



From  
**\$15,895** AUD

Single Room

\$19,525 AUD

Twin Room

\$15,895 AUD

Prices valid until  
30th December 2024

21 days

Duration

Belgium, France

Destination

Level 2 - Moderate

Activity

## Belgium, Netherlands, France, Germany Art Tour | Western Europe Art Tour

Sep 27 2024 to Oct 17 2024

## Belgium, Netherlands, France, Germany Art Tour | Western Europe Small Group Art Tour

Odyssey offers easy, convenient, and relaxed escorted small group tours across Western Europe and beyond. We explore Belgium, Netherlands, France and Germany fairy-tale natural beauty, its Imperial



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heritage, its World Heritage Sites, and world famous cities with their art galleries, all with some truly spectacular scenery along the way. This and more is all waiting to be explored on one of Odyssey's small group tours of Europe, designed for the senior traveller, and led by experienced, and enthusiastic like minded people.

Enjoy our small group art tour of Western Europe, designed for the mature couple or solo traveller with a passion for beauty. This tour gives travellers artistic experiences that goes well beyond the main tourist tracks. For those art lovers who have already experienced the grandeur of classic European galleries like the Louvre and the National Gallery, this cultural tour offers something completely different. This is a small group tour of the Dutch Masters, focusing on the lesser-known but equally enchanting smaller art galleries across northwest Europe. For art lovers, this is the type of vacation you would have dreamed about and along with this, you'll be joining a group of like-minded people who want to learn all they can about the wonderful Dutch Masters.

## Visiting Galleries in Western Europe

With 21 days of touring, this program is designed to help couples and solo travellers discover the best new artworks and museum pieces in Western Europe. It is also staged around several intimate encounters with the tradition of Western Art and Science.

This art tour for mature travellers begins in Amsterdam and ends in Cologne. In total, the tour stops in nine locations in each of the countries and we stay at each of these locations for an average of two nights.

Important tour stops include

- Amsterdam,
- Rotterdam,
- Antwerp,
- Bruges,

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- Lille,
- Brussels,
- Maastricht,
- Dusseldorf,
- and Cologne.

## An art tour for mature travellers

The 21 day tour begins with four nights in Amsterdam. Some highlights of our time here include an escorted tour with a professional guide of the Rijksmuseum. **This museum** showcases the best examples of Dutch painting, with a focus on the 15th to 17th centuries. While here, we learn about famous works of Vermeer, Rembrandt and Frans Hals. In the afternoon, we visit the newly-expanded Stedelijk Museum to see its collection of 20th century art and design. Afterwards, we take a sightseeing tour of the famed Amsterdam canals.

In Antwerp, we visit the Museum Aan de Stroom with our local guide. The recently redesigned museum features stunning new architecture and illustrates the history of Antwerp as a worldwide shipping powerhouse, especially in the diamond trade. We then head to the Plantin Moretus Museum, for a tour of the exhibits. While here, we learn about the importance of Christopher Plantin as a Renaissance humanist, book printer, and publisher in the 16th century.

During our time in Lille, an expert introduces us to the **Pasteur Institute Museum**. We also explore the life and work of the great scientist, who was also Dean of the Lille Faculty of Science. Later, we visit the new Louvre Project in Lens, where we get an insider's view of the brand new satellite of the famous Paris art temple. The museum is housed in a design by celebrated Japanese architects Sanaa.

Other highlights include a visit to the Van Gogh Museum, which showcases more than 200 works by Van Gogh and where you can read about key events in his life. We also gain a fascinating insight into the artist's life at Rembrandt's house in Amsterdam. While in Bruges, we

explore an important collection of Flemish painting. Finally, we experience the highlights of the surprising Bonnefanten Contemporary Art Museum, designed by Italian architect Aldo Ross. We finish our European tour in Cologne where we explore the pop art at the Museum Ludwig.

As well as incredible art, this travel experience will give you the chance to see five different European countries and take in the amazing scenery and landscapes each of these unique places has to offer. You can expect diverse culture, cuisine and architecture at each location as well as interesting art that you have not witnessed before. You can expect grand palaces, fortresses and forests in some destinations and quaint villages in others.

## About this small group tour

**This tour has been designed for the mature aged or senior couple or solo traveller with an interest in great European art, and keen to experience the best small museums and galleries available in the area.**

This European program is a small-group tour led by professional guides who are willing to share their knowledge and love of art. The upside for you is you do not need to worry about the planning and the booking once you're on the tour, you simply get to enjoy the art and enjoy a European vacation like no other. You can expect a most memorable trip!

For more details, click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

Alternatively, please call or send an email.

## Tour Notes

- Group size is limited to a maximum of 18 participants.
- Itineraries may change if flight schedules, site availability, and other inclusions have to be amended prior to departure

## Highlights

1. Gain a fascinating insight into the artist's life at Rembrandt's house in Amsterdam.
2. View the controversial new extension to Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum of Contemporary Art.
3. Visit the Van Gogh Museum which showcases more than 200 works by Van Gogh.
4. Explore the medieval town of Bruges.
5. Imagine what life was like in 1898 inside a cutting edge Art Nouveau townhouse, at the Horta House in Brussels.

## Itinerary

### Day 1

**Locations:** Amsterdam

**Overview:**

When we arrive in Amsterdam, we will come individually to the hotel. Our tour leader will meet us at our hotel for a program orientation and welcome dinner. (D)

**Accommodation:**

4 nights at Amsterdam Central Hotel or similar.

## Day 2

**Locations:** Amsterdam

### Overview:

We start the tour in style with a guided visit to the Rijksmuseum, showcasing the best examples of Dutch painting, with a focus on the 15th to 17th centuries. Here, we learn about the famous works of Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Frans Hals. In the afternoon, we visit the newly expanded Stedelijk Museum and its collection of 20th century art and design. Later on, we enjoy a sightseeing tour of the famed Amsterdam canals. (B,D)

### Accommodation:

Amsterdam Central Hotel or similar.

## Day 3

**Locations:** Amsterdam

### Overview:

In the morning, we enjoy a panoramic tour of the main sights of the charming city of Amsterdam. Later we explore the Amsterdam Museum, which illustrates the 1000-year history of the trading capital at the heart of a world. We end the day with a visit to the Rembrandt House Museum.

### Accommodation:

Amsterdam Central Hotel or similar.

## Day 4

**Locations:** Amsterdam

### Overview:

This morning, we visit the iconic Van Gogh Museum, which houses more than 200 of the Dutch impressionist's works. (B,D)

### Accommodation:

Amsterdam Central Hotel or similar.

## Day 5

**Locations:** Rotterdam

**Overview:**

After a short drive to Rotterdam, we explore the Boijmans Museum, also known as The Louvre on the River Maas. The Museum showcases works of Bosch, Bruegel, Van Eyck, Rubens, Rembrandt, Magritte, and Dali. We also explore the Maritime Museum, where we learn about the development of Europe's largest port. (D)

**Accommodation:**

1 night at Hotel van Walsum or similar.

## Day 6

**Locations:** Antwerp

**Overview:**

Today we travel to Antwerp, where we visit the Rubens House. This small museum gives visitors the impression that they are sneaking around Rubens' home whilst he is away for diplomatic talks with English courtiers. (D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Prinse Hotel or similar.

## Day 7

**Locations:** Antwerp

**Overview:**

Today we have the opportunity to experience the Museum Aan de Stroom. The recently redesigned museum features stunning new architecture and illustrates the history of Antwerp as a worldwide shipping powerhouse, especially in the diamond trade. Later on, we explore the Plantin Moretus Museum, where we learn about the importance of Christopher Plantin as a Renaissance humanist, book

printer, and publisher in the 16th century. (D)

**Accommodation:**

Prinse Hotel or similar.

**Day 8**

**Locations:** Bruges

**Overview:**

Today we travel to Ghent and enjoy a guided panoramic tour of medieval Ghent, the birthplace of Emperor Charles I and once Europe's second largest city after Paris. After lunch, we continue our journey to Bruges. (D)

**Accommodation:**

3 nights at Hotel Ter Brughe or similar.

**Day 9**

**Locations:** Bruges

**Overview:**

Located in one of the most perfectly-conserved medieval towns, today we experience the wonders of the Groeninge Museum. Here, we enjoy a guided tour of this important collection of 15th century Flemish painters. This afternoon we explore historic Bruges with our local guide, and discover why this magical and fairy-tale-like city is known as the Venice of the North. (D)

**Accommodation:**

Hotel Ter Brughe or similar.

**Day 10**

**Locations:** Bruges

**Overview:**

We start the day at Old St. John's Hospital. This 11th century hospital was the first of its kind in Europe. It is home to a unique collection of



Flemish primitive art from the 12th to 14th centuries. (B,D)

**Accommodation:**

Hotel Ter Brughe or similar.

**Day 11**

**Locations:** Lille

**Overview:**

In the morning, we travel to Lille and learn about Charles de Gaulle on a guided tour of the Churchill of France, where the statesman was born. After lunch, we discover the gem of the Palais des Beaux Arts, one of the first museums built in France, established under the instructions of Napoleon I at the beginning of the 19th century as part of the popularisation of art. Jean-Antoine Chaptal's decree of 1801 selected fifteen French cities (among which Lille) to receive the works seized from churches and from the territories occupied by the armies of Revolutionary France. The painters Louis Joseph Watteau and François Watteau, known as the "Watteau of Lille", were heavily involved in the museum's beginnings – Louis Joseph Watteau made in 1795 the first inventory of the paintings confiscated during the Revolution, whilst his son François was deputy curator of the museum from 1808 to 1823.

(D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Best Western Bellevue Hotel or similar.

**Day 12**

**Locations:** Lille

**Overview:**

This morning, an expert will introduce us to the Pasteur Institute Museum. Here, we explore the life and work of the great scientist, who was also Dean of the Lille Faculty of Science. We also visit the new Louvre Project in Lens, where we gain an insider's view of the brand new satellite of the famous Paris art temple, housed in a design by

celebrated Japanese architects Sanaa. (D)

**Accommodation:**

Best Western Bellevue Hotel or similar.

**Day 13**

**Locations:** Brussels

**Overview:**

Today we journey to Brussels, where we have the opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the work and life of René Magritte during our visit of the Magritte Museum. René Magritte was arguably the most important surrealist master, and the museum houses many of his most famous works.

The Magritte Museum opened to the public on 30 May 2009 in Brussels. Housed in the five-level neo-classical Hotel Altenloh, on the Place Royale, it displays some 200 original Magritte paintings, drawings and sculptures including *The Return*, *Scheherazade* and *The Empire of Lights*. This multidisciplinary permanent installation is the biggest Magritte archive anywhere and most of the work is directly from the collection of the artist's widow, Georgette Magritte, and from Irene Hamoir Scutenaire, who was his primary collector. Additionally, the museum includes Magritte's experiments with photography from 1920 on and the short surrealist films he made from 1956 onwards.

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at NH Hotel du Grand Salon or similar.

**Day 14**

**Locations:** Brussels

**Overview:**

Today we take the opportunity to increase our knowledge of the Art Nouveau style, which swept Europe at the turn of the 20th century. We attend a lecture at the Horta House, home of the famous architect Victor Horta and a typical example of his groundbreaking work. The museum is housed in Horta's former house and atelier, Maison & Atelier Horta (1898), in the Brussels municipality of Saint-Gilles. Housed in the Art

Nouveau interiors is a permanent display of furniture, utensils and art objects designed by Horta and his contemporaries as well as documents related to his life and time. The museum also organises temporary exhibitions on topics related to Horta and his art. The building is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as one of the major town houses of Victor Horta in Brussels. (B,D)

**Accommodation:**

NH Hotel du Grand Salon or similar.

**Day 15**

**Locations:** Maastricht

**Overview:**

This morning, we enjoy a panoramic tour of Brussels. A highlight is the chance to learn about the role of this city as the historic seat of the Dukes of Brabant as well as the present capital of both Belgium and the European Union. We then travel to Maastricht, where we spend the next two nights. (D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Hotel Beaumont or similar.

**Day 16**

**Locations:** Maastricht

**Overview:**

Today we are joined by an expert to learn about the highlights of the surprising Bonnefanten Contemporary Art Museum, designed by Italian architect Aldo Rossi. The museum was founded in 1884 as the historical and archaeological museum of the Dutch province of Limburg. The name Bonnefanten Museum is derived from the French 'bons enfants' ('good children'), the popular name of a former convent that housed the museum from 1951 until 1978.

In 1995, the museum moved to its present location, a former industrial site named 'C ramique'. The new building was designed by the Italian architect Aldo Rossi. With its rocket-shaped cupola overlooking the river

Maas, it is one of Maastricht's most prominent modern buildings. Since 1999, the museum has become exclusively an art museum. The historical and archaeological collections were housed elsewhere. The museum is largely funded by the province of Limburg. (D)

**Accommodation:**

Hotel Beaumont or similar.

**Day 17**

**Locations:** Dusseldorf

**Overview:**

Today we cross into Germany to Dusseldorf, the elegant capital of Germany's most populous state, Nordrhein Westfalen. We start with a panoramic tour of the city, followed by a guided tour of the Kunstpalast Gallery, which showcases works from the early 18th century to the German avant-garde of today. We also visit the fascinating Ceramic Museum, which features a lovely collection of fine porcelain. (D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Hotel Bismarck or similar.

**Day 18**

**Locations:** Dusseldorf

**Overview:**

Today we have a free day to stroll along the fashionable Koenigsallee in the historic downtown, also known as the Champs Elysee of Dusseldorf.

**Accommodation:**

Hotel Bismarck or similar.

## Day 19

**Locations:** Cologne

### Overview:

Today we travel to Cologne to enjoy a panoramic tour of this 2,000 year old city, which started as an early Roman settlement. We are joined by a local guide for a visit to the impressive Roman Germanic Museum, brimming with many local Roman objects and artefacts. (B,D)

### Accommodation:

2 nights at Best Western Brennerscherhof or similar.

## Day 20

**Locations:** Cologne

### Overview:

Today a local expert leads us on an exploration of the Museum Ludwig. The museum houses the largest collection of Pop Art outside the USA, as well as an extensive collection of 20th century Russian avant-garde works.

In the evening, we enjoy a farewell dinner with the group. (D)

### Accommodation:

Best Western Brennerscherhof or similar.

## Day 21

**Locations:** Cologne

### Overview:

After breakfast, we say our farewells and tour draws to a close. (B)

## Inclusions / Exclusions

### What's included in our Tour

- 20 nights accommodation



- 20 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 10 dinners.
- Transport, entrances and field trips as indicated.
- Services of local English speaking guides.
- Service charges and gratuities.
- Services of a tour leader.
- Detailed tour information booklet.

#### **What's not included in our Tour**

- International airfares and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls and laundry.
- Meals not specified in the itinerary.

#### **Level 2 - Moderate**

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, be in good health, mobile and able to participate in 3-5 hours of physical activity per day, the equivalent of walking/hiking up to 8 kilometres on uneven ground.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.