



**WOMEN OF THE MIDWEST**  
Travel Solo Together

# BELGIAN CHRISTMAS!

Delightfully Delicious!

with Women of the Midwest!

**November 29 - December 7, 2024**



Dear Women of the Midwest,

Belgian Christmas! Come crisp winter days, give in to that warm, fuzzy feeling during Christmas in Belgium! Belgium takes great pride in the grandeur of Christmas celebrations, and we will find ourselves at the most beautiful Christmas markets you've ever imagined.

Pretty medieval cities take on fairy tale airs as the temperatures drop; it's hard to judge which place is the most enchanting. The scent of fresh waffles lingers at all Christmas markets, and the streets are dressed like gingerbread houses with festive fairy lights reflected in the canal. Hop on a horse-drawn carriage for a tour of the cobbles or linger in some of Europe's most charming Christmas markets. Browse the stalls laden with handmade Christmas goodies and tasty treats. The opportunities for shopping are endless, and your only (luxury) problem is what to choose, and how much to bring back home for your favorite people.

Join me on this delightful and delicious journey to follow in the footsteps of kings and artists. Learn about art nouveau, the art of lace-making, chocolate making, and waffle baking. Visit castles and stunning museums ...even the museum of "a girl's best friend!" Ladies, what's not to love?

Get into the festive spirit and celebrate with me; I guarantee you will burst out in an "I Love Belgium" once this trip ends!

Yours in travel and adventure,  
Barb Wallingford  
Ambassador, Women of the Midwest



Call Executive Travel's Group Department today at 402-435-8888. Space is limited.

## Brussels - Grand Place



## Fall in Love with Art Nouveau!



## Chocolate Workshop & Tastings



### November 29, 2024 - Friday

#### Traveling to Brussels

Our fairy tale adventure begins as we take an overnight flight to Brussels. Enjoy in-flight entertainment and meal service as you start your dream vacation.

### November 30, 2024 - Saturday

#### Brussels

Welcome to Belgium! Upon arrival, we will meet our private tour director and take a short drive to the center of Brussels for a panoramic sightseeing tour. Brussels is the capital of Europe and home to several international institutions, such as NATO and the European Commission. We will drive through the European district, pass by the European Parliament, and visit the Atomium. The tall-standing (335 ft) monument is one of the tallest structures in Belgium. Its nine 59 ft stainless clad steel spheres are connected in the shape of a unit cell that could represent an iron crystal magnified 165 billion times. It offers stunning views and is the emblem of Brussels. A delightful welcome lunch is served at a centrally located restaurant before we check in to our beautiful hotel. Relax and unwind. If you are still awake, join us for a walking tour of the Christmas market at Grand Place, it is only a few minutes from our hotel. B (during flight) | L | T

### December 1, 2024 - Sunday

#### Brussels

After a filling breakfast, we are ready for more city sightseeing, including visiting the Horta Museum, which is

dedicated to the life and work of the architect Victor Horta and his time. The museum is housed in Horta's former townhouse and workshop, built in 1898. Antoni Gaudi, Gustav Klimt, and Louis Comfort Tiffany may sound familiar, but did you know Victor is the famous Belgian architect considered the Father of Art Nouveau? The interior of his house has been largely preserved: mosaics, stained-glass windows, furniture, and wall paintings form a harmonious whole that shows subtlety down to the smallest detail. By 1914, with the beginning of the First World War, Art Nouveau's elegant curves and long lines, were largely replaced by the more sharp angles and geometrical shapes of Art Deco and later by the Modernism styles. Free time for lunch before we take a walking tour this afternoon, including a private chocolate workshop to learn everything about the world-famous Belgian truffles. The evening is a leisure to explore more of Brussels. B | T

### December 2, 2024 - Monday

#### Gaasbeek Castle - Brewery - Bruges

After breakfast, we are off towards beautiful Bruges. Our first stop today is at the Castle of Gaasbeek. Never heard of this? Here comes another surprise! The inside-out beautiful fortified castle was built around 1240 and contains impressive art collections displayed in lavishly decorated historical rooms; this place will not disappoint. Besides the well-preserved rooms and stunning interior, the castle hosts an amazing garden. In the garden museum, you will see vegetables and fruits

in various stages of growth; it takes five full-time gardeners to mind the place. Our lunch today is served at a fun and traditional countryside tavern before we continue to a local brewery with some of the best beer in Belgium! Belgians take their beers as seriously as the French do their wines. You will find beers corked and wired like a bottle of Champagne, and some beers will mature in the bottle for up to six years. It is generally yeastier and higher in alcohol content than beers in other countries. We will taste and judge ourselves and learn everything about the family behind this craftsmanship. We will end our day in picturesque Bruges and check in to our hotel for a relaxing evening. Take a stroll around the corner to discover the cozy Christmas atmosphere in one of the prettiest cities in Europe! B | L | T

### December 3, 2024 - Tuesday

#### Bruges

After breakfast, we are ready to step back in time and explore Bruges on foot. With its beautiful medieval architecture, cobblestone streets, picturesque canals, and Christmas markets, it seems straight out of a fairy tale. Often called "Venice of the North," it beckons its visitors to tour its grand squares as well as its tiny back alleys and discover all its beautiful charms. We will visit the Lace Centre Museum. By the 13th Century, Bruges was the epicenter of Europe's textile trade. The large volume of textiles moving into and out of the area developed a rich fashion industry, which paved the way for Bruges' unique lace industry. You will have the opportunity to watch a bobbin lace-

## Beautiful Bruges



## Antwerp - a Brilliant Story!



## Ghent Cathedral



making demonstration. Lunch is served at our favorite restaurant, right on the canal. The remainder of the day is free for shopping, more sightseeing, or simply “people-watching” and enjoying life. B | L

### December 4, 2024 - Wednesday

Loppem Castle - Ghent

After a delicious breakfast, we say a fond farewell to Bruges. A few miles away lies Loppem Castle, in the middle of a romantic English garden with age-old trees, ponds, and a maze. It is time to follow in the footsteps of kings and artists! The castle dates back to the 11th century and is a total work of art: exterior and interior are in perfect harmony and original state. It houses a rich art collection, including medieval sculpture, Flemish paintings, stoneware, Mechelen alabasters, Portuguese ivories, illuminated manuscripts, prints, and drawings. We will arrive in Ghent in time for a guided walking tour, including tasting of three local delicacies. You will love this city which was a prominent city-state during the Middle Ages. Today, it is a university town and cultural hub. Its pedestrianized center is known for medieval architecture and beautiful alleys. In December, Christmas is everywhere! This afternoon, we will visit the impressive St. Bavo Cathedral, including the Mystic Lamb augmented reality experience. Through special glasses, we will travel back to the distant past in the cathedral’s crypt and witness the tumultuous history of the Ghent Altarpiece and the cathedral as if we were right there. It is an exceptional experience, and we are thrilled to share it with you! In

the late afternoon, we will check into our centrally located hotel for an evening at leisure. B | T

### December 5, 2024 - Thursday

Oudenaarde - Ename

After breakfast, we will depart for Oudenaarde and “the heaven of tapestry!” Wall tapestries are woven wall hangings that depict a scene or famous painting. Medieval and Renaissance tapestries were first developed in Europe to decorate castles and large churches. At first, they were primarily of religious scenes and later to depict historical events. Our first stop today is the Mou Museum, which is located inside one of the most beautiful town halls in Europe. Our guide takes us along on a trip in time, from the Middle Ages till today, explaining why, for centuries, Oudenaarde was renowned worldwide for its tapestries. Next, the House of Beaucarne. Our guided tour is given by the current generational residents. Immerse in a story full of passion and amazement created by the same family occupying the estate since the 18 century up until now. We will end this very special visit with high tea in a private dining room. Returning to Ghent, our last activity today takes place at a traditional waffle workshop. How does it get any better than this?! Enjoy an afternoon and evening among the shops and Christmas markets. B | L | T

### December 6, 2024 - Friday

Antwerp

After a filling breakfast, we will drive to

Antwerp. Many may not be familiar with this gem of a city. Antwerp is all about diamonds, jewelry, art, and shipping. It is only a short drive from Ghent, and we will begin with visiting the DIVA Museum to meet “a girl’s best friend.” We will follow the journey of a diamond from a raw material to a sparkling stone. Besides the diamonds, the museum also hosts a breathtaking collection of silverware. Lunch is at leisure before we continue with a visit to the Red Star Line Museum. The Red Star Line was the steamship line founded in 1872 by Clement Acton Griscom, a Philadelphia Quaker. The line was a joint venture and also ran the American Line. Two million passengers traveled to America on the Red Star Line ships; one of them was Irving Berlin, who crossed the ocean to America in 1893, chasing his dream. Before we return to Ghent, we will visit the Cathedral of Our Lady. When people say that Antwerp’s Cathedral is stunning, they are not exaggerating; it is a masterpiece of Gothic architecture. Our farewell dinner tonight is among the locals in a centrally located restaurant in Ghent. B | D

### December 7, 2024 - Saturday

Return Home

All too soon, our fairy tale has ended. Transfer to Brussels airport in plenty of time to check in and clear security. You may do some last-minute shopping at the duty-free stores before flying back to the United States. B | In-flight meals

Itinerary subject to change.

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch,  
T = Tasting, D = Dinner



To register contact:



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www.executivetravel.com

ONLINE REGISTRATION LINK:

Via our website [www.WomenoftheMidwest.com/journeys](http://www.WomenoftheMidwest.com/journeys)

**Package Price:**

Per person in a shared double room: \$3,595

Per person in a single room: \$4,495

Triple rooms are not available on this trip.

We offer "Pair & Share"-service. Ask us to assist in finding your roommate!

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 per person is required upon signing up. Deposit can be paid by cash, check, or credit card. The balance is due on August 1, 2024, and is non-refundable. The balance can be paid by cash or check. Credit card payment(s) (any payment applied to the tour after the deposit) will access a 3.5% fee.

**EARLY BIRD BONUS - ZERO CREDIT CARD FEES:**

Pay for your tour in full upon registration and minimum six months prior to departure using your credit card!

**SAVE 3.5%!**

*This tour will be materialized with a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 22 travelers. Should the number fall below 15, all funds paid to Executive Travel will be refunded 90 days prior to departure.*

**Tour Activity Level: LEVEL 1 2 3 4**

This tour involves a considerable amount of walking, some stairs, longer periods of standing, outdoor activities, and steep areas within the places visited. We walk between 4-5 miles over the course of a day. Add to this the walking you do outside the group activities. This trip is not recommended for guests with walking difficulties.

**Group airfare:**

Group airfare is available - see separate insert. We are happy to assist with airfare from any city within the U.S.

**Travel Insurance:**

We recommend travel insurance to help protect you and your trip investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer a plan provided by Travelex Insurance Services. For rates and plan highlights, please ask us.

*Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. Travel Insurance is underwritten by Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.*

**Hotel Accommodations** (announced 30 days prior to dep.):

Brussels - The Dominican Hotel or similar

Bruges - Dukes Palace or similar

Ghent - Grand Hotel Pillows Reylof or similar

**Included:**

- 7 nights during the tour in Belgium at hotels mentioned above or similar (4-star)
- 7 x breakfast
- 4 x lunch
- 1 x dinner
- All tastings as per the tour program (chocolate, waffles, beer, Ghent delicacies)
- All transportation as per the tour program
- Admissions to all sites mentioned in the tour program
- Headphones where required
- Porterage at hotels (one bag per person)
- Professional English-speaking tour director, November 30 - December 7, 2024
- Step-on guides where required
- Women of the Midwest Ambassador, November 29 - December 7, 2024
- All local taxes and fees as of February 19, 2024

**Not Included:**

- Airfare
- Additional airline baggage fees (first checked piece up to 50 lbs is FREE)
- Gratuities (estimate \$15 per person per day in total)
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses
- Meals and beverages other than mentioned in the tour program
- Entrances to monuments and/or museums other than mentioned
- Professional fee, \$75 per person, due at time of registration
- Anything not mentioned in the inclusions



**WOMEN OF THE MIDWEST**

Travel Solo Together

CO | IA | KS | MN | MO | NE

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Forwarding registration and deposit signifies that you agree to the terms and conditions found at [executivetravel.com/eti-home/vacation/escorted-tours](http://executivetravel.com/eti-home/vacation/escorted-tours)

Call Executive Travel's Group Department today at 402-435-8888. Space is limited.

## JOIN OUR GROUP AIRFARE

We offer group airfare with United Airlines at **\$1,350 per person**, including taxes and fees.

November 29, 2024	Omaha* - Chicago	11:21 AM - 12:59 PM
November 29, 2024	Chicago - Brussels	6:05 PM - 8:55 AM (November 30, 2024)
December 7, 2024	Brussels - Chicago	10:10 AM - 12:20 PM
December 7, 2024	Chicago - Omaha*	3:50 PM - 5:21 PM

\*We are happy to assist with airfare from a different airport than Omaha. Please reach out to us to assist you (a small supplement may occur). If you travel from a different airport, we aim to have you meet your fellow travelers in Chicago around the same time as the arrival of our Omaha group. On December 7, we aim to have you depart from Brussels around the same time as the Omaha group.

### Important notes:

- Group airfare comes with **seat assignments 30 days prior to departure**. Women of the Midwest / Executive Travel cannot confirm precise seat numbers earlier than 30 days prior to your departure and therefore cannot guarantee the availability of specific seating on the aircraft. We do our best to honor your preferences (window, aisle).
- **Premium seating upgrades** (upgrades) can be purchased and confirmed once the tickets are issued = 30 days prior to departure. Women of the Midwest / Executive Travel cannot guarantee the availability of specific seating on the aircraft. Contact us if you have any questions about this and kindly note that certain exceptions may exist.

### THE ITINERARY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

