ends.



**Dyle Path extension: go left next to the Lamot building, behind the Van Beethovenbrug (bridge), via a steep slope onto the Dyle Path. There are no benches along the Dyle Path itself.**

## DIJLEPAD

### Waterside walk

The Dyle Path is a relaxing walk alongside and over the Dyle between Haverwerf and the Botanical Garden in the heart of the city. The many waterbirds add to the atmosphere and provide entertainment, not least for children.



*The Dyle Path is accessible for wheelchair-users and those with reduced mobility, **provided they have sufficient help**. The ramps are fairly steep and can be slippery when it rains.*

26



The first bridge you go under is the Grootbrug **27** – Big Bridge. At the very end, you leave the Dyle Path via a very steep slope. Here you go to the right and cross Fonteinbrug – Fountain Bridge. Continue reading on page 36, Kruidtuin **30**.

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## GROOTBRUG

### Flanders' oldest stone bridge

Hoogbrug or Grootbrug, which dates from the thirteenth century, is the oldest (sand)stone bridge in Mechelen, and perhaps even in the whole of Flanders. It connects IJzerenleen with the Korenmarkt, and at one time was part of the city's fortifications. It was also a toll bridge. The last arch, on the corner of IJzerenleen, indicates where the 'Koolvliet' or 'Coal Canal', which ran between the iron railings, once flowed into the Dyle. Grootbrug also leads to Brusselpoort, Mechelen's only remaining city gate, which is situated along Mechelen's innercity ring road.

*The small cobblestones on and after the bridge are uneven in places.*



**Extension via Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat:** Go past the Lamot site and then along Van Beethovenstraat, keeping to the left. This street slopes. At the end go to the right into Guldenstraat. Take the first street on the left, the Korenmarkt and keep to the left. Continue straight on. The street becomes Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat **28**.

## ONZE-LIEVE-VROUWESTRAAT

### Tradition and innovation

28



In recent years Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat has attracted a steady stream of more unusual and trendy shops, which sit comfortably alongside long-established, traditional businesses. Recently a large part of the street has been pedestrianized and brightened up with street art by artists like Gijs Vanhee.

*A part of this street consists of cobblestones which are more difficult for wheelchair-users to navigate. However, most of the street presents no difficulty.*

Continue straight on for a while and you come to Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-over-de-Dijlekerk – Church of Our Lady over the Dyle **29** – on your right. Go straight on. At the end of this street, turn left into Vijfhoek, and then cross Fonteinbrug – Fountain Bridge.

## CHURCH OF OUR LADY OVER THE DYLE

### Idyllic scene in the city

29




This church was built in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries on the site where Mechelen's parish church is thought to have stood. The church houses a wealth of exceptional art treasures, with Rubens' The Miraculous Draught of Fish as the highpoint. Many works of art were commissioned by the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, a cult that supported (among others) Philip the Fair and Margaret of Austria.





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 room 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 at a higher level. Those who cannot manage the steps can access the choir aisle by means of a very steep sloping surface. Many of the treasures 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.

**Onze-Lieve-Vrouwkerkhof**  
**+32 15 29 40 32**  
**info@torensaandedijle.be**  
**www.torensaandedijle.be**

Immediately after this bridge, turn right into the Botanical Garden , between the two stone kiosks. Keep to the left in the park, always taking the left path where you have options. Here you will also find several benches.



## BOTANICAL GARDEN


### A city park with a past

30

Mechelen's Botanical Garden has an amazing history. In the Middle Ages, this verdant urban oasis was the garden of the Commanderie of Pitzemburg, an order of knights which was abolished under French rule. In the nineteenth century, an English landscape garden was built here for the members of the elitist Société Royale d'Horticulture. The Botanical Garden became a public park after World War II. You can enjoy the nature and the peace and quiet, while your children have fun in the playground.



The paths in the Botanical Garden are wide and wheelchair-users will find the surfaces relatively easy to navigate.

When you come to the herb beds, go through a gate. Cross over to the Leermarkt. Take the first street Blaasbalgstraat to the right. Then take the first left. You come out in Huidevetterstraat. A little further along on the right-hand side you come to De Vleeshalle . You'll recognize the building by the two bull heads.

## DE VLEESHALLE

### Historic market hall

31

At the end of the nineteenth century, a new covered meat hall was built in Mechelen, significantly improving the situation for traders and buyers as the meat was stored and displayed in better conditions. It also had spin-offs for other traders in the city centre. The light, spacious hall had 115 butchers' benches, which were rented out to butchers. It closed in 1965 as more butchers started to open their own shops. The cow's heads above the two entrance gates recall the building's former function.

This listed building has regained its mojo as a food hall and foodie destination. As such the historic Vleeshalle is a great place for a drink and a snack.

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The main entrance on the left side of the hall has an 18-cm threshold. At the entrance on the right side there is a 5-cm threshold and then a short steep surface between the two sets of doors, which is doable with help. Inside there is sufficient space to circulate. The top floor is only accessible via the stairs. On the ground floor there is an accessible toilet with grab rails.

Huidevetterstraat 7  
info@devleeshalle.be  
www.devleeshalle.be

Continue on your way, turn left into Muntstraat and follow it to the end. This street becomes the Botermarkt, where you will find several benches. Follow the Botermarkt to the end. Turn left onto Bruul **32** and go straight on for the best part of 100 meters. You'll pass three little streets on your right and several benches on your left.

32

## BRUUL AND BOTERMARKT

### Place on the water

Make your way from the Botermarkt with its fun fountains to Bruul, Mechelen's bustling shopping street. You may know it as one of the streets you can buy in Monopoly. Shoppers will love the mix of large chains and trendy boutiques. It is also a great place for a stroll as much of this area has been pedestrianized. In addition to shops, you can also explore the Church of Our Lady of Leliëndaal, and the adjoining Bruulpleintje.



The surface of both Bruul and the Botermarkt are navigable.



Turn right onto Bruulpleintje. Cross this square and go through the gate and you come out in the garden called Sinte Mettetuin **33**, where you'll find benches. Keep to the right here and leave the garden through the iron gate on the right.

## SINTE METTETUIN

### Photogenic attraction



This municipal garden is a verdant short-cut between Bruul and IJzerenleen but why not take a circular walk around this hidden corner of the city and relish the peace and quiet.

At the beginning of 2018 a glass carillon pavilion was built here, thereby bringing the 50-bell mobile carillon closer to the people than ever. You may be treated to an outdoor concert if a pupil happens to be practising when you visit.



The many garden paths are made up of small cobblestones.

Turn left into Schaalstraat and walk towards IJzerenleen **34**. There on the right-hand side you see the Schepenhuis in the distance. That is where your walk ends.

## IJZERENLEEN

### Mechelen's Champs-Elysées

Locals regard IJzerenleen as their city's Champs Elysées. Fortunately there is less traffic but the façades are imposing, the shop window displays attractive and you will also find one of Flanders' oldest town halls here. There used to be a small canal here, running from the River Dyle to the 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 over in the sixteenth century. While the façades may look as if 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 period styles, after much discussion and an architecture competition.



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

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## NEAR THE WALK

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### TOY MUSEUM



Discover the biggest collection of old and new toys in Europe! Lose yourself in the amazing world of games and toys, surrounded by puppets, party games, trains, teddy bears, building bricks and so much more. Interactive presentations of the permanent collection and the temporary exhibitions 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 ramps to the first floor as well. If you phone, an employee will come and meet you at the entrance and take you to the first floor.



There are special tours and workshops for people with a learning disability.



In 2022 the Toy Museum will be moving to a new location at Mechelen railway station.

**Nekkerspoelstraat 21**  
**+32 15 55 70 75**  
**info@speelgoedmuseum.be**  
**www.speelgoedmuseum.be**

### HET PREDIKHEREN

36

The Predikheren is Mechelen's new and dynamic temple of culture, a source of encounters, collaboration, art, culture and literature. The building's long and fascinating history combined with its respectful restoration, which has left as many readable layers of its past as possible, make the former Dominican monastery one of the most magical libraries in Flanders. In "the largest living room in the city" everyone can become part of the story.



*The building is easily accessible via Goswin de Stassartstraat and Tinelplein. There is a steep slope along the front of the building. The building is fitted with two lifts which go up to the third floor. Access was a prime consideration when converting the building, which means that the corridors and entrance doors are nice and wide.*

*Work is being carried out on a loop system for the main reception desk. Also the front door will open automatically. Inter Vlaanderen, the centre of expertise in accessibility, is working closely with the designers on the renovation of the adjacent church.*

**Goswin de Stassartstraat 88**  
**+32 15 40 44 70**  
**hetpredikheren@mechelen.be**  
**www.hetpredikheren.be**





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## KAZERNE DOSSIN

Kazerne Dossin is a special place that commemorates the Holocaust in Belgium. The museum is housed in a part of the former Dossin barracks from where more than 25,000 Jews and gypsies were rounded up and put on a train to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Fewer than five percent survived. This impressive museum has given these forgotten people a face and brings their tragic stories back to life. Every visit evokes pain and sorrow and prompts us to reflect in the hope that this part of our history will never repeat itself. The museum building was designed by the well-known Belgian architect bOb Van Reeth.



Security panels limit the entrance to a width of 82 cm. Otherwise the museum is 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 are subtitled for the benefit of 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 different floors. One room is accessed along a corridor that is just 80 cm wide. There is an accessible and spacious toilet with grab rails.

You'll find full details about accessibility here:  
[www.kazernedossin.eu/EN/Bezoek/Toegankelijkheid](http://www.kazernedossin.eu/EN/Bezoek/Toegankelijkheid).

**Goswin de Stassartstraat 153**  
**+32 15 29 06 60**  
**info@kazernedossin.eu**  
**www.kazernedossin.eu**

## BEGUINAGE CHURCH

38

At the end of the sixteenth century, Mechelen's beguines founded a new community within the city walls. They also built a new church in Nonnenstraat, which was the main road into and out of the beguinage. Archbishop Boonen laid the foundation stone in 1629. Court architect to the Archdukes Albert and Isabella, Jacques Francart, drew up the plans for the baroque church with Italianate influences, together with the Jesuit Pieter Huyssens. The young Mechelen sculptor Lucas Faydherbe was responsible for much of the interior decoration. The beguines must have been quite rich to afford such prestigious architects and artists. By this time, it is estimated there were about a thousand beguines, and many brought dowries with them. The beguines' devotion was heavily weighted towards female saints, as evidenced by the decoration in the Beguinage Church.



*The path leading to the entrance and the path round the church are cobbled and uneven.*

*The entrance to the church has no threshold and is via three sufficiently wide double doors. You will find the first doors open when the church is open to visitors. Circulation space between the two sets of doors is limited. Inside the church there is sufficient circulation space and the objects of interest can be clearly viewed from the aisle. The chairs are arranged on a 10-cm-high platform.*

**Nonnenstraat 28**  
**+32 15 29 40 32**  
**info@torensaandedijle.be**  
**www.torensaandedijle.be**





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## BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF HANSWIJK

The Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-van-Hanswijkkerk or Church of Our Lady of Hanswijk is one of sculptor and architect Lucas Faydherbe's most important creations. 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 a wide door and spacious porch. Only the vestibules are rather tight for space when the doors are closed. The basilica is very spacious and there is plenty of room 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 space at the candle tables is restricted. You can visit the church virtually at [www.virtualmechelen.be](http://www.virtualmechelen.be).*

**Hanswijkstraat 67**  
**+32 15 29 40 32**  
**[info@torensaandedijle.be](mailto:info@torensaandedijle.be)**  
**[www.torensaandedijle.be](http://www.torensaandedijle.be)**



## NOT TO BE MISSED

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### TECHNOPOLIS



Technopolis is not a museum, but a hands-on centre where you can explore all aspects of science and technology. Interactive displays reveal how science is part of our daily lives. Other showstoppers include crazy demonstrations of amazing experiments and a spectacular show in which nothing is what it seems!

*The surface slopes at the main entrance and between the two floors. There are accessible toilets and wheelchairs are available. Just ask a member of staff if you'd like to use the lifts.*

**Technologielaan 1**  
**+32 15 34 20 00**  
**[info@technopolis.be](mailto:info@technopolis.be)**  
**[www.technopolis.be/nl/bezoekers/toegankelijkheid-en-voorzieningen/](http://www.technopolis.be/nl/bezoekers/toegankelijkheid-en-voorzieningen/)**

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### PLANCKENDAEL ZOO



Though there are plenty of exotic animals to admire in its 40 hectares, Planckendael is much more than 'just' an animal park. Planckendael is synonymous with adventure! For example, you can follow a trail that leads across suspension bridges and through the treetops. There is more than enough space for children to play, for animals to frolic and visitors to stroll.

*The park is easily accessible. There are accessible toilets throughout the park, except in De Ooievaar. Ten wheelchairs are available (please reserve in advance). The Ooievaar, Gazelle and Toepaja restaurants are accessible. There are reserved parking spaces (charges apply) near the entrance. Guide dogs are welcome. Contact Reservations for more information: +32 3 224 89 10.*

**Leuvensesteenweg 582, 2812 Mechelen (Muizen)**  
**+32 15 41 49 21**  
**[info@kmda.org](mailto:info@kmda.org) or [groepen@kmda.org](mailto:groepen@kmda.org)**  
**[www.planckendael.be](http://www.planckendael.be)**

# EVEN MORE TO DISCOVER

## MECHELEN MUURT



Mechelen Muurt is a project organized and curated by former city artist Gijs Vanhee. An illustrator, graphic and street artist from Mechelen, he invited each of ten artists from Belgium and abroad to create the mural of their choice on one of ten walls in the city. Vanhee himself rounded off the project with the work you see here. 'The Gift' is a symbolic representation of how the streets have been reclaimed by the people who live here, replacing cold bare walls with colour and a story to tell. New artworks have since appeared in Mechelen's streetscape.

More information from Visit Mechelen.

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## BOAT TRIP ON THE INNER DYLE



Embark for a fascinating boat trip on the River Dyle, Mechelen's lifeblood. An audiotape provides information about the sights you see along the riverbanks, interspersed with historical facts and anecdotes. Alternatively, book a city guide for your group.

For more information about access, contact our partner organization.

**Jetty on Haverwerf**  
+ 32 478 08 51 14  
info@bootjesinmechelen.be  
www.bootjesinmechelen.be

TIP!

You will find the complete offering at [www.visitmechelen.be](http://www.visitmechelen.be).  
For questions email [visit@mechelen.be](mailto:visit@mechelen.be).

# WHEELCHAIR REPAIR SERVICE

By appointment, the Fietsatelier bicycle store in Mechelen will carry out repairs to tyres, brakes, spokes, etc. Replacement wheelchairs are available.

**Fietsatelier**  
**Battelsesteenweg 48**  
**+32 15 71 09 58**  
**fiets@ecoso.be**  
**www.fietsatelier-mechelen.be**

## WHERE TO STAY

These hotels have accessible rooms. For details it is best to contact the hotel of your choice direct. For a complete list of accommodation in Mechelen, go to [www.visitmechelen.be/logies](http://www.visitmechelen.be/logies).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>H1 Hotel Vé</b><br/>Vismarkt 14<br/>+32 15 70 07 00<br/>info@hotelve.com<br/>www.hotelve.com</p>                               | <p><b>H5 Holiday Inn Express Mechelen</b><br/>Veemarkt 37c<br/>+32 15 44 84 22<br/>info@hiexmechelen.com<br/>www.hiexpress.com/mechelenbe</p> |
| <p><b>H2 Van der Valk Hotel</b><br/>Rode Kruisplein 1-4<br/>+32 15 65 01 65<br/>info@hotel-mechelen.be<br/>www.hotel-mechelen.be</p> | <p><b>H6 B&amp;B Alegria</b><br/>Rembert Dodoensstraat 63<br/>+32 494 04 45 45<br/>info@alegriamechelen.be<br/>www.alegriamechelen.be</p>     |
| <p><b>H3 Martin's Patershof</b><br/>Karmelietenstraat 4<br/>+32 15 46 46 46<br/>mph@martinshotels.com<br/>www.martinshotels.com</p>  | <p><b>H7 VixX</b><br/>Muntstraat 11<br/>+32 15 20 36 77<br/>info@vixxhotel.be<br/>www.vixxhotel.be</p>  |
| <p><b>H4 Novotel Mechelen Centrum</b><br/>Van Beethovenstraat 1<br/>+32 15 40 49 51<br/>H3154@ACCOR.COM<br/>www.accorhotels.com</p>  |   |



T1

Grote Markt z.n.

## PATHWAY



## ENTRANCE



## TO THE TOILET

## TOILET DOOR

Clearance in front of the door	145 cm	
--------------------------------	--------	--

Width of the toilet door	87 cm	
--------------------------	-------	--

## INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space	184 x 166 cm	
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Clearance space in the toilet area	150 cm	
------------------------------------	--------	--

Free space in front of the toilet	110 cm	
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Free space next to the toilet	150 cm	
-------------------------------	--------	--

Number of the grab rails	1	
--------------------------	---	--

Sink		
------	--	--



T2

Reuzenstraat 1

## PATHWAY



## ENTRANCE



## TO THE TOILET



## TOILET DOOR

Clearance in front of the door	150 cm	
--------------------------------	--------	--

Width of the toilet door	87 cm	
--------------------------	-------	--

## INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space	220 x 153 cm	
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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 the grab rails	2	
--------------------------	---	--

Sink		
------	--	--



T3

Van Beethovenstraat 8 -10

## PATHWAY



## ENTRANCE



## TO THE TOILET



## TOILET DOOR

Clearance in front of the door	150 cm	
--------------------------------	--------	--

Width of the toilet door	90 cm	
--------------------------	-------	--

## INSIDE OF THE TOILET

Dimensions toilet space	186 x 175 cm	
-------------------------	--------------	--

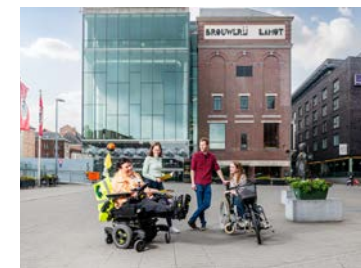
Clearance space in the toilet area	150 cm	
------------------------------------	--------	--

Free space in front of the toilet	30 cm	
-----------------------------------	-------	--

Free space next to the toilet	120 cm	
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Number of the grab rails	2	
--------------------------	---	--

Sink		
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T4

Lange Schipstraat 27

## PATHWAY



## ENTRANCE



## TO THE TOILET



## TOILET DOOR

Clearance in front of the 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	
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Free space in front of the toilet	180 cm	
-----------------------------------	--------	--

Free space next to the toilet	77 cm	
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Number of the grab rails	2	
--------------------------	---	--

Sink		
------	--	--



# CARE AND MOBILITY AIDS

## Medical care while on holiday

Should you require medical care while on holiday in Flanders, you can use a regional service or one of the independent nurses who operates near your holiday address. Be sure to contact a nursing service in good time so that you can discuss the various options in advance. Among the larger organisations are:

- The Wit-Gele Kruis (White Yellow Cross) is a home nursing organization with branches all over Flanders. You will find the contact addresses listed according to province at [www.wgk.be](http://www.wgk.be) (in Dutch).
- The website of the Flemish Association for Independent Nurses (VBZV) provides a list of home nursing contacts: [www.verplegingthuis.be](http://www.verplegingthuis.be) (in Dutch). You can discuss your specific requirements with a nurse.
- Home nursing and other forms of care can also be arranged through a local or regional social service. You will find details on the Vlaams Agentschap Zorg en Gezondheid (Flemish Agency for Care and Health) website: [www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/thuiszorg](http://www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/thuiszorg) (in Dutch).

## Mobility aids while on holiday

If you need a hospital bed, hoist, mobility scooter, etc. at your holiday address, these can be hired locally. Some devices, usually lighter items, must be collected; other items can be delivered to and/or installed at your holiday address.

Below are details of hire services in Mechelen. Not all mobility aids are available from every hire outlet. **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@assistzw.be](mailto:assist.mechelen@assistzw.be)  
[www.thuiszorgwinkel.be](http://www.thuiszorgwinkel.be)

### Medishop Mechelen

(Non-members pay an additional fee)  
Désirée Boucherystraat 19, 2800 Mechelen  
+32 15 21 52 19  
[medishopmechelen@devoorzorg.be](mailto:medishopmechelen@devoorzorg.be)  
[www.devoorzorg.be](http://www.devoorzorg.be)

# TRAVELLING TO FLANDERS

## BY TRAIN

### Eurostar, TGV and Thalys

A number of spaces are set aside for wheelchair-users in first-class compartments on Eurostar, TGV and Thalys. This means you can travel in comfort without having to move out of your wheelchair. These spaces are designed specially for wheelchair passengers and located alongside spacious toilets. Upon request, and subject to availability, one of these spaces will be allocated to you when you make your booking. Even though these facilities are located in first-class compartments, wheelchair passengers and their chaperone are charged a second-class fare.

### ICE

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

### Facilities and assistance at stations

The main international railway stations have put in place procedures, services (e.g. assistance) and facilities (e.g. escalators) to protect the interests of people with disabilities when travelling by train.

For detailed information, booking and assistance, go to:

[www.b-europe.com](http://www.b-europe.com) > Customer Service > Reduced-mobility passengers.

## BY AIR

Read more about services for passengers with reduced mobility or special requirements at:

### Antwerp Airport

[www.antwerp-airport.be](http://www.antwerp-airport.be) > Passengers > Reduced mobility people

### Brussels South Charleroi Airport

[www.charleroi-airport.com](http://www.charleroi-airport.com) > Passengers > PRM

### Brussels Airport

[www.brusselsairport.be](http://www.brusselsairport.be) > Passengers > Passengers with reduced mobility



**BY FERRY**

Ferry services to Flanders are frequent. Travelling by ferry is straightforward and relaxing, and gives you the chance to enjoy a meal, do a little shopping or just sit back and enjoy cruising!

**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 reduced mobility on P&O Ferries:

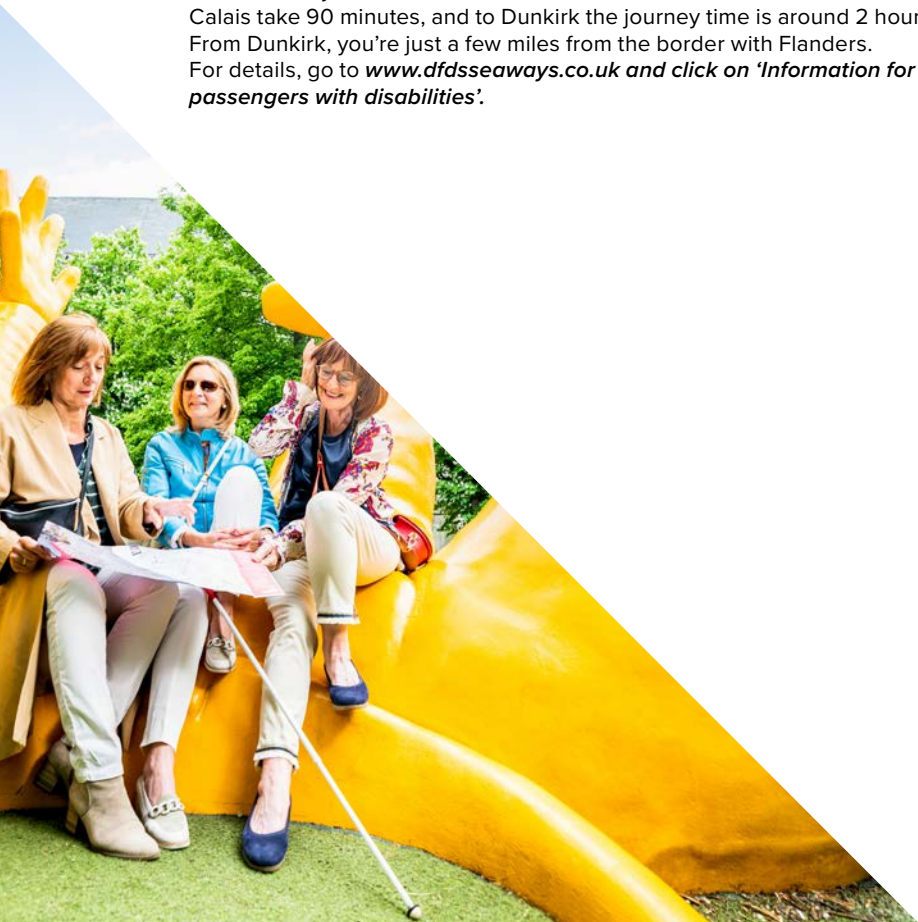
[www.poferries.com/en](http://www.poferries.com/en) > *Select a route* > *Travelling with us* > *Accessibility*

**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.

For details, go to [www.dfdsseaways.co.uk](http://www.dfdsseaways.co.uk) and click on '*Information for passengers with disabilities*'.

**TRANSPORT AND PARKING IN FLANDERS****BY TRAIN (NMBS)**

For all information about train travel, go to [www.belgianrail.be/en](http://www.belgianrail.be/en)

At many railway stations the NMBS provides assistance to passengers needing help with things like getting on and off trains. Find out which stations offer (free) assistance and how far in advance you should book assistance.

Request assistance either online or by phone: +32 2 528 28 28.

Also go to the website to find out about the discounts available for Belgian Rail passengers with a disability.

**BY BUS (DE LIJN)**

The new De Lijn buses have 'kneeling' suspension with a low floor and ramp. The ramp can only be used safely at an accessible (raised) stop.

Travelling with a wheelchair? You can check the accessibility status of stops on the website or using the De Lijn app. Or you may be eligible for the 'belbus' / 'dial-a-bus' service.

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

You will find full details at: [www.delijn.be/en](http://www.delijn.be/en) > *Accessibility*.

**PARKING****Reserved parking spaces**

For more information about accessible parking spaces, Have a look on page 7 for more info about the free ONWHEELS app.

**To pay or not to pay**

If you have a European disabled parking permit, you can park in Mechelen free of charge and without any restrictions. This applies to all parking spaces and not just those reserved for the disabled. This information also appears on the payment terminals. Please note that the permit cannot be used in underground car parks.

CITY MAP

- short route
- extension short route
- long route (via Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat)
- long route (via Dyle path)

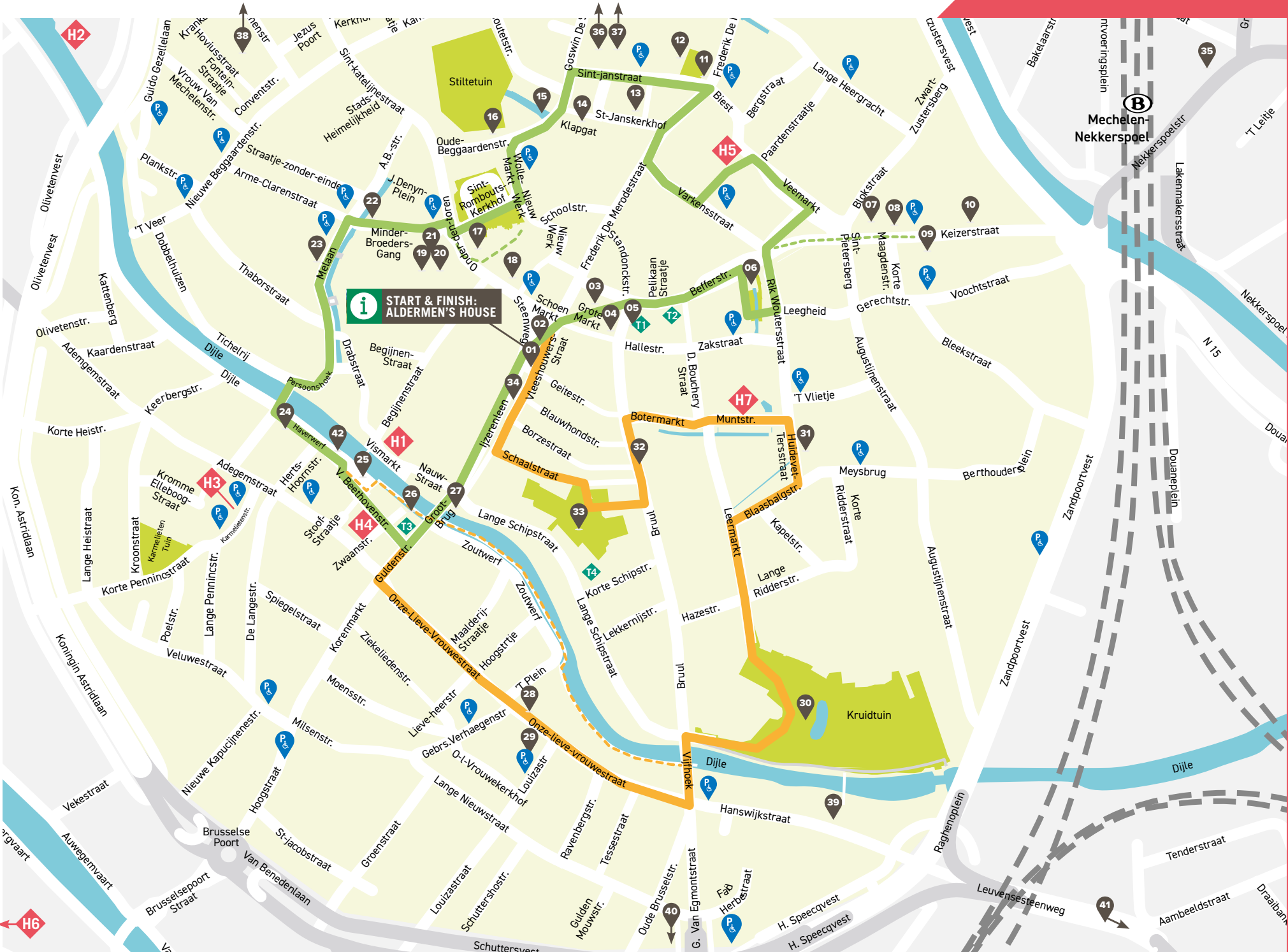
- P & PARKING (more info page 55)
- T PUBLIC TOILETS (more info page 48)

H WHERE TO STAY (more info page 51)

- |                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Hotel Vé                 | 5 Holiday Inn Express Mechelen |
| 2 Van der Valk Hotel       | 6 B&B Alegria                  |
| 3 Martin's Patershof       | 7 VixX                         |
| 4 Novotel Mechelen Centrum |                                |

ATTRACTIONS & SIGHTS

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Aldermen's House / Tourist Information Office             | 21 Cultuurplein                     |
| 2 Sculptural Mechelen ('Our Margret')                       | 22 De Cellekens                     |
| 3 Grote Markt   | 23 Melaan                           |
| 4 Beeldig Mechelen ('Opsinjoorke')                          | 24 Haverwerf                        |
| 5 Town Hall   | 25 Lamot site en Vismarkt           |
| 6 Rik Wouter's garden                                       | 26 Dyle path                        |
| 7 Churh of St Peter and St Paul                             | 27 Grootbrug                        |
| 8 Palace of Margareta of York                               | 28 Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat          |
| 9 Palace of Margareta of Austria                            | 29 Church of Our Lady over the Dyle |
| 10 Margaretaplein   | 30 Botanical garden                 |
| 11 't Schipke   | 31 De Vleeshalle                    |
| 12 Hof van Busleyden  | 32 Bruul and Botermarkt             |
| 13 Church of St John The Baptist and St John The Evangelist | 33 Sinte Mettetuin                  |
| 14 Klapgat  | 34 IJzerenleen                      |
| 15 't Groen Waterke   | 35 Toy Museum                       |
| 16 Archbishop's Palace                                      | 36 Het Predikheren                  |
| 17 St Rumbold's Cathedral and St Rumbold's Tower            | 37 Kazerne Dossin                   |
| 18 Sculptural Mechelen ('Den Uil')                          | 38 Beguinage Church                 |
| 19 De Garage  | 39 Basilica of Our Lady Of Hanswijk |
| 20 Chapel of the Holy Spirit                                | 40 Technopolis                      |
|   | 41 Planckendael Zoo                 |
|   | 42 Boat trip on the Inner Dyle      |





# COLOPHON

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## Contact

accessible@visitflanders.com  
visit@mechelen.be

## More information

[www.visitflanders.com/accessibility](http://www.visitflanders.com/accessibility)  
[www.visitmechelen.be](http://www.visitmechelen.be)

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