



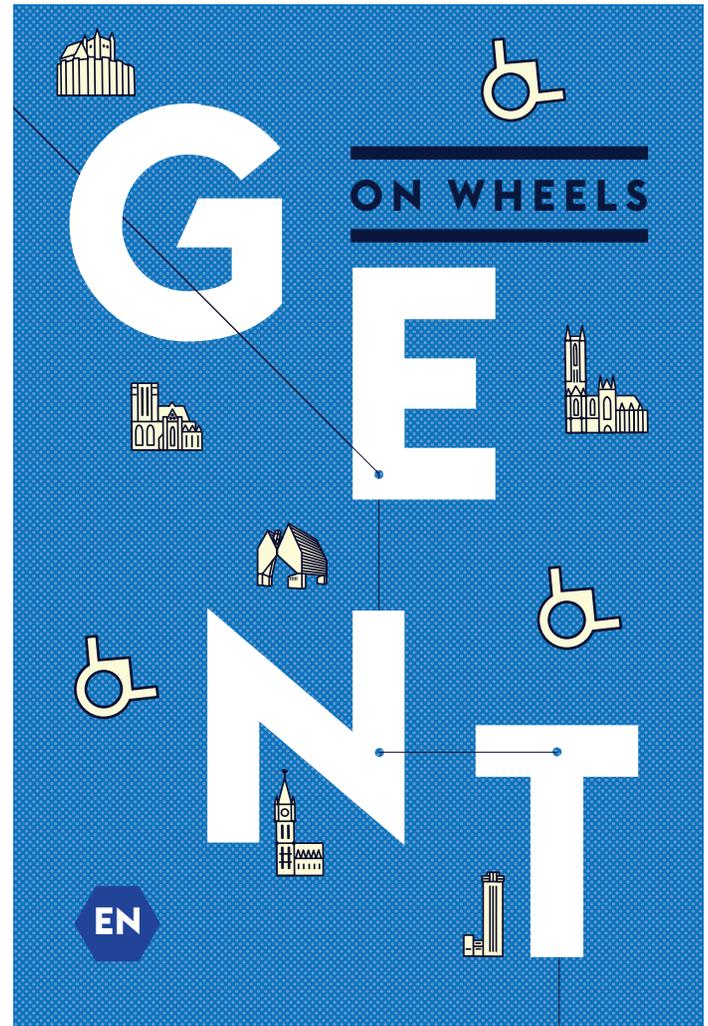


This route was put together and tested in cooperation between the not-for-profit JCI Gent Artevelde, the not-for-profit On Wheels and of course the City of Ghent.

On Wheels aims to map the accessibility of cities for people with a disability using an application. This app allows the user to consult the locations that are accessible for them using highly personalised settings. ([www.onwheelsapp.com](http://www.onwheelsapp.com))

JCI is an international organisation of young entrepreneurs that aims to offer opportunities for growth in order to encourage young people to create positive change. The JCI Ghent Artevelde Department saw the possibility of creating a socially valuable impact in its city, Ghent, through this project. ([www.jciga.be](http://www.jciga.be))

*If you download the free On Wheels app or consult the website, you will immediately find lots more information and photos about all kinds of locations, such as tourist sights, places to eat and drink, shops, car parks, toilets etc., all tested on accessibility by users. This information is kept up to date by users and you can also upload your own comments.*



# S O C I A L M E D I A



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**OPEN**  
7/7 – 10.00 >18.00

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**VOLG VISIT GENT OP:**



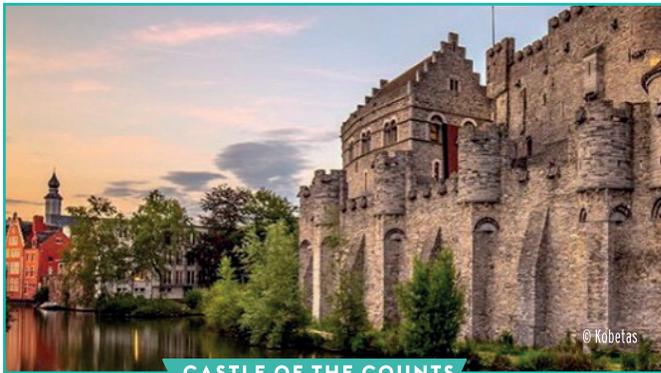
**#VISITGENT**

# GHENT: SOME HIGHLIGHTS



*This short wheelchair route introduces you to all the highlights of the historical city centre. Tested by wheelchair users and therefore fully customised. You will catch a glimpse of the main buildings and savour some of the many delicacies the city has to offer. Consider it a teaser... enjoy to the full, and of course, don't resist the temptation to have more!*

Our walk starts at **Sint-Veerleplein** 1, in the shadow of the imposing **Castle of the Counts** 2. Nowhere else in the world will you find such a massive castle right in the heart of a city. Whoever comes to Ghent without admiring this castle, which was built in 1180, deserves thumb screws, a stay in the dungeons or even the guillotine (which was last used in 1861). All this is on display inside the Castle of the Counts. Where you are currently standing, the Count's chickens once roamed around. The poultry yard was long gone when the **Old Fish Market** 3 opened its doors here in 1689, with its beautiful gateway! High above the entrance Neptune keeps watch with his golden trident, flanked by the Scheldt (male) and the Lys (female).



CASTLE OF THE COUNTS

Unless you've just visited the **Visit Gent Tourist Information Centre** 4 we recommend you do so asap! You can "surf" on the high-tech table designed by Arne Quinze or let the staff put a smile on your face!

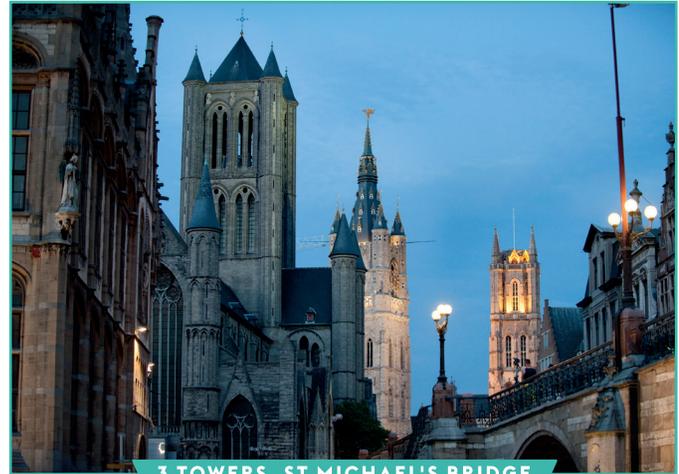
So: let's roll. You leave the Old Fish Market and (for the time being) catch one last glimpse of the Castle of the Counts, then take the bridge across the Schelde to your right. On the right-hand side of the bridge you can see the **Great Butcher's Hall** 4, where you can taste specialities from East Flanders, from Gandaham to cuberdons. The place to be for Ghent's very own mustard is across the square, at Tierenteyn, where they still make this hot treat today. Did you know that Charles V considered mustard an absolute must when eating ham?

Follow the tramlines towards the **Korenmarkt** 5. This square was renovated in 2010 and now really does the historic buildings justice. The area around the three towers is used very intensively by both inhabitants and visitors. Different activities often take place here and the outdoor cafés are an important part of this. The former Post Office building, with its eclectic style, was built for the 1913 World Exhibition and is now surrounded by the **De Post** 6 shopping centre.

Cross to the middle of the **Sint-Michielsbrug** 7. This bridge offers a breath-taking view of the Graslei and Korenlei, which together formed the first trade port in Ghent back in the eleventh century. The buildings on the left and right banks of the River Lys are unique and of a timeless beauty. Many tourist guides describe this as one of the most beautiful cityscapes in Europe - and we're sure you won't disagree. This is also the ultimate meeting place where the inhabitants of Ghent, commuters, students and tourists enjoy the sun and each other's company. Here (and here only) you can admire Ghent's skyline in its entirety. Take your time to stamp it on your memory. Or at least on your camera's memory card.

The tower of **St Michael's Church**, next to the bridge, was to be 138 metres high, but was never completed. The plans turned out to be too grand, and there was not enough money at hand. Behind the church, along the water, stands **Het Pand**, which used to be a Dominican priory and hospital. The building is now owned by Ghent University and is used as a cultural and conference centre.

Now that we've photographed them, we can go and admire the three towers from close-by. Now go back down to the first tower, the one from **St Nicholas' Church** 8, built in the thirteenth century in Scheldt Gothic style with blue stone from the Tournai region.



3 TOWERS, ST MICHAEL'S BRIDGE

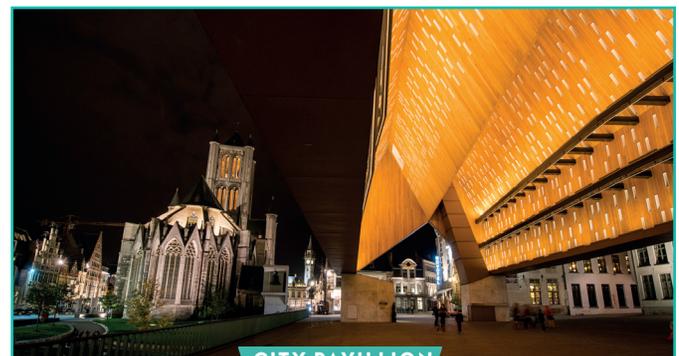
On your right, you see Veldstraat, where all the major shopping chains are represented. Left of the church you'll see Klein Turkije (Little Turkey), probably the only nightlife spot in the world with countless dormer windows and medieval step gables. This was the first paved street in a city full of filthy dirt roads. The street was built based on the stories of the crusaders returning from the Holy Land, which was then colloquially called Turkey.

On the way to the next tower, don't forget to look to the right first, towards the **Masons' Guild Hall** 9, a (contested) mix of old and new on the corner of the Sint-Niklaasstraat. The facade of the sixteenth-century building was long hidden behind the haphazardly built working-class houses. It was so well hidden that an exact copy of the house was built on the Graslei for the 1913 World Exhibition! Look up, on top of the facade there are six curious little devils that seem to be dancing around: the Moresque dancers.



GRASLEI AND KORENLEI

Now continue to the **Emile Braunplein** 10, a lively meeting place. First go down to the bottom. Discover the bubbly establishment Belfort Stadscafé & Restaurant under the city hall. The existing art elements - the Minne sculptures and the Mathildis clock - were given a new place in the design. You can also stop to have your tyres pumped up at Max Mobiel. Then take the lift to the top, where you'll come out beneath the **City Pavillion** 11. The City Pavillion is one of Ghent's new architectural highlights. Striking features include the roof structure and the use of glass, wood and concrete. There is space for concerts, dance shows and markets.



CITY PAVILLION

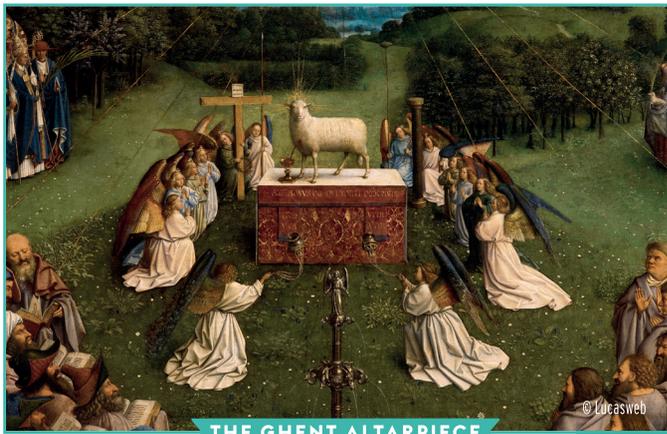
The second and highest tower of the world-famous Ghent skyline is the **Belfry** 12.

This imposing tower is topped by a dragon which watches over the city's inhabitants and its privileges, which it received in 1180. Until 1869, together with the town guards, the dragon would keep an eye on the city from up above, always on the look-out for invaders or – and this was more likely – devastating fires. The alarm bells have been silent for a long time; the carillon, on the other hand, often delights us with wonderful melodies. Since 1999 the Belfry has been a UNESCO Cultural Heritage site.

Keep going towards the Sint-Baafsplein. Flanked by his muses the god Apollo watches over the beautifully refurbished square from the **theatre building** <sup>13</sup>. Water flows from the fountain, and beer is plentiful in the many cosy outdoor cafes.

If the Belfry symbolises worldly power, then the tower of St Bavo's Cathedral symbolises godly grace. **St Bavo's Cathedral** <sup>14</sup>  was once nothing more than a small parish church. Today, little remains of the chapel that was consecrated in 942. The oldest remains are the two Romanesque aisles from 1150 in the crypt. When the Ghent diocese was founded in 1559, the church automatically became a cathedral ('cathedra' = chair of the bishop).

The cathedral is not only home to dozens of art treasures, it also houses the most important work in Flemish art history: **The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb** by the Van Eyck brothers. One of the panels of this beautiful altarpiece, The Just Judges, was stolen in 1934. Amateur detectives and treasure hunters have been relentlessly searching for it ever since... The masterpiece will be restored in several phases, but two thirds of the original will still be open to the public.



THE GHENT ALTARPIECE

We enjoy the city's typical hustle and bustle for one more minute, then we turn into the Biezekapelstraat, left in front of the cathedral. Less than fifty metres into this street, all sounds seem to have faded away. But if you're lucky, you will be treated to a wonderful melody from one of the windows, a hidden musician seems to accompany your steps with a delightful soundtrack. In reality what you hear are the students at the conservatory which is located in the **Sikkel** <sup>15</sup>.

This building, with its two small towers and private well, clearly belonged to a very rich family. Let's not forget that in the fifteenth century Ghent had only five wells for its 65,000 inhabitants!

We continue our walk and pass under the wooden buttress (not a footbridge!) and end up in what was once the main street: if you go right, you end up at Scheldehaven, if you go left you end up at Hoogpoort and eventually at the Lys River. We follow the latter route and roll along the facade of the Sikkel building (which has a torch snuffer) to the junction with Belfortstraat.

Facing the **Cour St Georges** <sup>16</sup> where Mary of Burgundy stayed in 1477, you can admire the imposing **Town Hall** <sup>17</sup>  . You will immediately notice two (of its many) architectural styles: to the right you can see the sixteenth century Flamboyant Gothic style and to the left the Italian Renaissance, which came much later. Inside the Town Hall you can discover more than six centuries of history. Guided tours are available from May till end of September.

You turn back to the crossing point between the Hoogpoort and Belfortstraat. To the right, you can see the headquarters of the Ghent police force (which rose to fame through the Belgian TV series Flikken!). Turn left onto the Hoogpoort.

*If you are getting tired now, you can take the shortcut by continuing straight on, taking you back to the start of the route.*

If you have energy left to discover more of this fantastic city, take a right onto the Werregarestraat, also known as the **Graffiti Street** <sup>18</sup>. Graffiti has been tolerated in this narrow street since 1995 and the streetscape here is constantly changing. The golden rule is to respect work that is better than yours.



GRAFFITI STREET

At the end of the street, turn right and then immediately left into the pleasant Serpenstraat, full of nice shops and restaurants. If you turn left at the end of this street, you will come to the **Vrijdagmarkt** <sup>19</sup>. For centuries this was the centre of public and social life in Ghent: this is where royalty was welcomed, feasts were celebrated and disputes were settled.

In the centre of the square, Jacob van Artevelde is pointing towards England, for eternity. In the fourteenth century, his opportunistic choice to support the English king resulted in Ghent being mainly neutral and therefore prosperous during the Hundred Years' War. Thanks to this 'Wise Man from Ghent' the cloth industry flourished like never before. Ghent is still referred to as 'the city of Artevelde', nearly 700 years after he was murdered by his rivals.

You can leave Vrijdagmarkt along many streets and alleys. You can see **Mad Meg** <sup>20</sup> on your left. This impressive wrought-iron cannon has been in the same spot for 425 years and has never fired a single shot. Its ox red colour is original.

*Take the Langemunt to the left. At the end of this shopping street you come out in the Groentenmarkt again and take the bridge to the right, back to the start of the route.*



GHENT ON WHEELS

## TIP

This route is particularly recommended at dusk: the city has a unique Lighting Plan which makes it look truly magical. As a result, the city undergoes a luminous transformation at sunset. The Ghent lighting plan won the prestigious **City People Light Award** and the **Auroralia Award**. Ghent adopts a responsible approach to energy consumption and light pollution, so after midnight the lighting plan changes back to functional lighting.