



## Bruges and Brussels

Bruges, the 'Venice of the North', is one of Europe's best preserved medieval cities, a city of stunning beauty and charm. During the Christmas period Bruges comes alive with markets in Simon Stevin Square and in the Market Square that both give off that magical Christmas atmosphere. You can stroll along the nicely decorated stands and tuck into all sorts of goodies and Christmas specialities. Each winter the centre of Bruges is transformed by these small but charming Christmas Markets which take place in two of the city's squares. The traditional step-gabled buildings decorated with sparkling lights and the seasonal ice rink in Market Square all add to the delightfully festive atmosphere.

### ACADEMIE HOTEL, BRUGES ★★★

The Academie Hotel is situated right in the historic "golden triangle" of Bruges itself, just 50 metres from the famous Minnewater (Lake of Love) and the Begijnhof (Beguine Convent).

The hotel boasts a lovely winter garden and stylish garden terrace as well as easy access on foot to the city centre. The Hotel Has a Lift and Some Ground Floor Rooms are Available. All Bedrooms have Private Facilities, Air-Conditioning, Telephone, Satellite Television and Hairdryer.



## 4 DAYS

8th - 11th December £ 229

Single Room Supplement £ 74.00

Insurance £ 19.50

### ITINERARY

#### Monday.

Departing in the morning we drive south along the motorways to Dover for the midday ferry to Calais, arriving in France we cross the Belgian border and arrive in Bruges early evening.

#### Tuesday.

The day will be free to explore Bruges, which comes alive in December with its many stalls and street sellers selling hand made gifts and crafts for Christmas. The Market Square has a beautiful tree and you might enjoy a couple of glasses of mulled wine to keep you warm whilst you browse.

#### Wednesday.

Today we travel to Brussels, upon arrival you will have time to stroll around the stalls of the city's Christmas Market in the Grand Place or enjoy a ride on the big wheel, illuminated by 18,000 lights. Maybe you would prefer to browse amongst the many exclusive shops in the city's pedestrian precinct.

#### Thursday.

Leaving our Hotel we drive to Ostend, queen of the Belgian coast where we shall spend some time, later we make our way to Calais and our ferry to England, arriving back in Shropshire during the late evening.

### Look What's Included!

- Centrally Situated, with Terrace and Gardens.
- 3 Nights Bed & Breakfast Accommodation.
- Excursions to Ostend and Brussels.
- Return Channel Crossing.



## Valkenburg and the Velvet Caves

Now one of our most popular Christmas Markets, Valkenburg is different, the markets here take place under the town, in old caves that have honeycombed the earth since the Romans first began quarrying the yellow building stone in ancient times. Cosy market stalls selling presents and Christmas items are set up in the festively decorated and candlelit corridors and caverns of the Valkenburg Caves. There is also a buffet with terraces set up on various levels, so when the shopping becomes too arduous you can take a well-earned break. The original Gemeentegrot Christmas Market has been so popular since being established in 1987 that the Fluweelengrot Market has been organised in another section of the quarries.

### HOTEL RICHE, VALKENBURG ★★★

Hotel Riche has been established for four generations and is always a winner with our clients. The atmosphere of the Hotel is welcoming and convivial and their aim is to try to make our stay as pleasant as possible. There is a bar and comfortable restaurant, from where you can enjoy the skills of the Hotel's excellent chefs. The Hotel Has a Lift. All Bedrooms have Private Facilities, Direct Dial Telephone and Colour Television.



## 5 DAYS

14th - 17th November £ 283

Single Room Supplement £ 22.50

Insurance £ 21.50

### ITINERARY

#### Friday

Leaving in the morning we drive to Dover for the short ferry crossing to France, we journey through France and into Belgium, arriving at our Hotel early evening.

#### Saturday

Today will be at leisure in Valkenburg, where you are free to explore the sights. The Christmas Markets are held in a maze of well lit and well preserved caves, which have honeycombed the ground beneath the town for some two thousand years. (P/I)

#### Sunday

This morning we visit pretty Monschau, with its decorated buildings and ruined fortress and then onto the Christmas Market in Aachen, where you will have time to explore the delightful and colourful stalls in this historic city. We return to our Hotel for dinner.

#### Monday

Departing after breakfast we cross back into Belgium, then through France and on to Calais for our ferry back to Dover, we will return to Shropshire late evening.

### Look What's Included!

- Welcome Drink and Portage.
- 3 Nights Bed, Buffet Breakfast and Evening Meal.
- Included Excursions to Monschau and Aachen.
- Entrance to Christmas Grotto's.
- Return Channel Crossing.