



EUROPEAN  
INSTITUTE  
OF  
CULTURAL  
ROUTES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



*European Cultural Route  
of Emperor Charles V*

Paths of Europe  
Erasmus+  
2017 - 2019



Erasmus+

**Programme of  
Thursday 16th November '17  
Visit Brussels**



*Brussels, the Belgian and European capital, is composed of 19 'communes', collectively known as the Brussels Region (Brussels Gewest). This region is the only area in Belgium to be officially bilingual and the communes often have two names - the original Flemish plus a French version. It is a city with a very rich history in which Emperor Charles V (1500 - 1558) plays an important role.*

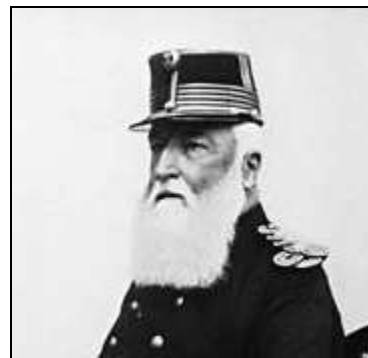
*Emperor Charles V ruled for more than 40 years over one of the largest European empires, in a way a precursor of our European community today!*

We'll start our walk at the Warandepark. This used to be the huge hunting area of the palace the Coudenberg, the medieval dukes' residence and main residence of emperor Charles V. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century the hunting park was little by little reduced to the nowadays dimensions and was laid out as the first public park in Brussels. On one side of this park you can see the Belgian Parliament:



**Paleis der Natie**

On the opposite side you see the Royal Palace. Its curved, colonnaded façade was built during the reign of Leopold II, the second Belgian king (1865 - 1909), who redesigned Brussels as a monumental, (19<sup>th</sup> century) modern capital with large boulevards, parks and big buildings. Nowadays, the royal family actually lives in Laken, just outside the city centre.



**Leopold II**

**Koninklijk paleis**

1. HOW CAN YOU TELL IF THE KING IS AT WORK?

Face the palace and go to your right till you reach the Koningsplein.

The '**Koningsplein**' is the core of Brussels' most aristocratic quarter, where the original palace of the dukes of this region, the palace of the Coudenberg, was located. Some years ago this palace was partly excavated and you can visit the original **palace of Emperor Charles V**, with the Aula Magna in which he became the new emperor at the age of 15 and where he abdicated more than 40 years later. This square is framed by grand neoclassical mansions. In the middle, you can see a statue of **Godfried Van Bouillon**. Our Belgian students can undoubtedly tell you a lot about him, just ask them!

The church on this square is called 'St. Jacob on the Coudenberg' and is the official church of the Belgian army.

A little bit further on your right you'll see the **Museum of Arts**, where you can find a rich collection of fine arts from the 15<sup>th</sup> century till now.



**Museum of Arts**

When crossing this square, keep the Museum of Arts at the right side and walk down the street till we reach the Zavel/Sablon.

On your right side, you will see the impressive church of the Zavel. Inside this church there are several tombs of important members of the court of Charles V, like the Tour and Tassis - family. This family organised one of the first European postal companies. In the lovely parc of the Little Zavel in front of the church, at the other side of the street, you can find several statues of important persons from the age of Charles V.

2. LOOK FOR THE FAMOUS FLEMISH CARTOGRAPHER AND GEOGRAPHER AND ASK HIS NAME AT THE BELGIAN STUDENTS.

At the other side of the street starts the Grand Sablon/Grote Zavel, a nice square with some very famous and expensive chocolateshops.

We walk back and keep left till we reach the Coudenberg again. Here we turn left into the Hofbergstraat.

On your right side, you will see The Old England Building or the Museum for Musical Instruments (MIM). This museum boasts one of the world's biggest collections of musical instruments (7000 , but only a quarter of it are on display). What's more, it is newly relocated in the fabulous Old England Building, a former department store and **Art Nouveau** showpiece built in 1899 by Paul Saintenoy, with a marvellous façade.

If you look downhill, you'll have a view on the Kunstberg, the Arts' Mountain. On your left side, you'll find the Albertina library, a large scientific library. and on your right side, you'll see the Congress building.

Walk down the stairs and have a closer look.

Down at the Keizerslaan, you can see the huge **statue** of the 3rd Belgian king **Albert I** (1909 - 1934) sitting on his horse. On the other side of the street his wife, queen **Elisabeth**, is honoured with a much smaller statue.

Cross the Keizerslaan (be careful) and go downtown into the Magdalenasteenweg. Continue the Magdalenasteenweg.

Walk on till you reach the Grasmart, a cosy square with lots of stalls. At the end of this square, turn left into the Heuvelstraat till you reach the ...

### **Grote Markt.**

The square dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and was once marshland (the name 'Brussels' is derived from the old Dutch word 'broek', which means marshland). By the mid - 14<sup>th</sup> century, Brussels was booming through the cloth trade and the patronage of the Dukes of Burgundy. A prosperous market not only covered the market square but also the neighbouring streets, as is evident from names such as Boterstraat (Butter street), Beenhouwersstraat (Butchers' street) and Kippenmarkt (Chicken - market street). The city's increasingly wealthy merchant guilds established headquarters - guildhalls - on the square. The Grand Place had become the commercial, political and civic centre in Brussels. Medieval tournaments and public executions took place here before high - spirited crowds.

In the middle of the Grote Markt there is the beautiful **town hall**. It was the only building on the market square to escape the 1695 bombardment, although it was the primary target. It's a superb structure, with a creamy façade covered with stone reliefs and a high tower with a gilded statue of St.-Michiel, the city's patron saint. If

you take a close look, you'll notice that the building is not symmetric . When the town hall was finished, the architect noticed this and he couldn't live with it, so he committed suicide by jumping off the tower.

As mentioned above the square holds also the country's finest **guildhalls**. Each merchant guild erected its own building, which is named after the guild, because there were no street numbers back then. The buildings are adorned with gilded statues and symbols related to its trade. At the opposite of the townhall you can see the Broodhuis, a copy from the one that was built during the reign of Charles V.

Turn into the Charles Bulsstraat.

3. TOUCH THE BRONZE STATUE AND MAKE A WISH.
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Continue the Charles Bulsstraat (follow the crowds) and after 100 metres, on your left side, you will find a remarkable young man :...

**"Manneken Pis! "**

The present - day Bronze Manneken Pis was sculpted by Jerome Dusquenoy in 1619, but a stone version - named Little Julian - stood here from the mid - 14th century. The statue's origins are lost in legend: some say he is modelled on a boy who extinguished a fire, others say he was the son of a nobleman. Whatever, the people of Brussels have adopted him as a symbol of their (indomitable) spirit and on occasion dress him up in one of his costumes.

Turn back in the same street. At Hotel Amigo turn left into the Vruntstraat.

The **Hotel Amigo**, nowadays a fine, rather exclusive hotel, used to be a prison, called the Vrunt. The Spanish rulers in 16<sup>th</sup> century misunderstood this as the Flemish word 'vriend' and translated it -ironically- to 'Amigo' and so became the prison 'the Amigo'.

Go straight on in the Vruntstraat, which becomes the Steenstraat, till you reach the Zuidstraat. Turn right and you will see the back façade of the Beurs, the Stock Exchange Building. Just before the Beurs, turn left into the Hendrik Mausstraat.

Cross the Anspachlaan into the Jules Van Praetstraat.

At the end of this street you will reach the **St. Gorikshallen**, a 19<sup>th</sup> century market hall, situated on the place where the city of Brussels started in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Here, on an island in the river Zenne, a fortification and a chapel, dedicated to St. -Gorik, was built about 950 (the second part of the name 'Brussels' -sela- meant 'chapel': chapel on the marshland). Later on, this chapel was replaced by a bigger church, but during Napoleons reign it was demolished and replaced by a fountain and this market hall. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, because of inundations and epidemics, the river Zenne was filled in. Nowadays this neighbourhood, with its many bars and restaurants is thé place to be to go out.

You can go inside the Market Hall and visit the permanent exposition about Brussels (or have a drink on one of the pavements).

Just in front of the St.- Gorikshallen turn into the Karperbrugstraat, till you reach the cross – over with the Dansaertstraat (left) and the August Ortsstraat (right).

The Dansaertstraat is the place where you can find a lot of exclusive fashion shops of young talented Belgian designers.

At the cross- over turn right into the August Ortsstraat, cross the Anspachlaan and see the beautiful front of the **Beurs** or **Stock Exchange Building**.



This impressive building, 1868-1873, in neo-Classical style, is a reminiscent of the Paris Opera. But the basic simplicity is contradicted by an over abundance of ornamental features. Even August Rodin was involved in its sculptural decoration.

Now go left of the Beurs into the Beursstraat.

Continue the Beursstraat, have a look to the **excavations** under the Beurs and pass the recently renovated **St.- Niklaaschurch**.

4. ASK THE BELGIAN STUDENTS WHAT ST. NIKLAAS DOES ON 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER?

Continue into the Boterstraat till you reach the Grote Markt again. Cross the Grote Markt.

At the end of the Grote Markt turn left into the Heuvelstraat. Cross the Grasmart and walk into the Koninklijke Galerij St. – Hubertus.

The **Royal Gallery St.- Hubertus** is an impressive construction (19<sup>th</sup> century) to house luxuryshops, a theatre, a cinema, appartments. It's the city's finest covered shopping arcade.

In the middle of this gallery, turn left into the **Beenhouwersstraat**.

This is a spectacle not to be missed. This narrow cobbled street is full of restaurants that compete for the tourist trade with hard - sell waiters and displays piled high

with all manner of marine delicacies, including kitsch imitation lobsters and the like. Some restaurants are highly recommended such as Chez Leon and Aux Armes de Bruxelles.

In the middle of the Beenhouwersstraat, turn right into the Betrouwbaarheidsgang (second on your right), where you'll find ...**Jeanneke Pis**.

**Jeanneke Pis** is *Manneke Pis*' female counterpart. This little girl is weeing cheerfully and she was erected in 1985 by Denis Adrien Debouvrie 'in honour of loyalty'.

5. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOU WHEN YOU THROW A COIN INTO THE WATER?
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Go back to the Beenhouwersstraat and turn left. Turn into the first street left, the Predikherenstraat. Here turn right into the first street, the Prinsengalerij. Continue left the Royal Gallery. At the end of the Gallery turn right into the Arenbergstraat. Walk till you see the impressive cathedral of Brussels.

This cathedral is dedicated to Saint Michael and Saint Goedele, the two patrons of the city. Inside you can admire the colourfull windows with the images of Emperor Charles V and his family.

Walk back down into the Arenbergstraat and the Schildknaapstraat till you reach the Muntplein.

This square is named after the 14<sup>th</sup>-century 'Munt', the place where local coins were made. Nowadays the square is dominated by the 'Muntschouwburg', one of the most important theatres of the city.

When you cross this square you reach the **Nieuwstraat**, one of the most popular shopping streets in Brussels. And this is ...

**THE END!**

**Here your teachers are waiting for you. Hand in your booklets and then you have to some time for (window) shopping.**

**Be back in time!**

**In case of emergency or if you get lost, contact one of the Belgian teachers:**

**An Decoster                      0032 496 52 10 55**

**An Oris                              0032 479 35 39 76**