

Bike & Barge



AMSTERDAM TO BRUGES



September 24 – October 3, 2024

Hosted by Bruce and Judy Buursma



You'll be enchanted by some of the most captivating countryside in The Netherlands and Belgium,



on an exquisite bike-and-barge expedition from Amsterdam to Bruges. Beginning with an overnight stay in Amsterdam, we'll pedal through charming cities and picturesque villages decked out in autumn splendor. Bruce and Judy Buursma will host this adventure, their eighth bike-and-barge sojourn through the Low Countries of Western Europe – all of them on board the cozy and deluxe barge *Sailing Home*. Capacity is 26 people in 13 state rooms.

Register today to hold your space!



Tour Cost

\$4,395 per person from Grand Rapids, based on double occupancy

REGISTER ONLINE AT

bookings.wittetravel.com

use booking code **092424BUUR**

or complete and return the printed registration form.

Hosted by

Bruce and Judy Buursma



Bruce and Judy enjoy exploring the rich cultural heritage and the stunning architecture and soothing landscapes of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the country of their ancestors. They've hosted several bike-and-barge excursions throughout the country, and have made

several other pilgrimages to the Netherlands for business and pleasure over the years. As a journalist for the Chicago Tribune, Bruce covered Pope John Paul II's "Pausbezoek" to the Low Countries in 1985. Bruce and Judy live in Grand Haven, Michigan. The Buursmas welcome you aboard and look forward to traveling with you.

Bruce & Judy Buursma

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September 2024

24, Tuesday

Depart Grand Rapids

Today we meet at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport for our connecting flights to Amsterdam. And we're off!

25, Wednesday

Arrive in Amsterdam

Welcome to the Netherlands! We first collect our baggage and meet our driver for the day. After checking into the hotel, our day is spent exploring Amsterdam. We have a guided tour of the city to get acquainted with the history and culture of the Dutch capital. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure. Walk the cobblestone streets, take in 17th-century architecture, or try a stroopwafel – a delicious Dutch delicacy. Tonight, we gather for a welcome dinner to commemorate the start of our tour. (D)

1 Biking over a canal

2 Dordrecht

3 Zierikzee

4 Kinderdijk

Cover

Top: Amsterdam, bottom Bruges

26, Thursday

Amsterdam, Oude Wetering

Cycling mileage 15 km / 9.3 mi

This morning is free to continue exploring Amsterdam before we board the *Sailing Home* in the early afternoon. After embarkation, you can put your luggage away in your cabin and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. Take the time to become familiar with the ship, its crew, and of course, your fellow passengers. We sail to Oude Wetering where we have an easy bike ride as we get used to our bikes. (B, D)

27, Friday

Oude Wetering, Gouda

Cycling mileage 45 km / 28 mi

Leaving Oude Wetering, we venture across country roads, riverbanks, and channels until we reach Gouda. Known for its cheese, Gouda is a beautiful Old Dutch city with stained glass windows, a fairytale town hall, and atmospheric canals. (B, L, D)

28, Saturday

Gouda, Dordrecht

Cycling mileage 39 km / 24 mi

Cycling along the IJssel River and over narrow cycling paths, arrive at the Lek River. We hop on a ferry to Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where we encounter an amazing view of the 19 windmills. After taking a break here to visit the interior of a windmill, we enjoy a tour through Alblasserwaard polder before hopping back on the ferry to Dordrecht. (B, L, D)





29, Sunday

Dordrecht, Zierikzee

Cycling mileage 54 km / 33.5 mi

From Dordrecht, we sail to the Delta area of Holland's great rivers while we eat breakfast. After horrible flooding in 1953, the Deltaplan was created. Most areas in Zeeland were under sea level. Now, because of the flood barriers, that chance is reduced to less than once every 4,000 years. Upon reaching Willemstad, we cycle to Zierikzee. There we visit the Watersnoodmuseum, which explains the tragic events of 1953 when a storm surge broke through more than 300 embankments. Ending our day in Zierikzee, we have the evening to explore the beautiful town and the center of the mussel culture. Blue mussels are a renowned delicacy here! (B, L, D)

30, Monday

Zierikzee, Middelburg

Cycling mileage 51 km / 31.7 mi

Today we cycle along the Oosterschelde towards the North Sea before crossing the Oosterschelde dam. When cycling along the embankment, we will be able to see how much of a challenge it has been to protect the country and to control the access of seawater into the widespread Delta area. It's obvious why the Deltaworks are referred to as one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World. Next, we pedal to the picturesque town of Veere before arriving in Middelburg. This lively Zeeland town is full of old houses, churches, and shopping opportunities. (B, L, D)

October 2024

01, Tuesday

Middelburg, Ghent

Cycling mileage 45 km / 28 mi

We cross the Westerschelde, the only estuary which isn't closed by a dam due to being a gateway to the port of Antwerp. After a short ferry trip from Vlissingen to Breskens in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, we are almost to Belgium! On today's ride, we cross the Dutch-Belgium border back and forth before we cross the border by boat to sail to Ghent. (B, L, D)

02, Wednesday

Ghent, Bruges

Cycling mileage 45 km / 28 mi

After breakfast, we cycle through Ghent to the beautiful and charming countryside of Oost-Vlaanderen. This area is known for its woods, fields, small villages, and castles. From the Aalterbrug, we cycle over the former tow path along the canal of Oostende-Gent to Bruges. The impressive city of Bruges is the last destination of our Bike and Barge Tour. (B, L, D)

03, Thursday

Bruges, Disembarkment

This morning we say goodbye to *Sailing Home* as we disembark. Explore the beautiful town and its medieval roots before we transfer to the Brussels airport for our flights home. (B)

NOTE: All biking distances are approximate. The itinerary is subject to change due to changing wind and weather conditions, and other unforeseen circumstances having to do with mooring requirements, etc.

- ❶ Ghent
- ❷ *Sailing Home* barge
- ❸ Included touring bikes
- ❹ Bikes on shore by the ship
- ❺ Twin bedded cabin
- ❻ Lounge area
- ❼ Bar and dining area



ACTIVE – Travelers must be physically prepared to bike an average of 25-30 miles per day, at times against headwinds. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with Bruce Buursma.



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Accommodations are on board the deluxe *Sailing Home*, with an outstanding crew, including your own chef and bike guide, who are sure to make this an exhilarating and memorable vacation! Cabins on *Sailing Home* have two single beds with a private bathroom and shower.

Comfortable touring bicycles are provided with 24 speeds, hand brakes, pannier bags, lock, and bike helmets. Different frame sizes are available (according to height). It is possible to reserve an E-bike at an additional cost of \$125 per person. Insurance is included for all bikes.



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