



Photo:



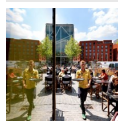
'Mechelaars' talk about their city with pride. Sometimes with a touch of humour, but always with underlying warmth. Visitors are struck by the genial atmosphere as they stroll past monuments redolent with age and pause in colourful courtyards and historic churches. The Mechelaar is proud of Gouden Carolus, the award-winning beer brewed here for centuries. He is proud of Margaret, Charles V's aunt, who put sixteenth-century Mechelen on the world map. And he has a soft spot for traditional craftsmanship and authentic local products. Come to Mechelen and experience its urban charms for yourself!



Andresr/Shutterstock.com



Featured



The Fish Market and Lamot site

If you'd like to see something of authentic Mechelen, do as the



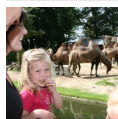
Walks on and alongside the...

The people of Mechelen love to stroll through their city and what could be m...



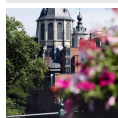
Het Anker brewery

On the edge of the beguinage you'll find Het Anker, the authentic brewery wh...



Planckendael

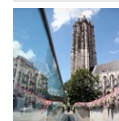
If you want to get out of the city for a while, head for Planckendael, where...



The eight historical churches

Mechelen has churches galore and each contains a profusion of religious trea...

Top 5



St Rumbold's Tower

After 538 steps, you'll be on the Sky Walk which affords a panoramic view of...



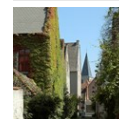
Kazerne Dossin

Between 1942 and 1944 Kazerne Dossin was used by the Nazis as a SS assembly ...



Het Anker brewery

On the edge of the beguinage you'll find Het Anker, the authentic brewery wh...



Large and Small Beguinages

Beguines are women who lived together and together sustained themselves. The...



Palaces of the Margarets

History and architecture enthusiasts will feel at home in Mechelen straighta...



THE CITY



Mechelen is situated in the heart of Flanders, mid-way between Antwerp and Brussels and just 15 minutes' drive from Brussels Airport. From neighbouring countries you'll be there in no time. So whether you are travelling by plane, train or car, Mechelen enjoys the ideal location.

The people of Mechelen take pride in their more than 300 listed buildings and four mentions on the UNESCO world heritage list. The most famous of these has to be St Rumbold's Tower. Count to 538 and you'll have Mechelen at your feet. The Skywalk at the top of the tower affords breathtaking views. On the way up, you can stop and catch your breath in six magnificent rooms and admire from close to the tower clock and not one, but two carillons. And with a spot of luck, you'll be able to exchange a few words with the tower keeper. What better way to start your visit to Mechelen!

The city centre boasts no fewer than eight historic churches, each with an intimate but very different interior. Stroll beneath Gothic arches, admire paintings by Rubens and Van Dyck, and in your mind's eye reach out and caress the baroque sculptures.

Tapestry-lovers the world over flock to Mechelen, for the city is home to a world-famous manufacturer. There are also family businesses

passed down from one generation to the next and artisanal workshops which will open their doors specially for you, welcoming you into an authentic world where the master artist is your guide! On the edge of the beguinage you'll find Het Anker brewery, where Gouden Carolus and Maneblusser have been lovingly brewed for five generations. Do as Charles V did in the sixteenth century: allow the beer to roll over your tongue. Cheers!

5 HOT TIPS



Andresr/Shutterstock.com

DO & SEE



Mechelen has something for everyone and everything is within easy reach of everything else. In the historic centre you'll find fascinating museums, scores of historic buildings and delightful squares. Below is a list of Mechelen's top 15 sights. Don't miss a single one!

Technopolis



Have you always wanted to try your hand at landing an aeroplane? Would you dare to take a nap on a bed of nails or ride a bicycle along a high wire 5 metres above the ground? At Technopolis®, the Flemish hands-on centre for science and technology, (almost) anything is possible.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Technologielaan z/n
Phone: +32 15 34 20 00
Internet: www.technopolis.be

Palaces of the Margarets



History and architecture enthusiasts will feel at home in Mechelen straightaway, particularly when it comes to viewing the palaces of Margaret of York and Margaret of Austria! The residence of the regent Margaret of Austria, the Court of Savoy, was the first renaissance building in the Low Countries. The picturesque garden is a wonderfully peaceful place. On the other side of the street is what remains of the Palace of Margaret of York.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Keizerstraat 20
Phone: +32 70 22 00 08
Internet: www.toerismemechelen.be

Walks on and alongside the water



The people of Mechelen love to stroll through their city and what could be more relaxing than a waterside walk that leads right through the centre!

Walk along the floating part of the Dyle path between Haverwerf and the Botanical Garden. Or alongside the Melaan. This brook had been filled in but was recently uncovered again.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Vismarkt z/n
Phone: +32 70 22 00 08
Internet: www.toerismemechelen.be

Boat trip on the Inner Dyle



For a whole new take on the city centre, opt for a boat ride from Haverwerf through the marina and the sluice dock. Look out for the Vismarkt (Fish Market), the Grootbrug (Large Bridge), the Botanical Garden and the Volmolen or Fuller's Mill. You'll see how the people of Mechelen live in historic waterside buildings: imagine how wonderful it must be to have a house overlooking the Dyle.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Haverwerf
Phone: +32 3 213 22 54
Internet: www.v-zit.be

The eight historical churches



Mechelen has churches galore and each contains a profusion of religious treasures. There are no fewer than eight historical churches in the

city centre, each well worth a visit! The coloured light which filters through the stained-glass windows and the serene atmosphere which pervades the buildings make a visit a very special experience. The churches also contain works of art, including famous paintings by Rubens and Van Dyck. The latter provided St Rumbold's Cathedral with a veritable masterpiece: the 'Crucifixion of Christ'.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Onder den Toren 12
Phone: +32 70 22 00 08
Internet: www.toerismemechelen.be

The Fish Market and Lamot site



If you'd like to see something of authentic Mechelen, do as the Mechelaars do and soak up the atmosphere around Lamot brewery.

The old brewery was converted into an ultramodern conference and heritage centre and is a wonderful example of how our industrial heritage can be put to new use. For Mechelen's trendiest spots, head for the convivial Vismarkt - or Fish Market - on the other side of the Dyle. When the sun's out, it's a great place to enjoy it.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Vismarkt z/n
Phone: +32 70 22 00 08
Internet: www.toerismemechelen.be

De Wit Royal Manufacturers of Tapestry



The world-famous De Wit Royal Manufacturers of Tapestry is an absolute 'must'. For four generations antique tapestries have been

cleaned and conserved here using

state-of-the-art technology. On Saturday mornings visitors can take a look inside the workshop and watch a weaving demonstration.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Phone: +32 15 20 29 05
Internet: www.dewit.be

Mechelen Toy Museum



The Toy Museum houses one of the largest collections of toys in Europe. You'll find toys from all over the world, old and new. Children are

amazed at the toys their grandparents used to play with and for adults they bring nostalgic memories of childhood flooding back.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Nekkerspoelstraat 21
Phone: +32 15 55 70 75
Internet: www.speelgoedmuseum.be

Planckendael



If you want to get out of the city for a while, head for Planckendael, where you can admire exotic animals, follow a trail that leads across

suspension bridges and through the treetops. In the 40-hectare park there is more than enough space for animals to frolic, children to play and adults to stroll.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Leuvensesteenweg 582
Phone: +32 15 41 49 21
Internet: www.planckendael.be

Town Hall



The modern-day town hall is actually two buildings: Cloth Hall with its unfinished belfry (recognized by UNESCO) and the Palace of the

Great Council. But in fact Mechelen has three town halls: the old Schepenhuis or Aldermen's House, Huis Den Beyaert and the modern-day town hall. Then there is the Huis van de Mechelaar, the brand-new administrative centre.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen

Address: Grote Markt 21

Phone: +32 70 22 00 08

Internet: www.toerismemechelen.be

DINING



Mechelaars love their food and you only really get to know the people when you eat what they eat! In the heart of the vegetable-growing region there is always something to make you lick your lips! But if the Mechelaar might give you a tip, try the city's most famous speciality: an absolutely delicious 'Mechelse koekoek', the native chicken, washed down with the local beer, the Gouden Carolus. Mechelen at its best.

't Nieuw Werk

In the heart of Mechelen in the shadow of the Cathedral, but away from the hustle and bustle, is an small, atmospheric inner square with a

Mediterranean feel. It is home to a superb restaurant, 't Nieuw Werk, which serves seasonal dishes using fresh produce beautifully presented with a contemporary twist. Weather permitting, you can eat out on the terrace. 't Nieuw Werk offers a four-course gourmet menu and a special lunch menu, both at set prices.

Address: Nieuwwerk 11

Phone: +32 15 34 53 40

Internet: www.nieuwwerk.be

De Cirque

De Cirque is located on the Vismarkt, Mechelen's trendiest square. For Belgo-French classics, head for this café cum restaurant with its convivial modern interior. The dishes are all in the same price category. Highly recommended!

Address: Vismarkt 8

Phone: +32 15 20 77 80

Internet: www.decirque.be

De Margriet

Brasserie De Margriet is located in the heart of Bruul, Mechelen's main shopping street, which makes it ideal for a break while out shopping. Whether you choose to sit inside in the convivial brasserie or outside on the sun-drenched terrace in the inner courtyard, De Margriet serves everything from a cup of coffee, to a quick lunch or a leisurely dinner. It prides itself on its impeccable service and affordable prices.

Address: Bruul 52

Phone: +32 15 21 00 17

Internet: www.demargriet.be

De Witten Vos

"Fine food and drinks" in beautiful surroundings in the heart of Mechelen. After twenty years, the dreamful De Witten Vos restaurant on the Grote Markt is very much a part of the Mechelen streetscape.

Address: Grote Markt 30
Phone: +32 15 20 63 69
Internet: www.dewittenvos.be

Eetcafé Madeleine

The concept is simple: delicious dishes prepared using fresh ingredients in a jazzy atmosphere, larded with texts which provide food for thought! The seasonal menu is chalked up on a large blackboard.

Address: Nauwstraat 5
Phone: +32 15 20 72 06
Internet: www.eetcafemadeleine.be

Folliez

The motto of this one-Michelin-star restaurant? George Bernard Shaw's words: "There is no love sincerer than the love of good food". And this is reflected on the plate - and in the glass. Folliez boasts a warm, modern interior, a great sense of hospitality, top-quality products prepared in a classic or innovative way - and its trump card: sound advice about the wine from the owner. 16 out of 20 points in the Gault&Millau restaurant guide and the prize for the best wine menu are recommendations indeed.

Address: Korenmarkt 19
Phone: +32 15 42 03 02
Internet: www.folliez.be

Grand Café Lamot

Several years ago the Lamot brewery was converted into the Grand Café Lamot, part of the LAMOT conference and heritage centre complex. Grand Café Lamot's large terrace overlooks a convivial square with a view of the Dyle. Quality products provide the basis for the mix of classics and daring combinations, all beautifully presented.

Address: Van Beethovenstraat 8/10
Phone: +32 15 20 95 30

Internet: www.grandcafelamot.be

Karimata

The Karimata boat restaurant moored in the heart of Mechelen uses a great variety of top-quality products to give traditional Greek recipes an original twist. The lobster preparations are a particular favourite.

Address: Winketkaai
Phone: +32 15 20 67 34
Internet: www.karimata.org

La Boya

La Boya is a Moroccan café serving food. Among the most eye-catching details in the exotic interior are the colourful ceiling lights imported direct from Fez. The most popular dish is the tagine. These earthenware casseroles are a feast for the eye as well as for the taste buds. La Boya also serves a wide range of tapas. "Ech, sou, fah" is the motto, which means something like "eat, drink, enjoy".

Address: Gebroeders Verhaegenstraat 16
Phone: +32 15 34 92 08
Internet: www.la-boya.be

Nostradam

You'll find Nostradam in an unremarkable street between Bruul and Ijzerenleen, walking distance from the Grote Markt. The rooms of this old building are furnished with odd pieces of furniture marked by age. No chair or table matches, no glass or plate is the same. The menu features a good selection of salads, pastas, scampi preparations, wok and vegetarian dishes and a page of 'highly recommended' dishes too.

Address: Blauwhondstraat 25
Phone: +32 15 21 14 99
Internet: www.nostradam.be

Restaurant Graspoort

Tucked away in a cul-de-sac, Graspoort is a convivial, alternative restaurant. It describes itself as serving fusion food, but there are also international and vegetarian dishes on the menu. The terrace is a haven in the city centre.

Address: Begijnenstraat 28
Phone: +32 15 21 97 10
Internet: www.graspoort.be

Ronda

This popular Moroccan restaurant on the convivial Vismarkt represents good value for money. Specialities include fish dishes, grilled meat (kebabs, etc.), tagines, coucous and salads. You can taste the sun in every dish.

Address: Vismarkt 10
Phone: +32 15 34 88 03

Spice & Taste

Close your eyes and imagine you are in Southern Asia! Spice & Taste welcomes the customers with authentic tasty delicacies from Pakistan and India. Tandoori dishes for carnivores and vegetarians are cooked in a cylindrical clay oven called a 'tandoor'. Spice & Taste's most popular dish is 'Chicken Vindaloo', chicken fillet cooked in the chef's own special sauce comprising garlic, ginger, fresh tomatoes and spices.

Address: Liersesteenweg 179
Phone: +32 15 33 90 76
Internet: www.spiceandtaste.be

Camogli

Camogli provides a taste of real Italian cuisine. From crostini through antipasti caldi and freddi to famous pastas and dolci, a visit to this restaurant will have you hooked on Italian food forever! Camogli is the name of a small Ligurian fishing port, so colourful and picturesque that the owners' could not resist naming their

restaurant after it.

Address: Leopoldstraat 48
Phone: +32 15 43 07 30
Internet: www.sites.resto.com/camogli

CAFES



Coffee is in! Like other cities, Mechelen is awash with espresso bars, slow coffees and baristas. Whether your preference is for an attractive bar, coffee shop, tea house or a brasserie for a lunchtime or afternoon snack, you're sure to find what you are looking for in Mechelen.

Beans

Beans is a convivial espresso bar on the Ijzerenleen. Sarah, a real barista, will prepare the perfect cup of coffee for you using freshly-ground beans. She loves what she does and you can taste that in every cup! You'll discover some surprising blends too. Be sure to try the Brazilian Bomb, an award-winning latte macchiato with hazelnut syrup and Brazil nuts.

Address: Ijzerenleen 37
Phone: +32 15 63 91 57
Internet: www.beansbar.be

Brasserie Het Anker

Het Anker comprises not only a brewery and a hotel, but also a large brasserie serving a typical Belgian beer-based cuisine. Each dish is prepared with one of Het Anker's beers. The brasserie was recently renovated, but still

exudes the authentic atmosphere of a 'brown café'. The speciality of the house is the 'Mechels stoofpotje', a stew prepared using Carolus beer. But Mechelen's most typical dish - 'Mechelse koekoek' - is also on the menu and well worth trying.

Address: Guido Gezellelaan 49
Phone: +32 15 28 71 45
Internet: www.hetanker.be

Chicchi di caffè

Chicchi's serves expertly prepared espressos and all kinds of homemade drinks. They also serve a range of mouth-watering rolls, cakes and pastries. Their homemade lemonades and chocolate brownies are highly recommended.

Address: Borzestraat 32
Phone: +32 15 29 09 20
Internet: www.chicchidicafe.be

Coffee & Cake

A delicious breakfast, lunch with freshly-baked bread or just a steaming cup of coffee? Check, check and check again! The couple that runs this tearoom has owned a patisserie for years so they know all about naughty but nice things! And they are only too pleased to share them with you... The menu at Coffee & Cake changes every month.

Address: Steenweg 18
Phone: +32 15 27 27 19

D'Afspraak

Housed in an old patrician house, D'Afspraak is a great place to meet for a chat over a drink and a bite to eat. With no fewer than 104 different beers to choose from, it surely has the most impressive beer menu in Mechelen. The coffee menu is extensive too. Be sure to try the 'steppegras': a mountain of thinly-cut, crispy

chips served with a spicy sauce and a generously sized steak. The large terrace is an extra draw in the summer.

Address: Keizerstraat 23
Phone: +32 15 33 17 34
Internet: www.dafspraak.be

De Fruitbar

The first and only fruit juice bar in Mechelen is located in the shadow of St Rumbold's Tower. It serves every imaginable sort of freshly-pressed juice and smoothie. The produce comes straight from Mechelen's auction at Sint-Katelijne-Waver.

Address: Onder den Toren 2A
Phone: +32 15 34 53 46
Internet: www.defruitbar.be

De Stripkever

De Stripkever is a quirky comic-strip shop located in the shopping centre on the Bruul. Actually, it is shop, gallery and coffee bar rolled into one, so you can purchase your favourite comics, enjoy them a cup of coffee or tea and then view the latest exhibition - all in the same space.

Address: Bruul 79
Phone: +32 15 21 76 05
Internet: www.stripkever.be

De Zondvloed

De Zondvloed is a unique concept in Flanders. The shop is stacked floor to ceiling with new and second-hand books and remainders and on the top floor is a coffee salon, serving healthy juices, but also novelties like Iranian tea. So here you can enjoy a quiet drink, while leafing through the newspaper or just chilling out.

Address: Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat 70
Phone: +32 15 64 03 79
Internet: www.dezondvloed.be

Het Ankercafé

Located on the Grote Markt, Het Ankercafé is a delightful brasserie with a summer terrace. It has links with Het Anker brewery and so serves its beers. Willy, the café manager, has been pulling perfect pints here since 1979.

Address: Grote Markt 28
Phone: +32 15 20 76 70
Internet: www.hetankercafe.be

Kaffee-ine

Kaffee-ine is sometimes referred to as the Mechelen (but cheaper) alternative to Starbucks. However, it is best known for its organic slow coffee. Above the coffee bar is a pleasant lounge area. Be sure to try the Hollywood: a coffee with cream and Malteser flakes. And non-coffee-drinkers will love Kaffee-ine's delicious hot chocolate.

Address: Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat 6

Le Pain Quotidien

The founder of the Le Pain Quotidien chain, Alain Coumont, so longed for the sort of rustic bread made from natural ingredients he had loved as a child that he opened a bakery that bakes bread in an artisanal and labour-intensive manner. Take a seat at the communal table and try the brownies-with-a-difference, made without flour, or an irresistible chocolate bomb.

Address: Ijzerenleen 35
Phone: +32 15 41 54 24
Internet: www.lepainquotidien.be

Puro

This large, stylish café cum restaurant housed in the old offices of the Lamot brewery pursues a concept of serving 'pure cuisine', starting with wholesome, quality ingredients. It prides itself on being a place where you can go for a

deliciously healthy breakfast, a drink and a snack throughout the day or a full-scale meal.

Address: Guldenstraat 20
Phone: +32 15 33 68 22
Internet: www.puro-mechelen.be

Sister Bean

Two sisters, Marijke and Sara, brought the conviviality of Limburg with them to Mechelen and gave their coffee bar a warm, homely feel. The interior is vintage and has a couple of cosy corners where you can sit over a cup of coffee, guzzle cakes and put the world to rights. The coffee cocktails, served in real cocktail glasses, have proved a particular hit.

Address: Vismarkt 26
Phone: +32 479 28 36 06

ViaVia Mechelen

After Antwerp, Brussels and Leuven, Mechelen now has its own ViaVia Reiscafé. ViaVia Mechelen enjoys a unique location: the Mill House is a remainder of the largest watermill complex in the Low Countries dating from the fifteenth century. It is the meeting place for everyone who appreciates three of the most important things in life: culture, nature and good food.

Address: Zandpoortvest z/n
Internet: www.viaviacafe.com/nl/mechelen

Sputnik

Sputnik takes you back to the 1950s. This small retro restaurant is located at the beginning of the Bruul shopping street. Their menu is as bright and cheerful as their interior with its chairs in all the colours of the rainbow. You don't need to ask for a menu because all the dishes are listed on the placemats on the tables. From Asian through Mexican to good solid Flemish

fare: Sputnik has it all. Ideal for a quick lunch.

Address: Bruul 134

Phone: +32 15 63 08 26

Internet: www.sputnikresto.be

BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Part of what makes Mechelen so convivial is its human scale. Rather than packing into large dance halls and nightclubs, in the evenings people tend to gather in the many atmospheric cafés and bars. Many of these provide live music, particularly in the summer months. The area best known for its nightlife is the Vismarkt or old fish market, which abounds in relaxed cafés for all age groups. The dynamism of the Vismarkt spills over into the surrounding Korenmarkt, Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat, Begijnenstraat and Melaan. Students tend to converge on the area around the station.

't Ankertje aan de Dijle

't Ankertje aan de Dijle is a convivial, brown 'discussion café' in an eighteenth-century, late-baroque building. The café serves all the Het Anker brewery's beers, which it also sells in a beer shop. Curiosities relating to beer and Mechelen's breweries adorn the walls. There is always a jazz, groove or blues band on the first Monday in the month.

Address: Vismarkt 20

Phone: +32 15 34 60 34

Internet: www.tankertje.be

Bar Popular

Bar Popular, on the hip Vismarkt, is a 'brown café' with a southern flavour. This is reflected in the cocktails and wide range of tapas they serve and in the monthly DJ evening. Bar Popular also has an inner courtyard and a very pleasant lounge on the first floor.

Address: Vismarkt 1-3

Phone: +32 486 13 91 65

Internet: www.barpopular.be

Barramundo Lounge

Barramundo is a household name in Mechelen. It could rightly claim to be the hippest lounge, cocktail and champagne bar in Mechelen and beyond. You can also choose from 25 whiskies and five sorts of cognac. On weekdays the atmosphere is 'loungy', but things hot up at weekends when you can expect house and dance music. Another draw on summer days is the wonderful inner terrace with separate bar.

Address: Steenweg 2

Phone: +32 494 30 09 91

Internet: www.barramundo-lounge.be

Boesjkammeree

An alternative rock café on the doorstep of Mechelen railway station, Boesjkammeree is open into the small hours. You'll find a DJ here on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The café also boasts a large and pleasant summer terrace.

Address: Koning Albertplein 10-11

Phone: +32 15 43 22 88

Borrel Babbel

In the shadow of St Rumbold's Cathedral you'll find the smallest café in Mechelen and the surrounding area. Borrel Babbel is a very agreeable, brown 'discussion café', serving a huge range of beers and whiskies. There are also some thirty young, old and fruit jenevers to

choose from.

Address: Nieuwwerk 7/201
Phone: +32 477 72 48 04
Internet: www.de5vaten.be

D'Hanekeef

D'Hanekeef is the city's oldest and most authentic 'brown café'. The building was once used for storing the cockerel cages for cockfighting. Now you can choose from some 35 different types of beer and 13 different sorts of whisky.

Address: Keizerstraat 8
Phone: +32 15 20 78 46

De 5 Vaten

This well-known and atmospheric café usually stays open into the small hours. At weekends a DJ will have you dancing to the bolder beats. Once a month it holds a theme evening, such as 'black & white', 'disco' or 'oldies'. During the summer months you can enjoy a pint on the 'night terrace'.

Address: Schoolstraat 6
Phone: +32 477 72 48 04
Internet: www.de5vaten.be

De Gouden Vis

The convivial 'brown café' known as De Gouden Vis has to be Mechelen's most famous café. The art-deco interior, the conservatory overlooking the water and the café library are all part of its unique charm. It has been run by the same owner for 25 years!

Address: Nauwstraat 7
Phone: +32 15 20 72 06

De Pekton

De Pekton is actually the name of the sixteenth-century building on the Lamot site

housing the Brouwerij Palm's 'beer café'. The original materials and interior features were used in the reconstruction so the building has lost none of its historic character. The café is open seven days a week and also serves regional snacks.

Address: Van Beethovenstraat z/n
Phone: +32 477 22 63 78

De Prof

A popular 'ambience café' frequented mainly by Mechelen's students, De Prof is often open into the early hours of the morning. On special occasions, you can expect the DJ to bring the roof down with loud ambient music! Theme evenings are organized on a regular basis. The large summer terrace is a further draw when the weather is fine.

Address: Koning Albertplein 13
Phone: +32 15 42 07 56
Internet: www.deprof.be

Den Akker

The large 'brown café' Den Akker has been part of Mechelen's streetscape for more than thirty years. As it is open late in the evenings, those working in the catering industry often congregate here after work. The large terrace on the Dyle is a wonderful place to unwind during the summer months.

Address: Nauwstraat 11
Phone: +32 15 33 10 78

Lord Nelson

In a manner of speaking, this legendary 'brown café' has helped write Mechelen's history. In the cold winter months it's the perfect place to sink into a leather chair by the open fire in an interior reminiscent of an English club, or in the summer to enjoy a drink and a bite to eat on the terrace

'under the tower'. The café was refurbished in the original style after a fire caused considerable damage.

Address: Wollemarkt 8
Phone: +32 15 20 38 14
Internet: www.lord-nelson.be

O'Fiach's Irish Pub

In the O'Fiach's Irish Pub you'll find everything you would expect of an Irish pub: you can of course enjoy a typical Irish Guinness or whiskey, but there are also live performances of Irish music which will have you tapping your foot. Quote from the owner: "Pulling pints of Guinness doesn't mean you have an Irish pub. No, it must be in your blood."

Address: Grote Markt 24
Phone: +32 15 65 01 21
Internet: www.ofiachs.be

Unwined

If you're looking to relax over a good glass of wine, head for the atmospheric wine bar Unwined. The owner opens some ten wines every day for tastings. You can also expect to discover some surprising combinations with a tapa, a slice of cheese or a pastry.

Address: Begijnenstraat 23
Phone: +32 15 41 81 85
Internet: www.unwined.be

Yam Mie Yam

Yam Mie Yam is a unique combination of Asian brasserie and trendy cocktail and Latino bar. Chill out in the Latino and Asian lounge until 10 p.m. and then prepare to salsa and meringue! You can choose from some twenty cocktails, but Yam Mie Yam's real specialities are mojito and caipirinha.

Address: Veemarkt 8

Phone: +32 15 34 76 55
Internet: www.yammieyam.be

CLIMB THE TOWER AND GET REDUCTIONS!



VisitMechelen

What better way to see Mechelen and the surrounding area than from the skywalk at the top of the tower!

As you make your way up there, you will hear, see and feel the history of the city from the belly of the belfry. Anyone can climb the tower's 538 steps during opening hours.

For more information and reservation, contact Tourism Mechelen.

Visit St Rumbold's Tower from January 2nd until March 31st 2015 and your ticket for the tower will give you access to Planckendael, Kazerne Dossin, the Toy Museum at their group rate!

SHOPPING



There are any number of reasons for choosing Mechelen as your shopping destination! For one thing, here you escape the hustle and bustle and shop against a backdrop of historic architecture rather than traffic! What is more, the shops are all within easy walking distance of each other. Most are concentrated in the Bruul - Ijzerenleen - Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat triangle and side streets where traffic is restricted. High-street chains and chic boutiques stand shoulder to shoulder with traditional specialist shops. So Mechelen has something for everyone: from trendy to classic, from vintage to cutting-edge.

Apia

This shop stocks just about every authentic product Morocco has to offer! From honey and oils, tagines and lamps, to olives and pastries, all the products are made by hand in Morocco, apart from the pastries which the owner makes herself. Apia's bestseller has to be its argan oil, produced from the kernels of the argan tree, which is endemic to Morocco. It is valued for its nutritive, cosmetic and medicinal properties.

Address: Désiré Boucherystraat 16

Awardt

Everyone in Mechelen knows Wies and Els, the cheerful 'hat ladies' from Adegemstraat. Mother and daughter have been designing colourful hats, scarves, shoes and handbags for almost ten

years. All the accessories are crafted in Belgium and can be made in different sizes and colours to meet a customer's specific requirements.

Address: Adegemstraat 3

Phone: +32 15 27 16 48

Internet: www.awardt.be

Banketbakkerij Vanderbeek

The Mechelen-based Michel is the seventh generation of Vanderbeek bakers. Having established a first shop in Kortrijk in 1763, the Vanderbeekes later opened up in Mechelen (among other places). A stone's throw from Mechelen's Grote Markt, Vanderbeek is a modern patisserie which, besides selling a wide range of tarts, cakes and special types of bread, also does canapés, pizzas, quiches and other savoury items. The firm's speciality is its moon-shaped chocolates and cookies known as 'Maneblussertjes'.

Address: Steenweg 36

Phone: +32 15 20 32 66

Internet: www.vanderbeek.be

Blender Vintage Shop

To step into the Blender Vintage Shop is to step back in time several decades. Cheerful seventies wallpaper, wall units and other storage furniture and original hanging lamps from the late fifties. You can browse at your leisure in the various, spacious display areas. And you'll find even more authentic vintage for every budget in the online shop.

Address: Bruul 79

Phone: +32 15 41 04 22

Internet: www.blendervintageshop.be

Chocolaterie Gauthier

Edouard Gauthier set up his praline business in Mechelen in 1964. These days Gauthier is an established name in the city and surrounding

area. Everything that is sold in the shop is handmade, without preservatives of any kind. Moreover, Gauthier is one of the few chocolatiers in Belgium that still makes marzipan from raw almonds.

Address: Ijzerenleen 3
Phone: +32 15 41 72 46
Internet: www.chocolaterie-gauthier.be

Het Mechels Souvenirke

If you're looking for an original gift to take back home with you, here you'll find not only the traditional souvenirs, but also a wide range of Belgian beers, liqueurs, pralines and other items which are typical of Mechelen or Flanders.

Address: Steenweg 12
Phone: +32 15 20 33 63
Internet: www.mechelssouvenirke.be

Huis Windels

Huis Windels specializes in smokers' products and requisites. It also sells alcoholic drinks. The firm was founded in 1875 and has been handed down from generation to generation ever since, making it one of the oldest businesses in Mechelen. People come to the Ijzerenleen from all over Flanders for specialities like the cigars known as 'Mechelse Zandknakjes'.

Address: Ijzerenleen 48
Phone: +32 15 28 70 93
Internet: www.huiswindels.be

Kaashandel Schockaert

This cheese temple has been in the family for almost a century. The result? The sort of expertise you would be hard put to find anywhere else - not to mention the huge range of cheeses. Be sure to try the 'Mecheleir'!

Address: Ijzerenleen 28
Phone: +32 15 20 25 21

Lily

In Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat in the heart of Mechelen, you'll find a shop called Lily. Though you might say it's the perfect location, the boutique is so small you could easily walk straight past it! And that's its charm. Unusual items are packed into just one room and it oozes atmosphere!

In terms of style, it reminds you of England. Lily would not be out of place in Camden or Shoreditch. You'll also find more than a hint of Paris here, which is hardly surprising since the collections come from Paris and London. The webshop is also worth a visit.

Address: Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat 120
Phone: +32 484 98 98 53
Internet: www.shoplily.be

Mr + Mrs Tweed

Mr + Mrs Tweed, a concept store in the alternative Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat, stocks a great variety of modern classics for men and women. You'll also find a wide range of accessories: everything from scent and jewellery to hats, handbags and shoes. While the clothes are to die for, the interior also speaks volumes!

To enter Mr + Mrs Tweed is to enter another world, one full of beautiful, magical touches - even real birds! Be sure to visit their webshop too.

Address: Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat 116
Phone: +32 474 22 13 36
Internet: www.mr-mrstweed.com

Paté du Chef

On the banks of the River Dyle in Mechelen you'll find Paté du chef. Not a butcher's, but the perfect place for original gifts and accessories. It sells everything you don't need, but which once

you've seen it, you just have to have: old postcards and posters, leather notebooks, original hats and frivolous scarves... even jewellery and designer items. They all have one thing in common: they are timeless.

Address: Vismarkt 24
Phone: +32 15 46 00 94

Pin'Art

Pin'Art is a good address for wine enthusiasts. You will find an excellent selection of character wines, each with its own identity and soul and produced by winegrowers who know the owners of Pin'Art personally. So it's the combination of knowledge and quality that makes Pin'Art so special. It doesn't stick to the well-trodden paths, but that just makes its wines all the more exciting in the glass.

Address: Désiré Boucherystraat 6
Phone: +32 15 20 75 85
Internet: www.pinart.be

Simon Lévelt

At Simon Lévelt you can choose from 30 different sorts of coffee and more than 150 different sorts of tea and most of them are organic and fair trade. That may sound rather a lot to choose from, but Simon Lévelt will advise you and you can always settle for a few smaller 'tester packets'.

Simon Lévelt also sells a special Mechelen blend of coffee, the 'Taste of Mechelen', and a Mechelen tea, the 'Wonder of Mechelen' with dreamy hints of bergamot, orange blossom and lavender.

Address: Guldenstraat 1
Phone: +32 15 42 43 20
Internet: www.simonlevelt.com

Simple comme Bonjour

Synonymous with simple, handmade jewellery with a preference for beautiful and sustainable materials, Simple comme Bonjour took over the smallest shop in Mechelen at the beginning of 2011 and turned it into a Valhalla that makes every girl's heart beat faster! Gold walls, porcelain knobs, fine fabrics... and that's just to ensure that the jewels are shown to their best advantage!

Address: Onze-Lieve-Vrouwestraat 143
Phone: +32 497 06 29 49
Internet: www.simplecommebonjour.net

Simple Design

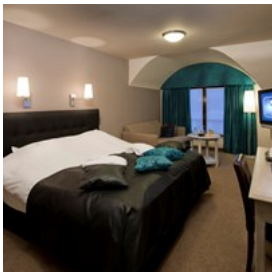
Simple Design is more than an interior design shop. With over fifteen years' experience in the world of interior design, the owner Amélie is only too happy to help you with expert colour advice and tasteful furnishing tips. Simple Design favours functional products that don't date, whether it's a tea towel, a lamp or a piece of furniture.

Address: Van Beethovenstraat 8/10
Phone: +32 476 89 33 00
Internet: www.simple-design.be

ACCOMMODATIONS



Best Western Hotel Gulden Anker****



You can expect a personal welcome at Best Western Gulden Anker, a relatively small, first-class hotel whose dedicated staff will ensure you feel at home.

Besides rooms offering four-star comforts, the hotel boasts an atmospheric gastronomic restaurant, a very pleasant lounge bar, a small fitness centre, a private sauna and a summer terrace on the inner courtyard.

Photo: Best Western Gulden Anker
Address: Ridder Dessainlaan 2
Phone: +32 15 42 25 35
Internet: www.guldenanker.be

Martin's Patershof****



Mechelen's Friar Minors' Church was transformed into a luxury, four-star hotel that skilfully combines the building's historical elements with a

delightfully modern interior. The rooms still boast some of the old church's original features, like stained-glass windows and Gothic arches. The breakfast buffet is served in the former choir.

Photo: Martin's Patershof
Address: Karmelietenstraat 4
Phone: +32 15 46 46 46
Internet: www.martins-hotels.be

Hotel Mercure Mechelen Vé****

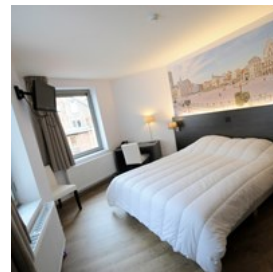


Hotel Mercure Mechelen Vé is housed in a former fish smokehouse dating from 1923. The existing structures were incorporated into the

modern architecture along with state-of-the-art luxury, resulting in a stylish home from home. The Vé Café offers an excellent choice of wines and cocktails with a view of the Dyle thrown in.

Photo: Hotel Mercure Vé
Address: Vismarkt 14
Phone: +32 15 20 07 55
Internet: www.hotelve.com

Hotel 3 Paardekens***



Mechelen's first ever hotel, the 'Afspanning De Drij Peerdekens', has recently been converted to provide comfortable contemporary

accommodation in the heart of the city right next to St Rumbold's Cathedral. The hotel's pride and joy is the glass breakfast room on the top floor. The reception area reflects the grandeur of the past.

Photo: Hotel 3 Paardekens
Address: Begijnenstraat 3
Phone: +32 15 34 27 13
Internet: www.3paardekens.be

Brewery - Hotel Het Anker***



In the heart of the beguinage is a fifteenth-century brewery. Having sampled Mechelen's beers and beer-based dishes in the stylish brasserie, you can climb into bed in one of the hotel's 22 rooms - and watch the brewery come to life over breakfast.

Photo: Hotel Het Anker
Address: Guido Gezellelaan 49
Phone: +32 15 28 71 41
Internet: www.hetanker.be

Hotel Den Wolsack***



Den Wolsack is a beautifully restored neoclassical building located at the foot of St Rumbold's Tower. The owners of this hotel personally ensure the well-being of their guests. The Brasserie 't Oud Conservatorium, a former music school, serves a tasty breakfast, quick lunch or leisurely dinner.

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen
Address: Wollemarkt 16
Phone: +32 15 56 95 20
Internet: www.denwolsack.com

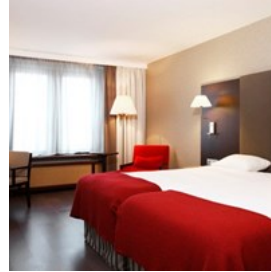
Holiday Inn Express Mechelen City Centre***

Holiday Inn Express Mechelen is located in the city centre, near the Grote Markt. There is a convenient underground garage and free, secure storage for bicycles. You help yourself to the continental breakfast buffet. The hotel is wheelchair-friendly throughout. Ideal for groups and families with children.

Address: Veemarkt 37C

Phone: +32 15 44 84 20
Internet: www.hiexpress.com/mechelenbe

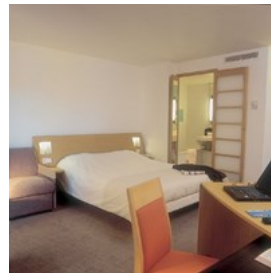
NH Mechelen***



Centrally located on the Korenmarkt, a convivial square packed with street cafes, NH Mechelen has 43 comfortable and stylish guest rooms. A generous and varied breakfast is served in the mornings, and in the evenings and at lunchtime on Sundays grilled dishes are the speciality of the 't Korenveld restaurant next door. The NH Endless Sunday allows guests to breakfast and check out late on Sundays. The hotel also has its own garage.

Photo: NH Hotel Mechelen
Address: Korenmarkt 22-24
Phone: +32 15 42 03 03
Internet: www.nh-hotels.com

Novotel Mechelen-Centrum***



The Novotel Mechelen-Centrum is located in the trendy and lively Vismarkt district. Its Foodsquare new dining concept provides an à la carte service 24/7. There is also a fitness centre and a hammam.

Photo: Novotel Mechelen
Address: Van Beethovenstraat 1
Phone: +32 15 40 49 50
Internet: www.novotel.com

Hotel Muske Pitter*



Muske Pitter is Mechelen's smallest hotel. Two of the four rooms benefit from a pleasant flower-filled patio. A secure bicycle shed makes Muske Pitter ideal for cyclists. The owners provide a free packed lunch for walkers and cyclists.

Photo: Hotel Muske Pitter
Address: Hanswijkstraat 70
Phone: +32 15 43 63 03
Internet: www.muskepitter.be

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



Airport

Mechelen's central location makes it very easy to reach from the various airports.

Brussels Airport
www.brusselsairport.be
Phone: +32 2 753 77 53
25 km

You can get to Mechelen by train, bus or hire car from Belgium's main airport, Brussels Airport. The simplest and fastest way is by train.

1. By train:

Brussels Airport railway station is on level -1. The Brussels Airport Express leaves for Brussels Central Station four times an hour. From there there are regular departures by train to Mechelen. The journey takes approximately half an hour. But there is more: from June 2012 a new, direct express train link will have you in Mechelen Central Station in just eight minutes! A ticket costs approx. €7.

Web: www.nmbs.be

2. By bus:

You'll find the airport bus station on level 0. De Lijn provides a direct bus service to Mechelen station twice an hour, including lines 282, 681, 682, 683 and 686. Bus line 686 only runs on weekdays. The bus journey takes between 45 and 50 minutes. A ticket costs approx. €3.

Web: www.delijn.be

3. By (hire) car:

At Brussels Airport you will find various car hire companies, including Hertz, Avis and Europcar. On leaving the airport car park, you immediately come to the motorway. Travel towards Antwerp (E19) and take exit 10 (Mechelen-Zuid) or exit 9 (Mechelen-Noord). The journey takes approximately 25 minutes.

Charleroi Airport (Brussels South) |
www.charleroi-airport.com
Phone: +32 78 15 27 22
95 km

From the low-cost Charleroi Airport you can take the bus and the train to Mechelen.

1. By bus and train:

At Charleroi Airport you can buy a ticket which combines the bus to Charleroi-South with the train to Mechelen Central Station. The two

ticket-vending machines are located outside the airport, adjacent to Door 2. Your journey will take approximately one and a half hours. A bus and train combination ticket costs approximately €15. The train to Mechelen leaves twice an hour, as does the bus between Charleroi airport and Charleroi-South station.

Web: www.infotec.be, www.nmbs.be

2. By (hire)car:

Several car hire companies have desks at Charleroi Airport, including Avis, Europcar and Hertz. On leaving the airport car park, take the E42 direction Brussels and then the N5 direction Waterloo or the A54 direction Brussels. When you get to Brussels, take the ring road and then the E19 direction Antwerp. You then take exit 10 (Mechelen-Zuid) or exit 9 (Mechelen-Noord).

The journey takes approximately one hour.

Antwerp Airport

Web: www.antwerp-airport.be

Phone: +32 3 285 65 00

25 km

You can save a lot of time both on arrival and departure by using Antwerp's small airport. Distances between the departure lounge and the planes are short which means you can check in up to twenty minutes before your flight leaves. On arrival at Antwerp Airport you can expect to leave the airport building some ten minutes after landing. From there you can easily get to Mechelen by bus and train.

1. By bus and train:

Bus 14 will take you from Antwerp airport to Antwerpen-Berchem railway station in ten minutes. A ticket costs approx. €2. From Antwerpen-Berchem station there is a frequent train service to Mechelen, with approximately

four trains an hour destined for Central Station. The journey takes between 15 and 20 minutes. A ticket costs approx. €4.

2. By (hire)car:

Both Avis and Hertz have desks at Antwerp Airport. On leaving the airport, drive straight on into Vosstraat. At the first roundabout turn left into Deurnestraat. At the end turn right into Antwerpsestraat. After approximately 500m turn left into Jozef Hermanslei, and then right into Frans Van Dunlaan. Then get onto the Antwerp ring-road. Take the E19 direction Brussels. Once in Mechelen take exit 10 (Mechelen-Zuid) or exit 9 (Mechelen-Noord). The journey time by car is approximately 25 minutes.

Public Transport



Why not explore Mechelen? From one side of Mechelen city centre to the other is approximately 1.50 km, so easily walkable. It

takes just 15 minutes from the outskirts to the heart of the city and you can enjoy the city along the way.

By bicycle

There are several places where you can hire a bicycle in Mechelen. You would be well advised to check in advance that the firm has bicycles available. Bicycles cost approx. €10 a day to hire, but the price varies greatly from one supplier to another.

1. Fietspunt Mechelen

Phone: +32 15 21 27 04

Web: www.fietsenwerk.be

You can hire a bicycle from Fietspunt on

weekdays. Unfortunately it is not open at weekends. You decide how long you want to keep the bicycle this might be anything from half a day to a week.

2. Provinciaal Sport- en Recreatiecentrum De Nekker

Phone: +32 15 55 70 05

Web: www.denekker.be

De Nekker is open every day, so also at weekends and on public holidays. The sports and recreation centre is located just outside the city ring-road. De Nekker also has tandems and children's bicycles for hire. You can even reserve your bicycle in advance online.

3. V-Zit

Phone: +32 3 213 22 54

Web: www.v-zit.be

V-Zit also hires stepper bikes. The firm is headquartered in Antwerp, but you can contact them by phone or email.

4. Fietsen GS (Hombeek)

Phone: +32 15 27 29 00

Web: www.fietsengs.be

5. Chamizo (Sint-Katelijne-Waver)

Phone: +32 15 21 18 99

Web: www.chamizo.be

Chamizo has a good selection of folding bicycles, electric bicycles and tandems.

By bus:

Mechelen lends itself perfectly to short bus rides. There are even special cheap fares to cover short journeys, a single ticket costing approx. €1.20. A day ticket, which allows you to

use the bus as many times as you like, costs approx. €10, a 5-day pass €15.

De Lijn operates the regional and city buses. On the regional lines, buses depart approximately once an hour on the urban lines usually every fifteen minutes. There is a reduced service at weekends and during the school holidays.

Central Station is walking distance from the Grote Markt, but buses do run between the two locations. Bus numbers 1 to 7 leave from platform one and travel in the direction of the Grote Markt. If you want to go from the Grote Markt to the station, you would do best to take a bus from the Schoenmarkt or Veemarkt.

Numbers 1 to 3 and 5 to 7 will take you there.

Phone: +32 15 40 87 11

Web: www.delijn.be

Photo: Toerisme Mechelen

Taxi

Taxis are expensive. For a short distance of 5 km you will easily pay €10. But if you are planning to have a drink while you're out, a taxi is the perfect solution. A TOV ticket enables you to combine the bus and the taxi. You get €2 discount on the taxi journey on presentation of your bus ticket. But note that not all the taxi companies accept the TOV ticket.

Web: www.delijn.be

At Mechelen station you will find one or more taxis at the taxi ranks near the station exit on Koning Albertplein. There are also parking places for taxis in other parts of the city, but you will not necessarily find a taxi there. You might do best to book a taxi with one of Mechelen's taxi companies.

Taxi 2000

Phone: + 32 15 41 26 09

A.A.A. Ecotaxi

Phone: +32 15 33 03 30

N-Taxi

Phone: +32 15 26 16 10

Web: www.ntaxi.be

Happy taxi

Phone: +32 492 77 77 77

Web: www.happytaxi.be

Snel-taxi

Phone: +32 487 35 53 55

Web: www.snel-taxi.be

A.A.S. Central Taxi

Phone: +32 15 55 60 20

B&B Services

Phone: +32 15 20 40 60

M(etropool) - Taxi

Phone: +32 472 20 20 50

Bens Taxi

Phone: +32 492 27 34 74

M3 Taxi

Phone: +32 474 25 04 53

KM Taxi

Phone: +32 474 62 64 30

San-Taxi

Phone: +32 485 34 94 94

Gerrit's Taxi

Phone: +32 15 20 07 22

Taxi United

Phone: +32 475 21 09 20

MW Taxi

Phone: +32 477 56 14 72

Taxi Maroc

Phone: +32 498 03 65 48

Taxi Mobilis

Phone: +32 494 36 09 14

Taxi Flexi

Phone: +32 15 40 42 45

786 Taxi

Phone: +32 496 44 78 60

Pharmacy

Phone: +32 15 43 12 44

Telephone

Country code: +32

Area code: 015

Electricity

220 V

Population

81,000

Currency

Euro, €1 = 100 cents

Opening hours

Most shops are open Monday-Saturday 10.00-18.00

Internet

www.visitmechelen.be

Newspapers

De Gazet van Antwerpen

Het Nieuwsblad

De Standaard

De Morgen

Het Laatste Nieuws

Emergency numbers

112

Tourist information

Toerisme Mechelen

Toerismehuis 'De Gulden Arent'

Hallestraat 2-4-6

2800 Mechelen

Phone: +32 70 22 00 08

E-mail: toerisme@mechelen.be

Winter season

November 1st to March 31st

Monday to Saturday: 10.00-16.00 hrs

Sunday and public holidays: 12.30-16.00 hrs

Summer season

April 1st to October 31st

Monday to Friday: 10.00-17.00 hrs

Saturday: 10.00-16.00

Sunday and public holidays: 12.30-16.00 hrs

