

CIRCUIT MECHELEN - BOOM

Beer, rivers and Burgundian palaces

This route leads through the Burgundian city with its wealth of ancient monuments and on through the peaceful river landscape that surrounds it. With Het Anker Brewery-Distillery as your starting point and numerous cafés and restaurants along the way, there is no danger of going hungry or thirsty! The traffic-free towpaths of the Dyle, Nete, Zenne and Rupel rivers provide a green corridor for cyclists through the Mechels Broek, Zennegat and Vrijbroek park wildlife areas.

HIGHLIGHTS

1 MECHELEN

In the sixteenth century, Mechelen was the political and cultural capital of the Burgundian Netherlands, which is when the region was ruled by the dukes of Burgundy. There is still plenty of evidence of that period, not least in the rich heritage of more than 300 listed buildings and cityscapes. This cycle route leads past places of interest like the Palace of Margareta of Austria, the Hof van Busleyden Museum and the Beguinage.

2 HET ANKER BREWERY-DISTILLERY

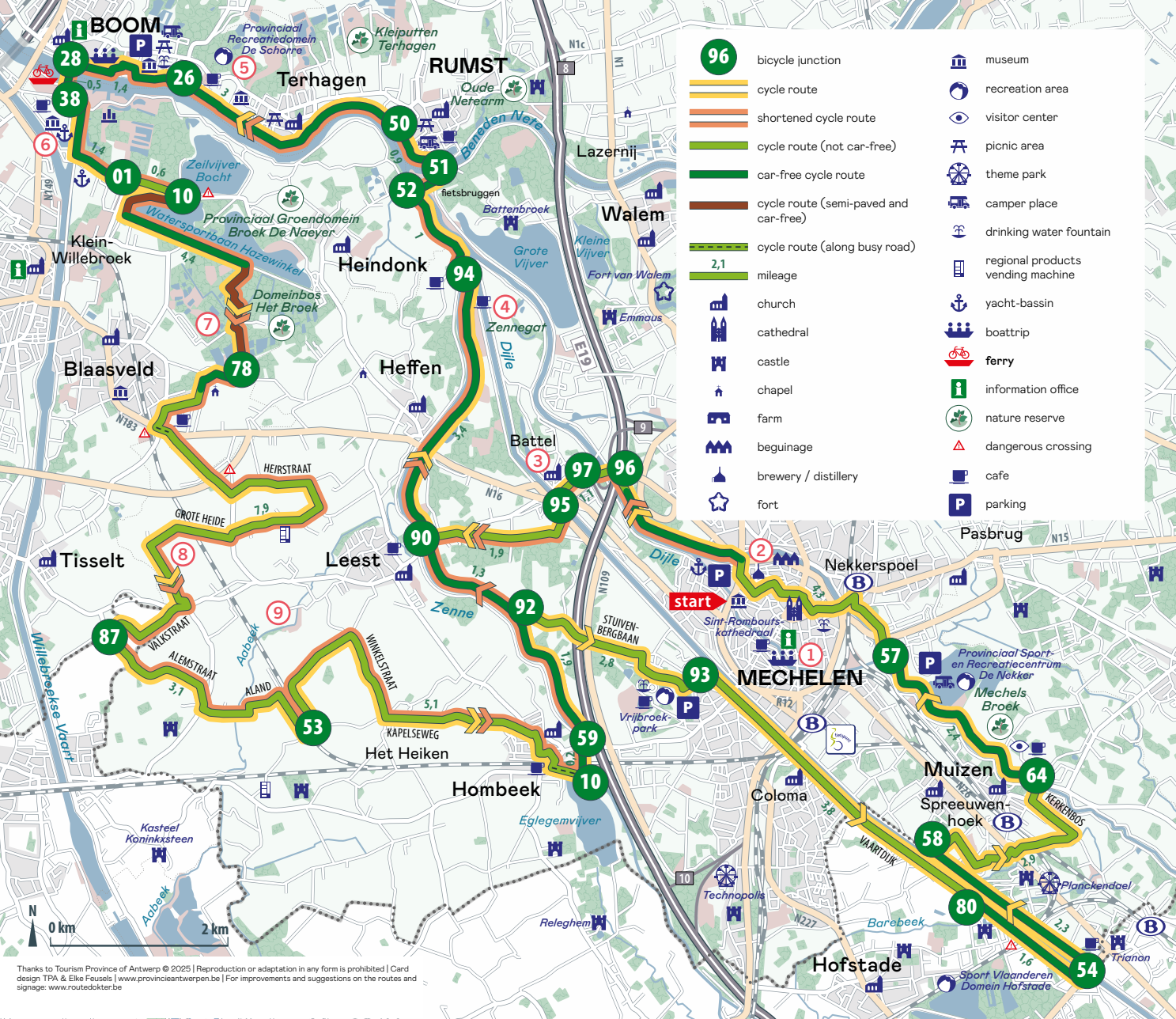
Het Anker, one of the oldest (1471) breweries in Belgium, has its roots in Mechelen's beguinage. This internationally award-winning family brewery couples modern brewing techniques with authentic recipes. Centuries ago Emperor Charles was partial to the predecessor of Gouden Carolus Classic, one of what are today Het Anker's ten award-winning beers. And it doesn't stop there: there's whisky to sample too!

3 BATTLEIEK

Batteliek is a micro-brewery, micro-distillery and lemonade factory housed in a former church in Battel, a stone's throw from Mechelen. Alchemy and industry meet in this wondrous place where the senses are stimulated and experimental foods and drinks conjure up adventurous taste combinations.

4 ZENNEGAT

The Zennegat is where the Dyle and Zenne rivers and the Leuven-Dyle canal meet. Artists are among those attracted to this idyllic hamlet by its characterful little houses, the colourful spectacle of the pleasure craft and houseboats, and its ecologically important landscape. A little further along, the Dyle and the Nete converge in the Rupel at the aptly named Drie Rivierenpunt, or point of the three rivers.



Palace of Margareta of Austria



Het Anker Brewery-Distillery, Gouden Carolus



Batteliek



Zennegat



5 DE SCHORRE PROVINCIAL RECREATION AREA

This former claypit in the heart of the Rupel district has been transformed into a fantastic recreation area, which includes a Troll Forest and a Barefoot Path. A third of the area is a nature zone, which can be explored from the attractive duckboard walkway running through it. De Schorre also boasts a whole range of sports and recreational facilities like a mini-golf course and pedal boats. Festivals and other events are held here too.

Attention: You have to take a ferry at intersection number 28.

6 BOOM AND KLEIN-WILLEBROEK

Walk, pushing your bicycle along the esplanade on the Kaai in Boom, take the ferry across the Rupel, visit the historic lockhouse and cycle on a little further to the colourful marina at Klein-Willebroek.

7 BLAASVELDBROEK

At junction 78 you're just a stone's throw from the Blaasveldbroek, a green, 160-hectare magnet for nature-lovers, hikers, joggers and anglers. "Het Broek", as the locals call it, even has an otter and beaver island. This photogenic landscape with its poplars, willows, black alders and meadows is the perfect place to unwind.

8 KARRELEES BREWERY

What started as a hobby 35 years ago has grown into a professional microbrewery. Walter brews artisanal beers in Leest with respect for the natural brewing process and with an installation that is completely energy neutral. All beers from the Karrelees brewery are specialty beers of top fermentation, with refermentation in the bottle and therefore with taste evolution.

9 HOMBEEKS PLATEAU

Hombeeks Plateau extends from the villages of Heffen and Leest to Hombeek with the Zenne meandering through the landscape. The Zenne villages owe their very existence to their waterside location. After flooding, a fertile layer of silt created summer pastureland. You still see cattle grazing on the banks and in the valleys of the Zenne.

Practical info

STARTING POINT

Het Anker Brewery-Distillery:
Guido Gezellelaan 49, 2800 Mechelen

CAR PARK

Parking Keerdok: Antonia Wolversstraat 1, 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

Standard route: 59 km
Shortened version: 45 km


DESCRIPTION AND ACCESSIBILITY

The terrain is flat. 55% of the route is vehicle-free. Between highlight 5 and 6 you have to take a ferry at intersection number 28 to cross the river Rupel. **Ferry sailing times:** www.boom.be/veerdienst-boom---klein-willebroek

INTERSECTIONS

96 - 97 - 95 - 90 - 94 - 52 - 51 - 50 - 26 - 28 -  - 38 - 01 - 10 - 78 - 87 - 53 - 10 - 59 - 92 - 93 - 80 - 54 - 58 - 64 - 57 - 96

Shortened:

96 - 97 - 95 - 90 - 94 - 52 - 51 - 50 - 26 - 28 -  - 38 - 01 - 10 - 78 - 87 - 53 - 10 - 59 - 92 - 90 - 95 - 97 - 96 - 57

For information about possible diversions: routedokter.be

BIKE HIRE

www.visitmechelen.be/bike-hire

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

CONTACT

Visit Mechelen, Vleeshouwersstraat 6, 2800 Mechelen
visit@mechelen.be, +32 15 29 76 54, visitmechelen.be

COLOPHON

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