FOOD IN FLANDERS

Flanders
State of the Art

Belgian chocolate

THE BEST OF THE BEST



VISITFLANDERS

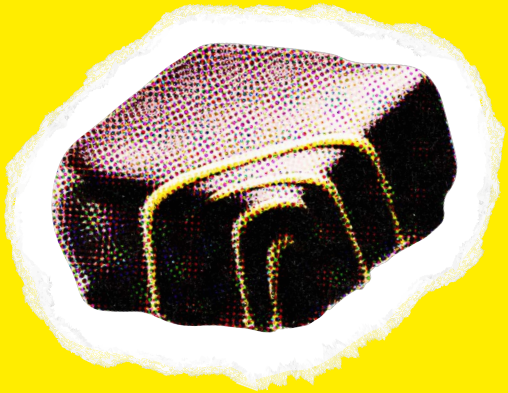






> Belgian chocolate is a simple pleasure and a culinary sensation



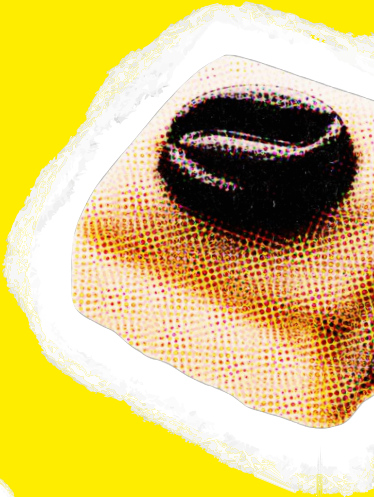




Tradition, craftsmanship and passion

Belgian chocolate is the best of the best–the absolute pinnacle. We're world-famous for this decadent delicacy. And we have the tradition, craftsmanship and passion of our chocolatiers to thank for it.

Belgian chocolate is a simple pleasure and a culinary sensation. Our famous pralines are proof of this. They were invented more than a century ago in the stunning Queen's Gallery in Brussels, which remains an international headquarters for world-class chocolatiers.
The nearly 2,000 chocolatiers in Belgium are the heroes of this story. They scour the world in search of the very best cocoa beans. Then, they use their expertise and flair for innovation to turn them into delicious chocolate, a culinary phenomenon of the very highest level.





Brussels, 1912

In the elegant Royal Saint-Hubert Gallery, Jean Neuhaus Jr. made culinary history. The pharmacist's son was working on one of his father's creations: medicine coated in chocolate to mask the bitter taste. Jean Junior took a revolutionary step. The medicine ended up in the bin and was replaced by a deliciously soft filling. The praline was born.

More than a century later, the praline still reigns supreme over chocolate creations. That same Royal Saint-Hubert's Gallery is still the epicentre of the praline. Some of the very best chocolatiers in Belgium – and therefore the world – are based here. In Brussels, their craft is officially recognised as cultural heritage.



© Kris Jacobs

Chocolate museums

From cocoa bean to praline: chocolate is deeply rooted in Belgian culture. Visit these chocolate museums to discover the story behind this beloved product and experience it with all your senses.

Chocolate Nation

The world's largest museum dedicated to Belgian chocolate. Discover the story of our black/brown gold at this innovative immersive museum. Follow the cocoa bean's journey from the plantations on the equator to the port of Antwerp. Educational and decadently delicious.

Antwerp **www.chocolatenation.be/en**


© LUCID

Choco-story

Choco-Story brings the more than 5,000-year history of chocolate to life through words, images and flavours. The museum immerses you in the wonderful world of chocolate at both of its locations. It's a sensory journey where you do not just look, but also smell and taste.

Brussels **www.choco-story-brussels.be/eng/home**

Bruges **www.choco-story-brugge.be/en**


© Choco-story

Belgian Chocolate Village

This chocolate village offers a fascinating, interactive introduction to the history of cocoa and chocolate. Visitors learn all about the origin and culture of cocoa beans and the process that turns them into magnificent chocolate products.

Brussels **www.belgianchocolatevillage.be/home**


© Visit Brussels

© Chocolate Nation

PRALINETTE

Small and large workshops at an established name in the centre of Bruges. For groups of 1 to 15 people. Separate bean-to-bar demonstrations for groups of up to 25 people.

Bruges

www.pralinette.be/en

ZOETEZEE

A visit to the chocolate atelier for small groups of 4 to 6 people. During the school holidays, ZoeteZee organises tasting walks for groups of 8 to 15 people.

Westende

www.zoetezee.be

HANNES D'HEEDENE

Chocolate workshops for 10 to 20 people. Can also be combined with a glass of bubbly for an extra treat.

Deerlijk

www.hdchocolate.be

VAN NUETEN CHOCOLATES

Interactive workshops for groups of 5 to 16 people, comprehensive master-classes for both enthusiasts and professionals.

Knokke-Heist

www.vannueten-chocolates.com

Experience **Belgian chocolate**

Are you a chocolatier at heart? Then try it for yourself at one of the many workshops, guided tours and tastings at our chocolatiers selected by Gault&Millau.

© I. Almblad

VANDENBULCKE

The Chocolate Trail is a unique experience centre that immerses you in the world of chocolate. Discover the whole story from cocoa bean to praline.

Heule (Kortrijk)

www.vandenbulcke.com/en

CHOCOLATES VAN HECKE

Fun and educational chocolate workshops, with tastings and a glass of bubbly. Also offers bespoke events for customers.

Merelbeke

www.chocolatesvanhecke.be/en

CHOCOLATIER ANTON

Four workshops a year, for 8 to 15 people. This includes tastings, a glass of bubbly and a box of pralines to take home.

Denderhoutem

www.chocolatieranton.be/en

GOÛT FOU

Extensive workshops for 4 to 10 people. Also possible to register individually.

Zele

www.goutfou.be

CHOCALICIOUS

Workshops for groups of 6 to 24 people. Individual workshops are also possible.

Antwerp

www.chocaliciousworkshops.be

SJOLAA

Award-winning chocolate workshops in the Mechelen atelier, with drinks and tastings. For groups of 6 to 25 people.

Mechelen

www.sjolaa.be

BOON CHOCOLATE HOUSE

Demonstrations for groups of 10 to 15 people, available in several languages.

Hasselt

www.chocoladehuisboon.be/en

CHOCOBERLEY

Small-scale workshops for groups of up to 10 people, also available in English.

Herk-de-Stad

www.chocoberley.be

LAURENT GERBAUD

Saturday workshops for companies and private individuals. Also possible to register individually.

Brussels

www.chocolatsgerbaud.be/en

CONCEPT CHOCOLATE

Classic and praline workshops for groups of 5 or more people. Also possible for groups of more than 20 people.

Brussels

www.en.conceptchocolate.eu/en





© Kris Vlegels







© Pieter D'Hoop



© JMilo Profi



Chocolate walks

Discover the rich history of Belgian chocolate while enjoying one of these exhilarating themed walks through our cities.

In historic **Bruges**, you can take a guided walk through the city and past several chocolatiers. Naturally, there will also be tasting opportunities. Find more information at **www.s-wan.be/en** and **info@discover-belgium.be**.

Trendy **Antwerp** also has plenty to offer. Take the 'Taste the city in chocolate' tour to discover and sample our chocolate heritage. On 'The Amazing Chocolate Tour Deluxe', city guide Carolien takes you on an intense chocolate experience. More information at **lekkerantwerpen@telenet.be** and **www.lekkerantwerpen.be**.

Interested in a chocolate tour through the illustrious university cities of **Ghent** and **Leuven**? Find more information at **www.leuveninsideout.com/en** and **info@chocolateatgent.be**.

© Milo Profi



Belgian chocolate is as popular as ever. Our country has around 2,000 chocolatiers. Below you will find the very best in Flanders and Brussels, as selected by Gault&Millau. These virtuosos of chocolate will offer a warm welcome.

Frederic Blondeel

Chosen by Gault&Millau as 'chocolate maker of the year 2025'. He comes from a family of coffee roasters and has taken the next step: roasting cocoa beans to make chocolate. He offers beautiful products in his coffee and ice cream bar in Koekelberg.

Brussels **www.frederic-blondeel.be**

Jérôme Grimonpon

A proponent of the bean-to-bar principle. Oversees the entire production process of his chocolate, with a focus on ecological footprint and the wellbeing of cocoa farmers. Has a preference for fruity and floral cocoa varieties.

Brussels **www.jeromegrimonpon.be**

Laurent Gerbaud

Has been established in his chocolate boutique in Brussels' Ravenstein Gallery for over 10 years. He invites his customers to share in the artisanal production process. His love for China also filters through into his creations.

Brussels **www.chocolatsgerbaud.be/en**

Xocolate

After more than 30 years in development cooperation, Xavier Declercq switched to the world of chocolate, where solidarity remains his guiding principle. Xocolate stands for honest, delicious creations.

Brussels **www.xocolate.be**

Van Dender

Herman Van Dender is a titan of Belgian chocolate. He has been in the profession for almost half a century and has produced his own chocolate since 2016. Refined, complex and exclusive.

Brussels **www.vandender.com/en**

Yasushi Sasaki

Japanese artisan who works wonders with a Belgian speciality. Sasaki's chocolate stands out for its intense character and refined nuances. His tonka bean or apple with Calvados pralines are delicious examples of this.

Brussels **www.patisserie-sasaki.be**

Jitsk

Jitsk Heyninck works at the intersection of innovation and traditional craftsmanship. He guarantees surprising flavour combinations and innovative products such as Puck, a plant-based chocolate with no added sugars.

Antwerp **www.jitsk-nv.odoo.com**

Zuut

Chocolate boutique with tasting salon and an ice cream cart on the Vismarkt (Fish Market) in Leuven. Founded by chocolatier David Van Acker and pastry chef Pieter De Volder, both former students of the great Pierre Marcolini.

Leuven **www.patisseriezuut.be**

Joost Arijs

Pastry chef Joost Arijs left the iconic restaurant Hof van Cleve to open his own business in Ghent. His brilliant creations stand out for their precision, creativity and balanced flavour combinations.

Ghent **www.joostarijs.be**

Olivier Willems

This passionate craftsman is inspired by the North Sea, and this is often reflected in his pralines. The famous masks of painter James Ensor are also a recurring theme Innovative, creative and balanced.

Ostend **www.olivierwillems.be/en**

Goût Fou

Chocolatier Justine Lanoo likes to involve her customers in her wild flavours. At her chocolate workshops, she shares secrets of the craft with fellow enthusiasts. She makes 48 different pralines in her atelier.

Zele **www.goutfou.be**

Deduytschaever

Only the best will do for Jannes Deduytschaever. That's why he decided to produce his own chocolate, which he has offered in his shop in Ghent since 2020. Care and expertise result in an original repertoire.

Ghent **www.deduytschaever.be**

The Chocolate Maker

This chocolate shop in colourful Ghent's 'graffiti street' operates based on the bean-to-bar concept. Founders Jannes Deduytschaever and Karen Van Lysebeth focus on innovation with an emphasis on quality, flavour, transparency and sustainability.

Ghent **www.thechocolatemaker.be**

The Chocolate Line

The life's work of a chocolate dynasty. *Shock-o-latier* Dominique Persoone and Fabienne De Staercke have long been a benchmark in the world of chocolate. Today, the boundless creativity of their son Julius sets the course.

Bruges, Antwerp **www.thechocolateline.be/en**

Boon Chocolate House

Patrick Mertens is one of the most creative chocolatiers in Flanders. Well-known regional products from the province of Limburg are the stars of his delicacies, for example in his flan pralines or gin balls.

Hasselt **www.chocoladehuisboon.be/en**

Centho

Once a small family business, now a house with its own signature style and several branches. The proper balance of flavours is key here. Geert De Coster's pralines have a remarkable ganache layer that complements the chocolate flavour without dominating it.

Tervuren **www.centho.be/en**

Günther Watté

Günther Watté's chocolate café delightfully colours outside the lines. His pralines excel in a wide variety of flavours, in which several fine teas, among other things, are among the surprising ingredients.

Antwerp **www.watte.be**

DelReY

You'll find this Antwerp icon on the famous De Keyserlei street. DelReY is home to Bernard Proot's iconic diamond pralines, a fine collection of chocolate bars, the typical Antwerp Handjes and a diverse repertoire of pralines.

Antwerp **www.delrey.be/en**

Chocolatier M

Scion of a brewing family and a grand master chocolatier. David Maenhout amazes with his eye for design, flavour sensations and carefully balanced textures. In 2023, he was chosen by Gault&Milliau as the very first Chocolatier of the Year.

Knokke-Heist **www.chocolatier-m.be/en**

Pierre Marcolini

A standard-bearer of Belgian chocolate. Maison Pierre Marcolini enjoys an excellent reputation as *haute chocolaterie*. Exceptional craftsmanship and boundless passion result in pralines with a refined taste.

Brussels, Bruges **www.eu.marcolini.com/en**



‘A praline is only top quality if it evokes emotion’

Chocolate is in Julius Persoone‘s blood. His father Dominique built The Chocolate Line from the ground up. Julius is now the creative brain behind it. He‘s taking the chocolate world by storm with his surprising creations. Think pralines with home-grown tomato, caramelised prawn heads or fermented mushrooms … The creativity knows no bounds.

‘A praline is only top quality if it evokes emotion,’ Julius explains. ‘One fellow chocolatier burst into tears when he tasted our praline with fermented tomato. He was catapulted back to his Italian grandmother’s kitchen. Moments like that are what drive me to spend days experimenting in the workshop.’

In support of that experimental drive, Julius can count on an exceptionally strong team comprised of a mixed bunch of top chefs, bakers and pastry chefs from all over the world. ‘There are no classic chocolatiers in our team. We think about pralines as we would about a dish. They must contain different layers of flavour and never be one-dimensional.’



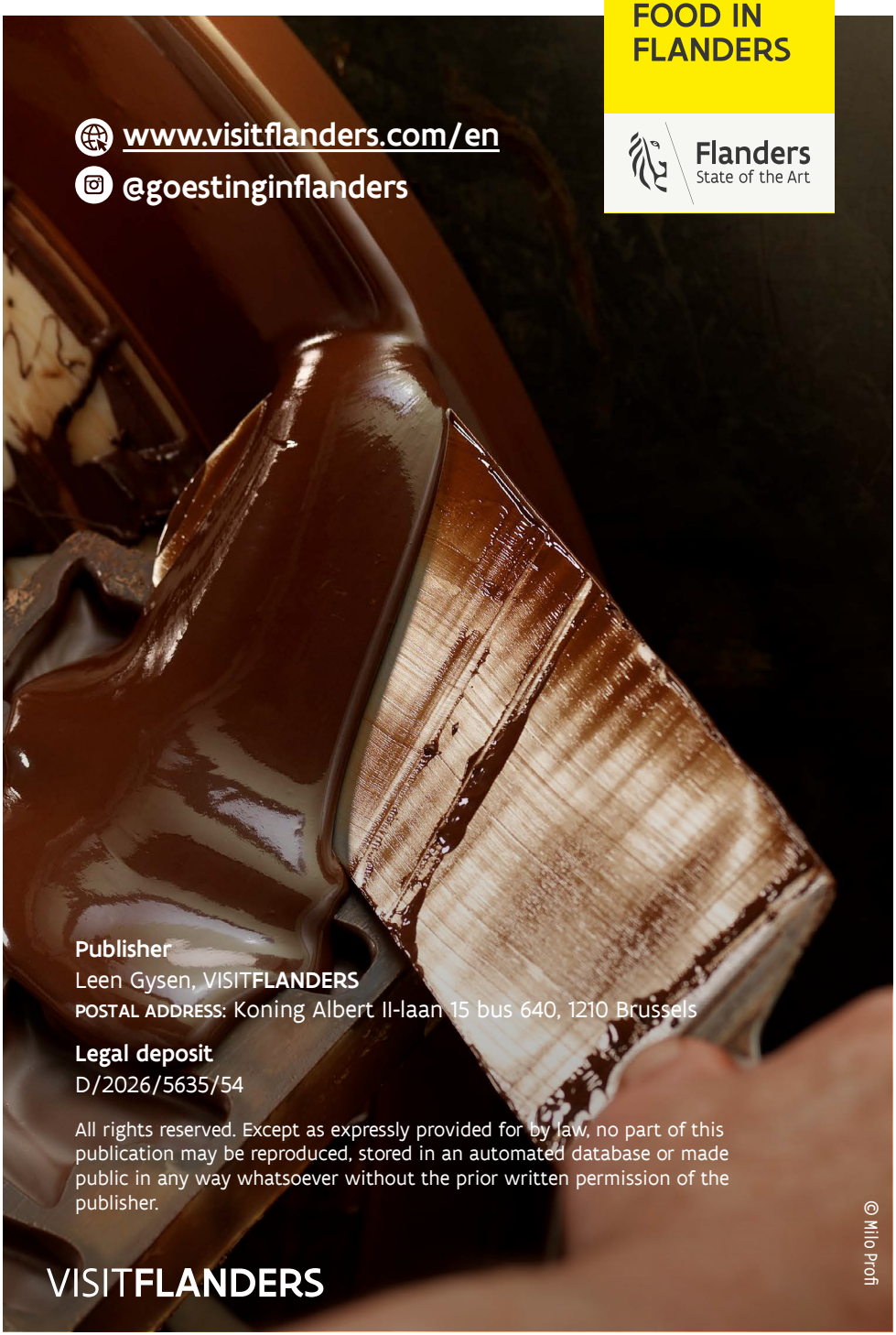
Julius is passionate about this wonderful product, and he is not the only one. Flanders has a small army of enthusiastic culinary ambassadors. GOESTING is a colourful collection of chefs, chocolatiers, brewers, hostesses and culinary makers all united by a common goal: to share the hidden stories of our food culture.

DISCOVER OUR AMBASSADORS AT
WWW.VISITFLANDERS.COM/EN/GOESTING

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