

See the World: Brussels & Bruges

Saturday, March 1, 2014 8:34 AM

Bruges is a preserved medieval town that demands a whole day or two just to stroll the streets and see the same buildings that were there in the 13th century. We spent a peaceful two days just wandering the streets of Bruges and sampling the famous Belgium chocolate and cherry beer. ****NOTE: Bruges is not an accessible city, no paved sidewalks and entrance to many cafes and stores have a step**** Don't rush through this town, but enjoy the relaxing nature within its' walls. Parts of the city are along canals and boat tours are popular. [Anabel's Travel Blog](#) has some great insight into what sights to be sure not to miss.

Brussels is a bustling, modern city not unlike London or New York. The palaces and royal buildings of the king are quite impressive and the Atomium had amazing views!

Itinerary

01DAY

Morning: **The Markt and the Belfort**

- A [market square](#) surrounded by medieval houses that will have a real market every Wednesday. We can on a Friday and there were still many sellers advertising their wares and street artists. ****NOTE: All cobblestones, everywhere****
- Across the street is the dominating Belfort tower, where the medieval charter was held. It's possible to enter and climb the Belfort, but there's no accessible route.

Afternoon: **STROLL THE [ROZENHOEDKAAI](#)**

- This is a beautiful street that walks the length of Bruges along River Dijver. There are restaurants and cafes aplenty, so take all afternoon.
- DINNER/EVENING OPTIONS:
 - [De Halve Maan \(Straffe Hendrik\) Brewery](#) (FRIDAY NIGHT)
Walplein 26, Bruges 8000, Belgium
 - **Delices de Bruges (Saturday breakfast)**
Sint-Amandsstraat 27, Bruges, Belgium
 - [Cafe Rose Red](#) (SATURDAY LUNCH)
Cordoeaniersstraat 16, Bruges 8000, Belgium
 - **2be Beer Wall (Saturday night)**

02DAY

Morning: **The English Convent**

- Inside a wall enclosure in northeast Bruges is a convent started when nuns were seeking asylum in 1642 when Charles I was executed. The gardens of the convent are truly breathtaking and traditionally, it's the site for couples to wander. Be quiet, however, loud noises and even talking above a whisper is not allowed.

Afternoon: **WANDER THE KANTCENTURM NEIGHBORHOOD**

- Known for its' lace, this [neighborhood](#) reflects the history of Burges lace workers. Again, no paved sidewalks but cobblestones.

03DAY

Morning: **WALKING BRUGES (day trip)**

- While not truly accessible, there's an easy route around the entirety of the city. The route only takes two hours to complete, but it will last all day if you stop to enjoy the different scenes. You begin at the Markt. Be on the lookout for:
 - [Spinolarei canal](#), one of the principle waterways and gorgeous sights
 - [Café Vlissinghe](#), reputedly Bruges oldest tavern and in our opinion, most delicious cherry beer and lunch. There is no accessible entrance but the kitchen staff helped carry my wheelchair as my husband carried me up into the bar area. There is also outdoor seating, which is slightly more accessible with no stairs.
 - [Bruges' most photographed dog](#)
 - The Traitor Skull at the city gates, [Smedenpoort \(Blacksmith's Gate\)](#). In 1688, a traitor to Bruges attempted to open the city gates to Louis XIV's army. He was executed and his skull mounted on the gates as a permanent reminder.
 - [Sint Salvatorskathedraal](#) and the ['T Zand fountain of the dancing ladies](#)
 - There are also [numerous museums](#) in Bruges to illustrate its' rich history- try one out!

Evening: **TAKE TRAIN TO BRUSSELS (see below where we stayed)**

04DAY

Morning: **WALK in the SABLONS and COUDENBERG**

- This 2hour walk (on paved sidewalks, very accessible) goes through the Upper town on the Coudenberg hill of the royal quarter and past the Place Royale Konings Plein where the royalty of Brussels has lived since medieval times. From Coudenberg you walk into the Lower town of the working class. This part of the city is more crowded and it returns to cobblestone streets and sidewalks, but the area around the Place du Grand Sablon has some great restaurants (no accessible bathroom in these restaurants and many have a step to enter).

- Make sure to keep an eye out for:
 - [Manneken Pis](#), a tiny yet infamous fountain of a statue of a little boy urinating. There are many theories and legends surrounding this little guy and during city events, he's dressed in different outfits. (He's on a street corner, easy to miss!)
 - The [Quartier Marolles](#), home of some of the best markets in Europe
 - [Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinee](#), the museum of Comic Strip Art and origin of Tintin and The Smurfs (the museum is fully accessible,

Afternoon: **ATOMIUM**

- Created for the 1958 World Fair, this [crazy sculpture](#) is now famous symbol of Brussels. Make a reservation in the top restaurant- the food is delicious and the view is incredible! (Unfortunately, the restaurant is not accessible and has stairs from the viewing floor. The staff carried my chair while Dusty carried me to our table)

WHERE WE STAYED:

BRUGES HOSTEL:

St Christopher's Inn - Bauhaus Hostel

135-137 Langestraat, 8000 Bruges (Brugge), Bruges, Belgium

Tel:[+32 50 341093](tel:+3250341093) **email:** bruges1@bedsandbars.com

***WARNING: The only accessible rooms are DORMS- the rooms are on the ground floor for easy access, but this part of the building also wraps around the backside of the bar. We stayed in a private room, but all the private rooms were on the second floor and my husband had to carry me. For independent travel, stay in Brussels and day trip into Bruges. As expected with a historically preserved town, I had difficulty finding any accessible lodging.

BRUSSELS HOSTEL:

Hotel De Fierlant, rue de Fierlant 67, Brussels, Belgium

Tel:[003225386070](tel:003225386070) **email:** info@hoteldefierlant.be

Arriving: Sun 16th March 2014 **Departing:** Mon 17th March 2014 **Arrival Time:** 15:00

****NOTE: Very accessible hotel with bathroom equipment**