Cruise Details

Name:	Belgium & Holland in Spring - Northbound
Reference:	TAUCKRHX202702052027
Operator:	Tauck
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	MS Joy
Regions:	Dutch Waterways
Departs On:	02 May 27
Departs From:	Brussel (Bruxelles)
Arrives On:	10 May 27
Arrives At:	Amsterdam
Cruise Nights:	8
Total Vacation Days:	9

Itinerary

Day 1: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

Tour begins: 4:00 PM, Brussels. A transfer is included from Brussels Airport directly to your riverboat, where embarkation begins at 4:00 PM. Settle in aboard ship and then meet your fellow river cruisers this evening at a welcome cocktail reception followed by dinner.

Arrives On: 02 May 27

Day 2: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

Antwerp is Belgium's second largest city, the capital of the province of Flanders, also known as the Low Countries, where Dutch is the official language. Go on an orientation tour of the city and take a guided walk through the historic center. As you stroll along the cobbled streets, hearing stories and insights from your local guide, discover Grote Markt, the old market square... and numerous restored merchants' houses, harkening back to the days of the 16th-century Age of Exploration when Antwerp – at the time a powerful center of international commerce – was the richest city in

Europe. After lunch aboard ship, you'll have some free time to explore more of Antwerp on a choice of excursions. One option offers you a visit to the Red Star Line Museum, sharing the stories of the over two million passengers who traveled to America on Red Star Line ships. Your other choice explores Antwerp through beer! Take to the streets on a walking tour to a number of local pubs for samplings of typical Belgian beer varieties.

Arrives On: 03 May 27

Day 3: Antwerp (Belgium)

You're off on a choice of excursions this morning. One brings you to Flemish city of Bruges, known as "the Venice of the North," for its canals and tiny medieval streets; have lunch in town. On your walking tour in cobblestoned, fairy tale-like Bruges, you'll feel like you've walked into a painting by Jan Van Eyck, who captured life in the city during its heyday in the 15th century. The hike up the stairs of the medieval bell tower is well worth the effort; you'll be rewarded with wonderful panoramic views. The other choice brings you to another Flemish city, Ghent, for a walking tour through its Old Town; the pedestrian-friendly cobblestoned town center feels like an outdoor museum of early Flemish architecture. Think about climbing to the top of the 14th-century belfry, crowned with a dragon, for the view – Ghent laid out before you is a visual feast of castles, churches, and historic merchants' houses. Be sure to try the local specialty, Ghent noses, a traditional raspberry candy sold at stands on the street – or a warm waffle with sugar or honey. Tonight, your ship charts a course for the Netherlands.

Arrives On: 04 May 27

Day 4: Brugge (Bruges) (Belgium)

Today you'll dock in Dordrecht, a historic island city bordering no less than five rivers in the South Holland province of The Netherlands. Reflecting the definition of the Dutch word for harbor – "haven" – the city's charming harbor district preserves many historic warehouses, merchants' mansions and quays, and its role as a major port city from the 15th to 18th centuries. A selection of morning excursions offers you the choice of excursions in the village of Kinderdijk. There's no other place in the world besides Kinderdijk where can you see so many historic windmills together in an authentic setting. During your visit, discover how a windmill works both inside and out, and explore the quintessentially Dutch history of windmills. Alternatively, you can choose a bicycling excursion amidst the Kinderdijk windmills. Enjoy lunch back aboard the riverboat before departing back out for a walking tour that reveals Dordrecht's notable architecture and monuments in its medieval inner city, as well as the surrounding ring of 19th-century buildings. Dinner onboard your ship tonight is followed by a performance by local musicians.

Arrives On: 05 May 27

Day 5: Dordrecht (Netherlands)

Arrive this morning in Rotterdam, the second-largest city in the Netherlands and a centuries-old seaport that's among the largest and busiest in the world. After most of its historic center was obliterated during World War II, the city rose from the ashes to become the thriving commercial and transportation center it is today; renowned for its cutting-edge architecture and vibrant cultural life, 21st-century Rotterdam has been called the "Gateway to Europe." You can explore Rotterdam's stunning 21st-century Markthal (Markethall) and its contemporary culinary culture on your food-focused walking tour, or visit The Royal Delft pottery factory where generations of craftsmen have been making Delft Blue pottery by hand since 1653 for a painting workshop with master tile painters that includes high tea. Lunch today is aboard the riverboat followed by an afternoon to explore Rotterdam at your leisure. Tonight, drive to The Hague (the royal city of Den Haag to the Dutch), for a sparkling Tauck Exclusive evening featuring dinner, live music and a tour showcasing Dutch Golden Age paintings at the Mauritshuis, a renowned art museum housed in a historic 17th-century building.

Arrives On: 06 May 27

Day 6: Rotterdam (Netherlands)

You're off this morning for a flower-filled visit to Keukenhof Gardens in Lisse, where you will discover "the most beautiful spring garden in the world." A rolling carpet of color, Keukenhof is one of Europe's most iconic – and fragrant – places to witness springtime in all its glory. For eight springtime weeks every year, more than seven million tulips, daffodils and hyacinths blanket the 80-acre landscape with color and fragrance unequaled anywhere. Your visit here offers you a choice; One option has you explore the illustrious gardens on foot; the other takes you on a bike ride around the gardens (Note: this bike ride does not take place in the gardens) finishing with a bit of time to walk the gardens. Spend the morning here and have lunch. Return to your ship this afternoon and cruise on to your final destination, Amsterdam.

Arrives On: 07 May 27

Day 7: Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Enter Enkhuizen - once one of the most important port cities in the Netherlands, today Enkhuizen retains much of that quaint charm and provides visitors with a crystal clear window into its maritime history and rich Dutch heritage. And what better way to acquaint yourself with that history than with a Tauck exclusive, early morning opening and guided visit of the Zuiderzeemuseum! Devoted to preserving the cultural heritage and maritime history of the old Zuiderzee region, you'll have the opportunity to explore the outdoor portion of its museum. Following lunch aboard the ship, set off on a choice of excursions. You'll have the choice between either a schooner cruise on Ijsselemeer Lake, where you'll help take part in working and running the 100-year-old sailboat, or, enjoy free time to explore Enkhuizen as you wish.

Arrives On: 08 May 27

Day 8: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Awaken on your riverboat today before heading out for a full day of exploration in Amsterdam – a vibrant blend of the historic and the contemporary, from its medieval core to the bustling shops, cafés and rich cosmopolitan life of a 21st-century European metropolis. After lunch aboard the ship, begin your exploration of this nearly car-free city of flower-rimmed canals, gracious gabled mansions, and people on bikes on a choice of excursions! One option takes you on canal boat cruise through the network of 17th-century canals at the core of the old city, that offers a refreshing perspective of the Netherlands' capital city. As you'll discover, Amsterdam boasts more canals than Venice... and, as it happens, more museums per kilometer than any other European capital. One of the most famous is the matchless Rijksmuseum – filled with myriad works by the Dutch Masters, including Rembrandt's The Night Watch and Vermeer's The Milkmaid – which you'll visit following your canal cruise. Another is a full-day excursion to the Dutch countryside, complete with a guided tour of a tulip and vegetable nursery. And your final choice is nearby exploration in Huizen. Return to your riverboat for your final evening afloat, which includes a farewell reception and toast, followed by dinner and onboard entertainment.

Arrives On: 09 May 27

Day 9: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Tour ends: Amsterdam. After disembarking and bidding captain and crew adieu this morning, a transfer is included from the riverboat to Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport or Centraal Train Station; all guests must disembark the ship by 9:00 AM. Fly home anytime; allow 3 hours for departure flight check-in at the airport.

Arrives On: 10 May 27

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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