Cruise Details

Name:	Belgian Delights & Holland in Bloom
Reference:	EMERALDECNB270328-1
Operator:	Emerald Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Emerald Astra
Regions:	Dutch Waterways
Departs On:	27 Mar 28
Departs From:	Brussel (Bruxelles)
Arrives On:	06 Apr 28
Arrives At:	Amsterdam
Cruise Nights:	10
Total Vacation Days:	11

Itinerary

Day 1: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

Welcome to the heart of Belgium. Brussels is well-known for its world-class chocolate and other culinary delights, artistic heritage and architectural splendour. Today, you'll be welcomed to the delightful Belgian capital by your Tour Director at your hotel, your home for your next three days. This evening, enjoy meeting your fellow guests for a convivial welcome drink.

Arrives On: 27 Mar 28

Day 2: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

Enjoy your time in the delightful Belgian capital, where history seamlessly blends with modernity. Your tour director will be more than happy to help you plan your Brussels explorations during your stay. Included Excursion
Walking tour of Brussels
This morning, embark on an unforgettable journey through the heart of Brussels on a guided city tour, exploring its iconic landmarks and vibrant culture. Marvel at the stunning

architecture of the Grand Place, a World Heritage Site and the capital's central square, and take in the quirky charm of Manneken Pis, one of Belgium's best-known symbols. Admire the grandeur of the Royal Palace and immerse yourself in the spiritual atmosphere of St. Michael and St. Gudula Cathedral. Stroll through the city's quaint streets, discovering hidden gems and learning fascinating insights from your knowledgeable guide. DiscoverMORE
Tastes of Belgium (extra expense)
Embark on a mouthwatering journey through the heart of Belgium’s capital, where every bite tells a delicious story. Our Tastes of Belgium walking tour invites you to explore the city's rich culinary heritage, from Belgium’s world-famous chocolates and golden waffles to artisan craft beers.
Activity Level: Easy, Duration: 1.5 hours

Arrives On: 28 Mar 28

Day 3: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

The day is yours to explore vibrant Brussels at your own pace. Immerse yourself in the creative spirit of Belgian comics that developed a style of its own. If you’re an enthusiast for new, delicious flavours, why not try some of the local delicacies, such as the world-famous Belgian fries, and pair these with a delicious craft beer - the capital is renowned for its brewing heritage. Or simply relax and wander through the Parc du Cinquantenaire, a collection of French-style gardens combined with a historical site that is home to museums, monuments and structures. DiscoverMORE
Belgium’s Comic Heritage (extra expense)
Step into the fascinating world of Belgian comics with an exclusive tour of the Comic Art Museum in Brussels, where you'll explore the rich history of iconic characters like Tintin and the Smurfs. Afterwards, you’ll join a master caricature workshop hosted by the renowned Belgian caricature artist, Jan Op de Beeck. Learn the tricks of the trade of exaggerated portraiture, refine your sketching skills, and create your own caricature under expert guidance—an unforgettable experience for comic enthusiasts and aspiring artists alike.
Activity Level: Easy, Duration: 4 hours

Arrives On: 29 Mar 28

Day 4: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

This morning, after breakfast, you'll join a coach transfer to the Netherlands and the iconic city of Amsterdam – the Dutch capital. Here, you’ll be welcomed on board your contemporary-style Emerald Star-Ship by the friendly crew, ready to embark on your luxury river cruise.

Arrives On: 30 Mar 28

Day 4: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Arrives On: 30 Mar 28

Day 5: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Beyond Amsterdam’s storied canals, a gentler rhythm unfolds as you venture into the Dutch countryside. Included Excursion
Tour to Zaanse Schans windmills
Travel to the charming village of Zaanse Schans, just north of Amsterdam. It’s famous for its picturesque windmills on the edge of the water, traditional green wooden houses and artisan workshops making traditional handicrafts. This is a quintessentially Dutch town where the smell of freshly baked goods and the sight of spinning windmills offer a truly memorable experience EmeraldACTIVE
Guided e-bike tour to Waterland
Enjoy an active cycling tour of the pretty Waterland area, famed for its green landscapes, winding canals and charming villages. Accompanied by a local guide, it’s a relaxed ride on flat ground that will immerse you in Dutch daily life. EmeraldPLUS
Clog painting on board
Relax on board your Emerald Star-Ship this afternoon, as a local clog painter will come on board for a demonstration. You’ll also have the opportunity to try your hand at this unique craft.

Arrives On: 31 Mar 28

Day 5: Zaandam (Netherlands)

Arrives On: 31 Mar 28

Day 6: Rotterdam (Netherlands)

The second-largest city in the Netherlands and the busiest port in Europe, Rotterdam is a modern multicultural hub. Its historic centre was largely destroyed by German bombing in World War II, and the subsequent reconstruction efforts utilised a patchwork of architectural styles, forever altering the city’s skyline. It is home to the tallest commercial and residential buildings in the country, a visual symbol of Rotterdam’s spirit of innovation. EmeraldPLUS
Private visit to the Mauritshuis and orientation walk in The Hague
Visit the royal and administrative capital of the Netherlands, The Hague. Set on the North Sea coast, the city is home to a thriving cultural and culinary scene, historical monuments, and the International Court of Justice. Within your guided tour, you’ll visit the beautiful Mauritshuis museum, home to the best of Dutch painting from the age of Rembrandt and Vermeer, including the famous Girl with A Pearl Earring. EmeraldACTIVE
Cycling and tasting tour of Rotterdam
Meet your local guide for a cycling tour. Travel through the historic Noordereiland district, pass the Lost Luggage Depot sculptures and stop at Fenix Food Factory for a tasting of local delicacies. Cross the Erasmusbrug to the Old Harbour and Maritime Museum area before returning to your Emerald Star-Ship. DiscoverMORE
Delft Pottery Factory visit (extra expense)
Learn about one of the most popular

forms of earthenware in the Netherlands, Delft pottery, during a visit to a working factory. Hear about how the local people maintain this rich tradition, dating back to the 1500s.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 4 hour DiscoverMORE
Royal Delft Tile Workshop (extra expense)
Experience the craft of Delft Blue yourself during one of the workshops at Royal Delft. Discover how the world-famous tin-glazed earthenware is made and paint your own tile to take home.

Arrives On: 01 Apr 28

Day 7: Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Spend your morning in Rotterdam. Later, return to your Emerald Star-Ship at lunchtime and cruise to the small town of Willemstad, known for its well-preserved historic fortifications. Included Excursion
Architectural tour of Rotterdam
Uncover the fascinating architectural legacy of Rotterdam. Its reputation as the city of high-rises has historical roots, beginning with the construction of a 45-metre (148 ft) office building, the Witte Huis, in 1897, which was the tallest office building in Europe. Your local guide will explain the city's modern skyline on a coach tour, followed by a walking tour of the Museum district and a tasting at a local market. EmeraldACTIVE
Guided e-bike tour through the Dutch countryside
Meet your local guide at the ship for a cycling tour. Travel across reclaimed land that is now verdant Dutch countryside, pass the city's notable landmarks and finish back at the ship.

Arrives On: 02 Apr 28

Day 7: Willemstad (Netherlands)

Arrives On: 02 Apr 28

Day 8: Antwerp (Belgium)

This morning, you'll arrive in Belgium's largest port, Antwerp. Located on the River Scheldt, the city's large harbour provides a link to the sea. Home to the famous Baroque artist Pieter Paul Rubens, Antwerp attracts art lovers from around the world. Included Excursion
Walking tour of Antwerp
Enjoy a guided tour of the city centre, with its café-lined cobbled lanes. Admire the Renaissance city hall and Hat Steen, a medieval fortress built during the early Middle Ages, and one of the oldest buildings in Belgium. Afterwards, enjoy free time to explore Antwerp at your leisure. DiscoverMORE
Excursion to Bruges (extra expense)
Known for its canals, cobblestone streets and well-preserved historic architecture, Bruges is a picturesque medieval gem. Your expert guides help you delve deeper into the history of its Gothic landmarks, bell towers and basilicas. If you wish to experience the culinary scene in your

free time, try the city's famous chocolate, fries and beer.
Activity level: Active, Duration: 9 hours DiscoverMORE
Antwerp’s hidden treasures (extra expense)
Join your local guide on a walking tour through this beautiful city known for its rich tradition of chocolate making. You’ll also enjoy a tasting and a hands-on workshop.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration: 2 hours

Arrives On: 03 Apr 28

Day 9: Nijmegen (Netherlands)

Welcome to Nijmegen, the Roman settlement of Noviomagus and the oldest town in The Netherlands. Although its history stretches back more than 2,000 years, it also has a youthful vibe thanks to its large university, as well as beautiful scenery, lush green spaces and world-class museums. Included Excursion
Walking tour of Nijmegen
Join a walking tour through the town centre, exploring its architectural wonders, rich history and charming streets. From Roman relics to medieval architecture, you’ll explore the city's landmarks, including the Valkhof Park and St. Stephen's Church, while learning about Nijmegen’s fascinating past. EmeraldACTIVE
Cycling tour of Nijmegen
Join your fellow travellers on a guided cycling tour of Nijmegen. Ride along the River Waal and learn about the city during Roman times and under the rule of Charlemagne, as well as the role Nijmegen played in World War II. EmeraldPLUS
Shanty choir
On board this evening, enjoy a performance from a traditional Dutch fishermen’s choir. Their songs and sea shanties celebrate the country’s rich maritime heritage. DiscoverMORE
Visit to Paleis Het Loo (extra expense)
Visit the Paleis Het Loo, which served as the summer residence of the Dutch royal family from the 17th century until 1975. Enjoy a guided tour of this opulent palace, where you’ll feel as though you have stepped back in time. The palace’s decorations and its spectacular gardens will captivate every visitor.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 4 hours

Arrives On: 04 Apr 28

Day 10: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Arrive in Amsterdam / Zaandam again this morning. With more than 100km (62 miles) of canals lined with grand merchant houses and crossed by more than 1,700 bridges, it’s no wonder the Dutch capital is often called the Venice of the North. The city comes especially alive in spring, when its streets and parks bloom in a riot of colours. Included Excursion
Visit to Keukenhof Gardens
This morning, you’ll visit the iconic Keukenhof Gardens, boasting 32 hectares (79 acres) of spring-flowering bulbs. Open only from March to May each year, more than seven million bulbs are planted, including 800 varieties of tulips. This area is infused with delightful aromas and a swathe of vibrant colours. Soak in the

sights of tulips, hyacinths, and orchids of every colour, creating an expertly arranged pattern of beauty. You will also see statues commissioned by world-renowned artists, each adopting the annual theme. DiscoverMORE
Visit to the flower auction at Royal FloraHolland in Aalsmeer (extra expense)
Wake early to visit the largest floral market in the world, the Flower Auction at Royal Flora Holland in Aalsmeer. Be amazed by the brokers working the bustling floor, where more than 45 million flowers change hands every day.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 2.5 hours DiscoverMORE
Hidden gems of Amsterdam (extra expense)
Explore a quieter, more authentic side of Amsterdam on this relaxed and personal tour through the city's hidden treasures. Visit the historic Jordaan area and a charming chocolate shop for a sweet treat. Continue through some of the city's most beautiful streets to Our Lord in the Attic, a 17th-century house with a fully preserved Catholic church in its attic. Finish with a beer and snacks at a local brewery.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration: 2.5 hours DiscoverMORE
Dutch apple pie making (extra expense)
Traditions and recipes have long been passed down through generations and are often kept as family secrets. Today, you'll meet with a local who will tell you all about life in Hoorn and share a family recipe for traditional Dutch apple pie.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration: 4 hour

Arrives On: 05 Apr 28

Day 11: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

After breakfast, it's time to bid farewell to your fellow guests as you disembark your Emerald Star-Ship for your transfer to the airport, taking memories of wooden windmills and blossoming flowers with you. Due to new restrictions on cruise ships at Amsterdam's city docks, your cruise is now likely to embark and/or disembark at a port outside central Amsterdam. If your ship does not have a central Amsterdam docking, Emerald Cruises will provide a central Amsterdam meeting point and transfers to your ship as required. These changes are required by local authorities and are in line with our booking terms which allow changes to berthing or dock locations and ports where operationally necessary. You will be advised of the confirmed docking location prior to departure. This itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons such as high and low water. As such, the cruise may operate altered from that stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions for further information. Please note: Preview itinerary subject to change.

Arrives On: 06 Apr 28

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