



News from VISITFLANDERS - March 2025

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News from VISITFLANDERS - May 2025

As the days get longer and the weather warms up, late spring invites us to step outside and enjoy everything Flanders has to offer. From lively festivals and scenic bike routes to delicious food and world-class beer, there's something for everyone as summer draws near. Seasonal highlights include a stunning light show in Bruges, the highly anticipated return of the RetroRonde in the beautiful Flemish Ardennes, and two newly updated cycling routes inspired by Belgian legends Eddy Merckx and Sven Nys. In Ghent, food lovers can savor local flavors at the Gent Smaakt festival, while Antwerp hosts its famous Beer Passion Weekend—a must for any beer fan. And for our U.S. readers, don't miss details about two special Memorial Day tributes we'll be hosting next week in Washington, D.C., and New York City. We hope to see you there! Whether you're drawn by the culture, the cycling, or the cuisine, Flanders is full of ways to make the most of the season. Tot ziens for now!

Arts and Heritage:

Antwerp Art Weekend

**'The Belfry as Storyteller – A
Summer Light Show**

May 29 - Jun 1 2025

Antwerp

Antwerp Art Weekend is a four-day celebration of contemporary art taking place across the city, now in its 11th edition. Over 70 venues—including museums, galleries, and artist-run spaces—will host exhibitions, performances, talks, and guided tours, offering a comprehensive look at Antwerp’s vibrant art scene. A highlight of this year’s edition is the OFF Programme, which focuses on independent and experimental initiatives. One of its standout events is Rendez-vous: An Artistic Encounter, where 47 artists will present collaborative works in duos or collectives.



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[Find out more](#)

July 1-11, 2025

Bruges Belfry

In early July, the Bruges Belfry will transform into a captivating canvas for a free nightly light show, 'Het Belfort Vertelt' ('The Belfry as Storyteller'). This immersive experience, held on the Market Square, will run twice each evening at 22:30 and 23:00, accompanied by a carillon concert at 10:00 PM. Over 22 performances scheduled over 11 nights, using sound and visual projections, the show will narrate evenings the rich history of Bruges and Flanders, highlighting the city's economic and international significance over the past eight centuries. Visitors can also explore the Belfry's interior, ascending its 366 steps to enjoy panoramic views of the city.



[Find out more](#)

Cycling News

Retroronde – 15th Edition

June 15-16, 2025

**Legendary Belgian cyclists
endorse two new routes in
Flanders**

June 2025

Oudenaarde

Cycling enthusiasts will take note that Retro Ronde is back in Oudenaarde this June for its 15th edition, celebrating the golden age of cycling in true vintage style. This year introduces an all-new challenge for seasoned riders – a 150km route designed to test the legs of even the toughest Flandriens. Over the weekend, participants can take on legendary climbs such as the Paterberg and Koppenberg, all while riding classic bikes in traditional kit. With scenic routes winding through the rolling hills of the Flemish Ardennes, Retro Ronde offers a nostalgic cycling experience packed with character, camaraderie, and cobbles. Whether it's for taking part or just spectating, it's a true cycling celebration not to be missed.



Image credit (c)Gianno Declerkq

[Find out more](#)

This June, Flanders unveils two enhanced cycle routes inspired by cycling legends Eddy Merckx and Sven Nys. The Merckx route has been extended for a tougher ride, with Merckx himself endorsing the challenge and sharing his cycling passion. Meanwhile, Nys explains the thinking behind a revamped, more demanding route through his beloved Hageland training grounds. Blending scenic Flemish landscapes with cobbles, hills and heritage, the new route offers a fresh take on a favourite trail.



Image credit: (c) David Stockman

[Find out more](#)

Flanders Fields News

Flanders Memorial Day

Thursday, May 15 &

Monday, May 19

New York and Washington

Join the Delegation of Flanders to the USA for Flanders Fields Memorial Day—a tribute to the enduring bond between Belgium and the U.S. and those who served in WWI. **New York City – Thursday, May 15** The ceremony includes remarks from Belgian and NYC officials, veterans, and historians, with The Last Post and Taps performed by Kevin Paul of The Doughboy Foundation. A reception, lunch talk, and book launch will follow at 12:00 PM at Flanders House (620 8th Ave, 38th floor), featuring The Stories of the American Presence in Flanders Fields. **Washington, D.C. – Monday, May 19** Events begin at 3:00 PM with a reception, keynote, and book launch at the Willard Office Space (1455 Pennsylvania Ave NW), followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at 5:00 PM at the WWI National Memorial. The Last Post and Taps will be performed by Kevin Paul of the U.S. Army Band “Pershing’s Own.”



[Find out more](#)

The Menin Gate renovations are complete

Ypres

The Menin Gate in Ypres has been fully restored after two years of work, marking 100 years since its construction began. Honoring over 54,000 missing Commonwealth soldiers, the project preserved the monument’s historical value through expert stonework, decorative restoration, a new ‘Living Roof’, and upgraded LED lighting. Despite logistical challenges, the daily Last Post ceremony continued throughout. Led by Monument Group and Bressers Architects, the restoration was supported by €1.9 million in funding from the Flemish Government and the city of Ypres



Image credit: © Piet De Kersgieter

[Find out more](#)

Gastronomy and Beer

Beer Passion Weekend

June 20-22, 2025

Gent Smaakt Food Festival

May 28 - June 1, 2025

Ghent

Ghent's beloved culinary festival, **Gent Smaakt**, returns, turning the historic city centre into a vibrant celebration of food and flavour. Spread across five themed squares, the festival features everything from world street food and sustainable local produce to signature dishes by top chefs. Highlights include family-friendly activities, hands-on workshops, and tastings, all set in a lively, welcoming atmosphere. Entry is free—just pay as you go at the food stalls.



Credit image © stad Gent

[Find out more](#)

Antwerp

The 24th Beer Passion Weekend takes place at Antwerp's historic Handelsbeurs. This popular festival features over 200 Belgian beers from over 40 breweries, with live music and a lively atmosphere. Entry is free, but a €20 starter pack is needed for tastings—it includes a 20cl glass, keychain, catalogue, and two tokens (extra tokens cost €3.50). Festival goers can expect everything from traditional witbiers and Trappist ales to bold craft brews. It's a must for beer lovers in a brilliant setting.



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[Find out more](#)



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