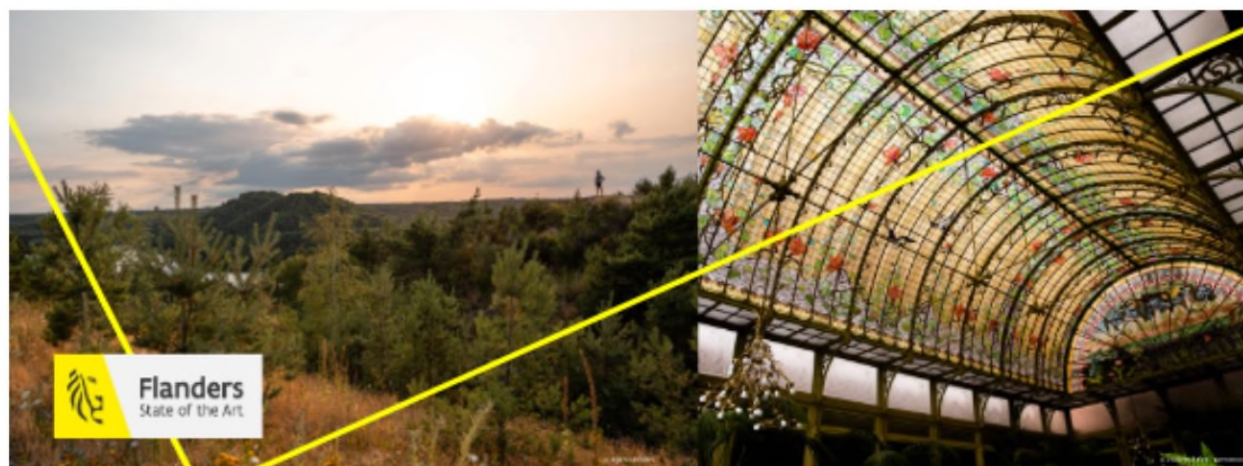




News from VISITFLANDERS - May 2024

With Spring in the air, new beginnings hail in Flanders, with longer, warmer days. In Antwerp, there's news about the part re-opening of Rubens House at the end of summer, Its new experience centre and baroque garden will be unveiled, using inspiration from Rubens' paintings. Antwerp also provides the venue for its annual Beer Passion festival in June. Nearby, the city of Mechelen looks forward to the re-opening of their exquisite art-nouveau glass house situated in a former girl's boarding school run by an Ursuline order, a true hidden gem. Looking further afield, to the Hoge Kempen National park, situated in the western Limburg region of Flanders, we bring news about a new and innovative "floating" cycle path to open in June. And pilgrims to Ypres' famous Menin Gate can now look forward to the Last Post ceremony taking place under the Menin Gate, the first time in months, following major renovation works taking place. We hope you enjoy your journey around Flanders!

Arts and Heritage:

Rubens House - Opening of the new Experience Center and Baroque Garden

August 30, 2024

Rubens House, Antwerp

The Rubens House, also known as the Rubenhuis, was the residence and

Winter Garden re-opening

May 29 2024

Winter Garden nr. Mechelen

workplace of Peter Paul Rubens, On August 30, 2024, the Rubenshuis experience centre and its garden will re-open to the public. The entrance has been relocated, where a new building will serve as the gateway to the Rubens Experience, a beautifully renovated Baroque garden, and new library. The garden now boasts 17,500 plants and flowers that thrive throughout the year and a view of Rubens's former home. During the ongoing restoration work, the former museum area of Rubens House, which was the artist's residence, will remain closed until 2030.



Image credit: (c) Rubenshuis

[Find out more](#)



Close to Mechelen lies a hidden gem known as the Winter Garden. This is a unique heritage site that introduces visitors to the grandeur of a former international boarding school for girls. Run by the Ursuline order, this showpiece is the enchanting art nouveau winter garden dating back to 1900. The magnificent stained-glass dome creates a magical play of light and color throughout the room. It displays morning, day and evening aspects, which are popular themes in Art Nouveau. The glass panes depict teams of plants and animals. In fact, little is known about what prompted the nuns to build such an opulent structure even more intriguing is the fact that nobody knows who designed the Winter Garden- despite its high quality and excellence.

[Find out more](#)

Cycling News

Terhills Floating Bridge opens

June 2024

Hoge kempen National Park, Limburg

From June, bike enthusiasts can look forward to a new attraction in Terhills: a S-shaped floating bridge for bikes and pedestrians within the distinctive natural environment of the Hoge Kempen National park. Currently under construction, this steel structure will create a floating structure over the waterway.

Visitors will be able to cycle across a floating bridge with some great 360° vistas of the beautiful landscape of the Terhills site, shaped by its history of mining.

Flanders Finest Cycling Routes

Themed with stories along the way, the site offers routes with practical information about bicycle junctions, bicycle rental and accessibility. Ideal for international tourists taking a cycling trip whilst visiting a city or a region offering shorter, loop-shaped routes around an area. A great way to hop on and off a bike to explore at leisure.

Routes can be uploaded from the website, with information about where to pick up bike hire in the area. GPX routes can be downloaded from the website.





Image credit: (c) Bjorn Snelders

[Find out more](#)

[Find out more](#)

Flanders Fields News

The Last Post resumes once again under the Menin Gate

Ypres

As part of the restoration of the Menin Gate being conducted by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the daily Last Post ceremony had to be re-located from taking place under the Menin Gate. Progress on the restoration has rapidly proceeded and now, visitors

50,000 flowers for Flanders Fields

Westhoek, Flanders Fields

The region of Westtoek around Flanders Fields is about to be bathed in a sea of beautiful alliums. 50,000 bulbs were planted within the distinctive memorial landscape of Flanders Fields as a powerful call for peace, freedom, and tolerance. Located in various renowned and lesser-known World War I sites, the flowers will turn Flanders Fields into a flourishing haven of peace and

can once again look forward to experiencing this amazing evening ceremony, which takes place daily, under the roof of the monument once again.

The monument's vault, and its bronze oculi and ceilings have now been repainted and renovated completely. Furthermore, the stair towers now boast new stairs, and the installation of cabling for the new lighting and sound system has been accomplished. Now, repairs on the stone and brickwork throughout the Monument are underway, with specific attention being given to the lion on the roof and its intricate details.



Image credit: © Piet De Kersgieter

[Find out more](#)

contribute to the preservation of biodiversity.

The Alliums, through their water evaporation process, not only cool the air but also provide sanctuaries for numerous insect species in the urbanised region of Flanders.. From the Tyne Cot Cemetery to Langemark's German Military Cemetery, the locations will witness the collective efforts of planters working towards a common goal.



Image credit: (c) westtoer

[Find out more](#)

Gastronomy and Beer

Beer Passion Festival

June, 21-23 2024

Antwerp

The 'Bierpassieweekend' ([Beer Passion weekend](#)) is the ideal occasion for beer connoisseurs and zythologists to discover the charms of Antwerp and taste a dazzling array of Belgian beers. The Groenplaats, one of Antwerp's most stunning squares, hosts about 40 breweries presenting 200 or more beers, and the festival offers visitors the chance to discover the rich palette of flavours in high-quality Belgian beer.



Credit image © Visitflanders

[Find out more](#)

New Brewery Experience tour opens

Halve Maan Brewery

Bruges

Bruges' famous Halve Maan Brewery have launched a new beer experience tour in their central city brewery. This historic brewing house has been owned by the Maes family for 40 years. In addition to a total update of their existing tour, new ultra-high-tech digital technology will enhance the personal tours to include an immersive area in which visitors will be able to experience the iconic underground beer pipeline as well as the bottling process through a virtual environment. Visitors will be able to get an even more immersive experience of the history of Brugs Zot, its famous beer which will be more accessible for those with physical disabilities.



Credit image © Jan Houdt (visit bruges)

[Find out more](#)



This newsletter is published by VISITFLANDERS, part of the Flemish government

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