

CIRCUIT MECHELEN - WINTER GARDEN

Through green and blue to an art nouveau gem

Behind the walls of a former international girls' boarding school lies an enchanting world. With a showpiece art nouveau-style Winter Garden from 1900. The journey to the heritage site is also worthwhile. Exchange the historic city centre for the peace and beauty of the green-blue environment of Mechelen. Continue past various castles and nature reserves and numerous resting points to catch your breath.

HIGHLIGHTS

1 MECHELS BROEK

Close to the De Nekker recreation park you will find Mechels Broek, a wet and open marshland that is part of the former floodplain of the river Dyle. This is an important resting and feeding place for a range of aquatic birds, making it ideal for birdwatchers. Be sure to look around when you cycle past this stretch of nature, because here you will see beautiful birds such as bluethroats, warblers, ospreys and harriers. If you spot a stork, that's because you are not far from ZOO Planckendael, where many of these birds live.

2 ZELLAER CASTLE

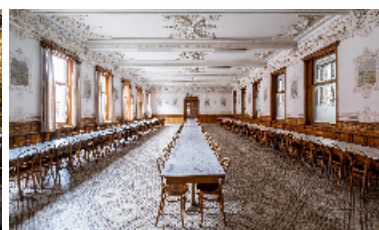
There was once another castle on the site where Zellaer Castle stands today. It was in all likelihood the property of Canon Arnold van Zellaer. The present castle was built around 1885 and is built out of white sandstone taken from the demolished fortresses of the town of Vilvoorde. The castle park is more than 18.5 hectares in size and freely accessible to cyclists. You will find a system of canals, a large pond and some huge trees that are at least 200 years old.

3 WINTER GARDEN OF THE URSULINES

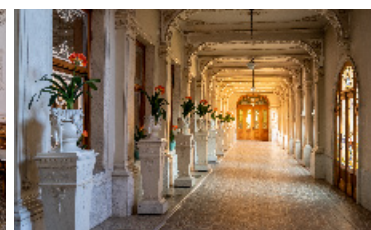
The Winter Garden of the Ursulines in Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Waver is much more than just a unique architectural masterpiece. The centrepiece is a colourful dome in art nouveau style from 1900, although this place is also a testament to educational innovation, international entrepreneurship and tough women from the 19th and 20th centuries. Curious about the interior of the building? Thanks to a brand-new experience trail, you can dive into the history of this former girls' boarding school with an audio guide. **More info and visiting moments at visitwintertuin.be**



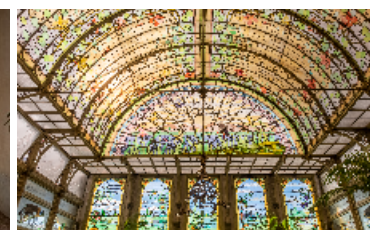
Mechels Broek



Winter Garden of the Ursulines



Winter Garden of the Ursulines



Winter Garden of the Ursulines



Domein Roosendael

④ NETE LANDSCAPE

From junction 40, cycle a substantial distance along the Nete. The river Nete is located in the river basin of the Scheldt, which is part of the Rivierenland Regional Landscape. The Nete dykes between Lier and Walem offer spectacular views. But this part of the trip is also perfect for taking a break. You can do this, on the other side of the dykes for example, in Domein Neteland, a green zone between Duffel and Lier. In spring and autumn, the pond and the numerous berry bushes attract many migratory birds.

⑤ DOMAIN ROOSENDAEL

The monumental gatehouse and coach house of Domein Roosendael are steeped in history. In the 13th century, Cistercian nuns founded an abbey here in the Nete Valley. Today, Domein Roosendael is a place of relaxation, culture and recreation. Desperate for a break along the way? What better place than the bike café here. This 17-hectare nature reserve is also a mecca for lovers of fauna and flora.

⑥ 'T GROM

In the market garden village of Sint-Katelijne-Waver you will find vegetable museum 't Grom. This is the first hands-on museum about vegetables and horticulture in Flanders. Nourished by the two Nete rivers and the Dyle, Demer and Rupel, this region has always been fertile ground. This riverscape with its clay and loam soils is and was ideal for horticulture. In 't Grom you will learn more about the horticultural heritage, the history of food culture and healthy food. More info on www.tgrom.be

⑦ KAUWENDAAL

The Kauwendaal nature reserve is formed from various stretches of nature on the border of Mechelen and Sint-Katelijne-Waver. By connecting them with each other and enriching them ecologically, this green strip on the northern edge of the city has been preserved. This nature area is popular with young people. There is plenty of wood to build camps, and the old railway verges are ideal for climbing and playing hide and seek. Animals such as owls, pheasants and buzzards are also at home here.

Practical info

STARTING POINT

Visit Mechelen, Vleeshouwersstraat 6, 2800 Mechelen

FOLLOWING THE ROUTE

The route makes use of the national cycle network. Just follow the intersection numbers on the rectangular green and white signs.

LENGTH AND DURATION

Standard route: 45 km | 3h30min

Shortened version: 32,5 km | 2h

DESCRIPTION & ACCESSIBILITY

The terrain is flat. Only a small section of the route is unpaved.

INTERSECTIONS

57 - 64 - 46 - 70 - 01 - 37 - 36 - 42 - 48 - 40 - 66 - 56 - 55 - 65 - 98 - 11 - 99 - 57

Shortened:

57 - 64 - 46 - 70 - 01 - 37 - 36 - 42 - 91 - 43 - 24 - 65 - 98 - 11 - 99 - 57

For information about possible diversions: routedokter.be

BIKE HIRE

www.visitmechelen.be/bike-hire

Visit the Winter Garden.
Book your tickets via visitwintertuin.be

For more cycling and hiking ideas, go to visitmechelen.be

CONTACT

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COLOPHON

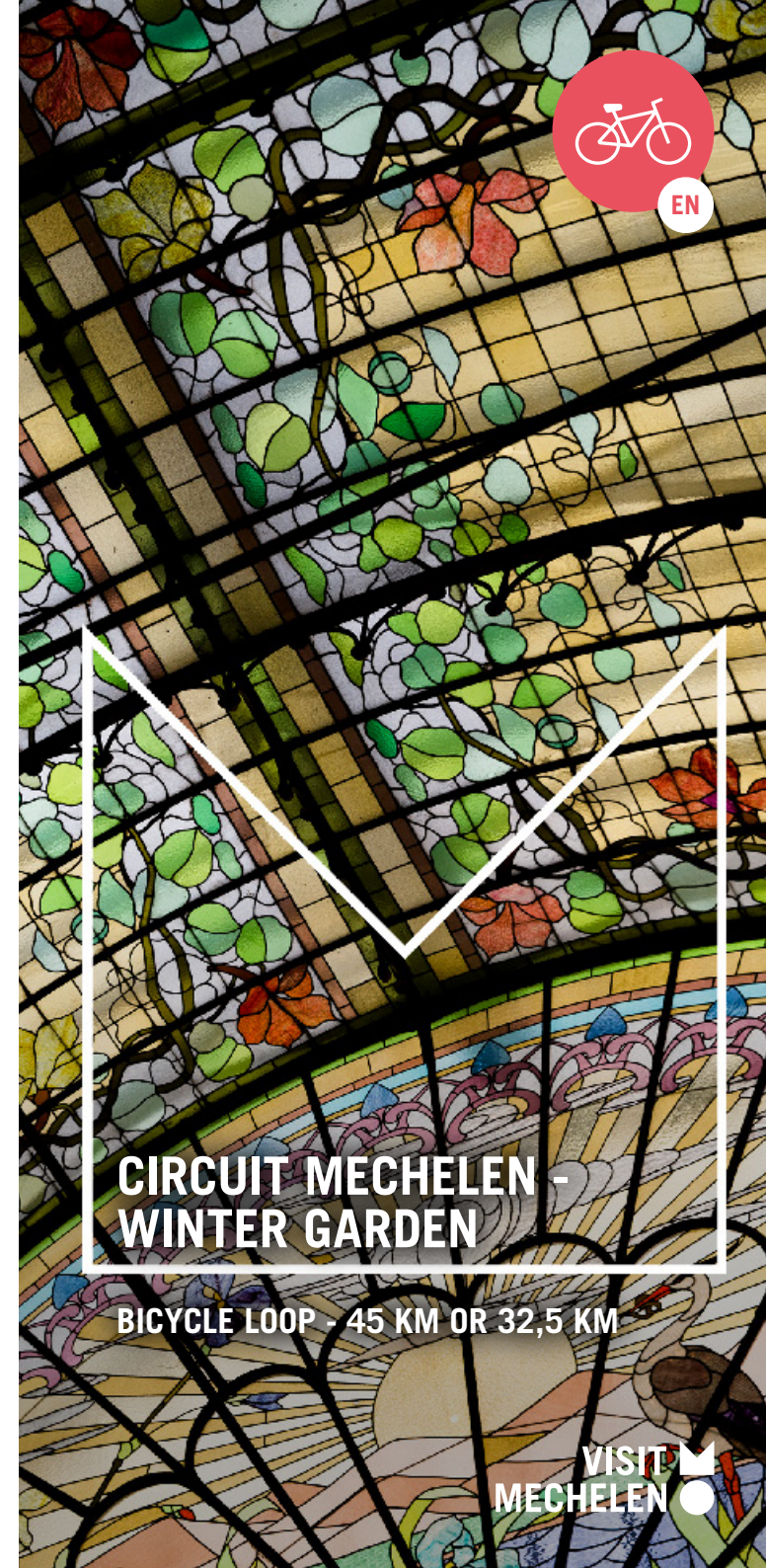
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**CIRCUIT MECHELEN -
WINTER GARDEN**

BICYCLE LOOP - 45 KM OR 32,5 KM

**VISIT
MECHELEN**