ArrivalGuides
A SMARTVEL COMPANY

Antwerp

Photo: Woodmonkey/Visit Antwerpen

Visit Antwerpen

Antwerp, a busy pocket-sized metropolis, has something for everyone. The city is an inspiring source of culture thanks to its impressive architecture and magnificent museums and churches. Fashionistas can explore the boutiques of Antwerp's designers, whose stylish creations are revered all over the world. Foodies and people with a passion for life in general will enjoy the warm welcome of Antwerp's cafés and restaurants. A visit to Antwerp should definitely include the iconic museum MAS, the Cathedral of Our Lady and the Rubens House.

Visit Antwerpen

Neutelings Riedijk architecten_foto sarah Blee/Visit Antwerpen

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THE CITY

Visit Antwerpen

Antwerp, with its roots stretching back to the Middle Ages, has long been a hub of commerce and culture. Founded around the 4th century, it rose to prominence in the 16th century as one of Europe's leading ports. Throughout the ages, Antwerp has been a witness to prosperity and hardship, playing pivotal roles in the Age of Exploration, the Spanish Fury, and the diamond trade, affirming its economic and cultural significance.

Today, Antwerp offers visitors a blend of historical marvels and modern vibrancy. From the majestic Cathedral of Our Lady, housing works by Rubens, to the bustling diamond district, the city is a treasure trove of artistic and architectural wonders. Contemporary attractions, such as the cutting-edge MAS Museum, complement its rich history. With its fashion-forward mindset, underscored by the influence of the Antwerp Six designers, the city is a fashionista's paradise.

Whether strolling through the charming Zurenborg district, exploring the cobbled lanes of the old town, or savouring the Belgian culinary delights, Antwerp invites visitors to experience its unique heritage and dynamic present.

DO & SEE

Thomas Konings/unsplash

Central Station

Antwerp's Central Station is a magnificent architectural feat with its steel canopy over the platforms. Architecturally inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, the station was inaugurated in 1905. In 2007, the station was expanded, and a tunnel was added. The large station hall is frequently used for all kinds of events. Centraal Station has been voted one of the most beautiful stations in the world on numerous occasions.

Photo: Mika Baumeister/unsplash
Address: Koningin Astridplein 27, Antwerp
More Info: Some of the best waffles can be found in a small kiosk under the escalators on the street level.

MAS — Museum aan de Stroom

If you visit one museum in Antwerp make it MAS. The 60-metre-high museum tower has become a new focal point in Antwerp. Here, the city and the port meet in every sense of the word. On the roof of MAS, you can enjoy a 360° panoramic view of Antwerp.

Photo: Nancy Pauwels/shutterstock
Address: Hanzestedenplaats 1, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 338 44 00
Internet: www.mas.be/en
Email: mas@antwerpen.be
More Info: Buy a ticket to see permanent and temporary exhibitions. Access to the roof terrace is free.

Het Steen

Het Steen is Antwerp's medieval fortress and its oldest building. Today, it houses a Visitor Centre, a cruise terminal, and The Antwerp Story exhibition. This historic site offers a deep dive into the city's heritage, complemented by stunning views from its terrace and a sleek, modern interior.

Take the opportunity to snap a photo with Druon Antigoon, the mythical giant who lived in Antwerp. His statue towers over the passers by next to Het Steen.

Photo: Natalia Paklina/shutterstock
Address: Steenplein 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily 10am–6pm
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/het-steen

Cathedral of Our Lady

After 169 years of construction, the cathedral of Antwerp finally dominated Antwerp’s skyline in 1521 with a height of 123 metres. It was and still is the biggest Gothic building of the Benelux. The Cathedral is a huge treasury of works of art. Eye-catchers include two masterpieces by Rubens: The Raising of the Cross and The Descent from the Cross.

Photo: Zoë Gayah Jonker/unsplash
Address: Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal, Groenplaats 21, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 213 99 51
Internet: www.dekathedraal.be/en
Email: info@dekathedraal.be

Nello & Patrasche Statue

In front of the Cathedral, the touching statue by Batist Vermeulen commemorates Nello and Patrasche, characters from the 1872 novel "A Dog of Flanders". Set in Antwerp, this tale of enduring friendship between a boy and his dog, culminating in their tragic end at the cathedral, resonates globally, especially in Japan. The statue captures their final, poignant moments together, symbolising unconditional loyalty.

Photo: maxim ibragimov/shutterstock
Address: Handschoenmarkt, Antwerp
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/info/nello-patrasche-en

Rubens House

Step into the shoes of the leading Baroque artist of his era. Rubens and his family lived in this palatial setting for well over 25 years and it is here that the artist created the lion’s share of his work. Here he entertained Europe’s nobility and Royalty and stored his impressive art collection in a beautiful art room. The charming garden, the creators’ workshop and the fabulous collection draws hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world.

Photo: Antwerpen Toerisme & Congres/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Rubenshuis, Hopland 13, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri 10am–5pm; Sat & Sun 10am–6pm; Wed closed
Phone: +32 3 201 15 55

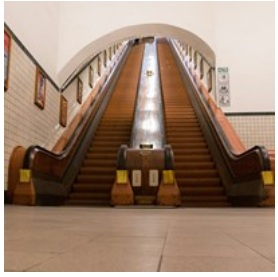
Internet: www.rubenshuis.be/en

Grote Markt & Brabo Fountain

At Grote Markt, the Brabo Fountain stands as a striking centrepiece amidst the historic architecture of Antwerp's central square. This celebrated monument is based on the legendary tale of Brabo, a local folk hero who defied the giant Antigoon, probably inspiring the city's name by throwing the giant's hand ("werpen" the "hant" in Middle Dutch) into the Scheldt River.

Photo: mareandmare/shutterstock
Address: Brabofontein op de Grote Markt, Antwerp
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/grote-markt

St Anna's Tunnel



St Anna's Tunnel, a historical marvel beneath the Scheldt River, offers a passage from Antwerp's core to Linkeroever (the left bank). Its rare wooden escalators, a novelty since the 1930s, guide cyclists and pedestrians through the tiled tunnel, making it a favourite for photographers and Instagram enthusiasts.

Photo: Untitled Photo/unsplash
Address: Sint-Annatunnel, Sint-Jansvliet, Antwerp
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/the-underpass

Zurenborg

Zurenborg, a quiet neighbourhood known for its whimsical architecture, is packed with impressive art nouveau villas. Start your journey at Cogels-Osylei, hailed as Antwerp's most splendid street. Don't miss Dageraadplaats and Draakplaats, both excellent for brunch or evening drinks. Put on your walking shoes and let your imagination soar among the urban palaces and verdant roundabouts.

Photo: Phant/shutterstock
Address: Cogels-Osylei, Zurenborg, Antwerp
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/neighbourhood-in-the-spotlight-zurenborg

Museum Mayer van den Bergh

In the late 1800s, a passionate collector Fritz Mayer van den Bergh amassed an amazing art collection. He purchased paintings by Peter Brueghel for a pittance, and managed to beat major museums purchasing stunning medieval sculptures. Mayer van den Bergh had an eye for the best quality in almost every genre. After his death, his mother finally managed to make her son’s dream come true: she built a museum, which showcased his collection. Today, the museum stands largely uncharged: it is still a museum of one man... and his mother. Highly recommended in the Great smaller museums of Europe.

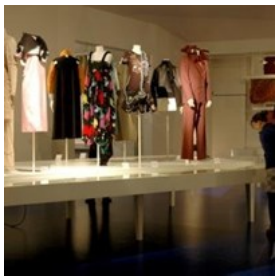
Photo: Antwerpen Toerisme & Congres/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Lange Gasthuisstraat 19, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 10am–5pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 338 81 88
Internet: www.museummayervandenbergh.be/en
Email: mmb@antwerpen.be
Discounted / free entrance with Antwerp City Card. More info in the City Card-section.

Red Star Line Museum

Between 1873 and 1934, the Red Star Line's ocean steamers ferried about 2.6 million adventurers and fortune seekers from Antwerp to New York. For many people, their passage started in the Red Star Line buildings in Antwerp. This museum tells the story of these passengers. The old buildings render their feelings, emotions and experiences tangible and visible. This new Antwerp museum also examines the issue of migration today.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Montevideostraat 3, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 10am–5pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 298 27 70
Internet: www.redstarline.be/en

MoMu — Fashion Museum



Right in the heart of the Antwerp fashion district is the ModeMuseum, also known as MoMu. Whilst the museum manages a collection of more than 25,000 objects (including garments and shoes) that are not accessible to the public, it does organize alternating exhibitions on specific themes: designer, fashion house or any other fashion-related topic.

Photo: Antwerpen Toerisme & Congres/Visit Antwerpen
Address: ModeMuseum, Nationalestraat 28, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 10am–6pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 470 27 70
Internet: www.momu.be

Museum Plantin-Moretus

The Plantin-Moretus museum gives an overview of book printing from the 15th until the 18th century and owns the world's oldest printing press from around 1600. The stately town house also boasts period rooms, decorated with tapestries, gilt leather and paintings, including a Rubens, sculptures, earthenware and porcelain. The Museum Plantin-Moretus/Print Cabinet received the ultimate recognition in 2005 and was named as a UNESCO world heritage and is the only museum worldwide to have been given this honour.

Photo: Antwerpen Toerisme & Congres/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Vrijdagmarkt 22, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 10am–5pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 221 14 50
Internet: www.museumplantinmoretus.be/en

M HKA — Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp

The Museum of Contemporary art or M HKA is located in the bustling Zuid district, among the galleries and the lively cafés. Explore a fascinating collection of modern art in the old converted corn silo. The museum features a mural by Keith Haring in its cafeteria.

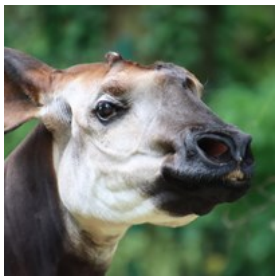
Photo: Antwerpen Toerisme & Congres/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Leuvenstraat 32, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 11am–6pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 260 99 99
Internet: www.muhka.be

Saint Paul's Church

Near the river Scheldt, you find Saint Paul's Church, the former Dominican church completed in 1639. Masterpieces by the likes of Jordaens, Rubens, Van Balen and Van Dyck emphasise the church's unique appeal.

Photo: Collection Maykova/shutterstock
Address: Sint-Pauluskerk, Sint-Paulusstraat 22, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 231 33 21
Internet: www.sintpaulusantwerpen.be/en

Antwerp Zoo



The Antwerp Zoo was founded in 1843, which makes it one of the oldest zoos worldwide and the oldest in Belgium. About 5,000 animals from 950 species call this zoo their home. They live in monumental buildings and an impressive, meticulously maintained garden. A visit to the Zoo is a dose of pure relaxation in the middle of the city.

Photo: Dominik Rheinheimer/pixabay
Address: Koningin Astridplein 20-26, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily from 10am
Phone: +32 3 224 89 10
Internet: www.zooantwerpen.be/en

FOMU — Fotomuseum

FOMU, Antwerp's photography museum, offers a deep dive into the world of photography, spanning its inception to contemporary works. With a vast collection of images, books, and equipment, the museum features thoughtfully curated exhibits showcasing both Belgian and international photographers. FOMU also hosts engaging tours, lectures and workshops.

Photo: FoMu/Guy Voet/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Waalsekaai 47, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 10am–6pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 242 93 00
Internet: www.fomu.be/en

KMSKA — Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp

Explore seven centuries of art at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp. Home to masterpieces from Flemish Primitives to Expressionists, it boasts extensive collections of James Ensor and Rik Wouters. This newly renovated museum displays works by Rubens, Van Dyck and Van Eyck, alongside more modern artists like Magritte and Modigliani. A fusion of tradition and innovation, it's a must-visit for art lovers.

Photo: Julie Pittevils/unsplash
Address: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen, Leopold de Waelplaats 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Wed & Fri 10am–5pm; Thu 10am–10pm; Sat & Sun 10am–6pm
Phone: +32 3 224 73 00
Internet: www.kmska.be/en

Maagdenhuis Museum

In this historic 16th-century building you can take a closer look at the phenomenal collection of the OCMW (public social welfare centre). The house used to be a girl's orphanage, hence its name and a lot of the items in the collection refer to this period.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Lange Gasthuisstraat 33, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 435 99 10
Internet: www.maagdenhuis.be/en

Middelheimmuseum

Middelheimmuseum is a unique place in Antwerp. This stunning park features an impressive art collection and temporary exhibitions. Some of the leading artists whose sculptures are on display in Middelheim Museum include: Auguste Rodin, Rik Wouters, Ai Weiwei and Erwin Wurm. The completely renovated castle — with a reception, café and museum shop — is the open-air museum's beating heart. There's always something new to discover!

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Middelheimlaan 61, Wilrijk
Opening hours: Tue–Sun from 10am, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 288 33 60
Internet: www.middelheimmuseum.be/en

Snijders&Rockoxhuis

This museum is a combination of two historic homes: the home of the 17th century artist Frans Snyders and his neighbour, mayor Nicolaas Rockox. The permanent exhibition brings together masterpieces from Jan Fyt, Cornelis Massijs, Peter Paul Rubens, Jan Sanders van Hemessen, Hans III Jordaens, Jacob Jordaens, Maerten de Vos, David Teniers, Quentin Matsys, Joachim Patinir, Frans Snyders himself, Lucas Faydherbe, Paulus Pontius and Lambert Lombard. In the other rooms, you can admire art cabinets, sculptures, tapestries and ceramics.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Keizerstraat 10, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sun 10am–5pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 201 92 50
Internet: www.snijdersrockoxhuis.be/en

Saint Andrew's Church

In the early 16th century, the Augustinian Friars built St Andrew's Church in the popular St Andrew's neighbourhood. Inside, you can see stunning Baroque altars and works of art from the 17th century.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Sint-Andrieskerk, Sint-Andriesstraat 5, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 232 03 84
Internet: www.sint-andrieskerk.be

Antwerp Diamond Bus

Hop on the Antwerp Diamond double-decker bus and visit Antwerp's best-known hotspots. It's a first timers' ideal introduction to the city. Daily departures from April until November, the other months only at the weekend.

Photo: Antwerp Diamond Bus/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Astridplein
Internet: www.citytourbus.be
Email: info@citytourbus.be

Plopsa Station Antwerp

Plopsa Station Antwerp is the newest alteration of the indoor park at Antwerp's Central Station. Plopsa offers a variety of fun rides based on cartoon characters: The Bumbamoles, The

Flying Bicycles, Jommeke Carrousel, K3 Disco Cars, Maya's playground, Storm at Sea, Wickie's fall tower and Wickie's ball pool, the Suske & Wiske Raging Race. It's a perfect family activity on a rainy day.

Photo: Julija Ogrodowski/shutterstock
Address: Antwerpen Centraal, Mediaplein, Antwerp
Phone: +32 58 42 02 02
Internet: www.plopsa.com/en/plopsa-station-antwerp
Email: info@plopsa.be

DINING

Visit Antwerpen

Antwerp, a city of true food enthusiasts, boasts a rich culinary heritage dating back to the Golden Age. In the 16th century, a diverse array of food, drinks, herbs and spices from around the world passed through its port. This tradition continues today, with global flavours enriching the city's vibrant food scene.

In Antwerp, food transcends borders, with exotic and international cuisines held in high regard by the locals. Antwerp's menus reflect a fusion of European and exotic flavours, with classic French dishes receiving a unique Belgian twist.

The largest concentration of restaurants can be found in the historic city centre and Antwerpen-Zuid, offering a diverse culinary adventure that mirrors the city's rich cultural tapestry.

Brasserie Appelmans

Brasserie Appelmans, located close to Antwerp’s Cathedral, offers a perfect mix of traditional and modern. Known for serving excellent food with Belgian highlights, like a stew made with local De Koninck beer, the restaurant reflects Antwerp's character in its fusion of the old and the new.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Papenstraatje 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Thu 4pm–midnight, Fri 4pm–1am, Sat noon–2am, Sun noon–midnight, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 226 20 22
Internet: www.brasserieappelmans.be/en
Email: info@brasserieappelmans.be

Maritime

Restaurant Maritime, a longstanding fixture located between the main square and the Scheldt, is a prime destination for seafood enthusiasts. Celebrated for preserving its beloved recipes over decades, this restaurant is a must-visit for those seeking authentic local seafood.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Suikerrui 4, Antwerpen
Opening hours: Fri–Tue noon–2pm / 6pm–10pm; Wed & Thu closed
Phone: +32 3 233 07 58
Internet: www.restaurantmaritime.be
Email: info@restaurantmaritime.be

RAS

In many ways RAS resembles a moored ship along the Scheldt quays. In the summer, you can dine outside on the large terrace. The menu features contemporary cuisine, a diverse range of salads and some surprising seasonal dishes.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Ernest Van Dijckkaai 37, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily 11am–10pm
Phone: +32 3 234 12 75
Internet: www.ras.today/en
Email: ras@zuiderterras.be

Grand Café De Rooden Hoed

Den Rooden Hoed is Antwerp's oldest restaurant, located opposite the Cathedral. Besides serving Belgian traditional fare like mussels and eel in green sauce, the menu also includes several refined meat and fish dishes.

Photo: Christopher Carson/unsplash
Address: Oude Koornmarkt 25, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Fri noon–2pm / 5pm–9:30pm; Sat & Sun noon–3:45pm / 4pm–10pm; Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 289 09 09
Internet: www.deroodenhoed.be
Email: info@deroodenhoed.be

Horta Grand Café & Art Nouveau Zaal

Grand Café Horta, named after Belgian art nouveau architect, is an icon in Antwerp's theatre district. The restaurant is located within walking distance of De Meir, Antwerp's main shopping street. An excellent choice if you are looking for a light lunch or a meal with the famous Belgian beer, a glass of wine or a cocktail.

Photo: Louis Hansel/unsplash
Address: Hopland 2, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri 10am–10pm, Sat & Sun 9am–10pm
Phone: +32 3 203 56 60
Internet: www.grandcafehorta.be/en
Email: info@grandcafehorta.be

De Peerdestal

De Peerdestal is within walking distance of Antwerp's main attractions. The restaurant has a distinct Paris feel to it, and the specialities include horse meat, beef and the fresh lobster from their own homarium.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Wijngaardstraat 8, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily 11:30am–2pm / 5pm–9:30pm
Phone: +32 3 231 95 03
Internet: www.depeerdestal.be/en

De Reddende Engel

If you like French cuisine, then De Reddende Engel is the place to go. Here, you can indulge in classic French fare, including bouillabaisse, cassoulet, and brandade de Nîmes, each dish a testament to authentic Gallic culinary traditions.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Torfbrug 3, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon & Thu–Sun noon–2pm / 6pm–9pm; Tue & Wed closed
Phone: +32 3 233 66 30
Internet: www.de-reddende-engel.be

Invincible

Discover Invincible in the heart of Antwerp, a culinary gem since 2004. Savour grilled specialties and seasonal dishes right from the counter, watching the chefs at work, complemented by a fine selection of wines in a relaxed atmosphere.

Photo: Louis Hansel/unsplash
Address: Hotel Matelote, Haarstraat 9, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 231 32 07
Internet: www.invincible.be
Email: reservaties@invincible.be

Elfde Gebod

Elfde Gebod, a distinctive culinary pub steps away from the cathedral, is adorned with countless statues of angels and saints, offering a heavenly setting. Indulge in historic Flemish dishes and Belgium's finest beers, including the largest Trappist beer selection, complemented by live music from Wednesday to Sunday.

Photo: Catarina Belova/shutterstock
Address: Torfbrug 10, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily noon–10pm
Phone: +32 487 93 46 43
Internet: www.elfdegebod.com
Email: info@elfdegebod.com
More Info: The name, Elfde Gebod, means "the 11th commandment" — which, as legend says, is drinking beer.

Graanmarkt 13

Graanmarkt 13, a gem in Antwerp's elegant square, houses a chic fashion store, gallery, and a Michelin-starred (2021 and 2023) restaurant. Led by Chef Chollada ‘Tan’ Phimharua, it offers a menu of modern classics infused with French-Belgian and Provençal flavours, focusing on simple, beloved dishes in a 'petit grand café' setting. Experience the essence of flavour in a cosy, no-fuss atmosphere.

Photo: Sepp Van Dun/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Graanmarkt 13, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sat noon–2:30pm / 6pm–10pm; Sun & Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 337 79 92
Internet: www.graanmarkt13.com

Ristorante Arte

Ristorante Arte offers a tribute to Sardinia's culinary heritage. Known for delectable pizzas and refined Italian cuisine, this modern eatery also delights with fresh starters, perfectly crafted mains and exquisite non-alcoholic cocktails. Enjoy a contemporary ambiance with a selection of fine Italian wines and tantalising desserts like their alcohol-free tiramisu.

Photo: Jakub Kapusnak/unsplash
Address: Suikerrui 24, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily noon–2:30pm / 6pm–10:30pm
Phone: +32 3 226 29 70
Internet: www.ristorante-arte.be

Gran Duca

If you don't know it's there, you'd walk right past it. Take the elevator to the top floor and enjoy the fantastic view of the Central Station and surroundings. The Italian menu is consistently good, complete with a selection of wines.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Hyllit Hotel, De Keyserlei 28, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 202 68 87
Internet: www.granduca.be/en
Email: info@granduca.be

Hoffy's

At Hoffy's, the Hoffman brothers serve traditional Ashkenazi dishes. The menu includes a wide selection of fish and meat dishes, soups and vegetarian food.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Lange Kievitstraat 52, Antwerp
Opening hours: Sun–Thu 10am–10pm, Fri 8am–3:30pm, Sat closed
Phone: +32 3 234 35 35
Internet: www.hoffys.be

Fong Mei

Fong Mei in Antwerp's Chinatown is a culinary gem, celebrated for its homemade, fresh dim sum, hailed by many as the city's best. Offering a taste of Southern China with Guangdong-inspired dishes, this restaurant is a haven for authentic Chinese cuisine, including tender barbeque pork and flavourful roasted duck. With friendly staff and a versatile seating arrangement, it's perfect for both intimate and group dining experiences.

Photo: Zoshua Colah/unsplash
Address: Van Arteveldestraat 65, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 225 06 54
Internet: www.fongmei-antwerpen.be

Ellis Gourmet Burger

Ellis's Gourmet Burgers are such a success with meat lovers that they have opened numerous locations around the Benelux. The menu includes traditional burgers as well as vegetarian and kids' burgers.

Photo: Jan Crab/Visit Antwerpen
Address: De Keyserlei 21, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 689 97 03
Internet: www.ellis.be/en-be
More Info: Ellis has two locations in Antwerp: next to MAS and close to the central station.

La Fontanella da Enzo

Near the Central Station, you can find a variety of restaurants, including La Fontanella Da Enzo. This modern and sleekly designed Italian restaurant offers a great selection of pasta, risotto, pizza, meat and fish dishes.

Photo: Danijela Prijovic/unsplash
Address: Statiestraat 26, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 231 53 03
Internet: la-fontanella-da-enzo-restaurant.eatbu.com

Bier Central

Bier Central offers more than 300 bottled beers and over 30 on tap. The menu features typical Belgian dishes like mussels, baked endive and stew cooked with local beer.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: De Keyserlei 25, Antwerp
Opening hours: Sun–Thu 11:30am–midnight, Fri & Sat 11:30am–1am
Phone: +32 3 201 59 85
Internet: www.biercentral.be/eng
Email: antwerpen@biercentral.be

Aahaar Delux

Aahaar is an authentic Indian restaurant which only serves vegetarian dishes. Go à la carte or choose the buffet formula and enjoy a nice selection of traditional Indian dishes. The restaurant is located in the diamond trading district and is a popular lunch spot for locals.

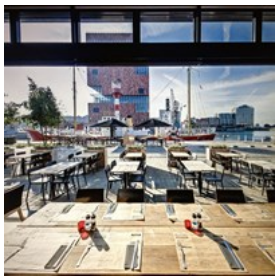
Photo: Lior Shapira/unsplash
Address: Lange Herentalsestraat 23, Antwerp
Phone: +32 473 48 52 52
Internet: www.aahaar.com

Bistrot du Nord

Just a stone's throw from Park Spoor Noord is Bistrot Du Nord — a relaxed, cosy restaurant with a straightforward brasserie fare. The menu primarily features meat dishes, but the fish options will also delight the no-nonsense gourmets. Deliciously affordable, and with a Michelin star!

Photo: Fabio Sangregorio/unsplash
Address: Lange Dijkstraat 36, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri noon–2pm / 7pm–9pm; Wed, Sat & Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 233 45 49
Internet: www.bistrotdunord.be

De Burgerij Eilandje



Head to the Burgerij next to MAS for a delicious burger straight from the grill. The restaurant uses beef of Belgian and Luxembourgish origin, offering both classic and unique burger varieties.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Sint-Laureiskaai 8, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 336 66 63
Internet: www.burgerij.be

Pazzo

Pazzo, housed in a revamped Oude Leeuwenrui warehouse, offers a fusion of French, Italian and Japanese dishes, with a special love for truffles. The owner, a multi-award-winning sommelier, offers an extensive wine list with many options available by the glass.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Oudeleeuwenrui 12, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 232 86 82
Internet: www.pazzo.be/en
Email: contact@pazzo.be

B23

B23, near Antwerp's MAS, serves refined dishes like oysters, truffle-accented plates, and supreme steaks. Enjoy their extensive wine list and a cosy terrace. A top choice for fresh, quality dining with vegetarian options.

Photo: Priscilla Du Preez/unsplash
Address: Brouwersvliet 23, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 345 15 14
Internet: www.bistro-b23.be

Marcel

Dave and Lieze opened the trendy restaurant Marcel in a former seamen’s church just around the corner from MAS. They serve Franco-Belgian cuisine, and like to focus on fish and game dishes. The building itself is an architectural destination itself — a former seamen's church of the Dawson Memorial Church, known as 'The Missions to Seamen'.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Van Schoonbekeplein 13, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 336 33 02
Internet: www.restaurantmarcel.be/en
Email: info@restaurantmarcel.be

Las Mañas

Stepping into Las Mañas feels like entering a lively Spanish tavern. It's a melting pot for people from all walks of life, all drawn by the authentic Galician cuisine.

Photo: Douglas Lopez/unsplash
Address: Ankerrui 36, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 231 72 20
Internet: www.lasmanas.be/en
Email: info@lasmanas.be

Felix Food Klub at Felix Pakhuis

This beautifully restored warehouse is located by the Willemdok marina, near the MAS museum. Here, you can enjoy meals with a clear focus on fresh, seasonal ingredients.

Photo: Jonas Denil/unsplash
Address: Godefriduskaai 30, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 203 03 30
Internet: www.felixfoodklub.be

Au Vieux Port

Au Vieux Port exudes a nostalgic bistro atmosphere. Belgian/French classics are expertly prepared here in accordance with proven traditional methods. Some dishes are even carved right before your eyes in the dining area. Truly a spectacular experience.

Photo: takedahrs/pixabay
Address: Napelsstraat 130, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri noon–2pm / 6pm–9:30pm; Sat & Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 290 77 11
Internet: www.restaurantauvieuxport.be
Email: info@restaurantauvieuxport.be

Balls & Glory

Predictably, the speciality of this casual eatery are their gloriously delicious handmade meatballs with a different filling each day, served with mashed potatoes or a salad. The meat is carefully sourced, ensuring it's organic and of top quality.

Photo: Sigrid Spinnox/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Theaterplein 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri 11:30am–9pm, Sat & Sun 9am–9pm
Phone: +32 3 568 61 24
Internet: www.ballsnglory.be/antwerpen

La Pipe d'Anvers

To experience the authentic atmosphere of Antwerp, take a stroll in Cadixwijk, just behind the MAS. In the cosy eatery La Pipe d’Anvers, you can enjoy the tastiest Antwerp dishes in its original Art Deco interior.

Photo: Matilda Bellman/unsplash
Address: Cadixstraat 3, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri 11am–11pm (kitchen until 9:30pm), Sat & Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 770 61 11
Internet: www.lapipedanvers.be

L'Amitié

You will find L’Amitié in one of the oldest buildings in het Zuid, an old coffee roastery. You can still see the rails for the carts that were filled with coffee. The chef serves delicious, refined fare in a relaxed atmosphere.

Photo: Stefan Schauberger/unsplash
Address: Vlaamsekaai 43, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri noon–1:30pm / 6pm–9:30pm; Sat & Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 257 59 05
Internet: www.lamitie.net
Email: info@lamitie.net

Kommilfoo

In the heart of het Zuid, you'll find Kommilfoo — a Michelin star restaurant. The restaurant offers a smart yet unpretentious dining experience, showcasing the chef's creative flair and commitment to culinary innovation. The house speciality, Pyrenean milk goat, is a constant, tantalising presence throughout the year.

Photo: Culibooks inc./Visit Antwerpen
Address: Vlaamsekaai 17, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 237 30 00
Internet: www.restaurantkommilfoo.be
Email: info@restaurantkommilfoo.be

Le John

The menu of this simple yet trendy restaurant in het Zuid features Flemish, Mediterranean, Italian and Eastern cuisine. After your meal, you can continue your pleasant evening in the lounge bar on the first floor.

Photo: Emma Houghton/unsplash
Address: Kasteelpleinstraat 25, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Sat 6pm–midnight, Sun & Mon closed
Phone: +32 488 09 09 12
Internet: www.lejohn.be

Fiskebar

This simple restaurant serves fresh tuna, king crab, prawns, scampi, lobster, mussels and more. Seafood lovers are crazy about Fiskebar. Their ceviche and octopus starters are highly recommended.

Photo: Mike Bergmann/unsplash
Address: Marnixplaats 12, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri noon–3:30pm / 6pm–10pm; Sat & Sun noon–10pm
Phone: +32 3 257 13 57
Internet: fiskebar.be

Umami

On the menu of this Asian-style brasserie, you'll find many innovative Asian dishes. The varied menu includes sushi, tempura, dim sum and wagyu. It is also the perfect place for a pre- or after-dinner drink!

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Luikstraat 6, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Thu 6pm–10pm; Fri & Sat 6pm–11pm; Sun 11:30am–3pm / 5:30pm–10pm
Phone: +32 3 237 39 78
Internet: www.umami-antwerp.be

Finjan

In het Zuid, Finjan is the go-to place for pita dishes, falafel and everything grilled. This Middle Eastern specialty shop has been an institution in Antwerp for years. The newspaper De Morgen even recently awarded it the title of the best pita restaurant in Antwerp!

Photo: Ludovic Avice/unsplash
Address: Graaf van Hoornestraat 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Tue–Thu 5pm–10:30pm, Fri & Sun 5pm–11pm, Mon closed
Phone: +32 3 248 77 14
Internet: www.finjan.be/en

Brasserie Den Artist

Den Artist in het Zuid attracts Antwerp locals and visitors alike. The brasserie serves Belgian dishes and is renowned as an excellent spot for breakfast and brunch.

Photo: iMattSmart/unsplash
Address: Museumstraat 45, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon & Wed–Sat 11:30am–11pm; Sun 11:30am–9pm; Tue closed
Phone: +32 3 238 09 95
Internet: www.brasseriedenartist.be
Email: info@brasseriedenartist.be

Mampoko

Head over to this quintessential Antwerp brasserie for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The cuisine is Belgian/French with Eastern influences. The menu includes salads, steaks and pastas. Be sure to check the daily fresh suggestions on the chalkboard.

Photo: Tom Peters/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Amerikalei 8, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri 10am–10pm, Sat 9am–10:30pm, Sun 9am–9pm
Phone: +32 3 257 77 10
Internet: www.mampoko.be

Civilta del Bere

In this trendy eatery with a contemporary interior, you'll feel like you're in New York's Little Italy. The name means 'the civilization of drinking', with a focus on Italian wines. The pizzas here are extra fresh, and the price-quality ratio is optimal.

Photo: Pinar Kucuk/unsplash
Address: De Burburestraat 43, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 257 56 60
Internet: www.civiltadelbere.be

Het Gerecht

Het Gerecht is a contemporary restaurant located in a beautiful mansion near the old courthouse. They serve French, seasonal dishes. The restaurant also has a nice terrace, bar and lounge.

Photo: Edward Howell/unsplash
Address: Amerikalei 20, Antwerp
Opening hours: Lunch: Tue–Fri noon–4:30 (kitchen until 2pm). Dinner: Thu–Sat 7pm–00:30am (kitchen until 9pm)
Phone: +32 3 248 79 28
Internet: www.hetgerecht.be

À L'infintiste

À L'infintiste is a tiny restaurant with a special concept. You bring your own aperitif, wine or soft drinks and coffee or tea. Every day, the chef creates refined 6-course menus a fixed price.

Photo: Peter Dawn/unsplash
Address: Kasteelpleinstraat 6, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily from 7pm
Phone: +32 3 237 43 37
Internet: www.alinfintiste.be

Ciro's

Everyone knows Ciro’s in het Zuid. For generations food connoisseurs have been coming here to enjoy a no-frills approach to good cuisine. The menu still features the best steaks, the most delicious fish dishes and excellent French-Belgian cuisine.

Photo: Louis Hansel/unsplash
Address: Amerikalei 6, Antwerp
Opening hours: Wed–Fri & Sun 11am–10pm; Sat 5pm–10pm; Mon & Tue closed
Phone: +32 3 238 11 47
Internet: www.ciros.be

CAFÉS

Nathan Dumlao/unsplash

Coffee culture is booming in Antwerp. Normo and Caffènation are probably the two best known cafes and roasters in Belgium, and they both call this city home. Be sure to sample some light roast on site and bring a bag of beans with you.

Caffènation

“One Drug, One Café, One Caffènation” is the slogan of Caffènation. Once over the threshold, you almost stumble over the sacks of house blend coffee. Inside is a pleasant, no-nonsense atmosphere, typical of a business that has nothing more to prove. The music is slightly harder and both the service and the interior have a rough edge.

Most coffees come from their own roasting business, which also supplies many other bars and restaurants in Antwerp. Furthermore, almost all local baristas made their first great espresso here. If you want to take home some typical Antwerp coffee, choose from a variety of bags of the bar’s own coffee beans.

Photo: Nathan Dumlao/unsplash
Address: Mechelsesteenweg 16, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Thu 8am–5pm, Fri 8am–6pm, Sat 9am–6pm, Sun 10am–6pm
Phone: +32 3 689 70 13
Internet: www.caffenation.be
Email: caffenation@gmail.com
More Info: Caffènation has four locations in Antwerp.

Normo

At Normo, the jute sacks of raw coffee beans are displayed on pallets on the floor. Owner Jens Oris has put an authentic coffee roaster in the middle of his business, and roasts the beans during normal business hours. This “micro roastery” makes Normo perhaps the most independent coffee business in the city.

Photo: Battlecreek Coffee Roasters/unsplash
Address: Minderbroedersrui 30, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Sat 8:30am–5pm, Sun closed
Phone: +32 495 65 72 43
Internet: www.normocoffee.be

Revista

Revista combines coffee, free wifi and a whole array of international magazines and newspapers — the holy trinity for bloggers and fashion students. Revista also offers soups, filling salads and sandwiches, so you can easily spend a whole day there.

Photo: Taylor Kiser/unsplash
Address: Karel Rogierstraat 47, Zuid, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Wed 8:30–10pm, Thu & Fri 8:30–midnight, Sat 11am–1am, Sun 11am–8pm
Phone: +32 488 62 74 67
Internet: www.revista-antwerp.be

Esco*bar

Need a break while shopping? Then head to Esco*bar, where you can choose from a range of coffees and teas, or enjoy some breakfast or lunch. Weather permitting, the large garden doors are opened for some al fresco dining.

Photo: Daryl Han/unsplash
Address: Quellinstraat 32, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 336 18 11
Internet: www.instagram.com/escobar_lunch

Wasbar

Wasbar is a hip place where you can do your laundry and enjoy a nice cup of coffee or a bite to eat — all at the same time. The menu features waffles, toasts, soups and salads. On Friday, they serve cocktails, and Sunday is the perfect day for brunch.

Photo: Kid Circus/unsplash
Address: Graaf van Egmontstraat 5, Zuid, Antwerp
Opening hours: Daily 9am–7pmm
Phone: +32 3 344 91 04
Internet: www.wasbar.be/en
More Info: Wasbar is a chain with five locations in Antwerp.

Mokkakapot

Mokkakapot is a creative coffee bar in Borgerhout's fast changing Moorkensplein, only a stone's throw from Central Station. There is art on the walls, a store selling clothes, jewellery and books as well as a menu with some original drinks and sandwiches.

Photo: Mazen Ir/unsplash
Address: Sergeyselsstraat 2 (Moorkensplein), Borgerhout, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 344 43 42
Internet: www.mokkakapot.be

Me & My Monkey

Me & My Monkey (named after a song by The Beatles) is the successor of La Chascona. The interior matches the antique feel of the Kloosterstraat. The menu is full of decadent coffee drinks, sweetened with honey and speculoos (gingerbread cookie spread).

Photo: Jamie Haughton/unsplash
Address: Oever 18, Antwerp
Internet: www.instagram.com/meandmymonkeyantwerp

Viggo's Coffee Bar

Viggo's is a coffee bar with a decidedly Scandinavian feel to it. You'll find it at the hip and colourful Coninckplein, not far from Central Station and the Permeke library. They serve a wide range of teas and chocolate milk made with Belgian chocolate. Of course, the coffee is excellent, and there's decidedly no decaf! In summer months you can also order refreshing smoothies, iced coffee or ice tea here.

Photo: Nathan Dumlao/unsplash
Address: De Coninckplein 21, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri 8:30am–5pm, Sat closed, Sun 9:30am–5pm
Internet: www.viggos.coffee

Salon de Thé Claude

A stylish tearoom that serves breakfast, lunch and cake. Claude also takes reservations for his "lazy afternoon tea", which includes coffee or tea, sandwiches, scones, cakes and macarons. You can also buy the macarons and enjoy them at home. Fresh Darjeeling, jasmine or chamomile tea: it's all available here.

Photo: Erol Ahmed/unsplash
Address: Groendalstraat 18, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 237 05 01
Internet: www.salondetheclaude.be

Vitrin

Vitrin is a trendy bar in Antwerp's popular Zuid district with large windows and lots of light. Enjoy a delicious cappuccino, a homemade bowl of soup or a Spritz, their popular afternoon drink. The bar is always bustling with activity, throughout the day and especially in the evening.

Photo: Annie Spratt/unsplash
Address: Marnixplaats 14, Antwerp
Phone: +32 485 17 95 58
Internet: www.vitrincafe.com
Email: vitrin.cafe@gmail.com

Caffe Mundi

Follow the smell of freshly roasted coffee to Oude Beurs near Grote Markt, where you will find Caffe Mundi. Guaranteeing its customers only the best quality, the owners have come up with a new and original approach: everything is done in house, from the roasting, to the grinding and the brewing. Of course, you can even buy your own coffee plant in this coffee bar and shop.

Photo: Andrew Neel/unsplash
Address: Oude Beurs 24, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri 7:30am–6pm, Sat & Sun 9:30am–5pm
Phone: +32 3 226 21 30
Internet: www.caffemundi.be/en
Email: info@caffemundi.be

Tartoer Coffee Bar

What does Antwerp have in common with Rome? Find out at the Tartoer: a finger-licking good cake bar in the centre of Antwerp, with a gorgeous blue Vespa lending it some old-school romantic vibe. Enjoy the tastiest home-made desserts, pies and cupcakes, along with a cup of coffee. The cake bar is decorated with some vintage Vespas, but you can also buy the coolest accessories and clothes here.

Photo: Catarina Belova/shutterstock
Address: Korte Koepoortstraat 2, Antwerp
Phone: +32 474 38 60 75
Internet: www.instagram.com/tartoer_coffee_bar

Chocolatier Del Rey

For over 60 years, Antwerp chocolate lovers have found their way to Del Rey. Every day master chocolate makers craft delicious pralines, biscuits, pastries and ice cakes here. You can also have lunch at the Chocolate Lounge next door.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Appelmansstraat 5, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Sat 9am–6pm, Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 470 28 61
Internet: www.delrey.be
Email: info@delrey.be

BARS & NIGHTLIFE

Visit Antwerpen

A lot of old-school cafés acquire a definite bar vibe as the sun nears the horizon. Spend long summer evenings chatting away with friends in a funky bar or on the river terraces. For a more adrenaline-packed party night, the city is your dance floor: salsa, hard rock, disco or drum ’n' bass — the beat thumps and the dance clubs fill up around the city centre and along the river Scheldt.

Without a doubt, a major attraction in Flanders is the beer. You have numerous types, varieties and brands to explore. However, if you just want a small draft beer to pass the time, ask for "een pintje" or just show the bartender your little finger. Don't leave without trying De Kriek (cherry beer), the amazing Westmalle Dubbel, and be careful with the surprisingly strong Duvel.

Café Storm

If you need to contemplate on your visit to the MAS museum, then you don’t have to go far. Located in the MAS building, Café Storm is the ideal place to relax and enjoy your drink. If you can, try to get hold of an outdoor seat. The view on the dock is amazing.

Photo: Aliaksandr Antanovich/shutterstock
Address: MAS, Hanzestedenplaats 5, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Fri from 11am, Sat & Sun from 10am
Phone: +32 3 231 43 00
Internet: www.cafe-storm.com/en

BelRoy’s at Nine

Next to Antwerp’s Cathedral, you can enjoy great cocktails in an amazing setting. The building is over 200 years old! On a hot summer night you can have a seat in the inner courtyard. In winter, gather around the open fire.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Lijnwaadmarkt 9, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon & Wed–Sun from 5pm; Tue closed
Phone: +32 3 344 79 54
Internet: www.belroys.com/en
More Info: You can also find BelRoy’s at MAS and in het Zuid

Paters Vaetje

In Paters Vaetje, you can choose from more than 200 types of beer. Let the extensive menu guide you, and you'll understand why Belgian beers are the best in the world. Whether you're a student, tourist, or a local: everyone loves this cosy café. Open until very late!

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Blauwmoezelstraat 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Sun–Thu noon–2am, Fri & Sat noon–3am
Phone: +32 3 231 84 76
Internet: www.theeuropeanbarguide.com/paters-vaetje-antwerp

Sips

Some of the best cocktails and mocktails in Antwerp can be found at Sips. Chief bartender Manuel makes about 1,000 cocktails without ever needing to glance at a cheat sheet. Some recipes date back to 1790. That's not all; he also regularly invents new cocktails.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Gillisplaats 8, Zuid, Antwerp
Phone: +32 478 31 08 66
Internet: www.instagram.com/sips.antwerp

De Muze

De Muze is a monument of Antwerp's nightlife and jazz scene. Enjoy the numerous performances that take place here.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Melkmarkt 15, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 226 01 26
Internet: www.jazzcafedemuze.be
Email: info@jazzcafedemuze.be

Den Engel

Den Engel, just metres away from the city hall, is one of the most typical cafés in Antwerp. The history of the building dates back to the 14th century. The pints poured here are enjoyed by both young and old.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Grote Markt 3, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 233 12 52
Internet: www.cafedenengel.be
Email: contact@cafedenengel.be

De Vagant

In De Vagant, you can sample a wide range of Belgian jenevers: more than 200 types! The café is located on an atmospheric, picturesque street with a beautiful view of the Cathedral.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Reyndersstraat 25, Antwerp
Phone: +32 473 91 16 60
Internet: www.instagram.com/de_vagant

Café Hopper

This jazz cafe has been named after the American painter, Edward Hopper and is widely known in Antwerp. The cafe has been hosting small live music events since its doors opened in 1991.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Leopold De Waelstraat 2, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 248 49 33
Internet: www.cafehopper.be

Red&Blue Cargo Club

Looking for a gay club? Then look no further, because Red&Blue Cargo Club is Belgium’s biggest gay club attracting an international audience. Thursday nights are the busiest!

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Address: Lange Schipperskapelstraat 11, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 213 05 55
Internet: www.cargoclub.be

Trix

Concert hall Trix is the place to be for those who love alternative and innovative concerts. There are three rooms (Trix bar, Trix club and Trix zaal). Check the event calendar on their website.

Photo: Anneke Peeters/Visit Antwerpen
Address: Noordersingel 28-30, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 670 09 00
Internet: www.trixonline.be
Email: info@trixonline.be

Cafe Beveren

Cafe Beveren is a cosy, unpretentious bar by the Scheldt river. It's a decidedly local place; there's no flashy facade to attract the tourists. However, this dive bar features a unique Decap dance organ from 1937. Drop a one Euro coin into a control box on the wall, and you can enjoy tunes from this mechanical marvel. Stop by for a quick pint and see an accordion, a drum set and a saxophone come to life.

Photo: Merja Partanen/pixabay
Address: Vlasmarkt 2, Antwerp
Phone: +32 495 81 81 34
Internet: www.instagram.com/cafe_beveren

Bar Paniek

Bar Paniek, an eclectic hub created by the Time Circus collective, offers an industrial grunge vibe in an artistically repurposed warehouse by the Kattendijkdok. With its unique decor of salvaged materials and vintage charm, it's an incredible place to enjoy local beers, homemade juices and waterfront sunsets.

Photo: Africa Studio/shutterstock
Address: Kattendijkdok-Oostkaai 21B, Antwerp
Opening hours: Usually open from April through September
Internet: www.timecircus.be
Email: bar.paniek@timecircus.be

Korsakov

Korsakov is a funky neighbourhood bar with recognisably hipster decor and interesting beers. In summer, the bar gets quite full and the crowd stands packed along the sidewalk, with trams passing by close enough to touch. There is a pool table in the smoking room upstairs.

Photo: Andrei Antipov/shutterstock
Address: Sint-Jorispoort 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Wed 2pm–2am, Thu & Fri 2pm–5am, Sat noon–5am, Sun noon–2am
Internet: www.instagram.com/korsakov_antwerp
More Info: If Korsakov is too full for comfort, step into the neighbouring Hypothalamus.

Witzli-Poetzli

Witzli-Poetzli, a charismatic bar in the shadow of the Cathedral, is a haven for Antwerp's creative souls. Known for its eclectic drink selection and tasteful music, it offers a unique vibe and authentic decor. It's a place where conversations flow as freely as the drinks. Enjoy the summer terrace or cosy up in winter for a game of chess and a few pints.

Photo: Max Kukurudziak/unsplash
Address: Blauwmoezelstraat 8, Antwerp

Opening hours: Daily from noon
Internet: www.instagram.com/witzli.poetzli

Kulminator

Kulminator operates like a speakeasy for vintage Belgian beer, with all the eccentricity that implies. Entry isn't guaranteed: first-time visitors must ring the bell and convince the elderly owners — Leen Boudewijn and Dirk Van Dyke — that they're serious about tasting, not just drinking. Those admitted step into a time capsule where cuckoo clocks keep watch over towering stacks of beer crates, and the scent of aged lambic hangs in the air.

The beer list reads like a museum catalogue, with vintages stretching back decades. The owners treat each pour with reverence, serving Trappist ales in proper glassware alongside plates of sharp cheese or cured meat.

This is no place for rowdy groups — Van Dyke has been known to turn away anyone he deems unserious. But for those who pass muster, Kulminator offers something vanishingly rare: the chance to taste history, one meticulously preserved bottle at a time.

Photo: Kristen Prahl/shutterstock
Address: Vleminckveld 32, Antwerp
Phone: +32 3 232 45 38
Internet: www.atlasobscura.com/places/kulminator-beer-bar-antwerp

SHOPPING

Visit Antwerpen

Renowned as a premier shopping destination, Antwerp combines vast diversity with convenience, housing a small selection of shopping centres all within a short stroll from each other. The city's historical architecture and pedestrian-friendly streets make window-shopping a unique delight. At the heart of Antwerp's retail allure is its iconic fashion scene, anchored by the legacy of the Antwerp Six. Their names are well-known: Walter Van Beirendonck, Ann Demeulemeester, Dries Van Noten, Dirk Van Saene, Dirk Bikkembergs and Marina Yee. This group of visionary designers transformed the city into a global fashion capital in the 1980s, setting the stage for Antwerp's continuing influence in contemporary design.

Today, you can explore a wealth of boutiques offering cutting-edge fashion from well-established designers like Jan-Jan Van Essche, garments from fresh, yet undiscovered talents, and a plethora of second-hand treasures.

If you are looking for some souvenirs that are less permanent in nature, you can never go wrong with artisanal Belgian chocolate, signature hand-shaped cookies or a bottle of a rare jenever.

De Meir

The Meir is a pedestrianized shopping street that connects the central station to the historical centre of Antwerp. Here, international chains jostle for attention with small Antwerp designer boutiques. The Stadsfeestzaal shopping centre, once a concert hall, has 40 luxurious stores lavishing in the restored marble, gilded and mosaic interior, plus a few restaurants and a bar.

Once a month and all through the month of December, many shops, cafes and restaurants will stay open for Koopzondag (Shopping Sunday).

Photo: Jan Crab/Visit Antwerpen
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/sunday-shopping

Wilde Zee

De Wilde Zee is a quaint and pleasant shopping neighbourhood, just south of the iconic Boerentoren building. The shops of this pedestrian area specialise in delicatessens, pralines, fashion and create a social atmosphere and a laid back clientele.

Photo: Eva Janssens/Visit Antwerpen
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/shopping-zone-wilde-zee

Quartier Latin

In Quartier Latin, also known as Theaterbuurt, you'll find the most upscale boutiques and specialty stores, antique and interior design shops. The Bourla on Graanmarkt and Stadsschouwburg theatre still remind us of the former Mecca for travelling theatre companies and the vibrant nightlife. When the weather cooperates, bring your lunch and a book to the botanical garden in the centre of the neighbourhood.

Photo: Sigrid Spinnox/Visit Antwerpen

Fashion District

The Modenatie building on the corner of Nationalestraat and Drukkerijstraat is the centre of this district, housing the Fashion Museum and the Fashion Academy. The area around Kammenstraat, Lombardenvest and Sint Antoniusstraat beckons the true fashionistas.

Photo: Dave Van Laere/Visit Antwerpen
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/shopping-zone-fashion-district

Het Zuid

South of the centre, between Amerikalei and the river, is the district known as het Zuid. Art and culture are the assets of this area, with important museums, numerous art galleries and renowned auction houses. Surely the trendiest area of the city, there is an abundance of designer restaurants, shops and cafes, too.

Photo: Dave Van Laere/Visit Antwerpen
Internet: visit.antwerpen.be/en/shopping-zone-het-zuid

Kloosterstraat

Kloosterstraat remains Antwerp's most compelling paradox. It's a street where 17th-century guildhouses jostle with avant-garde boutiques, and the scent of aged wood from antique shops mingles with espresso from minimalist cafés. While still home to Belgium's densest cluster of vintage dealers (think Art Deco chandeliers, Flemish oak cabinets and stacks of Delftware), the thoroughfare has evolved beyond its brocante roots. Design galleries and independent fashion ateliers now occupy spaces between the traditional antiquarians, their sleek displays contrasting with the patina of Mercator-Orteliushuis's Golden Age facade.

The real pleasure lies in the hunt: you might uncover a 1920s medical diagram in one shop, then turn the corner to find handcrafted leather jackets or a gallery specialising in Brutalist ceramics. Even the street's quirks — like the whimsical wooden Guirlande sculpture dangling above the pavement — reflect its refusal to be pinned down as purely old or new. Come weekdays when dealers have time to chat about provenance over bitterballen at the corner wine bar.

Photo: Kamilla Isalieva/unsplash
Internet: www.kloosterstraatantwerpen.com/planjebezoek

Around Central Station

Did you know that Antwerp has been the world's largest diamond centre for over 550 years? Hundreds of diamonds are traded here daily. More than 80% of all rough diamonds in the world pass through here. All this takes place within a compact area next to the central station. You can shop precious stones, gawk at the shiny window displays, check out the specialised jewellery tool shops or have excellent Jewish or Indian food.

Photo: Noortje Palmers/Visit Antwerpen

Historic City Centre

There is nowhere better to begin a shopping trip to Antwerp than in the traditional heart of the city — the Grote Markt and Groenplaats. The Grand Bazar Shopping Centre links Eiermarkt and Schoenmarkt with 50 shops. Kloosterstraat offers top-notch antiquing.

Photo: Jan Crab/Visit Antwerpen

Sonna Import/Export

Next to the south entrance to the central station, on Mediaplein, you'll find the fantastic Sonna store. The store offers an expansive collection of the finest African textiles. The creativity on display is incredible, and the plethora of designs will surely inspire you to create something unique for your wardrobe. Don't miss the opportunity to visit Sonna, even if

you only plan to browse their shelves.

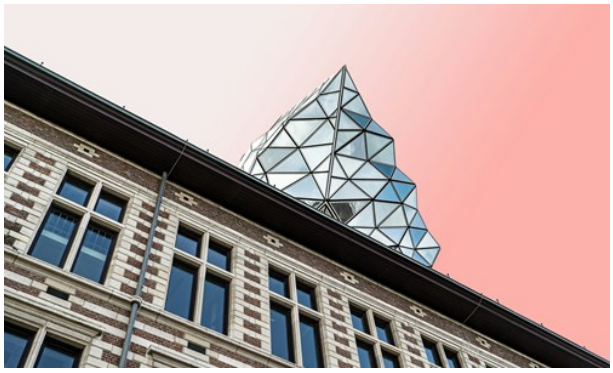
Photo: Eva Blue/unsplash
Address: Van Immerseelstraat 1, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Sat 9:30am–6:30pm, Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 233 38 98
Internet: www.sonna.com/eu

Kringwinkel

Antwerp has plenty of opportunities to shop second hand items, from clothing and books to furniture and interior design items, and everything in between. Kringwinkel is a long-standing charity shop, and probably the first step for any Antwerpener who wants to say goodbye to a precious object they no longer need. Stop by and browse the shelves, and find something unique without breaking the bank.

Photo: Paolo Chiabrando/unsplash
Address: Lange Koepoortstraat 39, Antwerp
Opening hours: Mon–Sat 10am–6pm, Sun closed
Phone: +32 3 340 88 61
Internet: www.kringwinkel.be
More Info: Kringwinkel has locations all over Flanders. Five of them can be found in Antwerp.

TOURIST INFORMATION



Mika Baumeister/unsplash

Antwerp, conveniently situated at the heart of Europe, is easily accessible by bike, car, train or plane. Positioned at a junction of major motorways, the city boasts a state-of-the-art railway network reaching into its core. Additionally, Antwerp offers an extensive network of tram and bus lines for seamless urban travel.

Airports

When travelling to Antwerp from afar, you are most likely to fly to Brussels Airport (BRU) or Charleroi Airport (officially Brussels South Charleroi Airport, CRL).

Belgium’s biggest and most important airport is situated 45 km from Antwerp city centre, a 40-minute car trip. The express train from Brussels Airport – Zaventem station to Antwerpen Centraal takes only 30 minutes.

Antwerp's own airport (ANR) is only 7 km from Antwerp city centre, a mere 15 minutes by car. Luxair, Tui Fly and Sky Alps offer connections to popular vacation spots, including London. The nearest train station is Mortsel. The local bus stop is right outside the terminal.

Brussels South Charleroi Airport is the farthest of the three, around 115 kilometres away. The most cost-effective connection is to take the local bus from the airport to Charleroi Gare Centrale (around 20 minutes) and then take the train to Antwerpen Centraal (1 hour 45 minutes).

Photo: yousef alfuhigi/unsplash
Address: Internationale Luchthaven Antwerpen, Luchthavenlei, Antwerp
Internet: www.luchthaven-antwerpen.com

Velo

Since 2011, you can explore Antwerp with one of the thousand red-and-white city bikes, called Velos. Wherever you are in the city centre, there is always a Velo station within walking distance. You can buy a bike pass for a day, week or year.

Photo: Velo Antwerpen/Visit Antwerpen
Internet: www.velo-antwerpen.be/en

Passport & Visa

Citizens of European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) countries do not need a visa to enter Belgium, only a valid ID. Many other countries, including the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, United Arab Emirates, Australia, and New Zealand, benefit from visa-free entry for short stays of up to 90 days within a 180-day period.

Visitors from visa-exempt countries must hold a valid passport and, starting in late 2025, will need to apply for an ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) authorisation online before travelling.

For those requiring a visa, such as travellers from some Middle-East, African or Asian nations, a Schengen visa must be obtained prior to arrival. All travellers should ensure their passport is valid for at least three months beyond their intended stay.

Photo: maramade/shutterstock
Internet: https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen/visa-policy_en

Public Transport

Antwerp is a pocket-sized metropolis: compact and easy to navigate, even on foot. You can easily explore the city on foot. About 20% of the historic centre is car-free, and during many summer events, pedestrians are given absolute priority. Ideal for crossing the city: take the tram or bus from the Flemish transport company De Lijn.

De Lijn's trams run for an extra hour on Fridays and Saturdays. As a result, the weekend timetable better matches the schedule of the night buses. Good news for partygoers, who can enjoy the nightlife longer and want to get home safely and quickly.

Buy your tram or bus ticket at a pre-sale point (newsagent, supermarket, corner shops, or at the machines at the stops). With pre-sale, a ticket is 20% cheaper. You can also pay the fare with De Lijn mobile app.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Internet: www.delijn.be/en/content/reisinfo/ontdek-de-app

Taxi

In Antwerp, all official taxis have a permit from the City of Antwerp. You can recognise them by an illuminated taxi sign on the roof and a red license plate on the front. You pay a uniform tariff set by the city. The tariff is always visible on the taximeter on the dashboard. When you arrive at your destination, the taximeter automatically prints out a ticket with the taxi company's name and contact information.

There are always taxis on Queen Astrid Square (Koningin Astridplein), immediately north of the central station.

Alternatively, book your ride through the taxi.eu app or call +32 3 238 38 38.

Photo: Visit Antwerpen
Phone: +32 3 238 38 38
Internet: www.taxi.eu/en/cities/antwerp

Telephone

Country code: +32 Area code: (0)3

Photo: Wesley Hilario/unsplash

Electricity

In Belgium, power plugs type C and E are the official standards. The electrical plugs are compatible with type F plug with two round pins.

The standard voltage is 230 Volt and the frequency is 50 Hz.

Photo: mk. s/unsplash

Population
The city: 536,079
The municipality: 1.23 million

Currency
1 Euro = 100 cents

Opening hours
Shops are open from Monday to Saturday 10am–6pm. Large department stores stay open longer.

Internet
https://visit.antwerpen.be
www.visitflanders.com

Newspapers
Gazet Van Antwerpen: www.gva.be
De Standaard: www.destandaard.be
De Morgen: www.demorgen.be
Het Nieuwsblad: www.nieuwsblad.be
Het Laatste Nieuws: www.hln.be

Emergency numbers
All emergencies: 112
Medical emergency service/fire brigade: 100
Police: 101
Doctor on call: +32 900 10 512
Belgian poison control: +32 70 245 245

Tourist information
Visit Antwerpen has two offices.

Het Steen (close to Grote Markt)
Steenplein 1, Antwerpen
Open daily 10am–6pm

Centraal Station (located on level 0, near the escalators)
Koningin Astridplein, Antwerpen
Open daily 9am–5pm

+32 3 22 11 333
info@visitantwerpen.be
visit.antwerpen.be

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