

## Art Nouveau gem

Step into the enchanting world of the **former international boarding school for girls** in Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Waver. Let yourself be guided along impressive highlights of the historic building complex and visit the **breathtaking Winter Garden from 1900** in art-nouveau style. The magnificent stained-glass dome creates a magical play of light and colour and will undoubtedly leave you in awe.

## Resplendent Art Nouveau

We have no idea what prompted the Ursuline nuns in Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Waver to make the rather bold decision to build this **truly magnificent** Art Nouveau building. After all, this style was considered hyper-modern in 1900. And yet, this enchanting Winter Garden with its colourful stained glass cupola was considered the most stunning feature of their boarding school, for young girls from good families. What's even more intriguing is that nobody knows who designed the Winter Garden. And yet the architect's design skills are **unparalleled**.

Don't believe us? Well, come take a look for yourself because this is Art Nouveau at its most resplendent.

## It's always spring in the winter garden

Entering the Winter Garden feels like a never-ending spring. Just look around at the **enchanting interaction between light and colour!** Rays of gold shoot across the multi-coloured glass cupola. It has a Morning, Day and Evening side, which are popular themes in Art Nouveau. The glass panes are simply teeming with **plants and animals**. And because it is a garden after all there are also several ferns, plants and flowers.

## Step into a different world

The Winter Garden is part of a **magnificent listed complex**, which is a stunning mix of architectural styles including Art Nouveau with neo-Gothic elements, neo-Empire style and Art Deco. It's as if you have stepped into a different world. Names like the Empire Corridor, the Alpine Room, the La Fontaine refectory, the Piano Gallery and the Grand Staircase will spark your imagination.

## Individual experience trail

Set off on your own with an audio guide. The experience trail takes visitors back to the heyday of the Ursuline Institute in the early twentieth century. Along the way, travel back in time to the world of the sisters and their boarding school for girls. Interactive multimedia applications will allow you to discover the history and beautiful architecture of this unique place.

This listening tour takes you through the highlights of the heritage site and invites you to discover the Winter Garden and surrounding spaces at your own pace. You choose how long you want to listen, look and pause.

**An unforgettable experience!**

## Price

Standard rate	€ 13
Children aged 5 - 15	€ 2
Holiday Participation Centre	€ 2

## Practical

Recommended for age 12 and over

Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12.30pm to 5pm

The audio guide is available in Dutch, English and French

Duration of the audio guide is 1,5 hours

**We recommend booking your tickets in advance. You can do so through the Winter Garden website. (<https://www.visitwintertuin.be/en/tickets/>)**

## Walk-in Tour

If you wish to take a guided tour but are not in a group, you can join a guided tour every Sunday as an individual or family. One of our expert guides will take you around the heritage site. With a guide, you will also visit the La Fontaine refectory, the monastery church and the unique piano gallery. These places are not included in the individual experience trail.

## Price

Standard rate	€ 15
Children aged 5 - 15	€ 2

## Practical

Recommended for age 12 and over

Sundays only at 1pm and 2pm

The walk-in tours are available in Dutch (1pm) and English and French (2pm)

Duration is about 2 hours

If you wish to visit the Winter Garden in group, **click here** (<https://visit.mechelen.be/en/wintergarden-for-groups>).

## Art Nouveau Apéro Concerts in the Winter Garden

Enjoy a special morning in the Winter Garden of the Ursuline nuns during the "Art Nouveau Apéro" concerts. The concerts take place in the atmospheric convent church or the unique setting of the Oratory. Those interested can take part in a guided tour of the iconic Winter Garden beforehand. After the concert, an apéritif is served in the Empire Gallery and/or the inner garden. All proceeds from the concerts go to charity.

Check out the programme and book your tickets via **the Winter Garden website** (<https://www.visitwintertuin.be/en/tickets/>).

## Accessibility

The site is **wheelchair-accessible** and has an **adapted toilet**. The experience trail is mainly on the ground floor. The trail on the first floor is not accessible to wheelchairs, but can be experienced on a **tablet** thanks to an app.

There is **no lift** in the building. People who have difficulty walking should consider that there are **about 100 steps**. During the visit, however, there are several stops where visitors can sit and pause.

For the blind and visually impaired, the **audio guide** offers an all-round experience. A **tactile model** illustrates the size of the Ursuline Institute as a whole. Guide and assistance dogs are welcome.

## Contact

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## Getting there

### By public transport

Take the train to Mechelen station. More info: [www.belgiantrain.be](http://www.belgiantrain.be) (<https://www.belgiantrain.be/en>)

Then take bus 80. Get off at the 'Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Waver Kerk' stop, 200 m from the Ursuline Institute. The bus ride takes about 25 minutes. Plan your route here: [www.delijn.be](http://www.delijn.be) (<https://www.delijn.be/en/>).

### By bike

The Winter Garden is close to bike node 36. there is a route of about 30 km from the centre of Mechelen to the Winter Garden.

### By car

The Ursuline Institute is located in the heart of Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Waver. Some free parking spaces are reserved for visitors to the Winter Garden next to the site entrance.

## Location

vzw Wintertuin van de Ursulinen  
Bosstraat 9A, 2861 Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Waver

## MEER INFO

[Circuit Mechelen - Winter Garden \(/circuit-mechelen-winter-garden\)](/circuit-mechelen-winter-garden)

## DOWNLOADS

[Flyer: Winter Garden of the Ursulines \(/flyer-winter-garden-of-the-ursulines.pdf\)](/flyer-winter-garden-of-the-ursulines.pdf) (8 MB)

[Circuit\\_Mechelen\\_Winter Garden\\_EN \(/circuit-mechelen-winter-garden-en.pdf\)](/circuit-mechelen-winter-garden-en.pdf) (1 MB)

