

# Directory

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## ACCOMMODATION

Belgium and Luxembourg's accommodation scene ranges from riverside camping grounds to five-star hotels, with the whole spectrum in between. An interesting point about Belgium's scene is the rise in top-quality B&Bs – we've highlighted many throughout the guide.

Accommodation listings in this book are ordered from budget to midrange and then top end. Budget accommodation ranges from about €17 for a dorm bed to €60 for a double room, and includes camping grounds, hostels, some B&Bs and cheap hotels. In the midrange category there's a wealth of B&Bs and hotels with double rooms going for €60 to €140. Top-enders, once again B&Bs and hotels, start

at €140. For more details on all these options, see the individual sections following.

Accommodation is usually heavily booked in the summer, so if you plan to visit from May to September it's wise to make reservations at least several weeks ahead. That said, the accommodation situation in Brussels is somewhat different to the rest of the Belgium due to the influx of Eurocrats and businesspeople on weekdays, and their mass evacuation at weekends and during the summer holiday months. Good deals can be found at these times. It's worth remembering that some hotels in other large cities – such as Antwerp and Luxembourg City – also offer weekend or summer discounts; for more details see p98. Weekend/weekday rates have been listed throughout this book.

In the event that you arrive without a booking, tourist offices will usually reserve accommodation for you (either for free or for a small fee); you simply pay a deposit that is deducted from your room rate.

Those into green tourism may want to investigate Luxembourg's Ecolabel initiative. This system gives hotels, camping grounds and long-term holiday dwellings a special Ecolabel logo if they comply with environmentally friendly management criteria (such as energy efficiency and waste disposal).

Accommodation in Belgium attracts 6% value-added tax (VAT) as well as a *stadsbelasting/taxe de séjour* (city tax) which varies from city to city but is usually no higher than 6%. In Luxembourg, 3% VAT is added. Prices for all accommodation mentioned in this guide includes the relevant taxes.

Something to keep an eye out for, particularly when travelling in rural areas in both countries, is hotels offering *demi-pension* (half board, ie breakfast and either lunch or dinner), *pension complète* (full board), and *weekend gastronomique* (accommodation plus breakfast and some meals which are usually four-course affairs). *Demi-pension*, in particular, can be an attractive option, allowing you to eat at a discounted rate at the hotel's restaurant, although you will have to settle for the menu of the day (you won't have a choice of à la carte options). On weekends in summer in extremely touristy places (such as Durbuy

## PRACTICALITIES

- Plug your hairdryer into a two round pin adaptor before plugging into the electricity supply (220V, 50Hz).
- Keep up to date with *The Bulletin* ([www.thebulletin.com](http://www.thebulletin.com)), Belgium's invaluable English-language newsweekly (celebrated 40 years in 2006 and has some 50,000 international readers). The Luxembourg equivalent is *Luxembourg News 352*.
- Leaf through *De Standaard* (Flemish), *Le Soir* (French) and *Grenzecho* (German) newspapers in Belgium, or *Lëtzebuurger Journal* in Luxembourg.
- Tune into the Flemish radio stations Radio 1 (91.7 kHz FM; news, politics and current events) and Studio Brussel (100.6 kHz FM; light entertainment); French stations Action FM (106.9 kHz FM; commercial pop) and Musiq3 (91.2 kHz FM; classical music); and Radio Lëtzebuerg (RTL; 93.3 kHz FM; news, current affairs etc) and Den Neie Radio (DNR; 102.9 kHz FM; light entertainment) in Luxembourg. For international news check out the BBC World Service (648 kHz AM).
- Switch on the box to watch the Flemish channels TV1 (news and sport), VTM (soaps and game shows) and Ketnet/Canvas (documentaries/foreign films), or the French channels La Une and La Deux1 (general news and sport) and ARTE (nonmainstream films and international documentaries). In Luxembourg RTL broadcasts nightly in Lëtzebuergesch.
- Buy or watch DVDs set on Region 2, and videos on the PAL system.
- Use the metric system for weights and measures. Decimals are indicated with commas and thousands with points (full stops).

in the Ardennes), some hotels rent rooms only on a *penzion complète* basis.

If you happen to be travelling with a pet, midrange and top-end hotels often accept dogs and cats – expect to pay between €3 to €10 per night.

New laws in Belgium require visitors to show their passport when booking into accommodation.

## B&Bs

B&Bs (*gastenkamers* in Flemish, *chambres d'hôtes* in French) have gained enormous ground in the last decade in Belgium. In Luxembourg, however, they're nonexistent in the capital and still light on the ground around the countryside.

B&Bs usually represent excellent value. Compared to a hotel room of the same price,

you'll get a spacious room full of character and individuality, breakfasts that are unforgettably feasts, and vibrant hosts that generally love what they're doing. At the top end, the quality is impeccable, with charming rooms and added extras such as a bottle of red wine or a bedtime chocolate.

Facilities and services, of course, vary with the price; cheaper B&Bs usually have shared bathroom and toilet facilities. Another point to consider is steps – many rooms in B&Bs are located on the 2nd floor of town houses. Elevators are nonexistent, so be prepared for lots of narrow staircases.

B&B prices start at single/double €35/45, rising to around €50/65 for midrange options and levelling out at €100 to €180 at the top end. Prices in Brussels tend to be a bit higher. Triples and family rooms are sometimes available and often don't cost all that much extra. Some B&Bs charge an extra €10 for stays of just one night; others offer discounts for stays of two or more nights. Some B&Bs in touristy areas will not accept one-night stays on weekends.

## Camping, Caravan Parks & Hikers' Huts

Camping and caravanning facilities are plentiful and at their best in the Belgian and Luxembourg Ardennes, where the tranquil nature

of the countryside lends itself to outdoor living. That said, camping grounds are popular summer retreats for locals and are often sardined with permanent trailers. While space is always set aside for overnighters, don't expect too much solitude, serenity or communing with nature in the camp ground itself.

Rates vary, but on average you'll be looking at between €10 and €20 for two adults, a tent and car. Camping grounds in both countries may be rated under the Benelux (an abbreviation for Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) classification system, however this is a voluntary scheme and many grounds are not part of it. Under the system, camping grounds are awarded between one and five stars – the more stars, the higher level of comfort.

Hikers' huts (known as *trekkershutten* in Flanders and *wanderhütten* in Luxembourg) are situated around Flanders and in Luxembourg's Müllerthal and Ardennes regions. These small wooden cabins can sleep four people and have basic cooking facilities. In Belgium they're located in camping grounds along the Flanders Cycle Route (p301); in Luxembourg they're located within walking distance of each other (see Camping Plage, p292, and the boxed text on p286). The overnight price in Belgium is €32 per hut; in Luxembourg it's €43 for two persons (extra person €5; maximum four-night stay).

Useful websites:

**Luxembourg National Tourist Office** ([www.visitluxembourg.lu](http://www.visitluxembourg.lu)) Publishes a free brochure listing all the country's camping grounds.

**Trekkershutten** ([www.trekkershutten.nl](http://www.trekkershutten.nl) in Dutch) Hikers' huts in Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

**Walloon camping** ([www.campingbelgique.be](http://www.campingbelgique.be)) Camping grounds in Wallonia.

## Guesthouses

Self-contained guesthouses and apartments, where you can base yourself for a few days, a week or longer, are steadily gaining ground in both countries. Mostly they're rural retreats in the Ardennes (Chimay, p228) or Luxembourg (Schegdenhaff, p286), although excellent options can be found in towns such as Bruges (p133), Tongeren (p215) and Echternach (p291). For value for money, guesthouses are hard to beat, especially for groups of friends or families. And as a base for exploring a region, they're ideal.

In the countryside, guesthouses are known as *landelijke verblijven* in Flemish, or *gîtes*

*ruraux* in French. Often they're attached to farms – they might be old converted stables or milking sheds, or part of a farmhouse that has been refitted.

Guesthouse prices vary enormously and fluctuate depending on the season; the high season is July and August, plus other school holidays (p308). Expect prices to start at about €220 per week.

A few useful organisations:

**Belsud** ([www.belsud.be](http://www.belsud.be)) Arranges guesthouses in Brussels and Wallonia.

**Gîtes de Wallonie** ([www.gitesdewallonie.be](http://www.gitesdewallonie.be)) Countryside retreats in Wallonia.

**Luxembourg National Tourist Office** ([www.visitluxembourg.lu](http://www.visitluxembourg.lu)) Publishes a good brochure entitled *Holiday Apartments Farm & Rural Holidays*.

**Vlaamse Federatie voor Hoeve & Plattelandstoerisme** ([www.hoevetoerisme.be](http://www.hoevetoerisme.be)) Arranges guesthouses in Flanders.

## Hostels & Gîtes d'Étapes

Belgium has a large number of hostels (*jeugdherbergen* in Flemish, *auberges de jeunesse* in French) affiliated with Hostelling International (HI). In some cities (such as Brussels and Bruges) there are also similarly priced private hostels. Luxembourg has a handful of HI-affiliated hostels. Some hostels in both countries close during winter.

Belgian HI hostels charge between €15 and €18 per night in a dorm, including breakfast and sheets. Many hostels also have single/double/family rooms from €29/42/50. For details on HI membership, see p306. There is no age limit for staying at HI hostels, though some private hostels cap it at 35 years.

In Luxembourg, the nightly dorm rate, including breakfast and sheets, is from €17.50 to €20.60, depending on facilities. Single/double rooms start at €29.50/45.

In the rural areas you'll occasionally come across *gîtes d'étapes*. These dwellings are predominantly for large groups, although individual travellers are welcome.

Hostel organisations:

**Centrale des Auberges de Jeunesse Luxembourg-geoises** (Map p270; ☎ 26 27 66 40; [www.youthhostels.lu](http://www.youthhostels.lu); 2 Rue du Fort Olisy, L-1616 Luxembourg City) Luxembourg's hostel association.

**Les Auberges de Jeunesse** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 02 219 56 76; [www.laj.be](http://www.laj.be); Rue de la Sablonnière 28, B-1000 Brussels) Administers hostels in Wallonia.

**Vlaamse Jeugdherbergcentrale** (Map pp176-7; ☎ 03 232 72 18; [www.jeugdherbergen.be](http://www.jeugdherbergen.be) in Flemish;

Van Stralenstraat 40, B-2060 Antwerp) Runs hostels in Flanders.

## Hotels

Hotels use a Benelux classification system indicating that the hotel is licensed and follows set standards. Recognised hotels will have a small blue shield adorned with one to five stars displayed near the entrance. Stars are awarded for facilities (elevators, room service, dogs allowed etc), and don't necessarily reflect quality, location or price.

A room is a *kamer* in Flemish or a *chambre* in French. The cheapest hotels charge between €35 and €45 for a single room and from €50 to €60 for doubles. Bathroom facilities may be shared. Midrange hotel prices average €50 to €100 for singles and €60 to €140 for doubles. Top-end establishments start at €140. Check-in time in many top-end hotels is not before 2pm.

Some hotels in Belgium reduce their rates at weekends (see p98). Occasionally, you'll find hotels doing the opposite. In touristy villages in the Ardennes, hotels may either charge more on weekends or rent rooms on a half- or full-board basis only.

In Luxembourg, most hotels are in the midrange or top-end brackets. Like in Brussels, some hotels in Luxembourg City offer discounted accommodation on weekends and/or in July and August, to make up for the Eurocrat shortfall. Discounts are noted in the relevant reviews, and it's also worth checking hotel websites for last-minute deals.

Top-end hotels usually offer private parking – expect to pay from €10 to €20 for 24 hours.

## ACTIVITIES

Cycling and hiking are the big two activities in both countries. From there the field widens – anything from kayaking or rock climbing in summer, to cross-country skiing or holing up in a billiard den in winter.

## Cycling

### BELGIUM

Cycling is one of Belgium's passions. On weekends it's the norm to see troupes of male cyclists of all ages whizzing around country lanes clad in fluorescent lycra gear or pulled up for a drink at their favourite wayside pub.

There are two cycling genres: in flat Flanders, bikes are a means of everyday travel and relaxation; while hilly Wallonia is favoured by mountain-bike (*terreinfiets* in Flemish,

VTT or *vélo tout-terrain* in French) enthusiasts. Wallonia also has RAVel paths (see the boxed text, opposite). Cycling is fine in most cities in Flanders but the major Walloon towns are much less bike friendly. Brussels is slowly accommodating cyclists, but in reality only adrenaline freaks would want to take on the city's potholes, cobblestones and taxi drivers.

In Flanders, many roads have dedicated cycle lanes and it's usual to see the whole family out for a day on just two bikes (kiddies' seats front and back). While Flanders is wonderfully flat, strong winds can make cycling a battle – as Murphy's law would have it, the wind always seems to come from ahead. Bikes are not allowed on motorways but they can be taken on trains (one-way/return €5/8 to anywhere in Belgium). Bike helmets are not a legal requirement and are generally ignored by adults (except competition cyclists). At night, it's illegal to cycle without a light (fines of €140). As in the Netherlands, the stolen bike racket flourishes in Flanders. Locals use two locks and chains to secure a bike, and even that's no guarantee it'll be there when you get back. Mopeds use bike paths, too – beware as they often speed past without warning.

Bikes can be hired from some train stations or from private operators. The going rate is about €6.50/9.50 per half-/full day, or €55 per week. Hiring from a train station is convenient, but you must also pay a deposit (€12 to €20 depending on the train station) and show your passport. Private operators, on the other hand, often don't ask for a deposit and have better-quality bikes. They can sometimes supply children seats, baskets and helmets, not to mention regional cycling maps and local advice. Two excellent bike outfits that can supply rental or secondhand bikes for the whole family are Fietsen Popelier (p130) in Bruges and Mobiel (see p160) in Kortrijk.

Many private rental outlets and participating train stations are mentioned in this guide, but for a full list of stations pick up the Belgian Railways' *Trein & Fiets/Train & Vélo* brochure from any large train station.

Depending on the length of time you plan to stay, buying a bike may be the way to go. Some bike-rental outfits sell new and secondhand bikes. A six-gear Oxford city bike, made in Belgium, costs around €440 new, but can be picked up (as a six-month-old ex-rental bike) for about €280. The cheapest used bikes go for about €100. Bikes will often be bought back by

rental outfits provided they're in good nick. Most bike-rental shops also do repairs.

When mountain biking in the Ardennes, follow this code of rules: stay on marked tracks, don't litter or make fires, and respect the silence and inhabitants of the woods and fields. Good rental outfits are located in Rochefort (p238) and La Roche-en-Ardenne (p246).

Bicycles can travel on planes, and you can sometimes just check it in as baggage (confirm this with the airline in advance). You may

have to fold the bike down and dismantle it as much as possible. Let much (but not all) of the air out of the tyres to prevent them from bursting in the low-pressure baggage hold.

## LUXEMBOURG

Cycling is a popular pastime in Luxembourg but, due to hillier terrain, it's not a common means of day-to-day travel. Numbered bicycle paths, known as *pistes cyclables*, criss-cross the countryside and plenty of bike-rental outfits

## ON YA BIKE IN BELGIUM & LUXEMBOURG

Cycling holidays are taking off in Belgium and Luxembourg. The countryside in both countries is riddled with well-marked cycling routes and if you hire a bike, bring your own or buy one cheap secondhand, it's easy to either cycle from destination to destination, or to go from city to city by train, using the bike to explore once you're there. Alternatively, combine the two.

For those into a cycling holiday along easy flat paths, Flanders is the obvious draw. Get hold of the multilingual *Topogids Vlaanderen Fietsroute*. This book (€8.50) details the Flanders Cycle Route, a circular 800km route – half of which is along traffic-free paths – that takes in many of Flanders' most picturesque villages and historic towns. The entire route is marked in both directions by white signposts with green symbols. The book has 61 detailed route maps (scale 1:50,000), as well as accommodation options such as hikers' huts (p298) where cyclists are also welcome to stay.

If 800km is too daunting, shorter circuits are also possible by taking one of the LF Cycle Routes – such as the LF2 Stedenroute – that divides the Flanders Cycle Route into four smaller loops. For those who prefer cycling without luggage, all-inclusive package holidays can be organised via Toerisme Vlaanderen (p311). These packages generally last four to five days, and spotlight one part of the Flanders Cycle Route.

Those going it alone can get information on bike-friendly accommodation options from Toerisme Vlaanderen ([www.vlaanderen-vakantieland.be/fietsvriendelijk](http://www.vlaanderen-vakantieland.be/fietsvriendelijk)). Their brochure *Accommodation at the Belgian Coast* lists places that are no more than 5km from a cycle route and provide a secure bike shed.

It's not only Flanders that offers flat cycling. Wallonia has RAVel ([www.ravel.wallonie.be](http://www.ravel.wallonie.be)), a network of pathways – canal or river towpaths, or old tram or railway tracks (rebuilt with hard surfaces) – that give a safe, motorist-free environment to slow movers such as cyclists, hikers, skaters or people with reduced mobility. The longest, RAVel 1, crosses Wallonia for 330km from east to west, starting at Lanaye near the Dutch border and finishing at Houplines on the French border. A fifth RAVel track is planned and will join Verviers in the north to Virton in Wallonia's south. To try out a section of a RAVel track, try the old train line at Rochefort (p238).

Although Luxembourg usually conjures up images of hilly terrain, cycling here can also be flat, easy and enjoyable. Many fine *pistes cyclables* (bicycle paths), all named and numbered, criss-cross the countryside and while you'll need good muscles for many, some are leisurely meanders. PC3, for example, winds right along the Moselle and Sûre Rivers – Echternach–Diekirch is a particularly nice stretch of this path (and there are now bike-hire outlets in both towns), as is Remich–Grevenmacher.

The excellent French, German and English guide *40 Cycle Routes*, published by Éditions Guy Binsfield, is well worth buying if you intend exploring Luxembourg on two wheels. It describes 40 specially selected cycle tours throughout the country and gives good topographical maps of each route plus track descriptions. It's sold in bookshops and newsagents around the country.

Depending on your level of fitness, the terrain and the wind factor, adult cyclists average about 15km per hour. For more on cycling possibilities, see p17. For listings of bike-rental outfits, see individual destinations. Also take a look at [www.cycling-belgium.be](http://www.cycling-belgium.be) and [www.fietsen-wandelen.be](http://www.fietsen-wandelen.be) (in Flemish).

have sprung up in recent years. Try those in Luxembourg City (p274), Echternach (p291) or Diekirch (p289). Bikes can be taken on trains for €1.50, and helmets are not compulsory. For more on cycling in Luxembourg, see boxed text, p301.

## Hiking

As with cycling, both countries are big on hiking.

In Belgium, hikers have the choice of easy, flat terrain in Flanders or the more inspiring hills of the Ardennes in Wallonia. Popular hikes in Flanders generally follow countryside bike paths (but make sure you give way to cyclists if walking on designated cycle paths). For a bed for the night, check out Flanders' hikers' huts (p298).

Serious hikers should head to the Ardennes – either in southeast Belgium or northern Luxembourg – as well as Luxembourg's Müllerthal region. These beautiful areas are dotted with wooded tracks that wind through largely coniferous forests and ford streams and rivers. Needless to say, in winter you'll have the tracks to yourself – cold, wet weather between November and March sees few locals venturing along muddy paths. Come April, snowdrops pop their heads up through thick layers of fallen leaves, and townsfolk yearning for spring and a touch of the outdoors start heading for the hills. In July and August it's high season and, during fine weekends at this time of the year, tracks can get crowded. Various *sentiers de grande randonnée* (long-distance footpaths, simply known as GR tracks) cross Belgium and there's also the 160km-long 'Transardennaise' footpath which goes from La Roche to Bouillon.

The best places for hiking are the Hautes Fagnes (p259), Bouillon (p241), La Roche-en-Ardenne (p246) and Rochefort (p238) in Belgium, or Echternach (p290), Berdorf (p292), Beaufort (p292) and Vianden (p283) in Luxembourg. Echternach, the main town in Luxembourg's Müllerthal region, is superb for hiking with paths weaving up, down and around gorgeous sandstone plateaus hidden deep within the forests. In this region, too, are overnight hikers' huts (p298).

Local tourist offices have copious information about hiking paths and they also sell maps of paths in their area. The biggest publisher of hiking maps is the Institut Géographique National (IGN), which puts out topographi-

cal maps covering all of Belgium, as well as specialist hiking maps.

In Luxembourg, consider buying the excellent multilingual *182x Luxembourg* published by Éditions Guy Binsfield. It describes 182 of the country's most charming hikes ranging from 2km to 17km. All are signposted and most can easily be covered in an afternoon. It's readily available in bookshops throughout the Grand Duchy.

On the internet, check [www.walking.lu](http://www.walking.lu) and [www.europaventure.be](http://www.europaventure.be).

## Billiards

Every town and village worth its weight in Belgium has a billiards *café* (bar/pub) where elderly gents congregate for a game and a gossip. Billiards (*biljart* in Flemish, *billard* in French) differs from snooker or pool in that only three balls are used and the table has no holes – the aim is not to pot the balls but to use one ball to hit the other two. Some billiards *cafés* have snooker and pool tables, too. The country's best-known billiards den is Mister 100 (p201) in Lier. It was set up by Raymond Ceulemans who won the world billiards championships 17 times since 1962 and is known as Mister 100% because he never misses a shot.

## Boating

Despite its many rivers and canals, boating in Belgium is nowhere near as popular as it is in the neighbouring Netherlands. In summer, the North Sea between Knokke and De Panne is sprinkled with catamarans and sailing boats; inquire at tourist offices at any of the coastal resorts for operators hiring boats out for a few hours or a day.

Luxembourg is also not a boating nation and the only option is a cruise along the Moselle River (p293).

## Canoeing & Kayaking

Belgium's Ardennes region is the place to ride rivers. Canoes and kayaks can be hired from several towns including Dinant (for the Lesse River; p236), Bouillon (Semois River; p242) and La Roche-en-Ardenne (Ourthe River; p246). All three rivers, particularly the Lesse, attract hoards of Flemish and Dutch holidaymakers every summer – you won't be alone on the water here. The Lesse is the 'wildest' of the trio, but don't expect rapids of any magnitude – conditions sometimes are so sedate (and water levels so low) that the rivers are closed to kayakers.

In Luxembourg, head to Diekirch (p289) for canoeing.

## Chess

Belgian men – both young and old – are the ones huddled deep in concentration over a chessboard in smoky *cafés* around the country. Many *cafés* have chess sets available for clients – the country's best-known chess den is Le Greenwich (p106).

## Golf

Despite the relative lack of space in Belgium, golf is a fashionable and increasingly popular activity. Courses are dotted around the country, with a heavy concentration around the green periphery of Brussels (p91). The main golfing organisation is the **Royal Belgian Golf Federation** ([www.golf.be](http://www.golf.be)).

## Horse Riding

For details on horse riding in the Ardennes, see the boxed text on p246.

## Rock Climbing

The most popular area for rock climbers in Belgium is along the Meuse River in the vicinity of Namur and Dinant. It was here, near Marche-les-Dames, that King Albert I died after a fall in 1934. Belgium's escarpments are generally high-quality limestone, while Luxembourg has hard sandstone cliffs. For more details you may be able to pick up *Selected Rock Climbs in Belgium & Luxembourg* by Chris Craggs from bookshops in Brussels, or ask at local tourist offices.

## Skiing

The Ardennes is Belgium's and Luxembourg's winter playground, albeit a very modest one. Cross-country skiing is all that's offered – the slopes are too short for alpine skiing. Even cross-country skiing is struck off the list some years when snowfall is too light (or almost nonexistent as in recent times). Given these odds, you can safely bet that no-one comes to Belgium or Luxembourg specifically to ski.

## BUSINESS HOURS

Restaurants generally open for lunch from 11.30am or noon until 2pm or 3pm. Dinner starts at about 6.30pm, and goes to 10pm or 11pm. Brasseries have more fluid hours, usually opening by 11am and staying open until midnight or 1am.

Defining business hours for bars and *cafés* is nigh on impossible. There are absolutely no regulations governing trading hours for these establishments – they open when they want and close when the last barfly drops. Most *cafés* are open by 10am or 11am, and some will still be going at 5am.

In general, shops in both countries are open from 9am until noon or 12.30pm, and again from 2pm to 6pm, Monday to Saturday. Many shops in major tourist destinations, such as Brussels, Bruges, Antwerp and Luxembourg City, don't close for lunch, and many also open on Sunday. The occasional convenience shop opens 24 hours – look for signs indicating *nachtwinkel* or *magasin de nuit*.

Banks open from 8.30am or 9am and close between 3.30pm and 5pm Monday to Friday. Some close for an hour at lunch, and many also open Saturday mornings.

Post offices generally operate from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and until noon Saturday. Smaller branches close for lunch and larger ones stay open until 6pm.

Throughout this guide, we've provided opening hours for sights and activities. For other businesses, like restaurants and shops, we've listed hours only when they differ from the norm.

## CHILDREN

Kids are adored in Belgium and Luxembourg, and both countries are extremely child-friendly when it comes to almost all aspects of travelling with children (see p18 for suggestions).

Both countries can easily be explored with children in tow but it will require planning and effort. For further general information, see Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children*.

## Practicalities

The only hole in the system in both countries is the scarcity of nappy-changing facilities – you'll soon get the hang of wrestling in the backseat of a car. Belgium's national chain of hamburger restaurants, Quick, generally have baby-change tables or a foam mat tucked away in a corner of the female toilets. They're not much chop but better than nothing during those tricky moments. Expect to pay €0.50 for this service. Unlike in the UK, chain shops such as Prémaman don't offer change facilities. Breastfeeding in public is fine, though it's not commonly seen (Belgians generally bottle feed from an early age).

Baby cots are readily available in many B&Bs, hotels and even some hostels, but you should reserve in advance as many places stock only one cot. Accommodation options which welcome babies and children, and which have facilities for them, have been noted throughout the guide. Cots are often free, but at the most you'll pay €15 per night. If you're travelling by car, it's easier to bring a portacot.

There's no fast rule about pricing for older children in B&Bs and hotels. Many places offer free accommodation for children under two or three years, others raise the age to seven or even 12. Some hotels charge €15 for an extra bed for a child, others charge a flat fee of 50% extra. Many hostels have rooms with four beds, making family travel economical.

If you're travelling with kids small enough to be carried in a backpack or baby-sling, this is the way to go. Strollers certainly have their place, but they're a nuisance when negotiating access to old buildings, shoddy pavements and endless flights of stairs. The locals commonly take strollers on buses, trams and trains (avoiding peak hour).

Also remember that in cities such as Bruges there are a lot of canals and open water – beware no-one takes an unexpected plunge.

A law introduced in 2006 means children under 1.35m must travel in a child's safety seat in cars. Most car-rental firms in Belgium and Luxembourg have safety seats for hire (Avis charges a flat fee of €30; at Budget it's €10 per week), but it's essential to book them two or three days in advance. The law means taxis too should provide a seat if you book in advance.

Take note that train travel in Belgium is free for under 12s providing they're accompanied by an adult and the journey starts after 9am.

Arranging baby-sitting in Belgium is possible but it's not easy, except in Brussels. Sitters can be arranged through **Gezinsbond** ([www.gezinsbond.be](http://www.gezinsbond.be)), a family-oriented organisation with centres throughout Flanders. They charge €2.50/3 per hour in the day/evening for baby-sitters, or €15 for overnight service. The catch for travellers is you must be an organisation member to use the baby-sitting service (annual membership costs €30) and, for security reasons, baby-sitters may not be willing to come to your hotel. Baby-sitting agencies have been mentioned in the larger cities throughout this book.

Those heading to Luxembourg may want to pick up the new *Family Guide* by Vivianne Bumb. It includes 600 activities, trips and con-

tacts and is well researched and beautifully illustrated. Note that it's impossible to find a baby-sitter in Luxembourg unless you're staying at a top-end hotel that provides that service.

For information on dining with kids, see p57.

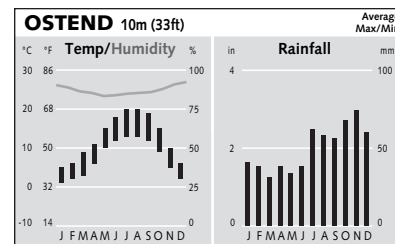
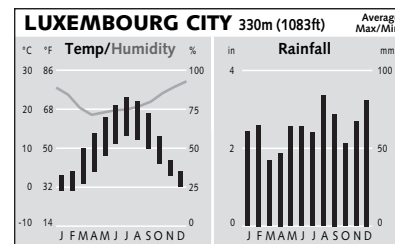
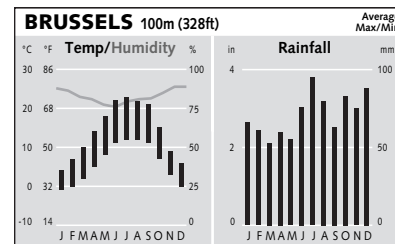
### Sights & Activities

Antwerp (p186), Bruges (p131) and Brussels (p93) have plenty to offer kids. Luxembourg City (see p276) does too although a day or two is about all you'd need here. Ostend is the most accessible resort on the Belgian coast – see p141 for details on its beach. Close to the coastal resort of De Panne is Belgium's most popular children's theme park, Plopsaland (p148). Near Mechelen there's the science-oriented Technopolis (p204) as well as Planckendael zoo (p205). In a wooded area close to Hasselt is an open-air museum, Bokrijk (p212), plus the country's largest playground. Schedule a whole day for these, as kids love both. In Hasselt there's the new Plopsa Indoor (p211). In the Ardennes, small towns such as Rochefort (p238) offer cycling and ancient caves to explore, Bouillon (p241) has a creepy castle and kayaking, and at La Roche-en-Ardenne (p245) you can cycle, kayak, hike or horse ride. All kids get right into the Euro Space Center (p240).

There's nothing like a ride in the country against a stiff North Sea wind to give kids a good night's sleep. Adult bicycles are readily available for hire in Belgium but if you want to plop young kids on a bike too, you'll need prior planning. Bruges (p130), Kortrijk (p160) and Luxembourg City (p274) all have excellent rental agencies offering both child bikes and baby/toddler seats. The latter are fitted to the front and/or rear of an adult bike and are ideal for getting around when kids are too young to saddle up themselves. You'll see this setup everywhere in Flanders: mum, dad and two or even three kids out for a half-day on just two bikes. Toddlers love travelling this way, although you'll have to limit journey lengths to suit them. An option for older children (four or five years) is the so-called 'third-wheel'. This is an extra wheel, complete with seat, pedals and handle bar, that is screwed onto the back of the adult bike and trails along behind. This system takes getting use to – by both adult and child – and you'll find some kids love it while others feel insecure. For more general information on cycling, see p300.

### CLIMATE CHARTS

Belgium and Luxembourg share a generally mild, maritime climate characterised by many days of grey and/or rainy weather. For more on local weather conditions and suggestions on when to go, see p12.



### CUSTOMS

Duty-free goods are no longer sold to those travelling from one EU country to another. For goods purchased in airports or on ferries *outside* the EU, the usual allowances apply for tobacco (200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or 250g of loose tobacco), alcohol (1L of spirits or 2L of liquor with less than 22% alcohol by volume; 2L of wine) and perfume (50g of perfume and 0.25L of eau de toilette).

Do not confuse these with *duty-paid* items (including alcohol and tobacco) bought at normal shops and supermarkets in another EU country and brought into Belgium or Lux-

embourg, where certain goods might be more expensive. The allowances for these goods are far more generous: 800 cigarettes, 200 cigars or 1kg of loose tobacco; 10L of spirits (more than 22% alcohol by volume); 20L of fortified wine or apéritif, 90L of wine or 110L of beer, and unlimited quantities of perfume.

### DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Both countries are, in general, very safe. The only danger you're likely to confront is a big night out on Belgian beer. That said, Belgians were shocked in 2006 by two separate murders in broad daylight in busy public places in the country's main cities (see p21 and p33). These events have put personal security back on the public agenda.

While the rate of violent crime is low compared with many European countries, petty theft does occur, more so in large cities. Favoured haunts for pickpockets in Brussels include the Grand Place, the narrow streets around Îlot Sacré, Rue Neuve, and the markets at Gare du Midi and Place du Jeu-de-Balle. In Luxembourg, keep your hands on your valuables around the train station area.

In January 2007, restaurants in Belgium – but not Luxembourg – became smoke-free. But unlike in a growing number of European countries, the new law didn't extend to *cafés* and pubs. Although *cafés* are required by law to have adequate ventilation, in reality few do. Even fewer have sections for *niet rokers/non-fumeurs* (nonsmokers). If you're used to socialising in a smoke-free environment, you'll find both countries challenging.

And lastly there's the subject of dog mess. Belgians' love of dogs unfortunately manifests itself in footpaths dotted with doggie-doo. Pictograms stencilled onto pavements ordering dogs 'not to squat here' have made little difference, and rare is the Belgian who follows his or her hairy companion and faithfully scoops up after it. A few years back, Brussels introduced hefty fines for failing to do just that, but they seem to have made little difference. A poll in 2005 showed dog mess on the street was the one thing that most irritated most Belgians.

### DISCOUNT CARDS

There is no national museum card in Belgium, but the Grand Duchy has the Luxembourg Card, which offers good value for those really keen on exploring (for details, see p271).

Many individual cities offer discounted passes to a variety of sights – these have been detailed throughout the guide. Museums in both countries offer concession prices for children, students and seniors.

### Senior Cards

Seniors over 65 (including visitors) pay only €4 for a return 2nd-class train trip anywhere in Belgium (not on weekends from mid-May to mid-September). Most museums and other attractions offer discounts for those aged over 65 – there's no standard rule so check tariffs to see if you're eligible.

### Student & Youth Cards

To stay at the hostels run by Vlaamse Jeugdherbergcentrale (in Flanders), Les Auberges de Jeunesse (in Wallonia) and Centrale des Auberges de Jeunesse Luxembourgaises (in Luxembourg) you must be a member of an organisation affiliated to Hostelling International (HI). If you don't have an HI card you'll pay €3 extra per night for up to six nights, after which an International Guest Card, valid for one year, is issued.

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) provides discounts on admission to many museums and sights and on train fares.

## EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

### Belgium Embassies & Consulates

For up-to-date visa information, check Belgium's Ministry of Foreign Affairs website at [www.diplomatie.be](http://www.diplomatie.be).

Diplomatic representation abroad:

**Australia** (☎ 02-6273 2501; fax 02-6273 3392; 19

Arkana St, Yarralumla, ACT 2600)

**Canada** (☎ 613-236 7267; fax 613-236 7882; Constitution Sq, 360 Albert St, Suite 820, Ottawa ON K1R 7X7)

**France** (☎ 01 44 09 39 39; fax 01 47 54 07 64; rue de Tilsitt 9, Paris F-75840 Cedex 17)

**Germany** (☎ 49-3020 6420; fax 49-3020 642 200; Jägerstrasse 52-53, Berlin D-10117)

**Ireland** (☎ 01-205 7100; fax 01-283 9403; 2 Shrewsbury Rd, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4)

**Luxembourg** (☎ 25 43 251; fax 45 42 82; 4 Rue des Girondins, L-1626 Luxembourg City)

**Netherlands** (☎ 070-312 34 56; fax 070-364 55 79; Alexanderveld 97, NL-2585 DB The Hague)

**New Zealand** (☎ 09-575 6202; [ismackenzie@extra.co.nz](mailto:ismackenzie@extra.co.nz); 15A Rarangi Rd, St Heliers, Auckland)

**UK** (☎ 020-7470 3700; fax 020-7470 3795; 103-105 Eaton Sq, London SW1W 9AB)

**USA** (☎ 202-333 6900; fax 202-333 5457; 3330 Garfield St, NW, Washington, DC 20008)

### Luxembourg Embassies & Consulates

In countries where there is no representative, contact the nearest Belgian or Dutch diplomatic missions. Visa information can be obtained online at [www.mae.lu](http://www.mae.lu).

Diplomatic missions abroad:

**Belgium** (☎ 02 735 57 00; fax 02 737 57 10; Ave de Cortenberg 75, B-1000 Brussels)

**France** (☎ 01 45 55 13 37; fax 01 45 51 72 29; 33 Ave Rapp, Paris F-75007)

**Germany** (☎ 030-26 39 570; fax 030-26 39 5727; Klingelhöferstrasse 7, Berlin D-10785)

**Netherlands** (☎ 070-360 75 16; fax 070-346 2000; Nassaulaan 8, NL-2514 JS The Hague)

**UK** (☎ 020-7235 6961; fax 020-7235 9734; 27 Wilton Crescent, London SW1X 8SD)

**USA** (☎ 202-265 4171; fax 202-328 8270; 2200 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008)

### Embassies & Consulates in Belgium

The following diplomatic missions are all embassies and are located in or around Brussels.

**Australia** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 02 286 05 00; fax 02 230 68 02; Rue Guimard 6, B-1040 Brussels)

**Canada** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 02 741 06 11; fax 02 741 06 43; Ave de Tervuren 2, B-1040 Brussels)

**France** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 02 548 87 11; fax 02 513 68 71; Rue Ducale 65, B-1000 Brussels)

**Germany** (Map p86; ☎ 02 787 18 00; fax 02 787 28 00; Rue Jacques de Lalain 8-14, B-1040 Brussels)

**Ireland** (Map p86; ☎ 02 235 66 76; fax 02 235 66 71; Rue Wiertz 50, B-1050 Brussels)

**Luxembourg** (Map p86; ☎ 02 735 57 00; fax 02 737 57 10; Ave de Cortenberg 75, B-1000 Brussels)

**Netherlands** (Map pp70-1; ☎ 02 679 17 11; fax 02 679 17 75; Ave Herrmann-Debroux 48, B-1160 Brussels)

**New Zealand** (Map pp76-7; ☎ 02 512 10 40; fax 02 513 48 56; 7th fl, Sq de Meeus 1, B-1100 Brussels)

**UK** (Map p86; ☎ 02 287 62 11; fax 02 287 63 55; Rue d'Arlon 85, B-1040 Brussels)

**USA** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 02 508 21 11; fax 02 511 27 25; Blvd du Régent 27, B-1000 Brussels)

### Embassies & Consulates in Luxembourg

The nearest Australian, Canadian and New Zealand embassies are in Belgium. The following foreign embassies are in Luxembourg City:

**Belgium** (Map p270; ☎ 25 43 251; fax 45 42 82; 4 Rue des Girondins, L-1626 Luxembourg City)

**France** (Map p270; ☎ 45 72 71 1; 8 Blvd Joseph II, L-1840 Luxembourg City)

**Germany** (Map p270; ☎ 45 34 45 1; 20-22 Ave Émile Reuter, L-2420 Luxembourg City)

**Ireland** (☎ 45 06 10; 28 Route d'Arlon, L-1140 Luxembourg City)

**Netherlands** (Map p270; ☎ 22 75 70; 6 Rue Ste Zithe, L-2763 Luxembourg City)

**UK** (Map p270; ☎ 22 98 64; 14 Blvd Joseph II, L-1840 Luxembourg City)

**USA** (Map p270; ☎ 46 01 23; 22 Blvd Emmanuel Servais, L-2535 Luxembourg City)

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Both countries are big on festivals and celebrations. Throughout the year there are jazz marathons, religious processions, local fairs, film festivals and classical music extravaganzas, though the lion's share of events takes place over summer.

The intimacy and originality of some of Belgium's festivals is one of the country's best-kept secrets. Many festivals have religious roots but have grown into unique events. The Heilig-Bloedprocessie (p132) in Bruges in May, Ommegang (p96) in Brussels in late June/early July and the seven-yearly Kroningsfeesten (p215) in Tongeren are three of the most famous religion-inspired events. Carnival (p223) is a big do in many towns and villages in both countries – people shake off the winter blues with outrageous celebrations ranging from balls to masked parades, with lots of drinking. Other quirky events include the Kattenfestival (Festival of the Cat, p152) in Ypres, the Penitents' Procession (p149) in Veurne, La Doudou (p222) in Mons, and the Procession of the Giants (p222) in Ath.

For a complete list of annual events in the Grand Duchy, look up the Luxembourg National Tourist Office's website ([www.visitluxembourg.lu](http://www.visitluxembourg.lu)).

The following list covers national events in both countries; local festivals are listed in the relevant town sections earlier in this book.

### February

**Carnival** Celebrated throughout Belgium and Luxembourg, but the most renowned festivities take place in the Walloon towns of Binche, Malmédy and Stavelot. For more information, see p223.

**Buergsonndeg** Luxembourg's Bonfire Day celebration started in pagan times and is held on the first Sunday after carnival. Bonfires in the shape of a cross are lit on hillsides all over the Grand Duchy and people – young and old – gather to eat, drink and socialise.

### April

**Festival van Vlaanderen** ([www.festival.be](http://www.festival.be)) The Festival of Flanders is an umbrella organisation for a host of festivals that, combined, add up to Belgium's biggest event. Top classical and international music performances, dance, world music and theatre are held from April to October in churches, abbeys, town halls and other historical locations throughout Flanders, including Brussels. Most of the events take place between July and September.

**Octave** One of Luxembourg's biggest events, this pilgrimage dates back to the 17th century and is held from the 3rd to the 5th Sunday after Easter. People from all around the Grand Duchy come to the capital to worship the Lady Comforter of the Afflicted, a small statue of the Virgin. On the 5th Sunday, the statue is carried around the city in a much-honoured, solemn procession that includes the Grand Ducal family and government officials. If you're driving around during these two weeks take note, pilgrims have the right of way.

### June

**Luxembourg National Day** This is the Grand Duchy's biggest event – a celebration of the birth of the Grand Duke (though it doesn't actually fall on a Grand Ducal birthday). Fireworks from Pont Adolphe in Luxembourg City kick it off on the evening of 22 June. Later there's dancing on Place d'Armes followed by an all-night party, with cafés and bars around town open 'til dawn. On 23 June, a military parade winds through the streets of the capital and festivities are held around the country.

**Festival of Wallonia** ([www.festivaldewallonie.be](http://www.festivaldewallonie.be) in French) Young Belgian musicians perform classical concerts throughout Brussels and Wallonia from June until October.

### July

**Belgium National Day** Celebrations on 21 July change little from one year to the next. A modest military procession in Parc de Bruxelles, opposite Brussels' royal palace, is followed by evening fireworks.

### September

#### Open Monumentendag/Journées du Patrimoine

On selected weekends in September, Belgium opens a handful of protected monuments to the public in what are known as Heritage Days. Different buildings are selected each year and, if recent years are anything to go by, the masses are impressed. These events usually fall on the second weekend in September each year for monuments in the countryside and the following weekend for those in Brussels.

## FOOD

Throughout this guide, restaurants and other eateries have been ordered by price, from budget options (roughly €5 to €15 for a main course) through midrange (€15 to €25) and

up to top end (€25 and above). See p52 for details on what to expect.

## GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Belgium is a world leader in equal rights for gays and lesbians. Same-sex couples have been able to wed legally in Belgium since 2003 when laws were passed overwhelmingly through parliament, and they now have the same rights enjoyed by heterosexuals, including inheritance and adoption. Laws governing the latter narrowly passed through the Senate in 2006, making Belgium the third EU member state (following Spain and Sweden) to grant homosexual couples adoption rights. In 2005, parliament voted to make Belgium the second country after Canada to celebrate national anti-homophobia day on May 17.

Attitudes to homosexuality are pretty laid-back in both Belgium and Luxembourg, and the age of consent in both countries is 16.

For details on gay and lesbian organisations and festivals, see boxed texts under Brussels (p97), Antwerp (p188), Ghent (p165) and Luxembourg City (p276).

## HOLIDAYS

### Public Holidays

**New Year's Day** 1 January

**Easter Monday** March/April

**Labour Day** 1 May

**Ascension Day** 40th day after Easter

**Whit Monday** 7th Monday after Easter

**Luxembourg National Day** 23 June (Luxembourg only)

**Festival of the Flemish Community** 11 July (Flanders only)

**Belgium National Day** 21 July (Belgium only)

**Assumption Day** 15 August

**Wallon Community** 27 September (Wallonia only)

**All Saints' Day** 1 November

**Armistice Day** 11 November (Belgium only)

**Christmas Day** 25 December

### School Holidays

**Belgium** July and August; one week in November; two weeks at Christmas; one week around Carnival; two weeks at Easter; one week in May.

**Luxembourg** Mid-July to mid-September; first week in November; two weeks around Christmas; one week at Carnival; two weeks at Easter; one week at Ascension.

## INSURANCE

A travel-insurance policy to cover theft, loss and medical problems is a good idea. World-wide travel insurance is available at [www.lonelyplanet.com/travel\\_services](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services). You can buy, extend and claim online anytime – even if you're already on the road.

Also see p326 for health insurance.

## INTERNET ACCESS

The internet is a rich resource for travellers. You can research your trip, hunt down bargain air fares, book hotels, check weather conditions or chat with locals and other travellers about the best places to visit.

Most travellers make use of internet cafés and free web-based email such as **Yahoo** ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)), **Hotmail** ([www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)) or **Gmail** ([www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com)). You'll need to carry three vital pieces of information with you so you can access your internet account: your incoming (POP or IMAP) mail server name, your account name and your password. Your ISP or network supervisor should provide you with these. Armed with this information, you should be able to access your internet account from any internet-connected machine in the world, provided it runs some kind of email software (remember that Netscape and Internet Explorer both have mail modules). Most ISPs will also enable you to receive your emails through their website, which only requires you to remember your account name and password. It's a good idea to become familiar with the process for doing this before you leave home.

Internet cafés are plentiful in major cities around Belgium, as well as in Luxembourg City, but don't expect too much away from main centres. Prices vary from €0.50 to €1.50 for 15 minutes, or €1 to €5 per hour. You'll also find public internet access in some libraries, hostels, hotels and tourist offices. To find out where you can log on, check the Information section in the individual cities and towns in this guide. In the listings, accommodation options offering internet access for guests are marked with a computer/internet symbol.

If you're travelling with a notebook or hand-held computer, be aware that your modem may not work once you leave your home country. The safest option is to buy a reputable 'global' modem before you leave home, or buy a local PC-card modem if you're spending an extended time in any one country. For more information on travelling with a portable computer, see [www.teleadapt.com](http://www.teleadapt.com).

See p14 for useful websites for planning your trip or to use while on the road.

## LEGAL MATTERS

Police in both countries usually treat tourists with respect and many officers, particularly in Flanders and in Luxembourg, speak English fluently. In both countries you are legally required to carry either a passport or national identity card at all times. A photocopy should suffice if you don't want to carry your passport for security reasons. Should you be arrested for any reason, you have the right to ask for your consul to be immediately notified.

In Luxembourg, you can seek free legal advice at the **Service d'Accueil et d'Information Juridique** (☎ 22 18 46; Côte d'Eich) in Luxembourg City.

## MAPS

Good maps are easy to come by once you're in Belgium or Luxembourg, but you might want to buy one beforehand to plan and track your route. The maps in this book will help you get an idea of where you might want to go and will be a useful first reference when arriving in a city. Once there, most tourist offices have decent, if basic, free maps. Proper road maps are essential for driving or cycling.

Michelin's fold-out Belgium/Luxembourg map (No 716, scale: 1:350,000) includes a town index and enlargements of Brussels, Antwerp and Liège. In Luxembourg, Geoline does a booklet of maps covering Luxembourg City and other main towns.

For hiking and off-road cycling, one of the best map resources is the topographical series published by Belgium's Institut Géographique National. They cover the whole country in scales ranging from 1:10,000 to 1:50,000. Many of these maps are available in major bookshops and local tourist offices. The latter also stock other maps and route descriptions relevant to their area, and are

### OF AGE

The legal ages in Belgium and Luxembourg:

- drinking alcohol – 16 in Belgium, 17 in Luxembourg
- driving – 18
- marriage – 18
- sexual intercourse – 16 (both heterosexual and homosexual)
- voting – 18

usually the best place to get the lowdown on the local walking/hiking scene.

Online maps are available at [www.derouckgeomatics.com](http://www.derouckgeomatics.com) (in Flemish and French only).

## MONEY

Belgium and Luxembourg are still largely cash-based societies. Locals generally use cash for small purchases so you can't avoid having at least some cash in your pocket. Major credit cards are widely accepted at top and midrange hotels and restaurants, and in many shops and petrol stations.

Belgium and Luxembourg both use the euro, which has the same value in all euro-zone countries. There are seven euro notes (five, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euros) and eight euro coins (one, two, five, 10, 20 and 50 cents, and one and two euros). One side is standard to all euro coins and the other bears a national emblem of participating countries.

Prices quoted in this book are in euros (€), unless otherwise stated. For exchange rates, see the inside front cover. For information on local costs, see p13.

## Moneychangers

Banks are the best place to change money, charging only a small commission on cash or travellers cheques. Out of hours, there are less generous exchange bureaux. Banks in both countries generally open from 8.30am or 9am to between 3.30pm and 5pm Monday to Friday, and also Saturday mornings. In smaller places, they may close for an hour at lunch.

Outside banking hours, there are exchange bureaux (*wisselkantoren* in Flemish, *bureaux d'échange* in French) at airports or train stations. These mostly have lower rates and higher fees than banks.

Automated teller machines (ATMs) are not widespread around the countryside, but are well populated in city centres and at the main international airports (Brussels National and Luxembourg Airport). They generally accept MasterCard (called EuroCard in Belgium and Luxembourg) and Visa.

## Tipping

Tipping is not obligatory as service and VAT are included in hotel and restaurant prices. Cinema and theatre attendants generally expect a €1 tip, and in public toilets you'll be given a foul look or be reprimanded if you attempt to leave without tipping the



attendant (€0.30 to €0.50); this goes for both men and women.

## PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO

The time of year will dictate, to a degree, what film to take or buy locally. Winter's dull and often overcast conditions mean photographers should bring higher-speed film (eg 200 ISO). With summer's (hopefully) blue sunny skies, slower film is the answer (100 ISO).

If using a digital camera, check that you have enough memory to store your snaps – 256MB will probably be enough. If you do run out of memory space your best bet is to burn your photos onto a CD. Increasing numbers of photo labs now offer this service.

Lonely Planet's *Travel Photography*, by Richard T Anson, is a helpful guide to taking the pictures you've always wanted.

If you're taking along your video camera, make sure you have the necessary charger, plugs and transformer.

## POST

Post offices in both countries are generally open from 9am to 5pm weekdays and 9am to noon Saturday.

In Belgium, mail can be sent either *prior* (priority) or *nonprior* (nonpriority) but, given the delays experienced with priority mail, don't even consider sending things nonpriority. Letters under 50g to European countries cost €0.60 and €0.65 to non-European countries.

In Luxembourg, letters (under 20g) cost €0.70 to send to EU countries and €0.90 to non-EU countries.

From both countries, letters average a week to 10 days to reach places outside Europe, two to three days inside the continent.

In addresses, the street number follows the street name in Flanders. In Luxembourg, the number is always placed first. In Wallonia, it's a mix of the two. In both countries, a four-digit postal code is given in front of the city or town name (B-1000 Brussels, for example). The 'B' attached to the postal code stands for the country, ie Belgium). The abbreviation for PO Box is 'PB' (*postbus*) or 'BP' (*boîte postale*); 'bus' or 'bte' (*boîte*) in an address stands for 'box number'.

Poste restante attracts a €0.40 fee and you may need to show your passport. Some useful poste restante addresses:

**Antwerp** (Poste Restante, Hoofdstaatskantoor, Groenplaats, B-2000 Antwerp)

**Bruges** (Poste Restante, Hoofdstaatskantoor, Markt 5, B-8000 Bruges)

**Brussels** (Poste Restante, Bureau de Poste Central, Blvd Anspach 1, B-1000 Brussels)

**Ghent** (Poste Restante, Hoofdstaatskantoor, Lange Kruisstraat 55, B-9000 Ghent)

**Luxembourg City** (Poste Restante, Luxembourg-Centre Bureau de Post, L-1118 Luxembourg 2)

**Namur** (Poste Restante, Bureau de Poste Namur 1, Blvd E Mélot 25, B-5000 Namur)

## SHOPPING

Belgium's specialities are chocolate (p54), beer (p45) and lace (p138). Antwerp, and to an increasing extent Brussels, is also famous for its avant-garde designer fashions (see boxed texts, p197 and p114) and for diamonds (p183). Antiques are popular buys in Brussels (p113), as well as in the Flemish town of Tongeren (p214). It's worth remembering that with expensive purchases like diamonds or antiques you can claim the 21% VAT back if you live outside the EU.

Markets are part of life for many people in Belgium. Vendors selling food, clothing and miscellaneous goods set up on a weekly basis in most Belgian towns, and the young and elderly with trolleys in tow jostle to see what's on offer. Two of the best such markets are Brussels' Gare du Midi market (p115) and Antwerp's Vogelmarkt (p192). Weekly food markets are listed in the Eating section in major cities and towns.

Bric-a-brac (*curiosa/brocante*) markets are also very popular – don't miss Brussels' Place du Jeu-de-Balle flea market (p115) or the centuries' old Vrijdagmarkt (p198) in Antwerp. Bargaining is not customary, though it's worth trying at flea markets.

## SOLO TRAVELLERS

Dangers are few when travelling solo through Belgium and Luxembourg, but women still need to take extra precautions (p313). Be aware that accommodation places can charge higher single supplement fees, and you may not be seated at the best table in restaurants as a lone diner. Hitchhiking is risky and not recommended at all, particularly for single travellers.

## TELEPHONE & FAX Belgium

Belgium's international country code is ☎ 32. To telephone abroad, dial the international

access code ☎ 00. For an international operator, call ☎ 1324.

Belgium has a single telephone zone for the entire country. This means it costs the same to make a telephone call within Brussels as to call, for example, from Brussels to Bruges. Area codes are incorporated into phone numbers. This means you must dial the area code as well as the telephone number, even when dialling from the relevant area.

Phone calls are metered. Telephone numbers prefixed with 0900 or 070 are pay-per-minute numbers (€0.17 to €0.45 per minute). Numbers prefixed with 0800 are toll-free calls. Those prefixed with 0472 to 0479, 0482 to 0489 and 0492 to 0499 are mobile numbers. Note also that a call to an English-speaking directory assistance operator (☎ 1405) costs a mighty €3.

You can ring abroad from almost any phone box in Belgium or Luxembourg. Public telephones accepting stored-value phonecards (available from post offices, telephone centres, newsstands and retail outlets) are the norm.

Mobile phones are the trend worldwide and travellers can rent (or purchase) phones with international capabilities. Belgium and Luxembourg use the GSM 900/1800 network, covering Europe, Australia and New Zealand. It's not generally compatible with North America. If you have a GSM phone, check with your service provider about using it in Belgium and Luxembourg.

Belgium's main mobile networks are Proximus, operated by Belgacom, Mobistar and Base. Mobiles can be rented from **Locaphone** (☎ 02 652 14 14) in the arrivals hall at Brussels National Airport. Prices start at €7 per day for the first five days, then drop to €2.50 per day (not including 21% VAT). Payment is by credit card only, and there's a one-off insurance payment of €9.50. Note that it's illegal to use mobile phones while driving a vehicle in Belgium.

The Yellow Pages, in major cities in Belgium, has a handy English-language index.

Faxes can be sent and received from some post offices or private shops. Expect to pay around €3 for one page to the UK, or €4.70 to the USA or Australia.

## Luxembourg

Luxembourg's international country code is ☎ 352. To telephone abroad, the international access code is ☎ 00. Call ☎ 12410 for an international operator. Collect calls can be

made by dialling ☎ 80 02 00. For directory inquiries call ☎ 016/017.

Local telephone calls are time based. International phone calls can be made using phonecards. Numbers prefixed with 0800 are toll-free numbers.

Mobile-phone users will find that Luxembourg, like Belgium, works on GSM 900/1800 (for more details, see left).

Post offices are the best places to send and receive faxes. The cost is €3.95 for one page to the UK or USA; to Australia it costs €4.95.

## TIME

Both countries run on Central European Time. See the World Time Zones map (pp350–1) for time zones.

Daylight-saving time comes into effect on the last Sunday in March, when clocks are moved forward one hour. On the last Sunday in October, they're turned back an hour. The 24-hour clock is used.

## TOILETS

Public toilets in Belgium and Luxembourg are few and far between, which is why most people use the facilities in pubs and cafés. A €0.30 fee (occasionally as high as €0.50) is charged in almost all public toilets, as well as in the toilets in some bars, cafés and fast-food restaurants. It's an honour system of sorts – drop the coins in the china dish on the table or expect the woman running the show to come after you if you don't cough up.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

Both countries are dotted with tourist offices. In Flemish they're signposted as *dienst voor toerisme* or *toeristische dienst*, and in Wallonia and Luxembourg you'll see signs for *syndicat d'initiative* or *office de tourisme*. Staff are generally friendly and efficient, and will book accommodation and arrange guided tours.

As is the case with many things in Belgium, there are two separate organisations promoting tourism: **Toerisme Vlaanderen** ([www.visitflanders.com](http://www.visitflanders.com)) covers Flanders and **Office de Promotion du Tourisme** (OPT; [www.belgique-tourisme.net](http://www.belgique-tourisme.net)) Wallonia. Both organisations publish vast numbers of free glossy, detailed brochures on their individual regions, as well as a range of national booklets covering topics such as hotels, camping, rural holidays and the useful annual *Guide to Tourist Attractions and Museums in Belgium*.



In Brussels, both organisations come under the umbrella title of the Belgian Tourist Information Centre (p68). The Luxembourg National Tourist Office (p271) is located inside the train station in Luxembourg City. The postal address is BP 1001, L-1010 Luxembourg.

### Belgian Tourist Offices Abroad

Australia, Ireland, Luxembourg and New Zealand do not have a Belgian tourist office – inquiries should be addressed to the Belgian Tourist Information Centre (see previous).

Otherwise, Belgium has tourist offices in the following countries (some countries have separate offices for Flanders and Wallonia): **Canada** (Office du Tourisme Wallonie-Bruxelles; ☎ 418-692 49 39; www.belgique-tourisme.qc.ca; 43 Rue de Buade, Quebec, Quebec G1R 4A2)

**France** (Flandres (Tourisme Belgique – Flandre et Bruxelles; ☎ 01 56 89 14 42; www.tourismebelgique.com; 6 rue Euler, F-75008 Paris); Wallonia (Office Belge du Tourisme Wallonie-Bruxelles; ☎ 01 53 85 05 20; www.belgique-tourisme.be; Blvd St-Germain 274, F-75007 Paris)

**Germany** (Belgisches Haus; ☎ 0221-27 75 90; www.belgien-tourismus.de; Cäcilienstrasse 46, D-50667 Köln)

**Netherlands** (Flandres (Toerisme Vlaanderen-Brussel; ☎ 070-416 81 10; www.toerismevlaanderen.nl; Koninginnegracht 86, NL-2514 AJ The Hague); Wallonia (Belgisch Verkeersbureau Wallonië & Brussel; ☎ 023-534 44 34; www.belgie-toerisme.be; Postbus 2324, NL-2002 CH Haarlem)

**UK** (Flandres (Tourism Flanders-Brussels; ☎ 020-730 777 38; www.visitflanders.co.uk; 1a Cavendish Sq, London W1G 0LD); Wallonia (Belgian Tourist Office Brussels-Wallonia; ☎ 020-7531 0390; www.belgiumtheplaceto.be; 217 Marsh Wall, London E14 9FJ) To order brochures call ☎ 0800-95 45 245.

**USA** (Belgian Tourist Office; ☎ 0212-758 8130; www.visitbelgium.com; 220 East 42nd St, Suite 3402, New York, NY 10017)

### Luxembourg Tourist Offices Abroad

The Luxembourg National Tourist Office has offices in the following countries:

**UK** (☎ 020-7434 2800; www.luxembourg.co.uk; 122 Regent St, London W1B 5SA)

**USA** (☎ 212-935 88 88; www.visitluxembourg.com; 17 Beekman Place, New York, NY 10022)

### TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Neither Belgium nor Luxembourg are terribly accessible countries for travellers with a mobility problem. Both have buildings that are centuries old and although efforts are being made to consider the needs of travellers with disabilities when renovating buildings, this is no small task. Some government build-

ings, museums, hotels, restaurants, *cafés* and arts venues have lifts and/or ramps, but the majority don't. According to Cléon Angelo, spokesperson from the National Association for Handicapped People's Housing (ANLH), only half of new public buildings in Brussels comply with a 2000 law that obliges architects to ensure buildings, including hotels and shops, are built in a 'disabled-friendly' way.

Out on the street, things aren't much better. Wheelchair users will be up against uneven cobblestones, rough pavements and steep kerbs. To access metro or train stations, there's usually a seemingly unending flight of steps or escalators. When travelling by train, wheelchair users must give an hour's notice. Ten of Brussels' 68 metro stations have lifts for travellers with disabilities, but only three are central – Gare Centrale, Maelbeek and De Brouckère (two other stations, Gare du Midi and Porte de Namur should also have lifts by the time you read this). According to the city's public transport organisation, Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles (STIB), 18 metro stations will have lifts by early 2008.

De Lijn, the company running buses throughout Flanders, plans to make all its buses accessible to wheelchair users by 2010.

In all cities and many big towns you'll find hotels (in the midrange or top-end price range) that can accommodate travellers in wheelchairs – the ones in this guide are noted with a wheelchair icon. Many official HI hostels in Belgium also have suitable rooms (such as in Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, Namur, Tongeren and Tournai).

In Luxembourg, the tourist office produces an annual brochure, *Holiday Apartments Farm & Rural Holidays*, which flags accommodation accessible to people with reduced mobility, as well as fully accessible options (though in reality there is little on offer for either).

Attempts have been made to assist the visually impaired, such as Braille plaques at the entrance to some metro stations in Brussels and a model of the belfry in Bruges with explanatory notes in Braille (it's located on the Markt).

Some useful organisations:

**Accessible Travel Info Point** (Map p74; ☎ 070 23 30 50; www.accessinfo.be; Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61, Brussels) Information for Flanders.

**Adapth** (Association pour le développement et la propagation d'aides techniques pour personnes handicapées; ☎ 43 95 58 1; www.adapth.lu in French) Keeps

a comprehensive database relating to disability issues in Luxembourg.

**British Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation** (RADAR; ☎ 020-7250 3222; www.radar.org.uk; 12 City Forum, 250 City Rd, London EC1V 8AF, UK)

**Info-Handicap** (☎ 36 64 66 1; www.welcome.lu; 65 Ave de la Gare, Luxembourg City) Luxembourg organisation which publishes *Guide du Handicap*, listing services and organisations.

**Mobility International** (☎ 541-343 1284; www.miusa.org) In the USA.

**National Information & Awareness Network** (Nican; ☎ 02-6241 1220; www.nican.com.au) In Australia.

**Taxi Hendriks** (☎ 02 752 98 00; fax 02 752 98 01) Brussels' taxi company specialising in minibus services for disabled people – book a few days in advance.

### VISAS

There are no entry requirements or restrictions on EU nationals visiting Belgium and Luxembourg. Citizens of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and the USA do not need visas to visit the country as tourists for up to three months. Except for people from a few other European countries (such as Switzerland and Norway), everyone else must have a visa. Three-month tourist visas are issued by Belgian or Luxembourg embassies or consulates. They can take a while to be processed, so leave enough time before departure to apply. Fees vary depending on your nationality. For more on up-to-date visa information, check www.lonelyplanet.com.

Visa information can be obtained from Belgium's Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, www.diplomatie.be. For Luxembourg, check www.mae.lu.

### WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Belgium's strong Catholic background has kept women's issues firmly on the back burner, which explains the huge difference between Belgium and its neighbour the very progressive Netherlands. It wasn't until 1990 that abortion was legalised in Belgium, and even then it caused a national drama (see boxed text, p27). Only in 1991 was succession to the Belgian throne opened to women.

Women should encounter few problems while travelling in either Belgium or Luxembourg. Brussels is small by capital-city standards but violent crime is on the increase, so it's advisable not to wander alone late at night or to arrive late at the Gare du Midi or Gare du Nord. The northern end of Blvd Adolphe Max (close to Place Rogier) is lined with striptease joints and peep shows. The metro is relatively safe at all times.

In Luxembourg City, the area around the train station – particularly Rue Joseph Junck – is pretty seedy.

Useful organisations for women:

**Amazone** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 02 229 38 00; www.ama zone.be; Rue du Méridien 10, Brussels) A centre housing a variety of women's organisations that was set up in the mid-1990s. From a traveller's point of view, it's not the sort of place you can just drop in to find out what's happening on the women's scene in Belgium. However, it's possible to pick up information and potentially make contacts at the centre's restaurant (open noon to 2pm Monday to Friday).

**Helpline** (☎ 02 648 40 14) Twenty-four-hour helpline based in Brussels.

**SOS Viol** (☎ 02 534 36 36) Rape crisis line in Brussels.

**Waisse Rank** (☎ 40 20 40) Women's crisis organisation in Luxembourg City.

# Transport

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This chapter gives the nuts and bolts about getting to Belgium and Luxembourg, as well as information related to getting around the two countries once you're there. Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at [www.lonelyplanet.com/travel\\_services](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services).

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### ENTERING THE COUNTRY

Entering both countries is straightforward, no matter what form of transport you choose to get there.

### Passport

To enter Belgium and Luxembourg you need a valid passport or, for EU nationals, travel

#### THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

documents (ie ID card or passport). By law, everyone in Belgium, including tourists, must carry some sort of ID on them at all times. For foreign visitors, this means your passport.

### AIR

#### Airports in Belgium & Luxembourg

**Antwerp** (ANR; ☎ 03 285 65 00; [www.antwerpairport.be](http://www.antwerpairport.be)) Near Antwerp (p198); services a modest number of flights to/from London.

**Brussels National Airport** (BRU; ☎ 0900 70 000; [www.brusselsairport.be](http://www.brusselsairport.be)) Belgium's main international airport (see p115).

**Charleroi** (CRL; [www.charleroi-airport.com](http://www.charleroi-airport.com)) About 55km south of Brussels at Charleroi (p227).

**Liège** (LGG; ☎ 04 234 84 11; [www.liegeairport.com](http://www.liegeairport.com))

Located at the city's former military base, Bierset.

**Luxembourg airport** (LUX; ☎ 24 64 1; [www.lux-airport.lu](http://www.lux-airport.lu)) Luxembourg's only international airport, also known as Aéroport de Luxembourg, 6km east of the capital. A big new glass terminal, under construction next to the original building, is expected to be finished by the end of 2007.

### Airlines

#### BELGIUM

Belgium's main international carrier is Brussels Airlines, recently renamed following a merger between SN Brussels Airlines and Virgin Express. The only other Belgian airline is VLM Airlines, with flights from Brussels National and Antwerp airport to London City.

Check the following websites for cheap airlines flying into Belgium: [www.wizzair.com](http://www.wizzair.com), [www.welcomear.com](http://www.welcomear.com), [www.skyeurope.com](http://www.skyeurope.com), [www.condor.com](http://www.condor.com) and [www.aerarann.com](http://www.aerarann.com).

Airlines (*luchtvaartmaatschappijen* in Flemish, *lignes aériennes* in French) flying into Belgium include the following (with Belgian phone numbers):

**Aer Lingus** (EI; ☎ 02 548 98 48; [www.aerlingus.com](http://www.aerlingus.com))

**Air Canada** (AC; ☎ 02 627 40 88; [www.aircanada.ca](http://www.aircanada.ca))

**Air France** (AF; ☎ 02 526 12 70; [www.airfrance.com](http://www.airfrance.com))

**Air New Zealand** (NZ; ☎ 03 202 13 55; [www.airnewzealand.com](http://www.airnewzealand.com))

**Alitalia** (AZ; ☎ 02 551 11 22; [www.alitalia.be](http://www.alitalia.be))

**American Airlines** (AA; ☎ 02 711 99 69; [www.aa.com](http://www.aa.com))

**British Airways** (BA; ☎ 02 717 32 17; [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com))

**Brussels Airlines** (SN; ☎ 070 35 11 11; [www.brusselsairlines.com](http://www.brusselsairlines.com))

### CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

### Flying and Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motor transport generates CO<sub>2</sub> (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

### Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the greenhouse gases they are responsible for with contributions to energy-saving projects and other climate-friendly initiatives in the developing world – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com).

**Continental Airlines** (CO; ☎ 02 643 39 39; [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com))

**Japan Airlines** (JL; ☎ 02 745 44 00; [www.jal.co.jp](http://www.jal.co.jp))

**KLM** (KL; ☎ 070 22 27 47; [www.klm.be](http://www.klm.be))

**Lufthansa** (LH; ☎ 070 35 30 30; [www.lufthansa.be](http://www.lufthansa.be))

**Ryanair** (FR; ☎ 0902 88 007; [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com))

**United Airlines** (UA; ☎ 02 713 36 00; [www.unitedairlines.be](http://www.unitedairlines.be))

**VLM Airlines** (VG; ☎ 03 287 80 80; [www.flyvlm.com](http://www.flyvlm.com))

### LUXEMBOURG

The national carrier, Luxair, flies to European destinations including London, Paris and Frankfurt. The airline's four decades of accident-free flying came to an end in 2002 when one of its planes crashed while landing at Luxembourg airport, killing 15 people.

Budget airline, Ryanair, flies to Frankfurt-Hahn in Germany from where there's a bus connection ([www.easybycoach.com](http://www.easybycoach.com); one way €17; 1½ hours; 10 per day) to Luxembourg City.

Airlines flying into Luxembourg include the following:

**Air France** (AF; ☎ 27 30 20 06; [www.airfrance.lu](http://www.airfrance.lu))

**British Airways** (BA; ☎ 43 86 47; [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com))

**Czech Airlines** (OK; ☎ Belgium 32 2 217 17 92; [www.czechairlines.com](http://www.czechairlines.com))

**KLM City Hopper** (KL; ☎ The Netherlands 31 20 4 747 747; [www.klm.com](http://www.klm.com))

**Lufthansa** (LH; ☎ 47 98 50 50; [www.lufthansa.com](http://www.lufthansa.com))

**Luxair** (LG; ☎ 24 56 42 42, arrival & departure information 24 56 50 50; [www.luxair.lu](http://www.luxair.lu))

**SAS Scandinavian Airlines** (SK; ☎ Belgium 32 2 643 6900; [www.flysas.com](http://www.flysas.com))

**Swiss International Air Lines** (LX; ☎ Switzerland 41 61 582 36 56)

**TAP Portugal** (TP; ☎ 47 98 21 33; [www.flytap.be](http://www.flytap.be))

**VLM Airlines** (VG; ☎ 49 33 95; [www.flyvlm.com](http://www.flyvlm.com))

### Tickets

The airline industry and the way travellers book tickets has changed dramatically in recent years. Once you'd automatically go to a travel agent rather than direct to an airline for a bargain fare, but that's no longer the case. The growing number of 'no-frills' carriers operating in the US and northwest Europe, which mostly sell direct to travellers, is responsible for the change. One such airline flying into Belgium is Ryanair. Unlike the 'full-service' airlines, no-frills carriers often make one-way tickets available at around half the return fare, meaning it's easy to put together a return ticket when you fly into one place but leave from another.

The internet has also changed ticketing. Many airlines, full-service and no-frills, offer

some excellent fares to web users. They may sell seats by auction or simply cut prices to reflect the reduced cost of electronic selling. Many travel agents around the world also have websites, which can make the internet a quick and easy way to compare prices.

### Online Booking Agencies

**Air Brokers International** (www.airbrokers.com) USA.

**Cheap Tickets** (www.cheaptickets.com) USA.

**Ebookers** (www.ebookers.com) UK, Continental Europe.

**Expedia** (www.expedia.com) Canada, USA, UK, France, the Netherlands.

**House of Travel** (www.houseoftravel.co.nz) New Zealand.

**JustFares** (www.justfares.com) USA.

**My Travel** (www.mytravel.com) UK.

**Orbitz** (www.orbitz.com) USA.

**Travel** (www.travel.com.au) Australia.

**Travelocity** (www.travelocity.ca) Canada.

**Webjet** (www.webjet.com.au) Australia.

### Australia & New Zealand

Flights to Belgium or Luxembourg from this side of the world require first going to London, Paris or Frankfurt and changing there to a Brussels or Luxembourg flight.

The following are well-known agents for competitive fares:

**Flight Centre** Australia (☎ 131 600; www.flightcentre.com.au); New Zealand (☎ 0800 24 35 44; www.flightcentre.co.nz)

**STA Travel** Australia (☎ 03-9207 5900; www.statravel.com.au); New Zealand (☎ 0800 474 400; www.statravel.co.nz)

### Continental Europe

As the Thalys fast train network linking Belgium with France, the Netherlands and Germany steadily expands, less and less people travel between Belgium and its neighbouring countries by plane. It's almost as quick to go by train.

To Luxembourg, there are daily flights from Paris (one hour), Amsterdam (1¼ hours) and Frankfurt (50 minutes).

A few recommended travel agents include the following:

**JustTravel** (☎ 089 747 3330; www.justtravel.de) Germany.

**NBBS Reizen** (☎ 0900 10 20 300; www.nbbs.nl in Dutch) The Netherlands.

**Nouvelles Frontières** (☎ 0825 000 747; www.nouvelles-frontieres.fr) France.

### UK & Ireland

There isn't really a low or high season for flights to Belgium or Luxembourg: prices de-

pend more on special offers and availability of seats. Special offers usually involve booking in advance and being away a minimum number of nights or staying over a Saturday night.

The flight time from London to Brussels is one hour and 10 minutes. To compare the difference between flying from London to Brussels National Airport, or travelling by Eurostar train service, see boxed text, (p319). A London–Antwerp flight also takes about an hour, but as there is no competition on this route and few flights it's not an interesting option. The only airline servicing the route is the small Flemish company VLM Airlines. London to Luxembourg City also takes about an hour.

From the UK, no-frills airline Ryanair flies out of Glasgow-Prestwick to Charleroi airport (about 55km south of Brussels).

From Ireland, Aer Lingus has Dublin–Brussels flights, while Ryanair offers flights from Dublin and Shannon to Charleroi airport.

Competitive travel agencies include the following:

**Flightbookers** (☎ 0800 082 3000; www.ebookers.com)

**STA Travel** (☎ 0871 230 0040; www.statravel.co.uk)

**Trailfinders** (☎ 0845 058 5858; www.trailfinders.co.uk)

### USA & Canada

There are few direct flights from the US or Canada to Belgium and none at all to Luxembourg; in most cases you'll have to travel via London. Travel time from New York is approximately eight hours.

Competitive travel agencies include the following:

**Council on International Educational Exchange**

(☎ 1-800-40-STUDY; www.ciee.org) America's largest student travel organisation.

**STA Travel** (☎ 800 781 4040; www.statravel.com) Has offices around America.

**Travel CUTS** (☎ 800 667 2887; www.travelcuts.com) Canada's national student travel agency.

### LAND

#### Car & Motorcycle

The main motorways into Belgium are the E19 from the Netherlands, the E40 from Germany, the E411 from Luxembourg and the E17 and E19 from France. Into Luxembourg, the main roads are the E411 from Belgium, the A4 and the E25 from France, and the E44 from Germany. If travelling from any of these countries, fill up in Luxembourg – fuel prices here are among the lowest in Western Europe. There are no controls at border crossings into Belgium

### EUROLINES

**Eurolines** (☎ Brussels 02 271 13 50; Luxembourg 26 29 80; Amsterdam 020-560 8788; Frankfurt 069-790 350; London 1582 404 511; Paris 0892 89 90 91; www.eurolines.com) is a consortium of coach operators with offices all over Europe. Belgium and Luxembourg are well connected to the UK, the rest of Continental Europe, Scandinavia and North Africa by Eurolines buses.

Eurolines' coaches are fairly comfortable, with reclining seats, air-conditioning and on-board toilets. They stop frequently for meals.

Discounts depend on the route, but children aged between four and 12 typically get 30% to 40% off, while seniors and those aged over 26 get a 10% to 20% discount on some routes. It's a good idea to book at least several days ahead in summer.

Real coach junkies can investigate a Eurolines Pass, which gives unlimited travel between 35 European cities for a set period of 15 or 30 days.

and Luxembourg. Plans are afoot to introduce a €60 motorway toll when entering Belgium.

### France

#### BUS

The only bus company operating between France and Belgium or Luxembourg is **Euro-lines** (☎ 0892 89 90 91; www.eurolines.fr). Buses depart daily from Paris to Brussels (one way €25, 3¼ hours, nine daily), Antwerp (€25, 4¼ hours, one daily), Mons (€22, 2¼ hours, two daily) and Liège (€25, 4¼ hours, one daily). There are also less frequent services to Ghent (€20, three hours, one daily), Kortrijk (€20, 2¼ hours, one daily), Leuven (€23, five hours, one daily) and Luxembourg City (€27, 5½ hours, two weekly). For more on Eurolines, see above.

#### TRAIN

France's national rail network is operated by the **Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Français** (SNCF; ☎ 0890 36 10 10; www.sncf.com).

Thalys fast trains (p318) efficiently link Paris' Gare du Nord station with Brussels' Gare du Midi (one way €74.50, 1½ hours, hourly). There are also services to Antwerp (€83.30, 2¼ hours, seven per day) as well as Bruges (€88.70, 2½ hours, one per day) and Liège (€92.30, 2½ hours, seven per day).

To Luxembourg, SNCF trains depart five times daily from Paris-Est station to Luxembourg City (€47, four hours, six daily). The high-speed TGV is expected to start operating between Luxembourg City and Paris in 2007 or 2008.

### Germany

#### BUS

The main company is **Deutsche Touring/Euro-lines** (☎ Frankfurt 069 790 350; www.deutsche-touring.com),

which has buses departing daily from several German cities, including Aachen, Frankfurt and Cologne, to a limited number of destinations in Belgium. As an example, there are buses from Frankfurt to Brussels (one way €34, 5¼ hours, one daily) and Liège (€34, 5¼ hours, one daily). For more on Eurolines, see above.

There's a bus connection (see www.easybycoach.com) from Frankfurt-Hahn to Luxembourg City (one way €17, 1¼ hours, 10 daily).

#### TRAIN

Thalys trains (p318) link Cologne with Liège (one way €25) and Brussels (€40, 2¼ hours, six daily). Regular Thalys fares are more expensive than ordinary **Deutsche Bahn** (DB; ☎ 01805-99 66 33; www.bahn.de) train fares; however, the Thalys discounted return tickets usually work out cheaper than DB fares.

To Luxembourg City, DB trains run from Cologne (€43, 3½ hours, hourly) and Frankfurt (€52, four hours, hourly).

### Netherlands

#### BUS

**Eurolines** (☎ 020-560 8788; www.eurolines.nl) operates daily buses between the Netherlands and Belgium or Luxembourg. From Amsterdam buses run to Antwerp (one way €18, 2½ hours, six daily), Brussels (€18, 3½ hours, six daily), Bruges (€18, 4¼ hours, three daily) and Luxembourg City (€22, 8½ hours, one daily). For more on Eurolines, see above.

#### TRAIN

The Netherlands' train network is run by **Netherlands Spoorwegen** (NS; ☎ 0900 20 21 163; www.ns.nl).

Thalys trains (see p318) link Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam with a handful of cities in Belgium. From Amsterdam, there are

**THALYS**

**Thalys** ([www.thalys.com](http://www.thalys.com); ☎ Belgium 070 66 77 88; France 0892 35 35 36; Germany 01805 215 000; Netherlands 0900 9296) fast trains are a service provided jointly by the Belgian, Dutch, French and German railways. They link various cities in Belgium with destinations in the Netherlands, Germany and France. Belgian Railways has phased out many of its trains on these routes, as more and more people opt for the fast trains. Some routes are still being upgraded to accommodate the Thalys (Antwerp train station has been undergoing massive construction works for the last few years), but all the tracks are expected to be upgraded to high-speed lines by mid-2007. In Brussels, Thalys trains depart only from Gare du Midi.

Several types of Thalys tickets are available. The most expensive 1st- and 2nd-class fares are for fully flexible, refundable Librys tickets. Cheaper nonflexible return fares, known as Smilys, are also available. Discounted adult fares are also offered on weekends and for trips booked well in advance. Travellers aged 12 to 26 get a 50% discount and seniors a 30% reduction on standard fares.

All the fares mentioned in the country sections are one-way Librys tickets.

Thalys trains to Antwerp (€37, two hours, five daily) and Brussels (€44, 2½ hours, five daily).

**UK BUS**

With the increase in availability of low air fares, buses no longer offer the cheapest public transport to and around Europe. But if you prefer to stay on the ground, buses are a good deal.

From London's Victoria coach station, **Euro-lines** (p317) runs buses to Brussels (one way/return €41/69, eight hours, six daily) and various other cities in Belgium, including Antwerp (€41/69, 8½ hours, two daily), Liège (€41/69, nine hours, two daily) and Luxembourg City (one way €50, 11½ hours, five per week). Prices in high season are €5 to €10 higher. Bookings can be made through Eurolines or any **National Express** ([www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)) office.

An alternative to Eurolines is **Busabout** (☎ 020-7950 1661; [www.busabout.com](http://www.busabout.com)). This UK-based company is aimed at younger travellers, but has no upper age limit. It runs coaches along interlocking European circuits, known as the Northern, Southern and Western Loops. The Northern Loop passes through Belgium, stopping in Bruges en route from Paris to Amsterdam (May to October only). Prices start with a one-loop pass for €455.

**CAR & MOTORCYCLE**

For details on taking a car or motorcycle through the Eurotunnel, see right. For information on car-ferry services, see opposite.

**TRAIN**

The Channel Tunnel allows for a land link between Britain and France. The high-speed

**Eurostar** (☎ London 08705 186 186; Brussels 02 528 28 28; [www.eurostar.com](http://www.eurostar.com)) passenger train service uses the Channel Tunnel to connect London–Paris or London–Brussels. Ten trains per day Monday to Friday, and seven per day on weekends make the journey from London to Brussels' Gare du Midi. Fares include travel on to any train station in Belgium (for example, you can choose to stop in Brussels or immediately continue on to say Bruges or Ghent at no extra cost).

A wide variety of fares is available. The regular 2nd-class fare (known as Standard) is UK£149/298 one way/return. The equivalent fare in 1st class (meal included) is UK£205/400. These tickets are fully refundable and you can make changes to the date and time of travel.

Other tickets may not be as flexible and usually have conditions attached. A fully-flexible Leisure Select ticket (return only) costs UK£329 and requires that you stay away a Saturday night. The weekend-day-return Leisure Select costs from UK£105. In addition, there are often special deals.

Youth tickets (one way/return UK£40/59) are available to those aged under 26; children's fares (from four to 11 years) are UK£25/50 in 2nd class and UK£50/100 in 1st.

Eurostar tickets are sold at main-line railway stations in the UK.

The **Eurotunnel** (☎ UK 08705 35 35 35; Belgium 070 22 32 10; France 03 21 00 61 00; [www.eurotunnel.com](http://www.eurotunnel.com)) vehicle service travels between terminals in Folkestone and Coquelles (5km southwest of Calais in France). Trains carry cars, motorcycles and bicycles with their passengers/riders. Trains run 24 hours, every day of the year, with four departures per hour in peak times. During the 35-minute crossing, passengers can sit in

**TRAIN OR PLANE FROM THE UK?**

For quick, hassle-free travel from London to Brussels (and on to cities such as Bruges or Antwerp), Eurostar train is the way to go. From mid-November 2007, the journey time from London to Brussels' Gare du Midi will be slashed from two hours and 20 minutes to one hour and 50 minutes, making this the most efficient and relaxing way to travel to Belgium. The reduction in travel time is due to the expected completion of a high-speed link between the Channel Tunnel and London, as well as Eurostar moving its services from London's Waterloo station to St Pancras station.

In comparison, a flight from London to Brussels takes between 60 and 75 minutes, on top of which is time getting to and from the airports, check-in and waiting for luggage. Also, keep in mind if you're flying with a low-cost airline that you may leave and/or arrive at secondary airports (such as Belgium's Charleroi, 55km south of Brussels), thus further increasing the overall journey time.

For more details on Eurostar, see opposite.

their cars or walk around the air-conditioned, soundproofed rail carriage. The entire process, including loading and unloading, takes about an hour.

Fares vary enormously depending on the time of year, the day of the week and the time of day. A return fare for a car (driver and all passengers included) starts at UK£160 but prices can increase substantially in peak periods. Special promotional fares, such as Short-Day Saver and Five-Day FlexiPlus, are worth investigating.

The fare for a motorcycle (with riders) starts at UK£22 for a same-day return and UK£38 for longer stays. Bicycles (with rider) cost UK£15 return but can be taken on limited services only.

**SEA**

Three car-ferry services exist between Belgium and the UK. Fares and schedules vary widely according to seasonal demand.

The following are the operators:

**P&O** (☎ Belgium 02 710 64 44; UK 0870-520 2020; [www.poferies.com](http://www.poferies.com)) Sails overnight from Zeebrugge in Belgium to Hull in the UK (14 hours) and charges from €162/245 one way/return for two passengers, a car and cabin.

**Superfast Ferries** (☎ Belgium 050 25 22 52; UK 0870-234 0870; [www.superfast.com](http://www.superfast.com)) Ultramodern ferry sails overnight three times per week between Zeebrugge in Belgium and Rosyth in Scotland (18 hours). Fares start at €92/165 one way/return for a car. Adult passengers pay from €60 one way.

**TransEuropa Ferries** (☎ Belgium 059 34 02 60; UK 01843-595 522; [www.transeuropaferies.com](http://www.transeuropaferies.com)) Ferries sail three times daily from Ostend to Ramsgate in the UK (four hours). Fares start at €60/120 one way/return for a car (passengers included).

**GETTING AROUND****AIR**

Belgium is so small that there are very few internal flights: Brussels–Antwerp is the only connection and it's rarely used as it's quicker and much cheaper to go by train. Luxembourg is even smaller and has no domestic services.

**BICYCLE**

Belgium and Luxembourg are fab destinations to explore by bike. Bikes can easily be hired or bought. For a complete rundown on cycling in both countries, see p300. Also see the cycling itinerary, p17.

**BOAT**

Getting around by boat is not big in Belgium, but there are possibilities. Try the following companies:

**easyCruise Two** (☎ UK 01895-651 191; [www.easycruise.com](http://www.easycruise.com)) This 52-cabin ship cruises along the rivers and canals of Belgium and the Netherlands, stopping in Antwerp, Brussels, Rotterdam and Amsterdam. You must spend a minimum of two nights on board. A four/two-bunk cabin costs €35/45 per person per night, a twin cabin starts at £58.

**Hoseasons Holidays Abroad** (☎ UK 01502-502 588; [www.hoseasons.co.uk](http://www.hoseasons.co.uk)) UK travel company arranging one- or two-week cruises around the fields of Flanders starting from Nieuwpoort and taking in towns along the way such as Veurne, Ypres, Bruges, Kortrijk and Ghent. Prices range from £550 to £825 per week (for two adults and a child) for the cheapest boat. Prices are seasonal, with July to August being the most expensive time.

**BUS**

Buses tend to be a secondary means of getting around in Belgium as the rail network is so



## Fuel & Spare Parts

In Belgium, fuel prices per litre are about €1.40 for unleaded and €1.10 for diesel.

Luxembourg's fuel prices are among the lowest in Western Europe: unleaded costs €1.15 per litre and diesel is €0.90. Residents of neighbouring countries regularly fill up here, and the prices are reflected in the number of huge petrol stations lining the road at every border town.

Repairs and spare parts are easy to come by in both countries.

## Hire CAR

Renting a car for inner-city travel is madness, but having your own wheels certainly makes it easy to mosey around the countryside. If you intend to do so, organise the rental before you leave home – it's usually much cheaper. If that doesn't suit, avoid renting a car from an airport or train station in Belgium as tariffs are 15% higher.

Rental prices include insurance and VAT, and most companies offer unlimited kilometres. Foreign drivers will need to show their passport or ID card as well as their driving licence, and most car-hire companies prefer that you have a credit card (some won't even look at you without one). Most companies require drivers to be aged 23 or over and to have been driving for at least one year.

If you plan to spend a good deal of time in Belgium and Luxembourg and even other European countries it's well worth investigating car-leasing programmes such as those offered by Peugeot or Renault (see right). These allow you to drive in many countries in Western and Central Europe; all you need is a credit card, passport and driving licence valid in the countries in which you'll be driving. Payment must be made in advance and the minimum age is 18. All of the cars in these programmes are brand new; prices include unlimited kilometres and comprehensive insurance, and prices are much cheaper than for normal rental cars, especially if you want a car for an extended period (ie more than 17 days). Cars can be picked up and dropped off in many European cities, including Brussels; however, you'll have to pay an added fee if you don't start your journey in France where these programmes originate. Allow at least three weeks for the paperwork. Many travel agents have details and brochures.

Rental/leasing companies include the following:

**Avis** (☎ Belgium 02 537 12 80; Luxembourg 48 95 95; [www.avis.com](http://www.avis.com))

**Budget** (☎ Belgium 02 646 51 30; Luxembourg 44 19 38; [www.budget.com](http://www.budget.com))

**Hertz** (☎ Belgium 02 513 28 86; Luxembourg 43 46 45; [www.hertz.be](http://www.hertz.be))

**Peugeot** (☎ France 0825 120 120; [www.peugeot.com](http://www.peugeot.com))

**Renault Eurodrive** (☎ France 01 40 40 32 32; [www.eurodrive.renault.com](http://www.eurodrive.renault.com))

## MOTORCYCLE

Motorcycles are only available for hire in Brussels (see p115).

## Insurance

Motor-vehicle insurance with at least third-party cover is compulsory throughout the EU. Your home policy may or may not be extendable to Belgium and Luxembourg; it's a good idea to get a Green Card from your home insurer before you leave home. This confirms that you have the correct coverage.

If you're hiring a car in either country, rental companies will provide insurance as a standard part of the rental package.

## Road Hazards

Most Belgian cities are congested and full of one-way streets, making driving frustrating and time-consuming. Trams have priority, and be aware of passengers disembarking onto the street. Also, be conscious of cyclists. Although cyclists often have separate bike lanes, the chances of a collision increase at intersections when vehicles are turning right and drivers fail to notice that a cyclist has come alongside the car on the cycle path to their right.

## Road Rules

Road rules are generally easy to understand, although the give way to the right law takes a lot of getting used to (see boxed text, opposite). Standard international signs are in use. Both countries have good motorways – they're free in Luxembourg but a €60 motorway toll may be introduced in Belgium from 2008 or 2009. Driving is on the right, and the speed limit is 50km/h in built-up areas, 90km/h outside urban centres and 120km/h on motorways (130km/h in Luxembourg). Seat belts are compulsory in the front and rear. In Belgium the blood-alcohol limit is 0.05%, which means two strong beers and you're over the limit.

## BELGIAN DRIVERS

'Aggressive' is the word generally used to describe Belgian drivers, and many foreigners who take to the roads here find it apt. Whether cruising on a sleek highway or bouncing over potholed inner-city streets, drivers have a reputation for being fast, impatient and at times abusive (though rarely incited to road rage). Anyone idling at 120km/h in the fast lane of a motorway will be flashed from behind by speed demons doing 160km/h. Belgium has the most dense road network in Europe and, considering the way people drive here, you'd think they were pressed to test-drive every inch of it.

One peculiarity that ensures adrenaline-pumped journeys is the *voorang van rechts/priorité à droite* (give way to the right) law, which operates in both Belgium and Luxembourg. Thanks to this rule, cars darting out from side streets sometimes have right of way over vehicles on the main road (but not always – signs with an orange diamond surrounded by white mean the main road has priority). Recent figures show that 250 people die each year due to this rule. In 2006, Belgium's Mobility Minister, Renaat Landuyt, said the government may consider scrapping the system as it is 'not always logical'.

Although required to by law, Belgian drivers rarely stop at pedestrian crossings (it halts the flow of traffic!). If you decide to stop, make sure you're not being tailgated and that the vehicle behind you has plenty of time to stop as well. Obviously, pedestrians must also take care at crossings. No matter how steely your glare, drivers generally will not stop – only suicide-seekers step out in front of oncoming traffic.

Statistically, Belgium has double the rate of road fatalities of most of its neighbouring countries (France is the exception). Compared to zealous nations such as Australia, speed checks and Breathalyser tests are almost nonevents. To make it worse, you'd be horrified by the number of Belgians who think they've every right to drive when sozzled. The government implemented hefty fines for speeding and drink-driving in 2002 in a bid to halve road fatalities by 2010. Since then, numbers have been reduced but at a rate lower than the European average. So another crackdown came into effect in 2006, with new laws aimed to reduce accidents and bring the country's safety improvements up to the level of neighbouring countries. Only time will tell whether the harsher fines and increased use of permanent speed cameras has the desired effect on drivers.

And if you think all this is a bit exaggerated, have a read of Pisa Test's recent study of 3000 European drivers in which the Belgians came out as the worst drivers in Europe. Just 48% are capable of passing their driving test, according to the study, compared to the average success rate of 54%. Or for something less dry, pick up Harry Pearson's *A Tall Man in a Low Land*. Anecdote after anecdote attests to Belgium's reputation for having Europe's worst drivers and Pearson's descriptions of 'swashbuckling driving methods' and an 'apparent delusion that the brake pedal is actually a spare clutch' are spot on.

In Luxembourg, the limit is 0.08%, though with debate raging within the government it's widely expected that it will soon drop to 0.05%. Luxembourg is one of only three Western European countries (including Ireland and the UK) to have retained this high limit.

## HITCHING

Hitching is never entirely safe in any country in the world, and we don't recommend it. Travellers who decide to hitch should understand that they are taking a small but potentially serious risk. People who do choose to hitch will be safer if they travel in pairs and let someone know where they are planning to go. It's illegal to hitch on motorways in Belgium and Luxembourg.

**TaxiStop** (p69) is an agency that will match long-distance travellers with drivers headed for the same destination for a reasonable fee.

A similar agency in Luxembourg is **Luxstop** ([www.luxstop.8m.com](http://www.luxstop.8m.com)) but it arranges travel only via its website. The basic charge is €0.05 per kilometre, which means you'll be looking at about €9 to Brussels and €25 to London.

## LOCAL TRANSPORT

The major cities in both countries have efficient and reliable bus networks. Trams are also used in some Belgian cities, and Brussels and Antwerp also have metro systems and a *premetro* (trams that run underground for part of their journey). Public transport services generally run until about 11pm or

midnight in major cities, or until 9pm or 10pm in towns.

Taxis are metered and expensive – you'll find them waiting outside train stations and close to major city hubs.

## TRAIN

Trains are the best way to get around in Belgium. Belgium built continental Europe's first railway line (between Brussels and Mechelen) in the 1830s and has since developed an extremely dense network. Trains are run by the **Belgische Spoorwegen/Soci t  National des Chemins de Fer Belges** (Belgian Railways; ☎ 02 528 28 28; www.b-rail.be), whose logo is a 'B' in an oval. Major train stations have information offices, open until about 7pm (later in large cities).

There are four levels of service: InterCity (IC) trains (which are the fastest), Inter-Regional (IR), local (L) and peak-hour (P) commuter trains (the latter stop at specific stations only). Depending on the line, there will be an IC and an IR train every half-hour or hour. For a comprehensive list of destinations serviced from Brussels, complete with fares, journey time and frequency, see p115.

### DISCOUNTED DAY TRIPS

If you intend to do much sightseeing around Belgium, investigate the discounted day-trip tickets offered by Belgian Railways. Known as B-Excursions (in French) or B-Dagtrips (in Flemish), these packages include a return 2nd-class ticket plus selected admission fees and a range of incentives such as a complimentary drink in a local *caf * (pub/bar). The price is less than a normal return train ticket plus admission and almost always represents excellent value. The free booklet *B-Excursions/B-Dagtrips* is available from most railway stations but it's in French and Flemish only; ask staff at information offices or ticket windows to explain the details.

Luxembourg's rather sparse rail network radiates out from Luxembourg City, the principal hub. Trains in Luxembourg work largely in partnership with buses – both are operated by the same company and have the same fare system (see p320). The main north-south train line slices straight through the middle

of the country, with a couple of side shoots branching off. From Luxembourg City, lines run east into Germany, south into France and west and north to Belgium.

Trains have 1st- and 2nd-class compartments; both are completely nonsmoking.

### Costs

Second-class tickets are 50% cheaper than 1st-class tickets. At weekends, return tickets to anywhere within Belgium are 50% cheaper than on weekdays. Children under 12 travel for free when accompanied by an adult, provided the journey starts after 9am. Seniors over 65 (including visitors) pay only €4 for

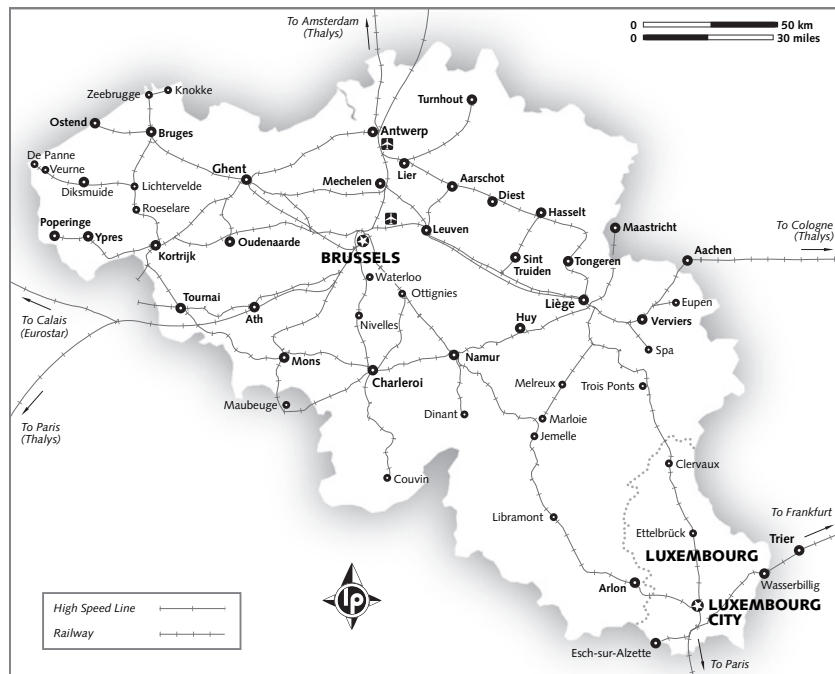
a return 2nd-class trip anywhere in Belgium (except on weekends from mid-May to mid-September). For discounted day-excursion packages, see boxed text, opposite.

### Train Passes

**Benelux Tourrail** Allows five days' travel within one month in Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, and costs €195/130 in 1st/2nd class (under 26 is €90, 2nd class only). It can be purchased in Belgium or Luxembourg but not in the Netherlands (though it's valid for use there).

**Go Pass** Provides 10 one-way trips anywhere in Belgium for people under 26 (€45, 2nd class only).

**Rail Pass** Gives 10 one-way trips anywhere in Belgium. Valid for one year and costs €104/68 in 1st/2nd class.





# Health

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Travel health depends on your predeparture preparations, your day-to-day health care while travelling and how you handle any medical problems that may develop during your trip. Health-care standards in both Belgium and Luxembourg are excellent.

## BEFORE YOU GO

Prevention is the key to staying healthy while abroad. A little planning before you depart, particularly for preexisting illnesses, will save you trouble later. For instance, see your dentist before a long trip, carry a spare pair of contact lenses and glasses, and take your optical prescription with you. Bring medications in their original, clearly labelled, containers. A signed and dated letter from your physician describing any medical conditions you have and the medications you are using, including generic names, is also a good idea. If carrying syringes or needles, be sure to have a physician's letter documenting their medical necessity.

### INSURANCE

If you're an EU citizen, an E111 form, available from health centres or, in the UK, post offices, covers you for most medical care. An E111 will not cover you for nonemergencies or emergency repatriation home. Citizens from

other countries should find out if there is a reciprocal arrangement for free medical care between their country and Belgium and/or Luxembourg. If you do need health insurance, make sure you get a policy that covers you for the worst possible scenario, such as an accident requiring an emergency flight home. Find out in advance if your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you later for overseas health expenditures.

### RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that all travellers should be vaccinated against diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio, as well as hepatitis B, regardless of their destination. Since most vaccines don't produce immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, visit a physician at least six weeks before departure.

### ONLINE RESOURCES

The WHO's publication *International Travel and Health* is revised annually and is available online at [www.who.int/ith/](http://www.who.int/ith/). Other useful websites include:

**Age Concern** ([www.ageconcern.org.uk](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk)) Advice on travel for the elderly.

**Fit For Travel** ([www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk)) General travel advice for the layperson.

**Marie Stopes International** ([www.mariestopes.org.uk](http://www.mariestopes.org.uk)) Information on women's health and contraception.

**MD Travel Health** ([www.mdtravelhealth.com](http://www.mdtravelhealth.com)) Travel-health recommendations for every country; updated daily.

It's usually a good idea to consult your government's travel health website before departure, if one is available:

**Australia** ([www.dfat.gov.au/travel/](http://www.dfat.gov.au/travel/))

**Canada** ([www.travelhealth.gc.ca](http://www.travelhealth.gc.ca))

**UK** ([www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice/](http://www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice/))

**USA** ([www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/))

### FURTHER READING

*Health Advice for Travellers* (currently called the 'T6' leaflet) is an annually updated leaflet by the Department of Health in the UK, available free from post offices. It contains some general information, details of legally required and recommended vaccines for different

countries, reciprocal health agreements and an E111 application form. Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* includes advice on travel health for younger children. Other recommended references include *Traveller's Health* by Dr Richard Dawood (Oxford University Press) and *The Traveller's Good Health Guide* by Ted Lankester (Sheldon Press).

## IN TRANSIT

### DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Blood clots may form in the legs (deep vein thrombosis or DVT) during plane flights, chiefly because of prolonged immobility. The longer the flight, the greater the risk. The chief symptom of DVT is swelling or pain in the foot, ankle or calf – usually but not always – on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may cause chest pain and breathing difficulties. Travellers with any of these symptoms should seek medical attention immediately.

To prevent the development of DVT on long flights, you should walk about the cabin, contract the leg muscles while sitting, drink plenty of fluids, and avoid alcohol and tobacco.

### JET LAG & MOTION SICKNESS

To avoid jet lag, which is common when crossing more than five time zones, try drinking plenty of nonalcoholic fluids and eating light meals. Upon arrival, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep and so on) as soon as possible.

Antihistamines, such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine) and meclizine (Antivert, Bonine), are usually the first choice for treating motion sickness. A herbal alternative is ginger.

## IN BELGIUM & LUXEMBOURG

### AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE

Good health care is readily available. For minor self-limiting illnesses pharmacists can give valuable advice and sell over-the-counter medication. They can also advise when more specialised help is required and point you in the right direction. The standard of dental care in both countries is usually good; however, it is sensible to have a dental check-up before a long trip.

Hotels and tourist offices will be able to assist you in finding a hospital (*ziekenhuis/hôpital* in Flemish/French) with an English-speaking doctor.

*Apotheek/pharmacie* (pharmacies) in both countries usually sport a green cross or the symbol of Aesculapius (the Roman god of medicine or healing) and are open from about 8.30am to 7pm Monday to Friday, as well as Saturday mornings. In cities and major towns, pharmacies work on a weekend and late-night roster: in Belgium look for the notice displayed in the pharmacy windows listing which are on duty that weekend or night; in Luxembourg on-duty pharmacies are listed in local newspapers.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

#### Insect Bites & Stings

Mosquitoes are found in most parts of Europe, and while they may not carry malaria, they can cause irritation and infected bites. Use a DEET-based insect repellent.

Bees and wasps only cause real problems to those with a severe allergy (anaphylaxis.) If you have a severe allergy to bee or wasp stings, carry an 'epipen' or similar adrenaline injection.

Bed bugs lead to very itchy, lumpy bites. Spraying the mattress with crawling-insect killer after changing bedding will get rid of them.

Scabies are tiny mites that live in the skin, particularly between the fingers. They cause an intensely itchy rash. Scabies is easily treated with lotion from a pharmacy; other members of the household also need treating to avoid spreading scabies between asymptomatic carriers.

*Tickborne encephalitis* is spread by tick bites and it's possible to contract it in the Ardennes. It is a serious infection of the brain and vaccination is advised for those in risk areas who are unable to avoid tick bites (such as campers, forestry workers and hikers/ramblers). Two doses of vaccine will give a year's protection, three doses up to three years.

#### Snake Bites

Avoid getting bitten in the first place: do not walk barefoot or stick your hand into holes or cracks. Half of those bitten by venomous snakes are not actually injected with poison (envenomed). If bitten by a snake, do not panic. Immobilise the bitten limb with a splint (eg a stick) and apply a bandage over the site. Make sure you apply firm pressure, similar to a bandage over a sprain. Do not apply a tourniquet, or cut or suck the bite. Get the

victim to the nearest medical facility as soon as possible.

### TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN

All travellers with children should know how to treat minor ailments and when to seek medical treatment. Make sure children are up to date with routine vaccinations, and discuss possible travel vaccines well before departure as some vaccines are not suitable for children under one year old.

Remember to avoid contaminated food and water. If your child is vomiting or has diarrhoea, lost fluid and salts must be replaced. It may be helpful to take rehydration powders for reconstituting with boiled water.

Children should be encouraged to avoid and mistrust any dogs or other mammals because of the risk of rabies and other diseases. Any bite, scratch or lick from a warm-blooded, furry animal should be thoroughly cleaned immediately. If there is any possibility that the animal is infected with rabies, immediate medical assistance should be sought.

### WOMEN'S HEALTH

Emotional stress, exhaustion and travelling through different time zones can all contribute to an upset in the menstrual pattern. If using oral contraceptives, remember diarrhoea, vomiting and some antibiotics can stop the pill from working and lead to the risk of pregnancy – remember to take condoms with you just in case. Time zones, gastrointestinal upsets and antibiotics do not affect injectable contraception.

Travelling during pregnancy is usually possible but there are important things to consider. Always seek a medical check-up

before planning your trip. The most risky times for travel are during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and after 30 weeks. Antenatal facilities vary greatly between countries and you should think carefully before travelling to a country with poor medical facilities, or where there are major cultural and language differences from home. Illness during pregnancy can be more severe, so take special care to avoid contaminated food and water, and insect and animal bites. A general rule is to only use vaccines, as with other medications, if the risk of infection is substantial. Remember that the baby could be at serious risk if you were to contract infections such as typhoid or hepatitis. Some vaccines are best avoided, for example those that contain live organisms; however, there is very little evidence that damage has been caused to an unborn child when vaccines have been given to a woman very early in pregnancy, or before the pregnancy was suspected. Take written records of your pregnancy with you. Ensure your insurance policy covers pregnancy delivery and postnatal care, but remember insurance policies are only as good as the facilities available. Always consult your doctor before you travel.

### SEXUAL HEALTH

Emergency contraception is most effective if taken within 24 hours after unprotected sex. The **International Planned Parenthood Federation** ([www.ippf.org](http://www.ippf.org)) can advise about the availability of contraception in different countries.

When buying condoms, look for a European CE mark, which means it has been rigorously tested. Keep condoms in a cool, dry place or they may crack and perish.

# Language

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## WHAT LINGO WHERE?

### Belgium

Belgium's three main languages are Flemish, French and German. Flemish speakers occupy Flanders, the northern half of the country, and French speakers live in Wallonia in the south. The small German-speaking region, known as the Eastern Cantons, is in the east, based around the towns of Eupen and St Vith. Brussels is officially bilingual though French has long been the city's dominant language.

Flemish, or *Vlaams* as it's known by most Belgians, is a form of Dutch; some Belgians do in fact prefer to call the language Dutch, or *Nederlands* as it's correctly known.

For details on the underlying tensions between the Flemish- and French-speaking

communities in Belgium, see The Linguistic Divide, p31.

If you spend any time travelling around Belgium you'll have to get used to switching between Flemish and French. If you're unsure of which language group someone comes from, it's probably best to stick to English until you've sussed it out – some Flemish take exception to being greeted in French and, vice versa, Walloons may also feel insulted if addressed in Flemish.

In Brussels, tourists can get by with English most of the time. In Flanders you'll have few problems using English – many Flemish speak English fluently and are very accommodating when it comes to speaking to foreigners. In Wallonia far fewer people speak English and once you get away from major cities or tourist centres you'll need French to get by. The people in the Eastern Cantons tend to be fluent in both German and French and also have a smattering of English.

Belgium's linguistic divide may cause some confusion, particularly when crossing between Flanders and Wallonia. For example, when driving from Antwerp, the sign you're following to Bergen (the Flemish name) will disappear and Mons (French) will appear – you'll need to know both the Flemish and French names for a city in order to keep up with road signs. The same goes for reading timetables and signboards at train stations. With the exception of Brussels, these are written in the local language only, hence you may start your journey scanning a timetable to 'Courtrai' and end up needing to look out for a station sign displayed 'Kortrijk'. For a list of alternative placenames, see p320.

### Luxembourg

Like Belgium, Luxembourg also has three official languages: French, German and Lëtzebuergesch. Unlike in Belgium, these languages live together harmoniously. Most Luxembourgers are fluent in all three as well as in English, which is widely spoken in the capital and by younger people around the countryside.

Lëtzebuergesch is most closely related to German and was proclaimed as the national

tongue in 1984. Luxembourgers speak Lëtzebuergesch to each other but generally switch to French when talking to foreigners.

The Grand Duke and government ministers address the nation in Lëtzebuergesch and debates in parliament are usually carried out in the national tongue; however, French is the official language of government announcements, laws, legislation and the judiciary. Street names and road signs tend to be in French and Lëtzebuergesch and the press is predominantly German and French.

A couple of Lëtzebuergesch words often overheard are *moien* (good morning/hello), *äddi* (goodbye) and *wann ech gelifft* (please). Like French speakers, Luxembourgers say *merci* for 'thank you'. A phrase that might come in useful is *schwatz dir Englesch?* (pronounced 'schwetz dear english'), which means 'Do you speak English?'.  
**LANGUAGE**

## FLEMISH

Flemish nouns come in one of three genders: masculine, feminine (both with *de* for 'the') and neuter (with *het* for 'the'). Where English uses 'a' or 'an', Flemish uses *een*, regardless of gender.

There's also a polite and an informal version of the English 'you'. The polite form is *u* (pronounced with the lips both pursed and rounded), the informal is *je*. As a general rule, people who are older than you should be addressed as *u*.

For useful information on food and dining out, including Flemish words and phrases, see p58. For more extensive coverage of Dutch/Flemish than we have space for here, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's *Dutch Phrasebook*.

## PRONUNCIATION

The following lists describe the letters used in our guides to pronunciation, not the actual letters of the Flemish alphabet (which wouldn't include the symbol *ə* or the letter combinations *ow* or *əy*, for example).

### Vowels

<b>a</b>	as the 'u' in 'run'
<b>e</b>	as in 'bet'
<b>i</b>	as in 'hit'
<b>o</b>	as in 'pot'

<b>u</b>	pronounced with pursed, rounded lips, as in the French <i>tu</i>
<b>ə</b>	a neutral vowel, as the 'a' in 'ago'
<b>aa</b>	as the 'a' in 'father'
<b>ee</b>	as in 'eel'
<b>oa</b>	as in 'boat'
<b>oo</b>	as in 'zoo'
<b>ow</b>	as in 'cow'
<b>ay</b>	as in 'say'
<b>əy</b>	similar to the sound of 'er-y' in 'her year' (with no 'r' sound) or, if you're familiar with it, as the 'eui' in the French <i>fauteuil</i>
<b>eu</b>	similar the 'er' in 'her', but with no 'r' sound

### Consonants

Most consonants in the pronunciation guides are similar to their English counterparts (**b, d, f, g, h, k, l, m, n, p, s, t, v, w, z**). A few trickier sounds are listed below:

<b>ch</b>	as in 'chip'
<b>g</b>	as in 'go'
<b>kh</b>	as the 'ch' in the Scottish <i>loch</i> ; it's like a hiss produced between the tongue and the back 'roof' of the mouth
<b>ng</b>	as in 'ring'
<b>r</b>	trilled, either with the tongue forward or held back restricting the flow of air in the throat
<b>y</b>	as in 'yes'
<b>zh</b>	as the 's' in 'pleasure'

## ACCOMMODATION

<b>I'm looking for</b>	<i>Ik ben op zoek</i>	ik ben op zoek
<b>a ...</b>	<i>naar een ...</i>	naar ən ...
<b>camping ground</b>	<i>camping</i>	<i>kem-ping</i>
<b>guesthouse</b>	<i>pension</i>	<i>pen-syon</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>hotel</i>	<i>ho-tel</i>
<b>youth hostel</b>	<i>jeugdherberg</i>	<i>yeukht-her-berkh</i>

### Do you have any rooms available?

*Heeft u een kamer vrij?*  
*hayft u ən kaa-mər vray*

<b>I'd like (a) ...</b>	<i>Ik wil graag een ...</i>	ik wil khraakh ən ...
<b>bed</b>	<i>bed</i>	bet
<b>single room</b>	<i>eenpersoons-kamer</i>	<i>ayn-pər-soans-kaa-mər</i>
<b>double room</b>	<i>tweepersoons-kamer</i>	<i>tway-pər-soans-kaa-mər</i>
<b>room with two beds</b>	<i>kamer met twee bedden</i>	<i>kaa-mər met tway be-dən</i>
<b>room with a bathroom</b>	<i>kamer met badkamer</i>	<i>kaa-mər met bat-kaa-mər</i>

<b>to share a dorm</b>	<i>bed op een slaapzaal</i>	bet op ən slaap-zaal
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<b>How much is it ...? Hoeveel is het ...?</b>	<i>hoo-vayl is hət ...?</i>	
<b>per night</b>	<i>per nacht</i>	pər nakht
<b>per person</b>	<i>per persoon</i>	pər per-soan

### May I see the room?

*Mag ik de kamer zien?* makh ik də kaa-mər zeen

### Where is the bathroom?

*Waar is de badkamer?* waar is də bat-kaa-mər

## CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

<b>Hello.</b>	<i>Dag/Hallo.</i>	dakh/ha-loa
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>Dag.</i>	dakh
<b>Yes.</b>	<i>Ja.</i>	yaa
<b>No.</b>	<i>Nee.</i>	nay
<b>Please.</b>	<i>Alstublieft. (pol)</i>	als-tu-bleeft
	<i>Alsjeblieft. (inf)</i>	a-shə-bleeft

### Thank you (very much).

*Dank u (wel). (pol)* dangk u (wel)  
*Dank je (wel). (inf)* dangk ya (wel)

### Thanks.

*Bedankt. (pol or inf)* bə-dangt

### That's fine/You're welcome.

*Graag gedaan.* khraakh khā-daan

### Excuse me.

*Pardon.* par-dan  
*or Excuseer mij.* eks-ku-zayr may

### I'm sorry.

*Sorry/Excuses.* so-ree/eks-ku-zəs

### How are you?

*Hoe gaat het met u/jou? (pol/inf)* hoo khaat hət met u/yow

### I'm fine, thanks.

*Goed, bedankt.* khood, bə-dangt

### See you soon.

*Tot ziens.* tot zeens

### What's your name?

*Hoe heet u? (pol)* hoo hayt u  
*Hoe heet je? (inf)* hoo hayt ya

### My name is ...

*Ik heet ...* ik hayt ...

### Where are you from?

*Waar komt u vandaan? (pol)* waar komt u van-daan  
*Waar kom je vandaan? (inf)* waar kom ya van-daan

### I'm from ...

*Ik kom uit ...* ik kom əyt ...

## DIRECTIONS

### Where is ...?

*Waar is ...?* waar is ...

### Can you show me (on the map)?

*Kunt u het mij tonen* kunt u hət may toa-nən  
*(op de kaart)?* (op də kaart)

### Could you write the address, please?

*Kunt u het adres opschrijven alstublieft?*  
*kunt u hət a-dres op-skhray-vən als-tu-bleeft*

### (Go) straight ahead.

*(Ga) rechtdoor.* (khaa) rekht-daar

### (Turn) left.

*(Ga) naar links.* (khaa) naar lings

### (Turn) right.

*(Ga) naar rechts.* (khaa) naar rekhs

### at the corner

*op de hoek* op də hook

### at the traffic lights

*bij de verkeerslichten* bay də vər-keers-likht-tən

### What street/road is this?

*Welke straat/weg is dit? wel-kə straat/wekh is dit?*

## SIGNS – FLEMISH

<b>Ingang</b>	Entrance
<b>Uitgang</b>	Exit
<b>Informatie/Inlichtingen</b>	Information
<b>Open</b>	Open
<b>Gesloten</b>	Closed
<b>Verboden/Niet Toegelaten</b>	Prohibited
<b>Kamers Vrij Vol</b>	Rooms Available
<b>Politiebureau</b>	Full/No Vacancies
<b>WC's/Toiletten</b>	Police Station
<b>Heren</b>	Toilets
<b>Dames</b>	Men
	Women

<b>behind</b>	<i>achter</i>	akh-tər
<b>in front of</b>	<i>voor</i>	voar
<b>far (from)</b>	<i>ver (van)</i>	ver (van)
<b>near (to)</b>	<i>dichtbij</i>	dikht-bay
<b>opposite</b>	<i>tegenover</i>	tay-khən-aa-vər

## HEALTH

**I need a doctor.** *Ik heb een dokter nodig.* ik hēp ən dok-tər noa-dikh

**Where is the hospital?** *Waar is het ziekenhuis?* waar is hət zee-kən-hays  
**I'm ill.** *Ik ben ziek.* ik ben zeek

**I'm ...** *Ik ben ...* ik ben ...  
**asthmatic** *asthmatisch* ast-maa-tis  
**diabetic** *suikerziek* say-kər-zeek

**EMERGENCIES – FLEMISH**

<b>Help!</b>		
Help!	help	
<b>There's been an accident.</b>		
Er is een ongeluk gebeurd.	er is ən on-khə-luk kha-beurd	
<b>I'm lost.</b>		
Ik ben de weg kwijt.	ik ben də wekh kwayt	
<b>Go away!</b>		
Ga weg!	kha wekh	
<b>Call ...!</b>	Haal ...	haal ...
<b>a doctor</b>	een dokter	ən dok-tər
<b>the police</b>	de politie	də po-leet-see

<b>I'm allergic to ...</b>	Ik ben allergisch voor...	ik ben a-ler-khis voar ...
<b>antibiotics</b>	antibiotica	an-tee-bee-o-tee-ka
<b>nuts</b>	noten	noa-tən
<b>penicillin</b>	peniciline	pay-nee-see-lee-nə
<b>antiseptic</b>	ontsmettings-middel	ont-sme-tings-mi-dəl
<b>aspirin</b>	aspirine	as-pee-ree-nə
<b>condoms</b>	condooms	kon-doams
<b>contraceptive</b>	anticonceptie-middel	an-tee-kon-sep-see-mi-dəl
<b>diarrhoea</b>	diarree	dee-a-ray
<b>nausea</b>	misselijkheid	mi-sə-lək-hayt
<b>sunscreens</b>	zonnebrandolie	zo-nə-brant-oa-lee
<b>tampons</b>	tampons	tam-pəns

**LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES****Do you speak English?**

Spreekt u Engels? spraykt u eng-əls

**How do you say ... in Dutch?**

Hoe zeg je ... hoe zekh yə ...  
in het Nederlands? in hət nay-dər-lants

**I (don't) understand.**

Ik begrijp het (niet). ik bə-khrəyp hət (neet)

**NUMBERS**

0	nul	nul
1	één	ayn
2	twee	tway
3	drie	dree
4	vier	veer
5	vijf	vayf
6	zes	zes
7	zeven	zay-vən
8	acht	akht

9	negen	nay-khən
10	tien	teen
11	elf	elf
12	twaalf	twaalf
13	dertien	der-teen
14	veertien	vayr-teen
15	vijftien	vayf-teen
16	zestien	zes-teen
17	zeventien	zay-vən-teen
18	achttien	akh-teen
19	negentien	nay-khən-teen
20	twintig	twin-takh
21	eenentwintig	ayn-en-twin-takh
22	tweëntwintig	tway-en-twin-takh
30	dertig	der-takh
40	veertig	vayr-takh
50	vijftig	vayf-takh
60	zestig	zes-takh
70	zeventig	zay-vən-takh
80	tachtig	takh-takh
90	negentig	nay-khən-takh
100	honderd	hon-dərt
1000	duizend	dəy-zənt
2000	tweeduizend	twee-dəy-zənt

**SHOPPING & SERVICES****I'd like to buy ...**

Ik wil graag ... kopen. ik wil khraakh ... koa-pən

**How much is it?**

Hoeveel is het? hoo-vayl is hət?

**May I look at it?**

Mag ik het zien? makh ik hət zeen

**I don't like it.**

Ik vind het niet leuk. ik vint hət neet leuk

**Do you accept ...?**

Accepteert u ...	ak-sep-tayrt u ...
credit cards	kredietkaarten
travellers cheques	kray-deet-kaar-tən reischeques rays-sheks

<b>more</b>	meer	mayr
<b>less</b>	minder	min-dər
<b>smaller</b>	kleiner	klay-nər
<b>bigger</b>	groter	khroa-tər

**I'm looking for ...** Ik ben op zoek naar ... ik ben op zoek naar ...

<b>the bank</b>	de bank	də bangk
<b>a bookshop</b>	een boekenwinkel	ən boo-kən-win-kəl
<b>the chemist/ pharmacy</b>	de dragist/ apotheek	də dro-khist/ a-po-tayk
<b>a laundry</b>	een wasserette	ən wa-sə-re-tə
<b>the market</b>	de markt	də markt
<b>the post office</b>	het postkantoor	hət post-kan-toor

<b>a public toilet</b>	een openbaar toilet	ən oa-pən-baar twa-let
<b>a supermarket</b>	een supermarket	ən su-pər-mart
<b>the tourist office</b>	de VVV	də vay-vay-vay

**What time does it open/close?**

Hoe laat open/ sluit het? hoo laat oa-pənt/ sləyt hət

**TIME & DATES****What time is it?**

Hoe laat is het? hoo laat is hət

**It's (8 o'clock).**

Het is (acht uur). hət is (akht ur)

<b>in the morning</b>	's morgens	smor-ghəns
<b>in the afternoon</b>	's middags	smi-dakhs
<b>in the evening</b>	's avonds	saa-vonts
<b>When?</b>	Wanneer?	wa-nayr
<b>today</b>	vandaag	van-daakh
<b>tomorrow</b>	morgen	mor-khən
<b>yesterday</b>	gisteren	khis-tə-rən

<b>Monday</b>	maandag	maan-dakh
<b>Tuesday</b>	dinsdag	dins-dakh
<b>Wednesday</b>	woensdag	woons-dakh
<b>Thursday</b>	donderdag	don-dər-dakh
<b>Friday</b>	vrijdag	vray-dakh
<b>Saturday</b>	zaterdag	zaa-tər-dakh
<b>Sunday</b>	zondag	zon-dakh

<b>January</b>	januari	ya-nu-aa-ree
<b>February</b>	februari	fay-bru-aa-ree
<b>March</b>	maart	maart
<b>April</b>	april	a-pril
<b>May</b>	mei	may
<b>June</b>	juni	yu-nee
<b>July</b>	juli	yu-lee
<b>August</b>	augustus	ow-gus-tus
<b>September</b>	september	sep-tem-bər
<b>October</b>	oktober	ok-to-bər
<b>November</b>	november	no-vem-bər
<b>December</b>	december	day-sem-bər

**TRANSPORT****What time does the ... leave?**

Hoe laat vertrekt ...? hoo laat vər-trekt ...

**What time does the ... arrive?**

Hoe laat komt ... aan? hoo laat komt ... aan

<b>boat</b>	de boot	də boot
<b>bus</b>	de bus	də bus
<b>plane</b>	het vliegtuig	hət fleekh-taykh
<b>train</b>	de trein	də trayn

<b>Where is ...?</b>	Waar is ...?	waar is ...
<b>the airport</b>	de luchthaven	də lukht-haa-vən
<b>the bus stop</b>	de bushalte	də bus-hal-tə
<b>the train station</b>	het (trein)-station	hət (trayn) sta-syon
<b>the tram stop</b>	de tramhalte	də trem-hal-tə

<b>I'd like ... ticket.</b>	Ik wil graag ...	ik wil khraakh ...
<b>a one-way</b>	een enkele reis	ən eng-ka-lə reys
<b>a return</b>	een retourticket	ən rə-toor-ti-keet
<b>a 1st-class</b>	eerste klas	ayr-stə klas
<b>a 2nd-class</b>	tweede klas	tway-də klas

<b>the first</b>	de eerste	də ayr-stə
<b>the last</b>	de laatste	də laat-stə
<b>platform</b>	spoor/perron	spoar/pe-rən
<b>number</b>	nummer	nu-mər
<b>ticket office</b>	loket	loa-keet
<b>timetable</b>	dienstregeling	deenst-ray-khə-ling

<b>I'd like to hire a/an ...</b>	Ik wil graag een ... huren.	ik wil khraakh ən ... hu-rən
<b>bicycle</b>	fiets	feets
<b>car</b>	auto	ow-to
<b>motorbike</b>	motorfiets	mo-tər-feets

**FRENCH**

For useful information on food and dining out, including French words and phrases, see p59. For more extensive coverage of French than we have space for here, get a copy of Lonely Planet's *French Phrasebook*.

**PRONUNCIATION**

Most letters in French are pronounced more or less the same as their English counterparts, and the pronunciation guides we include should help you get your tongue around the trickier aspects of the language.

<b>j</b>	as the 's' in 'leisure', eg <i>jour</i> (day)
<b>c</b>	before <b>e</b> and <b>i</b> , as the 's' in 'sit'; before <b>a</b> , <b>o</b> and <b>u</b> it's pronounced as English 'k'. When underscored with a 'cedilla' (ç) it's always pronounced as the 's' in 'sit'.
<b>r</b>	pronounced from the back of the throat while constricting the muscles to restrict the flow of air
<b>n, m</b>	where a syllable ends in a single <b>n</b> or <b>m</b> , these letters are not pronounced, but the vowel preceding them is given a nasal pronunciation

**BE POLITE!**

An important distinction is made in French between *tu* and *vous*, which both mean 'you'; *tu* is only used when addressing people you know well, children or animals. If you are addressing an adult who isn't a personal friend, *vous* should be used unless the person invites you to use *tu*. In general, younger people insist less on this distinction between polite and informal, and you will find that in many cases they use *tu* from the beginning of an acquaintance.

**GENDER**

All nouns in French are either masculine or feminine and adjectives reflect the gender of the noun they modify. The feminine form of many nouns and adjectives is indicated by a silent **e** added to the masculine form, as in *ami* and *amie* (the masculine and feminine for 'friend').

In the following phrases both masculine and feminine forms have been indicated where necessary. The masculine form comes first and is separated from the feminine by a slash. The gender of a noun is often indicated by a preceding article: 'the/a/some', *le/un/du* (m), *la/une/de la* (f); or one of the possessive adjectives, 'my/your/his/her', *mon/ton/son* (m), *ma/ta/sa* (f). With French, unlike English, the possessive adjective agrees in number and gender with the thing in question: 'his/her mother', *sa mère*.

**ACCOMMODATION**

<b>I'm looking for</b>	<i>Je cherche ...</i>	zher shersh ...
<b>a ...</b>		
<b>campground</b>	<i>un camping</i>	un kom-peeng
<b>guesthouse</b>	<i>une pension (de famille)</i>	ewn pon-syon (der fa-mee-ler)
<b>hotel</b>	<i>un hôtel</i>	un o-tel
<b>youth hostel</b>	<i>une auberge de jeunesse</i>	ewn o-berzh der zher-nes

**Could you write it down, please?**

*Est-ce que vous pourriez l'écrire, s'il vous plaît?*  
e-sker voo poo-ryay lay-kreer seel voo play

**Do you have any rooms available?**

*Est-ce que vous avez des chambres libres?*  
e-sker voo-za-vay day shom-brer lee-brer

<b>I'd like (a) ...</b>	<i>Je voudrais ...</i>	zher voo-dray ...
<b>single room</b>	<i>une chambre à un lit</i>	ewn shom-brer a un lee

<b>double-bed room</b>	<i>une chambre avec un grand lit</i>	ewn shom-brer a-vek un gron lee
<b>twin room with two beds</b>	<i>une chambre avec des lits jumeaux</i>	ewn shom-brer a-vek day lee zhew-mo
<b>room with a bathroom</b>	<i>une chambre avec une salle de bains</i>	ewn shom-brer a-vek ewn sal der bun
<b>to share a dorm</b>	<i>coucher dans un dortoir</i>	koo-sheer don zun dor-twa

<b>How much is it ...?</b>	<i>Quel est le prix ...?</i>	kel e ler pree ...
<b>per night</b>	<i>par nuit</i>	par nwee
<b>per person</b>	<i>par personne</i>	par per-son

**May I see it?**

*Est-ce que je peux voir la chambre?*  
es-ker zher per vva la shom-brer

**Where is the bathroom?**

*Où est la salle de bains?* oo e la sal der bun

**CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS**

<b>Hello.</b>	<i>Bonjour.</i>	bon-zhoor
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>Au revoir.</i>	o-rer-vva
<b>Yes.</b>	<i>Oui.</i>	wee
<b>No.</b>	<i>Non.</i>	no
<b>Please.</b>	<i>S'il vous plaît.</i>	seel voo play
<b>Thank you.</b>	<i>Merci.</i>	mair-see
<b>You're welcome.</b>	<i>Je vous en prie.</i>	zher voo-zon pree
	<i>De rien. (inf)</i>	der ree-en
<b>Excuse me.</b>	<i>Excusez-moi.</i>	ek-skew-zay-mwa
<b>Sorry. (forgive me)</b>	<i>Pardon.</i>	par-don

**What's your name?**

*Comment vous appelez-vous? (pol)* ko-mon voo-za-pay-lay voo  
*Comment tu t'appelles? (inf)* ko-mon tew ta-pel

**My name is ...**

*Je m'appelle ...* zher ma-pel ...

**Where are you from?**

*De quel pays êtes-vous?* der kel pay-ee et-voo  
*De quel pays es-tu? (inf)* der kel pay-ee e-tew

**I'm from ...**

*Je viens de ...* zher vyen der ...

**DIRECTIONS****Where is ...?**

*Où est ...?* oo e ...

**Can you show me (on the map)?**

*Pouvez-vous m'indiquer (sur la carte)?* poo-vay-voo mun-dee-kay (sewr la kart)

**Go straight ahead.**

*Continuez tout droit.* kon-teen-way too drwa

**SIGNS – FRENCH**

<b>Entrée</b>	Entrance
<b>Sortie</b>	Exit
<b>Renseignements</b>	Information
<b>Ouvert</b>	Open
<b>Fermé</b>	Closed
<b>Interdit</b>	Prohibited
<b>Chambres Libres Complet</b>	Rooms Available Full/No Vacancies
<b>(Commissariat de) Police</b>	Police Station
<b>Toilettes/WC</b>	Toilets
<b>Hommes</b>	Men
<b>Femmes</b>	Women

**Turn left.**

*Tournez à gauche.* toor-nay a gosh

**Turn right.**

*Tournez à droite.* toor-nay a drwa

**at the corner**

*au coin* o kwun

**at the traffic lights**

*aux feux* o fer

**behind**

*derrière* dair-ryair

**in front of**

*devant* der-von

**far (from)**

*loin (de)* lwun (der)

**near (to)**

*près (de)* pray (der)

**opposite**

*en face de* on fas der

**I'm ...**

<b>asthmatic</b>	<i>Je suis ...</i>	zher swee ...
<b>diabetic</b>	<i>asthmatique</i>	(z)as-ma-teek
<b>epileptic</b>	<i>diabétique</i>	dee-a-bay-teek
<b>ill</b>	<i>épileptique</i>	(z)ay-pee-lep-teek
	<i>malade</i>	ma-lad

**I'm allergic**

<b>to ...</b>	<i>Je suis allergique ...</i>	zher swee za-lair-zheek ...
<b>antibiotics</b>	<i>aux antibiotiques</i>	o zon-tee-byo-teek
<b>nuts</b>	<i>aux noix</i>	o nwa
<b>peanuts</b>	<i>aux cacahuètes</i>	o ka-ka-wet
<b>penicillin</b>	<i>à la pénicilline</i>	a la pay-nee-see-leen

**antiseptic**

*l'antiseptique* lon-tee-sep-teek

**aspirin**

*l'aspirine* las-pee-reen

**condoms**

*des préservatifs* day pray-zair-va-teef

**EMERGENCIES – FRENCH****Help!**

*Au secours!* o skoor

**There's been an accident!**

*Il y a eu un accident!* eel ya ew un ak-see-don

**I'm lost.**

*Je me suis égaré/e. (m/f)* zhe me swee-zay-ga-ray

**Leave me alone!**

*Fichez-moi la paix!* fee-shay-mwa la pay

**Call ...!**

*Appelez ...!* a-play ...

**a doctor**

*un médecin* un mayd-sun

**the police**

*la police* la po-lees

**contraceptive**

*le contraceptif* ler kon-tra-sep-teef

**diarrhoea**

*la diarrhée* la dya-ray

**nausea**

*la nausée* la no-zay

**sunblock cream**

*la crème solaire* la krem so-lair

**tampons**

*des tampons* day tom-pon

**hygiéniques**

*hygiéniques* ee-zhen-ek

**LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES****Do you speak English?**

*Parlez-vous anglais?* par-lay-voong lang

**How do you say ... in French?**

*Comment est-ce qu'on dit ... en français?* ko-mon es-kon dee ... on fron-say

**I understand.**

*Je comprends.* zher kom-pron

**I don't understand.**

*Je ne comprends pas.* zher ner kom-pron pa

**NUMBERS**

<b>0</b>	<i>zero</i>	zay-ro
<b>1</b>	<i>un</i>	un
<b>2</b>	<i>deux</i>	der
<b>3</b>	<i>trois</i>	trwa
<b>4</b>	<i>quatre</i>	ka-trer
<b>5</b>	<i>cinq</i>	sungk
<b>6</b>	<i>six</i>	sees
<b>7</b>	<i>sept</i>	set
<b>8</b>	<i>huit</i>	weet
<b>9</b>	<i>neuf</i>	nerf
<b>10</b>	<i>dix</i>	dees
<b>11</b>	<i>onze</i>	onz
<b>12</b>	<i>douze</i>	dooz
<b>13</b>	<i>treize</i>	trez
<b>14</b>	<i>quatorze</i>	ka-torz
<b>15</b>	<i>quinze</i>	kinz
<b>16</b>	<i>seize</i>	sez
<b>17</b>	<i>dix-sept</i>	dee-set
<b>18</b>	<i>dix-huit</i>	dee-zweet
<b>19</b>	<i>dix-neuf</i>	dee-znerf

20	<i>vingt</i>	vung
21	<i>vingt et un</i>	vung tay un
22	<i>vingt-deux</i>	vung-der
30	<i>trente</i>	tront
40	<i>quarante</i>	ka-ront
50	<i>cinquante</i>	sung-kont
60	<i>soixante</i>	swa-son
70	<i>soixante-dix</i>	swa-son-dees
80	<i>quatre-vingts</i>	ka-trer-vung
90	<i>quatre-vingt-dix</i>	ka-trer-vung-dees
100	<i>cent</i>	son
1000	<i>mille</i>	meel

**SHOPPING & SERVICES****I'd like to buy ...**

*Je voudrais acheter ...* zher voo-dray ash-tay ...

**How much is it?**

*C'est combien?* say kom-byun

**May I look at it?**

*Est-ce que je peux le voir?* es-ker zher per ler vwar

**I don't like it.**

*Cela ne me plaît pas.* ser-la ner mer play pa

**Can I pay by ...?** *Est-ce que je peux payer avec ...?* es-ker zher per pay-yay a-vek ...

<b>credit card</b>	<i>ma carte de crédit</i>	ma kart der kray-dee
<b>travellers cheques</b>	<i>des chèques de voyage</i>	day shek der vwa-yazh

<b>more</b>	<i>plus</i>	plew
<b>less</b>	<i>moins</i>	mwa
<b>bigger</b>	<i>plus grand</i>	plew gron
<b>smaller</b>	<i>plus petit</i>	plew per-tee

**I'm looking for ...** *Je cherche ...* zhe shersh ...

<b>a bank</b>	<i>une banque</i>	ewn bank
<b>the hospital</b>	<i>l'hôpital</i>	lo-pee-tal
<b>the market</b>	<i>le marché</i>	ler mar-shay
<b>the police</b>	<i>la police</i>	la po-lees
<b>the post office</b>	<i>le bureau de poste</i>	ler bew-ro der post
<b>a public phone</b>	<i>une cabine téléphonique</i>	ewn ka-been tay-lay-fo-neek
<b>a public toilet</b>	<i>les toilettes</i>	lay twa-let
<b>the tourist office</b>	<i>l'office de tourisme</i>	lo-fees der too-rees-mer

**TIME & DATES**

**What time is it?** *Quelle heure est-il?* kel er e til

**It's (8) o'clock.** *Il est (huit) heures.* il e (weet) er

**It's half past ...** *Il est (...) heures et demie.* il e (...) er e day-mee

**in the morning** *du matin* dew ma-tun

**in the afternoon** *de l'après-midi* der la-pray-mee-dee

**in the evening** *du soir* dew swar  
**today** *aujourd'hui* o-zhoor-dwee  
**tomorrow** *demain* der-mun  
**yesterday** *hier* yair

**Monday** *lundi* lun-dee  
**Tuesday** *mardi* mar-dee  
**Wednesday** *mercredi* mair-krer-dee  
**Thursday** *jeudi* zher-dee  
**Friday** *vendredi* von-drer-dee  
**Saturday** *samedi* sam-dee  
**Sunday** *dimanche* dee-monsh

**January** *janvier* zhon-vyay  
**February** *février* fayv-ryay  
**March** *mars* mars  
**April** *avril* a-vreel  
**May** *mai* may  
**June** *juin* zhwun  
**July** *juillet* zhwee-yay  
**August** *août* oot  
**September** *septembre* sep-tom-brer  
**October** *octobre* ok-to-brer  
**November** *novembre* no-vom-brer  
**December** *décembre* day-som-brer

**TRANSPORT**

**What time does ... leave/arrive?** *À quelle heure part/arrive ...?* a kel er par/a-reev ...  
**boat** *le bateau* ler ba-to  
**bus** *le bus* ler bews  
**plane** *l'avion* la-vyon  
**train** *le train* ler trun

**I'd like a ... ticket.** *Je voudrais un billet ...* zher voo-dray un bee-yay ...  
**one-way** *simple* sum-pler  
**return** *aller et retour* a-lay ay rer-toor  
**1st class** *de première classe* der prem-yair klas  
**2nd class** *de deuxième classe* der der-zyem klas

**the first** *le premier (m)* ler prer-myay  
*la première (f)* la prer-myair  
**the last** *le dernier (m)* ler dair-nyay  
*la dernière (f)* la dair-nyair  
**platform number** *le numéro de quai* ler new-may-ro der kay  
**ticket office** *le guichet* ler gee-shay  
**timetable** *l'horaire* lo-rair  
**train station** *la gare* la gar

**I'd like to hire a/an...** *Je voudrais louer ...* zher voo-dray loo-way ...  
**car** *une voiture* ewn vwa-tewr  
**motorbike** *une moto* ewn mo-to  
**bicycle** *un vélo* un vay-lo



# Glossary

See p59 for a list of culinary terms. Fl after a term signifies Flemish, Fr French.

**abdij/abbaye** (Fl/Fr) – abbey

**apotheek** (Fl) – pharmacy

**ARAU** (Fr) – Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaine (Urban Research & Action Group)

**auberge de jeunesse** (Fr) – youth hostel

**bakker/bakkerij** (Fl) – baker/bakery

**barouches** (Fr) – horse-drawn carriages

**begijn/béguine** (Fl/Fr) – Beguine; member of a Catholic order of women

**begijnhof/béguinage** (Fl/Fr) – community of *begijnen/béguines*; cluster of cottages, often around a central garden

**beiaard** (Fl) – carillon

**Belasting Toegevoegde Waarde (BTW)** (Fl) – value-added tax, VAT

**Belgische Spoorwegen** (Fl) – Belgian National Railways

**Benelux** – the common abbreviation for Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg

**benzine met lood** (Fl) – leaded petrol, Super

**benzine zonder lood** (Fl) – unleaded petrol

**betalend parkeren** (Fl) – paid street parking

**biljart/billard** (Fl/Fr) – billiards

**billet** (Fr) – ticket

**boulangerie** (Fr) – bakery

**BP (boîte postale)** (Fr) – post office box

**brasserie** (Fr) – brewery; *café/restaurant* serving food all day

**brocante** (Fr) – bric-a-brac

**brouwerij** (Fl) – brewery

**brown café** – small, old-fashioned pub, noted for the interior

**bruine kroeg** (Fl) – *brown café*

**Brusselaar** (Fl) – inhabitant of Brussels

**Bruxellois** (Fr) – inhabitant of Brussels and the name of the city's old dialect

**bureau d'échange** (Fr) – foreign-exchange bureau

**café** – pub, bar

**carte** (Fr) – menu

**centrum** (Fl) – centre

**chambre** (Fr) – room

**chambre d'hôte** (Fr) – B&B/guesthouse

**château** (Fr) – castle

**chocolatier** (Fr) – chocolate-maker

**commune** (Fr) – municipality

**confiserie** (Fr) – chocolate and sweet shop

**curiosa** (Fl) – bric-a-brac

**dagmenu** (Fl) – fixed-price, multicourse meal of the day

**dagschotel** (Fl) – dish of the day

**demi-pension** (Fr) – half-board, ie breakfast and either lunch or dinner

**dentelle** (Fr) – lace

**dienst voor toerisme** (Fl) – tourist office

**Ecolabel** – Luxembourg's system of classification for hotels, camping grounds, long-term holiday accommodation etc that comply with environmentally friendly management criteria

**eetcafé/eetkroeg** (Fl) – *café* serving food

**église** (Fr) – church

**entrée** (Fr) – entry

**essence avec plomb** (Fr) – leaded petrol, Super

**essence sans plomb** (Fr) – unleaded petrol

**estaminet** (Fr) – tavern

**étang** (Fr) – pond

**EU** – European Union

**Eurocrat** – administrative official at the headquarters of the EU

**Europese Instellingen** (Fl) – EU Institutions

**fiets** (Fl) – bicycle

**fietspad** (Fl) – bicycle lane

**frietten/frites** (Fl/Fr) – chips or fries

**frituur/friture** (Fl/Fr) – chip shop

**galerij/galerie** (Fl/Fr) – covered shopping centre/arcade

**gare** (Fr) – train station

**gastenkamer** (Fl) – B&B/guesthouse

**gaufres** (Fr) – waffles

**gebak** (Fl) – cakes and pastries

**gemeente** (Fl) – municipality

**gemeentehuis** (Fl) – town hall

**genièvre** (Fr) – gin

**gezellig** (Fl) – cosy, convivial atmosphere

**gîtes d'étapes** (Fr) – group accommodation (individuals also welcome) set in the countryside

**gîtes ruraux** (Fr) – countryside guesthouses

**glacier** (Fr) – ice-cream shop

**godshuis** (Fl) – almshouse

**grand café** (Fr) – Opulent *café* usually built around the turn of the 19th century

**gratis/gratuit** (Fl/Fr) – free

**grotte** (Fr) – cave

**gyros** – stuffed pitta bread

**hallen/halles** (Fl/Fr) – covered market

**herberg** (Fl) – old-style pub

**hof** (Fl) – garden

**hôpital** (Fr) – hospital  
**hôtel de ville** (Fr) – town hall

**ingang** (Fl) – entry  
**Institutions Européennes** (Fr) – EU Institutions  
**ISIC** – International Student Identity Card

**jardin** (Fr) – garden  
**jenever** (Fl) – gin  
**jeugdherberg** (Fl) – youth hostel

**kaartje** (Fl) – ticket  
**kamer** (Fl) – room  
**kant** (Fl) – lace  
**kasteel** (Fl) – castle  
**kerk** (Fl) – church

**laverie** (Fr) – laundrette  
**landelijke verblijven** (Fl) – countryside guesthouses  
**loodvrije benzine** (Fl) – unleaded petrol

**magasin de nuit** (Fr) – 24-hour shop  
**marché aux puces** (Fr) – flea market  
**markt/marché** (Fl/Fr) – market  
**menu** (Fl & Fr) – fixed-price meal with two or more courses  
**menu du jour** (Fr) – fixed-price, multicourse meal of the day  
**molen** (Fl) – windmill  
**Mosan** (Fr) – art from the Meuse River valley  
**moules-frites** (Fr) – mussels and chips  
**musée** (Fr) – museum

**nachtwinkel** (Fl) – 24-hour shop  
**niet rokers/non fumeurs** (Fl/Fr) – nonsmoking  
**non-prioritaire** (Fr) – nonpriority mail

**office de tourisme** (Fr) – tourist office  
**ondertitels** (Fl) – subtitles  
**oude stad** (Fl) – old town or city  
**OV (originele versie)** (Fl) – a nondubbed film, shown in its original language

**patinage à glace** (Fr) – ice skating  
**pâtisserie** (Fr) – cakes and pastries; shop selling them  
**pékèt** (Fr) – a type of gin  
**pension complète** (Fr) – full board  
**pharmacie** (Fr) – pharmacy  
**piste cyclable** (Fr) – bicycle lane  
**pitas** (Fr) – stuffed pitta bread  
**place** (Fr) – square  
**plat du jour** (Fr) – dish of the day  
**plein** (Fl) – square  
**poort/porte** (Fl/Fr) – gate in city wall  
**pralines** (Fr) – filled chocolates  
**premetro** (Fl & Fr) – trams (found in Brussels and Antwerp) that go underground for part of their journey

**prioritaire** (Fr) – priority mail  
**priorité à droite** (Fr) – priority-to-the-right traffic rule

**RACB** (Fr) – Royal Automobile Club de Belgique  
**rommelmarkt** (Fl) – flea market  
**rond punt/rond point** (Fl/Fr) – roundabout  
**routier** (Fr) – trucker (also truckers' restaurant)

**sentiers de grande randonnée** (Fr) – long-distance footpaths, known simply as GR tracks across Belgium  
**slijterij** (Fl) – shop selling strong alcohol  
**Société National des Chemins de Fer Belges** (Fr) – Belgian National Railways  
**sortie** (Fr) – exit  
**sous-titres** (Fr) – subtitles  
**spijskaart** (Fl) – menu  
**stadhuis** (Fl) – town hall  
**stadsbelasting** (Fl) – city tax  
**stationnement payant** (Fr) – paid parking  
**STIB** (Fr) – Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles (Brussels Public Transport Company)  
**syndicat d'initiative** (Fr) – tourist office

**taxe de séjour** (Fr) – visitors tax  
**Taxe sur la Valeur Ajoutée (TVA)** (Fr) – value-added tax, VAT  
**teleboetiek/téléboutique** (Fl/Fr) – telecommunications shop where you can send faxes  
**téléférique** (Fr) – cable car  
**terreinfiets** (Fl) – mountain bike  
**TIB** – Tourist Information Brussels  
**toeristische dienst** (Fl) – tourist office  
**toneel/théâtre** (Fl/Fr) – theatre  
**toren/tour** (Fl/Fr) – tower  
**treinstation** (Fl) – train station  
**trekkershut** (Fl) – hikers' hut  
**tuin** (Fl) – garden

**uitgang** (Fl) – exit  
**ULB** (Fr) – Université Libre de Bruxelles

**vélo** (Fr) – bicycle  
**vélo tout-terrain (VTT)** (Fr) – mountain bike  
**vieille ville** (Fr) – old town or city  
**vijver** (Fl) – pond  
**VO (version originale)** (Fr) – nondubbed film  
**voorrang van rechts** (Fl) – priority-to-the-right traffic rule  
**vrachtwagenbestuurder** (Fl) – trucker

**wassalon** (Fl) – laundrette  
**weekend gastronomique** (Fr) – accommodation plus breakfast and some meals  
**wisselkantoor** (Fl) – foreign-exchange bureau

**ziekenhuis** (Fl) – hospital

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