

2012

Amsterdam, Luxembourg & Brussels with Floriade World Horticulture Show



Tulips burst into life each spring in The Netherlands.

DAY 1: FLIGHT TO THE NETHERLANDS

Your journey begins with a regularly scheduled overnight flight to Europe on an internationally recognized airline.

DAY 2: ARRIVAL IN AMSTERDAM

Touch down in Amsterdam. A Go Ahead representative greets you at the airport after you clear customs and then escorts you to your hotel. After settling into your room, meet your fellow travelers at tonight's included dinner.

Included meals: breakfast (in flight), dinner

DAY 3: AMSTERDAM

Your Tour Director acquaints you with the charms of Amsterdam this morning, from its canals to its gabled 17th-century homes. Then visit the Anne Frank House, where you can climb to the attic room where a young Anne and her family lived in hiding for two years during World War II. The tour also includes a visit to a working diamond-cutting factory and a visit to Dam Square, the historical heart of the city. Later this morning, on a narrated canal cruise, you'll pass along some of the city's many waterways and view the houseboats that still serve as residences for many local citizens. You'll also glide past Amsterdam's

iconic multi-storied mansions, many of which were constructed during the Dutch Golden Age. On selected springtime departures, an optional excursion to Keukenhof Gardens will be offered. This evening, opt for dinner and a relaxing cruise on Amsterdam's canals.

Included meals: breakfast

Included entrances: Anne Frank House, diamond-cutting factory, canal cruise

DAY 4: OPTIONAL EXCURSION TO DELFT & THE HAGUE

You'll have a full day to take in the sights of Amsterdam on your own. If the art of the Dutch masters interests you, plan to visit the recently renovated van Gogh Museum or the Stedelijk Museum (a collection of modern art). Or, you might consider an optional excursion to Delft & The Hague. On your way to these historic cities, you'll stop to visit to Aalsmeer floral market, where blooms from around the globe are bought and sold in the world's largest flower auction. Then you'll visit the charming town of Delft, the home of Vermeer, before witnessing the Peace Palace and the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

Included meals: breakfast

10-DAY TOUR INCLUDES

- Round-trip air transportation with a major airline, airport transfers
- The services of a bilingual Go Ahead Tour Director
- A licensed local city guide in Maastricht, Luxembourg City and Brussels
- 8 nights accommodations in comfortable, well-located hotels with twin beds and private bath or shower
- All hotel service charges and tips, baggage handling and local taxes
- Buffet breakfast daily; 4 three-course dinners
- Private deluxe motorcoach
- Guided sightseeing and entrance fees to select sights as described
- Go Ahead travel gift and membership in our World Traveler Club, which includes credit toward your next tour

GUIDED SIGHTSEEING

DAY 6: Maastricht

DAY 6: Luxembourg City

DAY 8: Brussels

Tour Highlight

The Floriade World Horticultural Expo brings out the superstars of botany, agriculture, art, dance and environmentalism. The show is a sprawling, expansive once-in-a-decade spectacle celebrating all things green.

Insider's Tip

Amsterdam's old working-class neighborhood of Jordaan is a delight to explore once you've viewed the main attractions. Lively markets, art galleries and fantastically sculpted courtyards await you.



Holland's famous tulips adorn window boxes throughout the country.



The Netherlands plays host to plenty of flower markets, but none so large or so grand as Floriade.

DAY 5: FLORIADÉ FLOWER SHOW

This morning, transfer to the town of Venlo for the Floriade World Horticultural Expo, a spectacular display of flowers from around the world convened just once a decade. Floriade is more than just a flower show: it's also a celebration of music, dance, theatre, literature and visual art from around the world. Some visitors pack a picnic lunch to enjoy amid the flowers, but there are also multiple restaurants featuring a variety of cuisines from around the world. After spending the afternoon taking in the rare plants, trees, vegetables, fruits and flowers at Floriade, you'll transfer to Maastricht in time for an included dinner.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

DAY 6: MAASTRICHT & LUXEMBOURG

Today begins with a guided sightseeing tour of Maastricht, where the European Union was created in 1993. Located on the Dutch-Belgian border, Maastricht is among the oldest continually settled cities in Holland. On your guided tour, you'll visit the stylish shops of Stokstraat and the cobblestone streets of the Jeker neighborhood. You'll also pass by the red tower of St. John's Church and the ancient Basilica of St. Servatius. This afternoon, you'll transfer to one of Europe's smallest countries, Luxembourg, where an expert local guide leads your sightseeing tour of Luxembourg City. Travel through the Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. View the poignant World War II Monument of National Unity, the

Notre-Dame Cathedral, the 17th-century Citadel of the Holy Spirit and the elegant Grand Ducal Palace, once a royal residence and now the setting for formal state functions. Dinner is included tonight. Included meals: breakfast, dinner

DAY 7: THE ARDENNES AND BASTOGNE

As you head north, travel through the forested Ardennes. The Battle of the Bulge unfolded amid the rolling hills and dense forests of this region. After crossing the border into Belgium, stop in Bastogne for a visit to the Bastogne Historical Center, paying tribute to the American soldiers who defended Belgium in World War II. Arrive later in Brussels, where dinner is included tonight.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Included entrances: Bastogne Historical Center

DAY 8: BRUSSELS SIGHTSEEING

Join a professional local guide for a tour of Brussels, unofficial capital of Europe and headquarters for the European Union. In the city's historical center, see the Manneken Pis and the elegant Baroque houses that line the Grand Place. You'll also view the European Union buildings, the 18th-century Place Royale, the Royal Palace and the Palais de Justice. In your free time this afternoon, you may choose to browse the galleries of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts, featuring work by Monet and Gauguin. Or for a true taste of Brussels, stroll down Rue des Bouchers (Butchers' Street), a narrow alley full of culinary delights.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 9: FREE TIME IN BRUSSELS

Spend the day at your leisure in Brussels. Be sure to sample some of Belgium's renowned pastries or chocolates and take in the colorful local bustle of the Fish Market. Popular museums in the city include the unique Comic Strip Museum and the Museum of Modern Art. Alternatively, join an optional excursion to the Flanders region, including a boat cruise in scenic Bruges.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 10: DEPARTURE

If you're continuing your vacation on our Paris extension, board a train for the City of Light this morning. If this marks the end of your tour, a Go Ahead representative escorts you to the airport for your flight home.

Included meals: breakfast

(In the case of early morning departures, breakfast may not be provided.)

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

Paris

3 nights

DAY 10: Journey by train to Paris. Tonight, opt for an Evening in Paris with dinner at a local restaurant followed by a cruise along the Seine.

Included meals: breakfast



Extend your stay in Paris to witness landmarks such as Notre-Dame Cathedral.

DAY 11: With two free days in Paris, you'll have plenty of opportunities for enjoying the sights, sounds and flavors of the City of Light. Use your free time to stroll along the Left Bank, explore the Louvre or sample Paris' legendary cuisine. Alternatively, join an optional sightseeing tour of the city by bus, featuring views of Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Eiffel Tower, Place de la Concorde and the Champs-Élysées. In the afternoon, join an optional excursion to Versailles.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 12: Enjoy another free day or journey into the French countryside on an optional excursion to Montmartre to watch the sidewalk artists and experience the community in which some of the great artists once worked, including Dalí, Picasso, Monet and van Gogh.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 13: A Go Ahead representative helps you transfer to the airport for departure.

Included meals: breakfast

(Please note that in the event of early morning departures, breakfast may not be offered.)

Extension is available on select departure dates, and space is limited. Please call early to hold your spot. Extension also requires a minimum of 10 travelers.



MAP KEY

- Overnight Stays
- Included Visit
- Optional Excursion
- () # of Nights
- Extension
- ## Rail Route

Travel Pace: 2

Travel pace levels are based on criteria such as length of tour, number of cities visited, number of included activities, as well as length of flights and land transfers.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 - leisurely | 3 - active |
| 2 - comfortable | 4 - challenging |

Walking on Tour

Exploring three of Europe's most walkable cities is a delight. Luxembourg City, Brussels and Amsterdam are all easily accessible on foot, and most sightseeing and free time will involve some walks along the medieval streets of Luxembourg's Old Town, through Brussels' museums and halls and along the canals of Amsterdam. Brussels is slightly larger than Luxembourg and the main center of Amsterdam, so you might want to break up periods of walking by using the very efficient public transportation. Overall, however, travelers should be used to regular walking.

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- Personalized "My Account" Page
- Tour planning
- Meeting fellow travelers and sharing travel tips in Trip Forums
- Suggested reading lists

Climate

The following guide provides the average temperatures for a sampling of the regions on your itinerary.

AMSTERDAM

Jan-Feb	34°-40°F / 1°-4°C
Mar	37°-46°F / 3°-8°C
Apr	43°-52°F / 6°-11°C
May	50°-60°F / 10°-16°C
June	55°-65°F / 13°-18°C
July-Aug	59°-68°F / 15°-20°C
Sep	56°-64°F / 13°-18°C
Oct	48°-56°F / 9°-13°C
Nov	41°-47°F / 5°-8°C
Dec	34°-41°F / 1°-5°C

LUXEMBOURG/BRUSSELS

Jan-Feb	31°-42°F / -1°-6°C
Mar	36°-51°F / 2°-11°C
Apr	41°-58°F / 5°-14°C
May	46°-65°F / 8°-18°C
June	52°-72°F / 11°-22°C
July-Aug	54°-73°F / 12°-23°C
Sep	51°-69°F / 11°-21°C
Oct	45°-60°F / 7°-16°C
Nov	38°-48°F / 3°-9°C
Dec	32°-42°F / 0°-6°C

PARIS (ON EXTENSION)

Jan-Feb	34°-44°F / 1°-7°C
Mar	38°-54°F / 3°-12°C
Apr	43°-60°F / 6°-16°C
May	49°-67°F / 9°-19°C
June	55°-73°F / 13°-23°C
July-Aug	58°-75°F / 14°-24°C
Sep	53°-70°F / 12°-21°C
Oct	46°-60°F / 8°-16°C
Nov	40°-50°F / 4°-10°C
Dec	36°-44°F / 2°-7°C

Pre-departure information for “Amsterdam, Luxembourg & Brussels with Floriade World Horticulture Show”

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

This tour includes the following countries: the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium and France (on extension). In order to enter these countries, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport. The expiration date must extend at least six months beyond the date of your return home. No visa is required for U.S. or Canadian citizens. If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact each country's consulate for your particular entry requirements.

AIRPORT AND DEPARTURE TAXES

All airport and departure taxes are included in the total trip cost printed on your invoice.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Airlines have varying weight restrictions on luggage. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies. Bear in mind that your luggage will probably weigh more on your return trip due to souvenir shopping. We allow only one suitcase per person. One carry-on bag is also permitted, provided that it does not exceed 45 inches (length + width + height). There may be times when you will have to handle your own bags, and you'll find that lightweight luggage provides a distinct advantage. Make sure you label your baggage and carry valuables, medication and documents in your carry-on luggage.

CLOTHING AND PACKING TIPS

The countries on this itinerary tend to be cool and often damp at certain times of year. Loose-fitting, layered clothing that can accommodate varying temperatures will probably be most comfortable. A sun hat, sunglasses and a sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers are recommended for sightseeing. It's always a good idea to be prepared for any eventuality—a lightweight sports jacket and rainwear are advised. If you plan to visit an elegant restaurant or attend the opera or theater, you will probably feel more comfortable with something formal to wear. Also, remember that it is preferable not to visit churches or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).

HEALTH

There are no major health risks when traveling to Benelux. However, it is always advisable to check with your doctor or health-care provider for the latest updates.

CUISINE

One of the pleasures of traveling is experiencing the delightful variety of local cuisine. In Luxembourg, the culinary influences are mostly Germanic. Smoked sausages, hams and hearty stews are popular. Belgian cuisine is sophisticated and gourmet. Rich sauces accompany dishes of pork, game and beef. Seafood is of a very high quality—mussels steamed in white wine are a favorite. Patisseries offer decadent pastries and cakes, while Belgian chocolate is among the very best in the world. In the Netherlands, the universal staples of beef, chicken and fish are prepared in a simple fashion, and substantial soups and stews are also very popular. Snack food might be less familiar, where the emphasis is on fish. You might try *maatje*, raw green herrings served with onions. Also popular are pancakes, french fries, doughnuts and waffles served from street stands. In Paris (on extension), you'll find endless opportunities to sample wonderful food at every price range. For the most casual snack or picnic, stop at a small grocery store for cheeses, patés, cured meats, fresh-baked bread and fruit. Sidewalk vendors are known for their steaming crepes, filled with cheese, ham, fruit or chocolate. Mouthwatering pastries and hot café au lait beckon from the cafes.

TRANSPORTATION

Flights arrive in Amsterdam and depart from Brussels. Included transportation on your tour is by private motorcoach. In your free time, most locations are best accessed on foot. You may want to use the modern transportation system in Brussels—called the STIB—which covers all bus, tram, metro and train travel. Tickets are available in varying packages and day passes at metro stations, vending machines and news kiosks. Amsterdam also has a user-friendly bus and tram system, if needed.

ELECTRICITY

All destinations operate on the European standard 220 volts.

TIME ZONES

Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands are one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST). When it's noon in New York, it's 6 p.m. in these countries.

CURRENCY

The euro is the currency you will be using on your tour. Better rates of exchange are usually available

overseas, although it is worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive. We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks, as needed. You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees. We suggest that you inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans, so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges. Please note: With the conversion to the euro, it has been increasingly difficult to exchange travelers checks outside of Europe's major cities—both at banks and shops—and they often attract higher fees.

TIPPING

At the conclusion of your tour, it is customary to offer your Go Ahead Tour Director and driver a gratuity. We recommend tipping in your tour country's currency, the equivalent of \$3USD/CAD per person per day for your driver and \$6USD/CAD to \$9USD/CAD per person per day for your Tour Director. If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD/CAD per local guide. Tips can only be paid in cash. Please keep current local currency exchange rates in mind when tipping.

PURCHASING OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS ON TOUR

If you have not yet purchased your optional excursions, you may be able to do so while on your tour. Your Tour Director will only accept cash (in U.S. dollars only), Visa, MasterCard or American Express as payment for optional excursions. Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged. Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See the separate “Optional Excursions” sheet for more information.

International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary without advanced notice to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to the current catalog for terms & conditions, dates and prices.