

The 5 best restaurants to EAT LIKE A LOCAL

- 16 **WALRUS**
Jan Van Beersstraat 2
Southern Antwerp ⑦
+32 (0)3 238 39 93
restaurantwalrus.be
- This relaxed neighbourhood bistro near the law courts is popular with locals who come for the friendly family atmosphere. It's somewhere to go if you're looking for a solid Flemish stew or a simple steak served with a bowl of fries.
- 17 **IN DE ROSCAM**
Vrijdagmarkt 12
Central Antwerp ①
+32 (0)486 42 56 06
roscam.cafe
- This cafe on the corner of the Vrijdagmarkt attracts students from the nearby fashion academy. Yet it is homely rather than hip, furnished with an old stove, vintage table lamps and a few dusty books. The women behind the counter know how to cook the perfect comfort food.
- 18 **BIZIE LIZIE**
Vlaamsekaai 16
Het Zuid ②
+32 (0)3 238 61 97
bizielizie.be
- This modern brasserie has a terrace facing the new Zuidpark. The interior is decorated with dark red walls, vintage lamps and old Antwerp photographs. It's a classic Belgian place open all hours that attracts a mix of locals, families and tourists. The menu pleases everyone with its familiar Belgian dishes like Ostend fish soup, *garnaalkroketten* and mussels.

- 19 **AU VIEUX PORT**
Napelsstraat 130
Het Eilandje ⑧
+32 (0)3 290 77 11
restaurant
auvieuxport.be

Here is a dockside restaurant that serves old Belgian classics like steak and frites, tomatoes with shrimps and steak tartare (raw mince). The owner, Jan Bogaerts, bought the façade in Lille and furnished the interior with old French tables and chairs. The tiled floor and wood panelling add to the atmosphere.

- 20 **MAMPOKO**
Amerikalei 8
Het Zuid ②
+32 (0)3 257 77 10
mampoko.be

It's named after a town in the Congo, but this lively Antwerp brasserie couldn't be more Belgian. The interior is decorated with wood panelling, mirrors and nostalgic colonial memorabilia. The menu lists classic dishes like shrimp croquettes, Zeeland mussels and pork cooked in mustard sauce. Also open for breakfast.



19 AU VIEUX PORT

The 5 most STYLISH *and* HIP CAFES

126 VITRIN

Marnixplaats 14
Het Zuid ②
vitrin.eu

The plywood walls and the long benches of this bright cafe and cocktail bar were designed by the friendly young owners Michiel Thys and Kenny Aernouts. The pavement terrace faces west so you can sit outside in the evening with a glass of their signature spritz (cava, aperol and a slice of orange) as the sun sets. We love this place.



127 ME & MY MONKEY Oever 18 Central Antwerp ①

This is a friendly little coffee bar in the antique district furnished with vintage chairs and stacks of fashion magazines. It is owned by a drummer in a Belgian band whose extensive playlist includes rare records by obscure indie bands. The barista serves tasty coffee in old China cups picked up at the nearby flea market.

128 KORSAKOV Sint-Jorispoort 1 Central Antwerp ①

Korsakov's interior is pure 1950s, with a tiled floor and red Formica table tops. The metal spiral staircase leads to a romantic upper room where smoking is allowed. Some basic food is served.

129 BAR BRUL Karel de Preterlei 222 Suburbs (Borgerhout) ②

Locals love this revamped neighbourhood bar with a pavement terrace looking out on the Te Boelaerpark. The interior combines ancient wood-panelling with school chairs and hipster hanging plants. You can stop here for a Goose Island beer or a pot of ice cream made by Borgerhout firm Borgo Gelato. Sometimes you will come across a pétanque competition, a DJ concert or even a book evening.

130 AMOR Turnhoutse- baan 288-290 Borgerhout ⑩ +32 (0)3 600 16 80 deroma.be/amor

This bright, airy cafe opened in 2019 in an abandoned shop next to the Roma theatre. Located in the heart of multicultural Borgerhout, it's a relaxed meeting spot with colourful cushions, house plants and a cool indie playlist. Perfect for coffee, lunch or a local beer.

The 5 best FLOWER SHOPS

201 BALTIMORE

Orgelstraat 6
Central Antwerp ①
+32 (0)3 232 28 38
baltimorebloemen.be

Marc Colle creates the most flamboyant bouquets using rare flowers. In recent years, he has created floral displays for several Antwerp designers, including Dries Van Noten, Ann Demeulemeester and Raf Simons. Yet his bouquets are still remarkably affordable.

202 WILDER

Provinciestraat 28
Borgerhout ⑩
+32 (0)3 297 43 41
wilderwilder.be

This little organic flower shop occupies a former wine warehouse in a quiet Borgerhout neighbourhood. Owners Marijke and Mayken sell beautiful bouquets, along with vintage ceramics, vases and books.

203 BLOEMEN VAN CORNELIS

Sint-Jorispoort 30
Central Antwerp ①
+32 (0)3 293 95 19
bloemenvancornelis.be

This tiny shop filled with flowers occupies a historic house in the old town. The owner suggests simple arrangements like a bunch of yellow tulips or a pot with three hyacinths. He also sells potted plants for balconies, or even a single cut rose for Valentine's Day.

204 DE GROENE DROOM

Kasteelpleinstraat 51
Het Zuid ②
+32 (0)3 232 26 47
degroenedroom.be

This smart shop has giant cacti in the window and bright cut flowers arranged in old zinc pots on two long shelves. The shop will sell you plants for a roof terrace, or put together a bouquet for your best friend's wedding.

205 FLOR ARTES

Mechelsesteenweg 161
Southern Antwerp ⑦
+32 (0)3 230 78 88
florartes.be

The brothers Yvan and Sven Roelandts opened this flower shop in 1985. They have an enormous variety of cut flowers sitting in metal pots along with exotic plants for living rooms and urban terraces.





CHRISTIAN WIJNANTS

50 PLACES FOR FASHION & DESIGN

<i>The 5 best shops for</i> ANTWERP FASHION ———	116
<i>The 5 hippest</i> HIGH FASHION BOUTIQUES —	118
<i>The 5 most original</i> FASHION SHOPS —————	120
<i>The 5 best shops for</i> SUSTAINABLE FASHION —	122
<i>The 5 best</i> VINTAGE SHOPS —————	124
<i>The 5 most innovative</i> CONCEPT STORES ———	126
<i>The 5 best shops for</i> SHOES and BAGS —————	128
<i>The 5 best</i> JEWELLERY SHOPS —————	130
<i>The 5 most</i> SURPRISING SHOPS —————	132
<i>The 5 most stylish</i> DESIGN SHOPS —————	134

The 5 most IMPRESSIVE TOWERS

261 CATHEDRAL

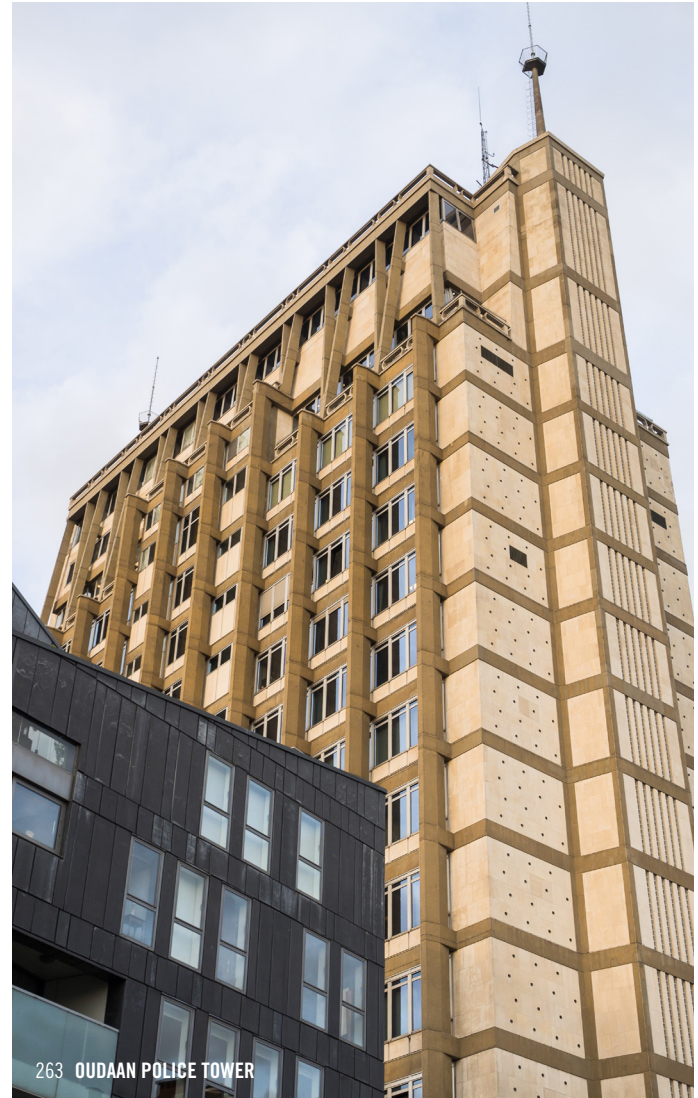
Handschoenmarkt
Central Antwerp ①

The north spire of Antwerp Cathedral slowly rose above the city's rooftops between 1420 and 1518. The architect designed the upper sections in a beautiful Brabant Gothic style, creating the tallest spire in the Low Countries, at 123 metres. Concerts are played on the carillon in the tower every Sunday, from May to September, from 3 pm to 4 pm. You can also catch evening concerts in July and August, on Mondays from 8 pm to 9 pm.

262 DE BOERENTOREN

Eiermarkt 20
Central Antwerp ①

Built from 1929 to 1932 the Boerentoren (Farmer's tower) was Europe's first skyscraper, constructed like the skyscrapers of Manhattan around a steel skeleton. Designed in art deco style, the tower was originally 87,5 metres high, but gained an additional 10 metres in 1976. Previously owned by KBC bank, the iconic skyscraper was bought in 2021 by Antwerp entrepreneur Fernand Huts, who plans to turn it into a multifunctional complex with offices, shops, restaurants, apartments and an art centre.



263 OUDAAN POLICE TOWER

The 5

ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARKS

296 **CENTRAL STATION** **Astridplein** **Station Quarter** ④

Built in 1905 by the architect Louis Delacenserie, Antwerp's main railway station is considered to be one of the most beautiful stations in the world. It has a high domed booking hall, a sweeping iron and glass canopy above the tracks and a viaduct decorated with turrets.



297 **PARKBRUG** **Italiëlei 9** **Antwerpen-Noord** ⑨

The city has come up with an inspiring design for a pedestrian and cycle bridge to link Park Spoor Noord with Het Eilandje. Constructed in 2019 by Brussels engineers Ney & Partners, the bridge features a steel canopy pierced with holes that create a romantic dappled light effect.

298 **HANDELSBEURS** **Borzestraat 31** **Central Antwerp** ① **handelsbeurs** **antwerpen.be**

Entered by four narrow lanes, this forgotten building in the heart of Antwerp was the world's first stock exchange. Rebuilt in the 19th century following a fire, it was recently transformed into a stunning space featuring small shops, walls decorated with world maps and 56 wooden offices where stockbrokers once worked.

299 **PORT HOUSE** **Zaha Hadidplein 1** **Het Eilandje** ⑧ **+32 (0)3 205 20 11** **portofantwerp.com**

Antwerp Port Authority occupies a striking glass structure perched like a ship on top of a disused 19th-century fire station. Designed by Zaha Hadid Architects, this daring building was completed in 2016. Its glass structure is composed of triangular facets designed to evoke ripples on the surface of the river.

300 **STADHUIS** **Grote Markt 1** **Central Antwerp** ①

The massive Renaissance town hall designed by Cornelis Floris De Vriendt has dominated the Grote Markt since it was completed in 1565. You can wander around the vaulted rooms on the ground floor where an exhibition explains the history of this exceptional building.

The 5 best places to WATCH A FILM

- 361 **CINEMA LUMIÈRE**
Lakenstraat 14
Het Zuid ②
+32 (0)3 500 51 15
lumiere-antwerpen
- Hidden behind the photo museum, Cinema Lumière is owned by the people who run Cartoon's in Antwerp and Lumière in Bruges. It's a comfortable indie cinema with an eclectic programme of new films by Belgian and international directors.
- 362 **FILMHUIS KLAPPEI**
Klappeistraat 2
Antwerpen-Noord ⑨
+32 (0)472 17 10 89
klappei.be
- This small filmhouse occupies a Flemish gabled building, constructed in 1916 as a police station. It still has the original prison cells, but it has been renovated to incorporate a 50-seat cinema and cafe. The programme includes some inspired ideas, like a season of architecture films or a Kinky Klappei evening devoted to soft porn movies.
- 363 **CARTOON'S**
Kaasstraat 4
Central Antwerp ①
+32 (0)3 232 96 32
cinemacartoons.be
- Here is an authentic three-screen cinema in a quiet street near the River Scheldt. You buy the ticket at a little box office outside and settle into a snug cinema. The programme leans towards international arthouse movies.

- 364 **DE CINEMA**
Maarschalk
Gérardstraat 4
Central Antwerp ①
+32 (0)3 260 96 10
decinema.be
- This innovative filmhouse offers an adventurous programme of movies on two screens. Launched in 2019, it is a joint venture by contemporary art museum M HKA and cultural centre De Studio. The programme might feature a forgotten horror film from 1920s Berlin, a classic 1980s blockbuster or an unknown experimental film.
- 365 **SECRET CINEMA**
Falconrui 60
Central Antwerp ①
secretcinema.be
- It started in Rotterdam as Cinema Culinaire. Now urban planner Wies Sanders has brought her concept to Antwerp. The idea is that you watch a movie while eating exactly the same food as the actors on screen, at precisely the same moment. Films are screened every month in a former warehouse near the port.

The 5 best CITY PARKS

421 **PARK SPOOR NOORD**

Viaduct-Dam 2
Antwerpen-Noord 9

This 1,6 km long park occupies an abandoned railway marshalling yard in the north of the city. The derelict train sheds have been restored and urban wasteland turned into green space. The park offers endless activities including a jogging trail and a children's playground. Come here on a summer evening and you will find pop-up bars serving ice cold beer.



422 **STADSPARK**

Rubenslei
Jewish Quarter 5

A romantic 19th-century park, the Stadspark was laid out on the site of a 16th-century fortress. The winding paths lead to interesting statues and a romantic war memorial. Look out for the empty plinth where contemporary works are placed.

423 **BOEKENBERG**

Eksterlaar 3
Suburbs (Deurne) 12

This romantic park was once a country estate with a 19th-century folly garden. The park also has a children's playground divided into four age categories, a cafe and an open-air pool.

424 **WOLVENBERG**

Posthofbrug
Suburbs (Berchem) 12

Enclosed on all sides by busy roads, this wilderness near Berchem Station is not too easy to reach. Once you have crossed the busy road, you discover an untouched area of woodland, ponds and meandering trails. You might even forget that there is a roaring motorway just beyond the trees.

425 **FORT 6**

Universiteitsplein 1
Suburbs (Wilrijk) 12

The military engineer Henri Brialmont built a series of eight forts around Antwerp in the 19th century. It was a massive undertaking that took five years and 13,000 workers, but the forts failed to protect Antwerp when the German army invaded in 1914. Abandoned long ago, they have become unexpected nature reserves.