

The 5 best restaurants for **BRUSSELS ATMOSPHERE**

- 11 **LES BRIGITTINES**
Place de la Chapelle 5
Marolles ③
+32 (0)2 512 68 91
www.lesbrigittines.com
- This stylish restaurant stands opposite the church where Pieter Bruegel was buried. The interior is decorated in a warm style, with mirrors, paintings and art nouveau lamps. The cook uses the best local ingredients, including Cantillon beer.
- 12 **LE CHOU DE BRUXELLES**
Rue de Florence 26
Ixelles ⑤
+32 (0)2 537 69 95
www.lechoudebruxelles.be
- This friendly little restaurant in a quiet residential street is a good bet if you want traditional Belgian cuisine. The lamb is succulent, the frites are served in a paper cone, and the Zeeland mussels come with a choice of 30 different sauces. The place is always busy and staff occasionally struggle to cope with all the tables.
- 13 **LA BRANCHE D'OLIVIER**
Rue Engeland 172
Uccle ⑤
+32 (0)2 374 47 05
www.labranchedolivier.be
- This rustic restaurant lies hidden down a quiet cobbled lane on the edge of a nature reserve. You can dine in the wood-paneled interior or outside on the terrace when the weather allows. The menu is fantastic value for Brussels, although you might have to factor in a taxi fare.

- 14 **PLATTESTEEN**
Rue du Marché
au Charbon 41
Central Brussels ①
+32 (0)2 512 82 03

A friendly authentic Brussels brasserie in the gay area of the old town. The interior is wood-paneled, mirrored and a little bit aged, which is just how people like it. Perfect for steak-frites and a beer.

- 15 **HOUTSIPOU**
Place Rouppe 9
Central Brussels ③
+32 (0)2 511 38 16
www.houtsiplou.be

This is a friendly, relaxed restaurant with authentic Brussels charm. A great place to go with kids: its walls are decorated with quirky comic-book murals illustrating episodes from Belgian history. The cooking is Belgian style with classics like *moules-frites*, beef stewed in Belgian beer and *saucisse-stoemp* (sausage with mashed potatoes). The menu lists interesting Belgian beers, along with Belgian *Cécémel* (chocolate milk) for the young ones.



11 LES BRIGITTINES

The 5 bars with the LONGEST BEER LISTS

- 106 **CHEZ MOEDER LAMBIC**
300 BEERS
Rue de Savoie 68
Saint-Gilles ⑥
+32 (0)2 544 16 99
Place Fontainas 8
Central Brussels ①
+32 (0)2 503 60 68
www.moederlambic.com
- The original Moeder Lambic lurks behind Saint-Gilles' town hall. It's a comfortable corner cafe with a deeply serious approach to beer drinking. It recently opened a new downtown branch on Place Fontainas with 46 different beers on tap. They serve plain, wholesome food, including sandwiches and quiches.
- 107 **DELIRIUM**
3000 BEERS
Impasse de la Fidélité 4A
Central Brussels ①
+32 (0)2 514 44 34
www.deliriumcafe.be
- This bar hidden at the end of an alley stocks more than 3000 beers from 60 countries. It is packed every evening with backpackers, students and visiting bands, all shouting at once in twelve different languages. It's great fun, but a bit frantic.
- 108 **BIER CIRCUS**
200 BEERS
Rue de l'Enseignement 57
Central Brussels ①
+32 (0)2 218 00 34
www.bier-circus.be
- It takes a bit of effort to find this quiet bar in the Parliament district. You may wonder if it is worth it, but the beer list is exceptional, featuring some rare beers from small breweries in the Ardennes and rural Flanders.

- 109 **POECHENELLEKELDER**
150 BEERS
Rue de Chêne 5
Central Brussels ①
+32 (0)2 511 92 62

This bar stands directly opposite the famous Manneken Pis statue, so you would assume that it is a place to avoid. But, no, the owner has set his sights on creating a serious beer cafe. He is supported by locals who come here to drink good beer amid an eerie collection of dangling puppets.

- 110 **ULTIME ATOME**
90 BEERS
Place Saint-Boniface 14
Ixelles ⑤
+32 (0)2 513 48 84
www.ultimeatome.be

This lively brasserie in the heart of the African quarter appeals to everyone, from fashion students to couples who have been coming for the past 20 years. The eclectic beer list includes the elusive Poperings Hommelbier, a rare brew from West Flanders.



The 5 most original shops for **BELGIAN FASHION**

166 **MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA**

[Rue de Flandre 114](#)
[Dansaert Quarter](#) ②
[+32 \(0\)2 223 75 20](#)
[www.maisonmartinmargiela.com](#)

No name. No nothing. The reclusive Antwerp designer Martin Margiela likes to keep a low profile. His Brussels store occupies an old corner building that has been painted white and decorated with cryptic letters. Buying something here is close to a religious experience. Ring the bell and wait to be admitted to the sanctuary.

167 **ERIC BEAUDUIN**

[Chaussée de Charleroi 229](#)
[Saint-Gilles](#) ⑥
[+32 \(0\)2 534 72 10](#)
[www.ericbeauduin.be](#)

Brussels fashion designer Eric Beauduin makes unique patchwork handbags using vintage leather clothes he finds at flea markets. He displays his creations in a beautiful 19th-century atelier near the Horta Museum in St Gilles.

168 **NIYONA**

[Rue de Laeken 86](#)
[Dansaert Quarter](#) ②
[+32 \(0\)2 219 20 74](#)
[www.niyona.be](#)

Nina Bodenhorst creates original leather handbags using hides selected from a local Belgian tannery. She also creates menu holders, leather aprons and place mats for upmarket local restaurants. You can check out her latest creations in her downtown Brussels atelier and shop.

169 **UNICA**

[Rue de Flandre 118](#)
[Dansaert Quarter](#) ②
[+32 \(0\)477 70 55 73](#)
[www.unicabrussels.com](#)

Fashion designer Carine Lauwers moved in 2016 to a new shop on Rue de Flandre. She shares the space with Nadine Serbruyens, who restores vintage and design furniture. Lauwers creates unique handmade dresses for her clients in an atelier at the back of the shop.

170 **CARINE GILSON**

[Rue Dansaert 87](#)
[Dansaert Quarter](#) ②
[+32 \(0\)2 289 51 47](#)
[www.carinegilson.com](#)

Belgian designer Carine Gilson has a small atelier in Brussels where she creates fragile lingerie from delicate French silk and lace. She sells her hand-crafted pieces in a beautiful minimalist boutique.

The 5 best ARCADES

241 GALERIES SAINT-HUBERT

Rue du Marché aux
Herbes
Central Brussels ①
www.grsh.be

The beautiful Galeries Saint-Hubert was a sensation when it opened in 1847. It was the world's first shopping arcade, with shops, a theatre, restaurants, cafes and apartments all under one roof. It is still an alluring place where specialised shops sell German cutlery, Italian gloves and Belgian chocolates.

242 GALERIE BORTIER

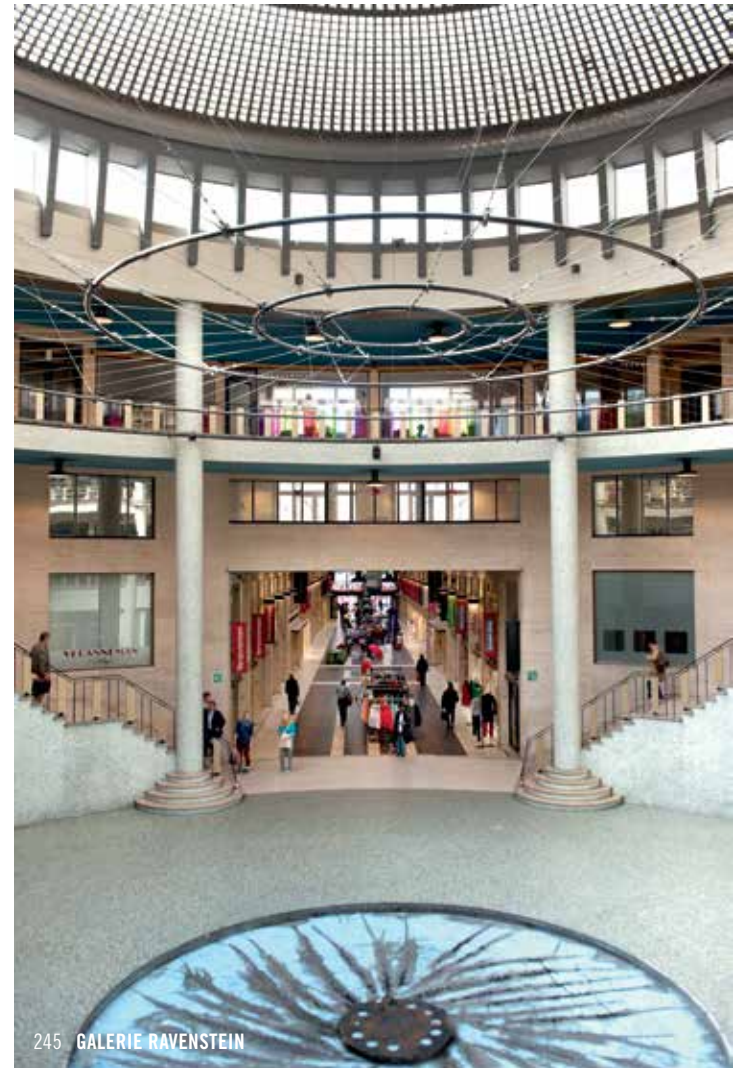
Rue de la Madeleine
Central Brussels ①

The Galerie Bortier is a romantic 19th-century arcade with wood-panelled walls and a glass roof. Never as successful as the Saint-Hubert arcade, it is mainly occupied by antique print shops and secondhand booksellers.

243 PASSAGE DU NORD

Rue Neuve
Central Brussels ①

A 19th-century arcade decorated with iron statues of female caryatides. The shops include a cutlery shop and a tiny oyster bar.



245 GALERIE RAVENSTEIN

The 5 most REMARKABLE PLACES in the EUROPEAN QUARTER

321 HOUSE OF EUROPEAN HISTORY

Rue Belliard 135

European Quarter ④

+32 (0)2 283 1220

www.historia-europa.ep.eu

The hugely controversial House of European History opened in 2017 in a former dental hospital on the edge of Parc Leopold. It sets out to tell the story of Europe using objects and documents from 300 European collections. The presentation is ambitious and innovative, using digital tablets with texts in all 24 EU languages. It has fascinating sections on the two world wars, Capitalist and Communist consumer goods from the Cold War period and even some campaign badges from the UK in/out referendum. Entry is free, but security is tight.

322 PARC LEOPOLD

European Quarter ④

This beguiling park with steep slopes and a lakeside walk was once a 16th-century country estate. It briefly became a 19th-century zoo before being reincarnated as an early 20th-century science park. It is now a convenient shortcut between the European Parliament and the Berlaymont building, as well as a quiet place to soak up the sun.

323 SQUARE AMBIBORIX

European Quarter ④

A romantic 19th-century square on the edge of the European Quarter where elderly Turkish men play card games and Eurocrats eat their sandwiches.

324 EUROPA

Rue de la Loi 175

European Quarter ④

A striking new building designed by Belgian architect Philippe Samyn for summit meetings of EU leaders. Known locally as 'the egg in a cage', the building has an oval meeting hall surrounded by walls built from recycled window frames gathered from demolished buildings across Europe.

325 BERLAYMONT PANELS

Rond-point Schuman

European Quarter ④

You may want to know how the European Commission ended up in the Berlaymont building. This fascinating story is told in a series of information panels attached to glass screens on the south side of the building.

The 5 best places to discover RENÉ MAGRITTE

366 **MAGRITTE MUSEUM**
Rue de la Régence 3
Central Brussels ①
+32 (0)2 508 32 11
www.musee-magritte-museum.be

The Magritte Museum opened in 2009 in an impressive neoclassical building on Place Royale. It's a fascinating collection that includes photographs, amateur film footage and surrealist ephemera.

367 **RENÉ MAGRITTE MUSEUM**
Rue Essegheem 35
Jette
+32 (0)2 428 26 26
www.magrittemuseum.be

This is not the Magritte Museum. This is the house in Jette where René and Georgette lived from 1930 to 1957. The great Belgian surrealist created some of the most startling images in modern art in the kitchen of this modest home. It was bought by two art enthusiasts and restored to its original state.

368 **LE GREENWICH**
Rue des Chartreux 7
Dansaert Quarter ②
+32 (0)2 540 88 78
www.greenwich-cafe.be

Magritte liked this old creaky bar where local men gather to play chess. The cafe closed in 2011 to allow the architects Robbrecht & Daem to renovate the belle époque interior. Some say it has lost its old charm, but it is still a gorgeous interior.

369 **LA FLEUR EN PAPIER DORÉ**
Rue des Alexiens 55
Central Brussels ③
+32 (0)2 511 16 59
www.lafleur-enpapierdore.be

Magritte is rumoured to have sold his first painting to one of the regulars in this ancient bohemian cafe. The three tiny rooms are filled with old furniture, murky paintings and cryptic writings. You won't find anything by Magritte, but go through to the back room to admire the enlarged photograph showing Magritte along with other regulars standing outside the cafe.

370 **SCHAERBEEK CEMETERY**
Avenue Jules Bordet
Schaerbeek

Magritte died in 1967 while living at the Rue des Mimosas in Schaerbeek. He was buried in Schaerbeek Cemetery under a plain stone slab, located in plot 16, row 2. His fans sometimes leave curious objects on the grave.





LEOPOLD II

15 PEOPLE WHO MADE BRUSSELS

The 5 most famous people **BORN IN BRUSSELS** — 236

The 5 people who **BUILT MODERN BRUSSELS** — 238

The 5 most **CREATIVE PEOPLE** *in Brussels* — 240

The 5 ODDEST THINGS about Brussels

476 MADAME PIPI

Most toilets in bars and cinemas are maintained by a woman affectionately known as Madame Pipi. She is normally found seated at a small table decorated with a vase of plastic flowers, reading a celebrities magazine. She expects to be paid about 50 cents. The tips she receives are her only source of income.

477 PARAKEETS

You see them everywhere. And if you don't see them, you hear them. Over the past few decades, Brussels has been invaded by green parakeets. It started in 1974 when the owner of a local zoo released about 50 birds into the wild because, he said, Brussels needed more colour. Now there are an estimated 8000 colourful birds nesting in the trees on Place Guy d'Arezzo and in several city parks.

478 MUSIC IN THE BRUSSELS METRO

Some years ago, the people who run the Brussels metro decided to stop playing muzak all day. They developed a playlist with songs to match the time of day. The music is cheerful in the morning, becoming more edgy around 4 pm when schools come out and ending with classical music after 9 pm in a bid to stop kids loitering on the platforms.

479 LA PASIONARIA Avenue de Stalingrad Gare du Midi Quarter

The artist Emilio Lopez Menchero constructed a giant steel megaphone near the main railway station in 2006 as a monument to migrants. He was inspired by the Spanish rebel Dolores Ibárruri Gómez (who appeared in a film scripted by Ernest Hemingway making passionate speeches from a megaphone on the back of a truck).

480 KING ALBERT'S JACKET Place des Palais 7 Central Brussels ① +32 (0)2 545 08 09 www.belvue.be

The BELvue museum has a strange collection of relics relating to the Belgian royal family, but the oddest item is a corduroy jacket in a glass case with a torn sleeve. This was the jacket King Albert I was wearing when he fell in mysterious circumstances while climbing a cliff in the Ardennes.