

Dear guests,

We are pleased to welcome you on one of our tours soon.

In order to start your holiday well equipped and well prepared we have assembled some useful information and suggestions. We hope that you will enjoy reading the following in happy anticipation of your bike and barge tour. You can also find information of the tour you've booked on our website, [www.boatbiketours.com](http://www.boatbiketours.com). Should you still have questions about your tour or your documents we will gladly answer them by phone or email.

The information we provide you is based on many years of experience in organizing bike and barge tours. Nevertheless, we don't claim to be perfect and always welcome suggestions that can help us to improve. We would like to wish you an adventurous and relaxing vacation.

Your Boat Bike Tours team  
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Phone: +31 20 7235400

## Place of departure

### Place of departure Paris

You have booked the Paris - Bruges tour on the Zwaantje. This is a fully-guided premium tour.

The tour starts in Paris. The ship will be docked at the **Quai de Bercy** along the River Seine (close to the bridge Pont de Bercy).

[This google link](#) will give you the exact mooring in Paris.

The Quai de Bercy is marked on the map below.

We expect you on board on Saturday **as from 2 p.m.**. The ship stays in Paris on Saturday, so if you can't make it on time, it is not really a problem. If you'll arrive later than 5.30 p.m., please call the ship at: +31 (0)6 14 486 600 or the tour leader at +31 610 934 265.



## How to get to the place of departure Quai de Bercy

### By car

Navigation system: 210 Quai de Bercy, Paris.

Please drive to the ship first and drop-off your luggage and your bike (in case you brought your own), and then drive to the parking location (more info at “parking in Paris”).

### By plane

**From Charles de Gaulle airport** there is a wonderful straight connection to Station Gare de Lyon.

From terminal 2 or 3 take the RER Line B (blue train) in the direction of Robinson, Anthony or StRemy-les-Chevreuse. At Station Châtelet-Les-Halles you have to change to RER Line A in the direction of Marne-la-Vallée or Boissy-St-Léger and get off at Station Gare de Lyon. Or change to the subway line 14 in the direction of Olymplades and get off at Station Bercy or Station Cour St-Émilien. From here you can walk or take a taxi to the docking place.

OR

you can take the Roissy-bus to Place de L’Opéra. Tickets ad €13.20 p.p. are available at the driver. Departure every 15 minutes until 8 pm, travel time ca. 60-75 minutes (please note: during rush hour traffic is far worse thus travel time longer). From Place de L’Opéra you continue travelling with RER line A in the direction of Marne-la-Vallée or Boissy-St-Léger, get off at Station Gare de Lyon. From there you can walk or take the taxi to the docking place.

**From airport Paris Orly** you take the OrlyVAL to Station Antony. Here you change to RER Line B in the direction of Charles de Gaulle or Dammartin, get off at Station Châtelet-Les-Halles where you change to RER Line A in the direction of Marne-la-Vallée or Boissy-St-Léger, and get off at Station Gare de Lyon. Or change to subway line 14 in the direction of Olymplades and get off at Station Bercy or Station

Cour St-Émilien. From here you can walk or take a taxi to the docking place.

**Tickets:** Paris RER trains have 2 different kinds of tickets depending on which part of the RER network you use. Price varies from € 5 to €15. Tickets are available at the blue vending machines or at the ticket office. Travel time around 50 minutes.

More information and online route planner:

- <http://en.parisinfo.com/practical-paris/how-to-get-to-and-around-paris>
- <http://www.parisaeroport.fr/>

### By train (Paris l’Est)

From Station Paris Est take the subway line 5 in the direction of Place d’Italie and get off at Station Quai de la Rapée. From here you can walk or take a taxi to the docking place.

### By taxi

Taxi stands are at train stations and airports. More information about taxis in Paris:

<https://www.timeout.com/paris/feature/taxis-in-Paris>.

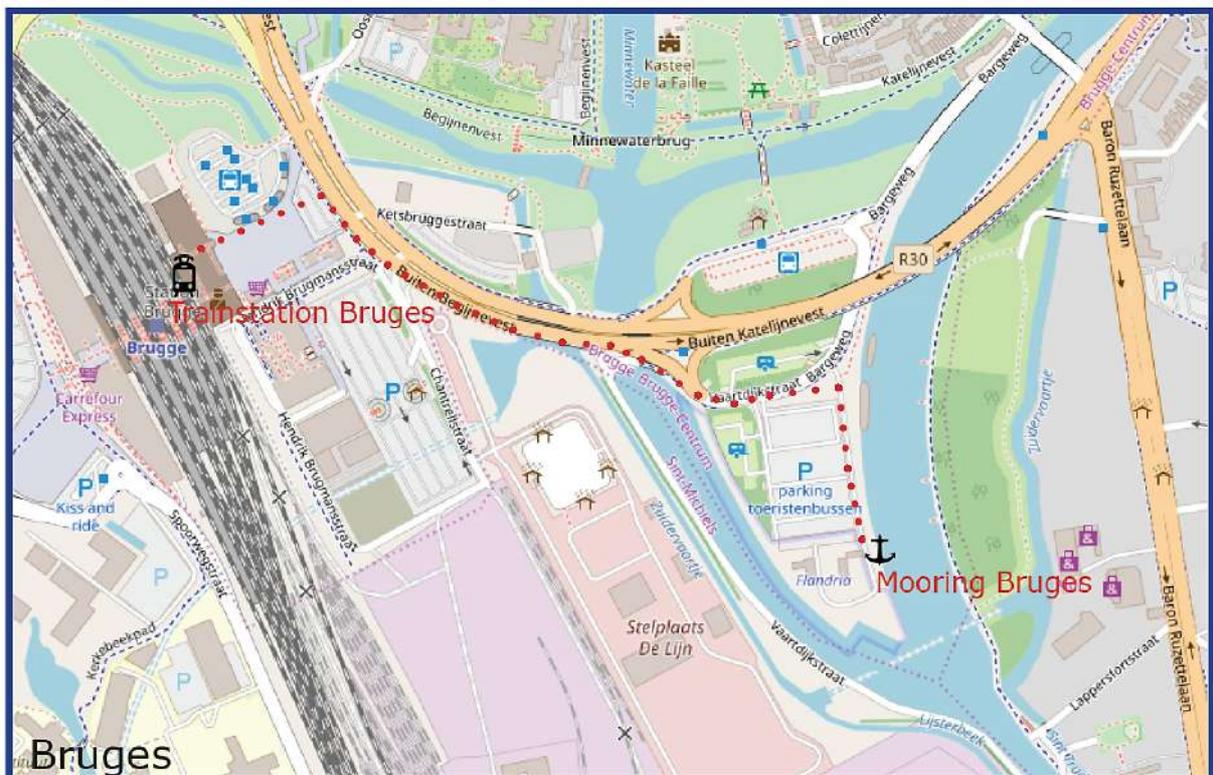
## Disembarkation in Bruges

Disembarkation in Bruges will take place after breakfast till 09:30 a.m. Please check your cabin for personal items. Before you leave, do not forget to hand over your cabin key to the crew. If you wish you can leave your luggage on board until noon (please ask the crew).

### Leaving Bruges

The ship will be docked at the Bargeweg at Katelijnepoort/Jachthaven south of the city center (marked on the map below), approximately 400 meters from the train station. It is at a walking distance, but you can also call a taxi (Brugse Taxi Service +32 (0)50 33 44 55, around €10)

**Returntransfer:** Plan your route via [www.goeuro.co.uk](http://www.goeuro.co.uk) or [www.trainline.eu](http://www.trainline.eu).



An extra night in a hotel ?

## Would you like to book a hotel?

If you arrive a (few) day(s) before your tour starts or if you would like to stay longer after the trip, you can arrange your hotel via us at: <http://boatbiketours.com/travel-preparation/book-your-hotel/>

## Welcome on your ship Zwaantje

For an extensive description incl. pictures of your ship Zwaantje please check our website:  
<https://boatbiketours.com/ships/zwaantje/>

### General information about the ship

The Zwaantje ('little Swan') is a newly built small passenger ship. Since September 2014, the Zwaantje is owned and operated by Martijn van Tatenhove and Marjorie Kersten. The sympathetic and very motivated couple has been in the bike & boat business for many years. They restyled the interior of the Zwaantje in winter 2014-2015 and have created a warm and cozy atmosphere. The Zwaantje sails under Dutch flag and management and is a very popular small canal barge on several tours in The Netherlands, Belgium and France. The Zwaantje takes maximum 24 passengers in 12 comfortable cabins.

### The team

The Zwaantje sails the inland waterways of the Netherlands, Belgium and France with a crew of five or six: a captain, a mate, a chef, a hostess and one or two tour leaders. The crew all speak Dutch, English and German. Any question you may have about cycling, food, times, phone numbers, internet, the ship, waterways or anything else; the crew is pleased to be at your service. The captain and his crew wish you a pleasant time on board!

### The cabins

After arrival on board, the crew will show you to your cabin. A cabin is almost like a bedroom at home. You will find a few things to pay attention to in the information map in your cabin. Please read this map carefully.

All cabins have portholes (all portholes are fixed for safety reasons), shower, toilet, a washing bin, individually regulated air conditioning, 220/230 Volt electric sockets, a small safe and hair dryer.

### Meals and drinks

The meals on board are substantial and healthy. Breakfast will be served as a buffet and during breakfast you may make your own packed picnic lunch for your bike tour. In the evening the chef serves a three course dinner. One evening dinner will be in a restaurant of your choice. (not incl. – restaurant recommendations on board).

Special meals are available for vegetarians and guests with other moderate diet wishes, but only on prior notification (at least 7 days prior to arrival on board). In case you eat according a strict diet, such as gluten free or lactose free, there is an additional charge of € 50,- per week to be paid on board.

Coffee and tea are available and included all day. Other drinks such as various non-alcoholic drinks, beer, red and white wine and various kind of liquors are available at a charge.

Please note: it is only possible to pay in cash on board (no credit cards, no ATM).

In case you want to consume a bottle of wine or champagne that you bought during your bike tour, we charge a corkage of € 6 per bottle. It is not permitted to consume other drinks brought on board by yourself, in the lounge or on the sundeck.

### Smoking

Due to legal safety regulations, smoking is prohibited in all cabins on board. All other passenger areas on the barge are also nonsmoking areas.

### **Wi-Fi**

The ship is fitted with Wi-Fi. It is unlimited and free to use. Please be aware that it is a mobile network and might be slower than a landline network you may have at home.

### **Tipping**

May service aboard be not to your liking, please let the crew know during the trip. In this case they have the opportunity to improve their service. Are you on the other hand really satisfied, then you are more than welcome to show this in a financial gesture. The amount is at your own discretion, but we would like to suggest approximately €5 per person (guest) per day. This tip is only for the staff aboard the ship and will be divided equally amongst the crew.

### **Language**

Aboard the ship most of the crew speaks English, Dutch and German.

However, the daily briefings will be done in English and German only. Also the daily route notes are only available in German and English.

### **Sustainability**

Travelling by barge and bike is sustainable. Our waste water is collected in a separate tank that is regularly emptied. We provide you with a water bottle which can be refilled with tap water.

Furthermore we hand out paper bags instead of plastic to wrap your lunch. Please help us and the environment by using electricity, water and towels with awareness.

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Type of guidance

## **A fully guided premium tour with 2 tour leaders**

During your bike tours you will be accompanied by two skilled, professional and multi-lingual tour leaders (from 18 guests).

Each evening the tour leaders will discuss the plan for the next day. The tour leaders will divide the cyclists in two groups. On most days there is a choice between two cycling options: a shorter/longer or quicker/slower tour (this depends on the day-to-day program). Not all mentioned highlights will be visited during the short bike option.

The tour leaders will join you and shows you the interesting sights along the route. He or she can make repairs to the bike if necessary.

But you don't have to bike with the group. If you prefer to wander off by yourself for a day, there are maps available and the tour guide will give you all the information you need. You can also use the GPS tracks of this tour. A link to these GPS tracks can be found in this boarding information (more information at "Ride with GPS").

If you don't feel like cycling for a day (or more) you are welcome to relax and stay on board while the ship is sailing. But please note: lunch will not be served on board. So you can enjoy your packed lunch.

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Level of difficulty – level 2

## **Biking skills and level of the tour**

Nearly all of our trips are suitable for a wide range of cyclists. But please note that for each of our tours, also for the easy tours (level 1) a good physical condition and basic cycling skills are required. We have divided up our routes into four levels of difficulty, where 1 is easy and 4 is challenging.

### Level of difficulty – level 2

This trip is rated as level 2. The countryside is mostly flat, but sometimes slightly hilly, up to a daily elevation of 250 – 300 meters.

We use separate bike paths as much as possible, but we will often have to share the road with car traffic and we will have to cross busy intersections.

A good physical condition is important, because every day we cycle between 40 km and 60 km and it is not (always) possible to join the ship halfway. Moreover, it is not always sunny and calm weather. Even under poor weather conditions you should feel safe and able to cover the distance. The average speed while biking is at least 15 km/h. Please come prepared to enjoy the tour, the good company and the beautiful countryside.

Of course there is always the possibility to stay on board for a day and have some extra rest.

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Ride with GPS

### Ride with GPS

Ride with GPS (RWGPS) is a special app for your mobile phone, a bike route mapping tool for cyclists. Boat Bike Tours / Eurosail partnered with RWGPS to provide our guests a way to download tour maps and daily routes to the Ride With GPS app on your smartphone for free. The app provides you with clear GPS tracks with voice navigation, to be used off line.

To be able to use the app during your tour, you have to do some homework.

Make sure you downloaded the app on your phone and that you have downloaded the maps for offline use on your smartphone. Our tour leaders only have limited time to help you during the tour, and downloading the app via the ships' network can take a long time

So download the Ride with GPS app on your phone.

Open the app and choose 'enter shortcut'.

For Paris – Bruges Zwaantje ENG use this code: **MQ2MY**

You can also scan the barcode.



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Bicycles

### Rental bicycles

The **bicycles** on board are modern unisex bicycles with normal mount (ladies model), easy-to-handle Shimano 21 gears, 2 handbrakes, gel-saddle (height adjustable), a lock on the frame. All bikes have 28 inch wheels. Some smaller frames are available on board for smaller persons. For each rental bike we have a detachable pannier bag, a pump and a repair kit available on board; use of these items is included in the rental price.



### **E-bike rental**

We get a lot of questions about our e-bikes, also known as power bikes or booster bikes. First of all it is important to know that e-bikes feature a small electrical engine and a battery that assist and ease your pedaling, but they do not feature autonomous propulsion. So you still have to pedal yourself. However, riding an e-bike can greatly contribute to the pleasure of your holiday. Nevertheless, an e-bike is not a solution for untrained cyclists. It is absolutely not easy to handle such a bike. The engine and battery make the bike a lot heavier than a regular bike and it accelerates faster. Handling it well therefore requires good basic cycling skills and confidence, especially when cycling in a group. If you are unsure whether renting an e-bike is a good idea, you can ask our sales team for advice by mail, chat or telephone.

Aboard the Zwaantje there are 5 e-bikes available. Please indicate at your booking that you would like to make a reservation for such a bike. This will be on request and at an additional charge. It is important that you are a good cyclist and that you know how an electrical bike works, before you start your cycling tour. The e-bike is a Batavus (type: Mont Blanc Easy or comparable) with 10-speed chain gear and handbrakes. The rear wheel engine with ION-technology offers five levels of support. The E-bikes have a comfortable gel saddle. (or a comparable brand/model).

### **Available sizes:**

In general, rental bicycles are available for persons taller than approx. 150 cm (4.9 ft.); rental e-bikes are available for persons taller than 155 cm (5.1 ft.). In all cases your inseam (length of your leg) is decisive: when we know your inseam, we can check whether a well-fitting bicycle or e-bike is available on the tour of your choice. By 'well-fitting' we mean that your inseam matches the distance from saddle to pedal with an almost stretched leg.

**We ask for body heights as soon as you book a rental bike with us; this enables an easy distribution of the bicycles on board.**

### **Responsibility**

Please do not forget to lock your rental bike each time you leave it somewhere for sightseeing or going to a restaurant. Never leave your pannier bag or other belongings on the bicycle. You are responsible as well as liable for your bike and equipment in case of loss, theft or an accident. We would like to ask you to treat your bike with care as if it was your own one. Please return the rental bike as well as the bicycle equipment to the tour guide / crew at the end of the journey.

### **Own Bicycles**

**Tours in Holland & Belgium:** Bicycle rental is optional; you can bring your own bikes at no additional charge.

**Tours in France:** During this tour, you cannot bring your own bike. Exceptions are made for special bikes, but only after they have been previously registered and confirmed.

Daily the crew brings your bike off and on board. Small scratches and damages on the bikes can't be avoided. The crew nor the tour operator can be held responsible for this. The bicycle shed is not covered. Please bring a small repair kit with you.

### **Helmets**

In the Netherlands, Belgium and France wearing a helmet is recommended, but not compulsory. In France children till 12 yrs. are obligated to wear a bike helmet. If you want to wear a helmet, we advise you to bring your own. On this tour a helmet is included in the price and available on request.

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Included

### **Included in this tour:**

- 15 days/14 nights
- 14 x breakfast
- Packed lunches
- 13 x 3-course dinner
- Coffee and tea on board
- Welcome drink
- Use of bed linen and towels
- Daily cleaning of the cabin, 1x change of bed sheets
- Climate-controlled cabin
- Daily briefings
- Fully guided cycling tours (from 18 guest: 2 tour leaders, 2 groups)
- Some short walking tours
- Maps for cycling tours (1 set per cabin)
- GPS tracks
- Use of a helmet
- Use of a waterproof pannier bag
- Water bottle
- Fees for ferries
- Visit museum Glade of the Armistice
- Entrance castle of Chantilly
- Visit town hall Oudenaarde
- Canal trip through Ghent
- Wi-Fi

### **Excluded in this tour**

- 1 x dinner (Zwaantje: Péronne / Fleur: St. Quentin)
- Drinks
- Bicycle rental or E-bike rental
- Personal insurances
- Gratuities (at your discretion)
- Entrance fees and excursions (not mentioned under included)
- Transfers to/from the docking place
- Parking fees

## Packing list

More experienced cyclists know exactly what to bring. In case you are planned to come along on a boat bike tour for the first time, we can provide you with some advice:

- Travel light
- Bring comfortable clothes that you can wear in layers
- Make sure you bring rain gear
- A windbreaker or soft shell jacket is also useful for cool mornings and days that are a bit chilly
- Padded cycling shorts will add considerably to your comfort
- Cycling gloves
- Sunscreen
- Sun glasses
- Sportive shoes (for walking and biking)
- Your own helmet (included on premium tours)
- And of course passport, credit cards and travel documents

There is no special dress code on board. Casual clothing is sufficient.

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## Cycling in Belgium and France

### Cycling in Belgium and France

#### Sign posts

The bike paths are indicated by special cycle path signs. Do you see one of these blue signs with a white bike on it, then you are obliged to take the bike path. In many occasions there is a white bike pictured on the pavement. This part is mostly separated from the road by a white, continuous or intermittent line. Cyclists are also obliged to use the separate cycling path here. In short: if there is such a bike path nearby, it is prohibited to cycle on the road.



#### Traffic rules

Here are a few of the most important, general traffic rules:

- Always ride on the right and pass on the left
- Through traffic has always priority over traffic turning left or right on equal roads
- When you cycle on the road (and not on a separate cycling path) always ride behind each other and not next to each other!



In addition to this, the following rules apply for cyclists too:

- Cyclists may ride alongside each other, but only if they don't bother the other traffic
- Highways are forbidden for cyclists
- Biking on the sidewalk is FORBIDDEN (please dismount)
- Front and rear lights of the bikes should be turned on at dusk and in the dark
- Change of direction should be indicated by a clearly extended arm
- Small children should be transported in a special baby saddle, with enough support/space for their hands, back and feet; please order this baby saddle well in advance.
- It is forbidden to transport persons older than 14 years as passengers on a bike.
- Cyclists are not allowed to hold a mobile phone while cycling. And the use of headphones or in-ear phones is prohibited during cycling.
- In France children till 12 yrs. are obligated to wear a bike helmet. Please bring your own – good fitting - helmet.



#### Special remark about cycling in North-eastern France (tours from/to Paris)

In many less densely populated regions in North-eastern France, signposting and cycling infrastructure are not always good or clear as in Holland, Belgium or Germany. For this reason, we strongly recommend you to only ride in a group, accompanied by your tour leader, and– to avoid the risk of getting lost or cycling on roads with intense car traffic unnecessarily – not on your own. Please always discuss the (im)possibilities with your tour leader.

Parking in Paris

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### Our parking recommendations:

Do you plan come to Paris by car?

We have the following parking suggestions for you:

#### For Quai de Bercy

##### Parking Bercy

Address: 210, Quai de Bercy – 75012 Paris

Maximum height: 1.90m / 310 parking places

Price for 1 week: € 97, after that (8th – 13th day) € 5 per day.

To reserve in advance: <https://www.saemes.fr/en/parking/parking-bercy-en>

##### Parking Paris Gare du Lyon Diderot

Address: 198 Rue de Bercy, 75012 Paris

Maximum height: 1.90m / 299 parking places

Price per 24 hours: € 35

To reserve in advance, please click on the following link: [Paris gare du Lyon](#)

##### Parking Paris Gare de Lyon Méditerranée

Address: 26 Rue de Chalon, 75012 Paris

Maximum height: 1.90m / 1608 parking places

Price per 24 hours: € 37.80

To reserve in advance, please click on the following link: [Paris Méditerranée](#)

Program of your tour

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## Bike and Barge France & Belgium: Paris – Bruges Premium | Zwaantje

During this trip through northern France and Flanders (northern Belgium), from Paris to Bruges, you will cycle through attractive landscapes, over gently forested undulations and across open farmland, along the rivers Seine, Oise and Somme, Scarpe and Scheldt. Here the watershed appears to be the actual border.

This tour is characterized by a wide variation in landscapes and has all the ingredients a good bike and barge tour needs to explore these interesting regions. Highlights of the first stage in France are – obviously – beautiful Paris, the “City of Lights” as unbeatable start of a beautiful discovery tour, the Chateau de Chantilly and its art gallery the Musée Condé that houses one of the finest collections of paintings in France, and World War I battle fields and memorials in the Somme valley. The second stage in Belgium features highlights like Vincent van Gogh’s heritage, tapestry in Oudenaarde, history in medieval Ghent, a nice Belgium beer at end of your daily cycling tour and magnificent Bruges, “Pearl of Flanders” and destination of this two-week discovery tour.

The cycling tours go over gently forested undulations and across open farm land, along the rivers Seine, Oise, Somme and Scheldt; the French-Belgian border also appears to be more or less the watershed between the river basins of Seine and Scheldt. As well as being able to discover many picturesque villages each day – both on your bicycle and on foot – you will be able to:

- Visit many highlights of Paris;
- Walk to the grave of Vincent van Gogh in Auvers-sur-Oise;
- Admire the splendid chateau of Chantilly; a luxurious castle with an impressive art collection and horse dressage;
- Visit the town of Péronne with her fascinating “Grande Guerre” museum;
- Pass through Oudenaarde, the town of the tapestry weavers
- Explore Ghent where several masterpieces of medieval painting are to be found, “The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb” by Jan van Eyck being the most famous of all;
- Visit the UNESCO World Heritage-listed historical center of Bruges.



### **Day 1 (Sat): Paris**

Embarkation and check-in at 2 p.m. in the center of Paris. After a welcome by the captain, crew and tour leader, there is time for a walk to the Cathedral Notre-Dame and the Ile de la Cité. Night in Paris.

### **Day 2 (Sun): Paris – Bougival (35 km/ 21 mi.)**

During breakfast the Zwaantje cruises the river Seine through the center of Paris. At about 10.30 a.m. you will be able to go ashore for an interesting bike ride. You can also choose to stay on board and enjoy the view while cruising out of Paris. The ship will moor in an outskirt of the city.

### **Day 3 (Mon): Paris (Bougival) – Auvers-sur-Oise (38 km/23 mi.)**

After breakfast you will cycle along quiet towpaths along the river Seine to the higher situated St. Germain; the gardens of Le Nôtre provide a magnificent view across Paris. Next you will ride through a forest area to Conflans for a picnic on the pier amongst the terraces. After a short stop at the Pontoise Bridge, you continue cycling across the picturesque Chemin des Monts to the church of Auvers, famous for Van Gogh's paintings. You will have the possibility to visit Van Gogh's grave on the local cemetery during a short evening walk.

**Day 4 (Tue): *Auvers-sur-Oise – Beaumont* | *Beaumont – Creil* (42 km/26 mi.)**

Sailing breakfast to Beaumont. Start your bike tour in Beaumont and follow the Oise River upstream. You will pass the abbey of Royaumont, one of the best preserved abbeys from the 13th century. During the afternoon you will visit the splendid Chateau de Chantilly, a magnificent castle with a horse dressage and its art gallery – the Musée Condé – that houses one of the finest collections of paintings in France.

**Day 5 (Wed): *Creil – Pont-Ste.-Maxence* | *Pont-Ste.-Maxence – Compiègne* (33 km/21 mi. or 48 km/29 mi.)**

During breakfast the barge will bring you to Pont-Sainte-Maxence. This town owes its name to the fact that in the Middle Ages here was one of the very few bridges over the Oise River. Therefore Pont-Ste-Maxence became the place to stay the night for kings and merchants, who were on their way to Flanders. From here your biking tour starts. Not far from here you pass the abbey of Moncel, which in 1309 was founded by King Philip le Bel. Before you reach your destination Compiègne, you will cycle through the forest named after this town “Forêt de Compiègne”. French kings loved to hunt here. The longer tour adds some more miles of forest and also the little town of Pierrefond, where you can admire the exterior of the impressive castle. Compiègne owes its architectural wealth to the proximity of Paris. The gardens of the Chateau de Compiègne are definitely worth a visit.

**Day 6 (Thu): *Compiègne – Pont l’Évêque* (41 km/26 mi.)**

Today you leave the river Oise to continue your trip by way of the canal system connecting France and Belgium. In the morning you cycle into the most northern part of the forest of Compiègne. Here you visit the “Clairière de l’Armistice”, the place where the French and German generals signed the Treaty to end World War I. You can have a look into the small but interesting museum. Thereafter you will cross the river Aisne and cycle through the forest of Ourscamp. In the afternoon you will spend some time in Noyon, where you can visit one of the oldest Cathedrals of the country. After your visit you will cycle back to the canal at Pont l’Évêque, where the Zwaantje will be waiting for you.

**Day 7 (Fri): *Pont l’Évêque – Haudival* | *Haudival – Péronne* (44 km/28 mi. or 54 km/34 mi.)**

Today you continue the cruise on and along the Canal du Nord. The construction of this canal was already planned in 1903, but it took until 1966 to finish the works. It was built to replace the older and smaller Canal de St. Quentin, constructed by Napoleon in 1801, to transport coal from the mines to the north. During breakfast the barge will bring you to Haudival from where the cycling tour starts through gently rolling, open countryside to the art deco town of Ham, along the river Somme and other picturesque villages to Péronne. The barge will be moored just outside this charming town with its intimate square and church as well as a castle and the fascinating Grande Guerre museum.

**Day 8 (Sat): Day in Péronne**

Today the Zwaantje will stay in Péronne. You have time to visit the museum, take some rest and do some shopping. Today there is no dinner on board. You can select one of the local restaurants.

**Day 9 (Sun): *Péronne – Ytres* | *Ytres – Moeuvres* (19 km/11 mi. or 45 km/27 mi.)**

The first part of your cycling tour goes through the valley of the Somme River. Later you will continue through the sparsely populated open and rolling landscape to Ruyaulcourt. At the end of WW1 this area was the frontline of the battle around the Somme.

The Canal du Nord has 2 tunnels, where the barge has to sail through. The longest one is the tunnel of Ruyaulcourt, which is 4,350 meters (2.7 miles) long. As soon as you are all back on board, the Zwaantje will pass this tunnel. Above the tunnel is the watershed between the rivers Somme and Escaut (Scheldt). From there the barge therefore goes downhill into the direction of Arleux. Mooring is in Moeuvres, an outskirt of this town.

**Day 10 (Mon): Moeuvres – Cambrai – Arleux (35 km/21 mi. or 51 km/31 mi.)**

Your cycling tour leads to the city of Cambrai, once a Roman provincial capital and an important destination for pilgrims. Worth seeing are the impressive restored buildings of the city fortress, built under King Charles V. Then you will cycle through the marshlands of Chantraine to rural Arleux.

**Day 11 (Tue): Arleux – Doornik (Tournai) (57 km/36 mi.)**

Today the Zwaantje follows the Canal du Grand Gabarit for a few hours, passing through a former industrial area of northern France. Old coal mines and steel sites border the canal. You will start your bicycle ride in Arleux. The tour goes through open farm land, through little mining towns towards Lewarde, where a mining museum can be visited.

Once in Belgium you will cycle through the so-called “white land”. The charming little fortress town Antoing lies at the heart of this region and since the Roman days, (white) limestone has been mined here. Today’s destination is Doornik (in French: Tournai), one of the oldest cities of Belgium. Now you are in Wallonia, French speaking Belgium, where all towns and villages have both a French and a Flemish name. Up till the beginning of the 17th century Doornik was ruled by the French. Here, tapestry weaving gained in importance, while the cloth industry became less important. In the various museums of the town, excellent examples can be seen. In 1940 the entire city center was destroyed after a German air-raid. However, the town has been renovated splendidly. Especially the cathedral the Notre Dame (12th and 13th century) is worth seeing, as well as the Belfort, which was built at about 1200.

**Day 12 (Wed): Doornik (Tournai) – Oudenaarde (41 km/26 mi. or 47 km/29 mi.)**

Now the barge sails downstream the river Scheldt and after crossing the language barrier you enter the Flemish region. From here onwards Flemish is the spoken language. Your target today is Oudenaarde. In former days this little town was situated on the border of the French and German Empires and as a result it was involved in wars frequently. Since Oudenaarde was right in the firing-line, there was always someone on the look-out. The statue of the most famous watchman, Hanske de Krijger, is on the splendid city hall. In the first half of the 16th century this city hall was built of sandstone in Brabantine late Gothic style and it is one of the most beautiful city halls of Flanders. Oudenaarde is also known as the town of the tapestry weavers. Their tapestry is famous all over the world.

**Day 13 (Thu): Oudenaarde – Ghent (41 km/26 mi.)**

Shortly after starting your cycling tour at Oudenaarde you briefly stop at the ruins of the old abbey of Ename, located at the river Scheldt. You keep on following the river towards Ghent, your destination. Ghent is a lively university town with a rich history. The town arose in Roman days on the confluence of the rivers Leie and Schelde. This favorable location brought on quite some wealth with a peak in the late 13th and early 14th century. The cloth industry was a source of great richness in the late Middle Ages. In the city many patrician residences have been preserved. In the “Lakenhal” – Cloth Hall – (1425) the cloth traders gathered. The most important church is St. Baafs cathedral, which was constructed in different centuries and in different styles. In the cathedral several masterpieces of medieval painting are to be found. “The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb” by Jan van Eyck is the most famous of all. You may wish to take a city tour by boat or visit the old castle Gravensteen.

**Day 14 (Fri): Ghent – Aalterbrug | Aalterbrug – Bruges (30 km/18 mi. or 40 km/24 mi.)**

While enjoying breakfast you will cruise the Canal Ghent – Bruges to Aalterbrug. Here you will start your cycling tour. Today your cycling tour goes through the pleasant flat country side of Western Flanders to Bruges. Bruges, also called “Venice of the North”, is said to be the most beautiful of all Flemish cities. Its old center, which dates from the Middle Ages, is almost completely intact. In past ages, Bruges was a metropole, center of trade and art, which you can still fully enjoy. We advise you to stay in Bruges one or more days longer, so that you will have plenty of time to discover this interesting city.

## Day 15 (Sat): Bruges

End of your tour: Disembarkation after breakfast until 9.30 a.m.

Parts that are printed in italics parts will be covered by the ship.

All distances are "approximate distances" of recommended bike tours.

The tour details are barring changes, a.o. as a result of nautical, technical or meteorological reasons.

Various travel information

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## Various travel information

- **Service charge & tips**

The total amount of a bill always includes service and VAT (BTW). The amount on the taximeter also includes service.

- Of course you may give a tip, especially for remarkable or special help or service. The amount of the tip depends on the amount of the bill or the quality of the service given. It goes without saying that this is always at your discretion. However, it is common use to give a small tip in a restaurant or to the taxi driver (about 5 %).

- **Mobile phone**

We strongly advise you to bring your own mobile phone on this tour, so that you'll be able to call the tour leader or captain during the cycling tours, if necessary.

- **Emergency number in Belgium and France**

Police / ambulance / fire department → emergency: 112

In Belgium and France 112 is specifically used as general emergency number for all rescue services. In case you need to call the police for a non-life threatening situation (for example for an accident without personal damage, theft or burglary) please call 17 in France or 101 when in Belgium.

## Emergency phone number Boat Bike Tours (24/7): +31 653 475 689

### One last tip:

We recommend you to make copies of your most important papers and documents and to take these on the journey with you (keep them separate from the originals). In case of loss of original documents copies make it easier to get replacement documents. It's also possible to scan these items and e-mail them to yourself.

We wish you for now a lot of fun preparing your trip and we hope you will have a pleasant journey!

Team Boat Bike Tours



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