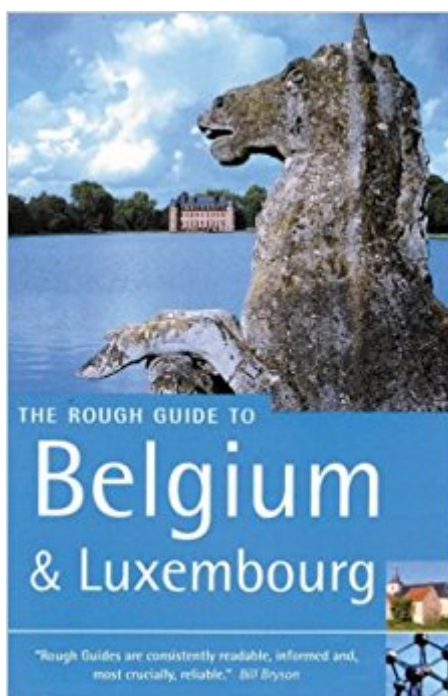




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# The Rough Guide To Belgium & Luxembourg (Rough Guide Travel Guides)



## Synopsis

This guide to Belgium and Luxembourg features attractions from the art galleries of Bruges to the forests of Ardennes and the low-down on Belgian beers, including a top twenty list of brews, plus art and history essays, complete tours of World War I battlefields, and alternative perspectives on major cities and delightful small towns. For outdoors enthusiasts, the book contains plenty of advice on activities including hiking, cycling and canoeing. The authors also provide revealing background on art, history and politics.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The holiday-makers' favourite guidebook series The Sunday Times Travel Magazine --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After years of travelling, Martin Dunford took up travel writing and co-founded the Rough Guide series. He is now Rough Guides' editorial director. Phil Lee has been writing for Rough Guides since the late 1980s - his other titles include Norway, Brussels, Mallorca, Menorca, Pacific Northwest and Canada.

I traveled to Belgium in 1999 on a whim, for a long weekend in Antwerp, with about three days' notice. It was the best trip to Europe I've ever made. First, let me give you five (or six, or seven) really good reasons to go to Belgium and Luxembourg.<sup>1)</sup> Since they are somewhat off the beaten path (with the possible exception of Brugge (Bruges), in Flanders), they're cheap. You can get top

quality accommodations, food, and beer for about half what you would expect to pay for similar quality in Paris, Cologne or Amsterdam.2) If well-preserved, but still functioning, medieval towns are your thing, consider this for a moment: Antwerp, Brugge, Ghent, Namur, Mechelen, Leuven, Tournai. Any questions?3) The best beer on earth, period.4) Small enough to get anywhere within two hours, and entirely realistic to tour on a bicycle.5) More linguistic, cultural, artistic and geographic diversity crammed into a small space than any other country in the world. You get Dutch, French, German, and maybe even a little Spanish.6) A courteous and helpful service ethic. Belgians love tourists! And I love Belgium!7) Jacques Brel. If you don't know, make it a point to discover him while you're there. And, of course, there are also five good reasons to buy this guide rather than other guides.1) Essential historical, cultural and literary contexts that explain these small countries' somewhat confusing, multi-ethnic histories.2) Encyclopedic coverage of all the cities, towns and important natural sites, including insightful historic and practical information.3) Immediately up-to-date listings. Be sure to buy the most recent edition.4) More substance than style. Rough Guides are intentionally that way.5) A "not to miss" section that is well researched and looks beyond the obvious. With mighty Brugge right next door, I still think incredible Ghent gets the short end of the stick. Some of the writing is a bit stale in this regard. For me, the hoards of tourists in Brugge make the experience in Ghent that much more authentic. There's nothing like falling into a Ghent pub at about 4:30PM for a Duvel, and staying on until you forget where you are. It's awesome. The same goes for "so-beautiful-it-hurts" Tournai, in Hainaut. If you don't buy the book, go anyway. And if you go to Belgium and spend all your time in Brussels, shame on you:)

I traveled to Belgium (Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels) for a week in October of 2013 using the 5th edition. Aside from the cost of things going up, all of the information we relied on was still spot-on. The Rough Guide is one of the few publishers that dedicates an entire book to Belgium, and that alone makes this handy for a trip to the country. The introductory sections are nice for gaining a quick historical and cultural perspective in the area that you're in. As is the case with all Rough Guides, they do an excellent job of describing the main tourist attractions AND suggesting off-the-beaten-tourist-path sites. The maps are small which makes it slightly challenging to navigate the medieval layout of most cities. At the very least it can get you to the tourist information offices where complementary and detailed maps can be had. Whether you're interested in checking sights off a list or if you actually want to dive deeper to explore Belgium, this book is a fantastic resource.

Some errors and mix ups between different places. It gets you through the trip, but doesn't contain

any "off the beaten path" stuff either. I try to avoid Lonely Planet since it's what everyone's doing, but this is pretty much the same.

See my review of the Kindle Rough Guide to France. This is a complete waste of money. It will save you more in the long-run to carry a print copy and leave it behind if you don't want to port the weight home.

I would have liked this book on my Kindle Fire, but the maps are unreadable. Zooming in on them does not help as they are too blurry to read. Terrible engineering and too bad as I would have liked to use this for my trip.

My wife and I tried to use this guide while we were in Brussels for a short visit on our way to other countries, and found it very irritatingly organized and generally much less useful than we'd hoped. We ended up having to mostly figure things out on our own; the book is just okay if you need to find a (very) few restaurant recommendations. Keep looking....:)

I like these guidebooks a lot. And great to be able to download them on Kindle. Makes it so much easier.

True to the series, this is a well-written guide. We are traveling in Sept. 2012 and using this guide to plan the trip. So far, we have found it really useful.

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