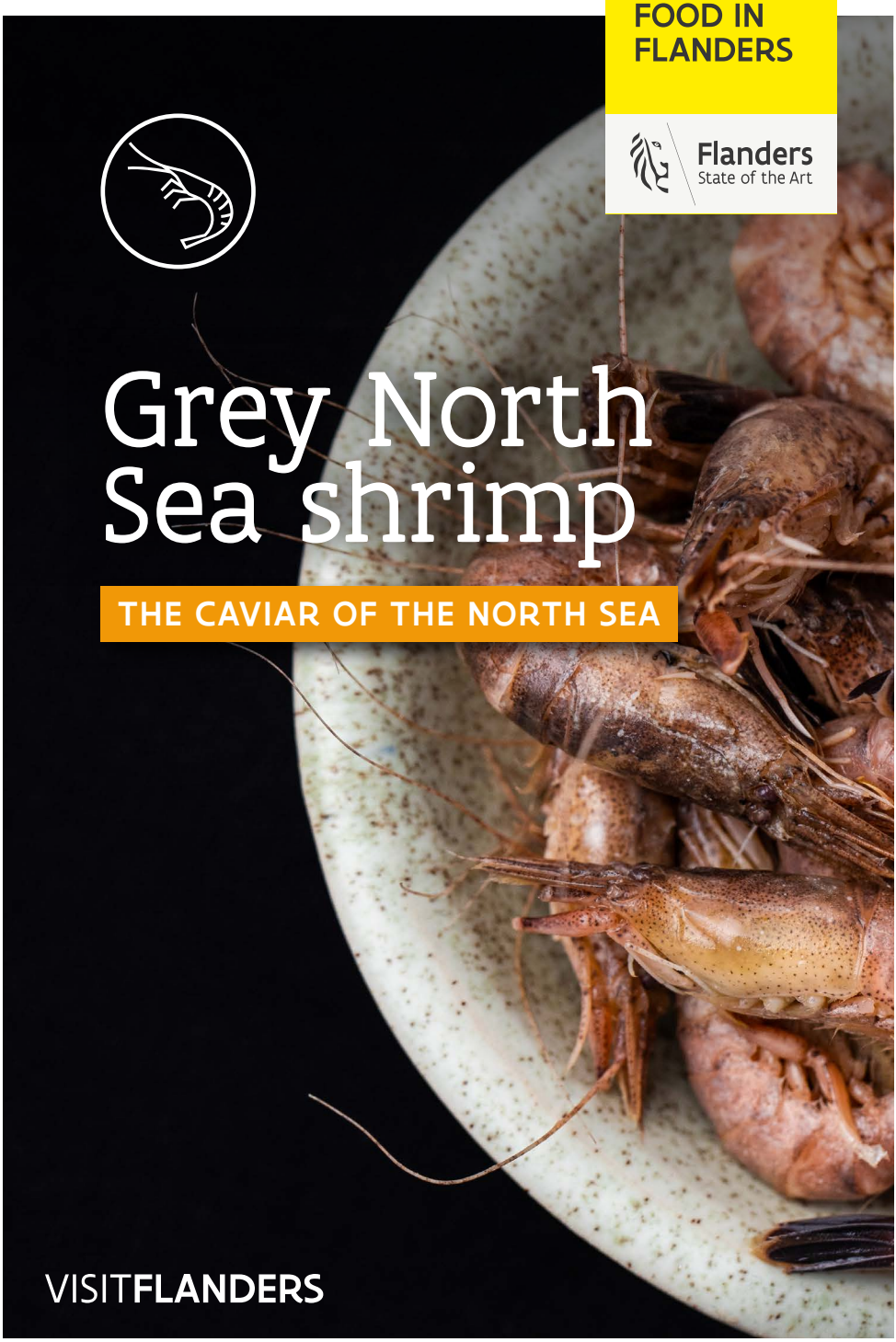
FOOD IN FLANDERS

Flanders
State of the Art

Grey North Sea shrimp

THE CAVIAR OF THE NORTH SEA



VISITFLANDERS



“A delicious product, tradition and craft.

The jewel in our culinary crown

If the North Sea is a treasure chest, the grey shrimp is its most exquisite jewel. The finest shrimp of all swim here in our waters. This softly salty delicacy is put on a pedestal in Flanders. It is an irresistible cornerstone of our culinary culture,

which we are able to enjoy thanks to our hard-working fishermen, who gather them from the North Sea. They use three different methods for this. The first is done in the moonlight. The fishing boats head out to sea and cast their nets at night. Their catch is cooked on board in salty seawater.

The other two methods are carried out in the surf. Shrimp fishermen wade through the shallow water with a trawl net and gather the ‘caviar of the North Sea’. In Oostduinkerke, this task is even more romantic. It is the only place in the world where you still find authentic shrimp fishermen on horseback. You see the fishermen in their yellow oilskin coats riding sturdy draught horses. It’s a magnificent tradition that is included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

However these shrimp are caught, they land on your plate in no time at all. The fresher, the better. That goes without saying. They are used super-fresh in a traditional dish in Flemish cuisine. You’ll find them as subtle little flavour bombs in tatjespap, a creamy buttermilk mashed potato dish. They are just as delicious in tomaat-garnaal (shrimp-stuffed tomatoes), which is simple yet sensational. And, once you discover shrimp croquettes, you’ll be back for more. These classics are inextricably linked with our heritage.

All these lovely dishes can be enjoyed thanks to three reasons: a delicious product, tradition and craftsmanship. Which make the grey shrimp a jewel in Flanders’ culinary crown. The North Sea coast is proud of its fantastic product. And you’ll notice that everywhere.

The Flemish coast, a multi-faceted paradise

Say grey shrimp and you think of the North Sea. Say North Sea and you think of the Flemish coast. This multi-faceted paradise boasts 67 kilometres of fine sand, sea and dunes, but also culinary highlights, art, culture, history, heritage and much more.

You will discover 13 coastal resorts, each with their own personality and identity. There is Ostend, where the fishing life and lively cultural scene blend into one. There are the wide walking beaches in De Panne and the Belle Epoque beauty of De Haan. There are pleasure cruises and wartime history in Nieuwpoort, the authentic fishing life in Koksijde, the port in Zeebrugge, the grandeur of Knokke, the pristine nature in Het Zwin and much more.

Can't get enough of the salty sea air? Explore more of it with an amazing four-day stay at the Flemish coast.

SCAN THE QR CODE AND DISCOVER THE FLEMISH COAST: 67 KILOMETRES OF BEACH, CULTURE, HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The world's longest tram line covers the full length of the Flemish coast: 67 kilometres long, with 67 stops. It's the perfect way to discover all the treasures and flavours of the Flemish North Sea coast. Look out the window to enjoy the lovely views along the way. The **Beaufort Sculpture Park** is a collection of around 40 artworks along the North Sea beach. It gives the Flemish coastline an artistic character.

SCAN THE QR CODE AND DISCOVER THE COASTAL TRAM

FRESHER THAN FRESH - THE VISTRAP

It doesn't get any fresher than the Vistrap. For North Sea shrimp, this is the shortest imaginable route from 'boat to plate.' The stalls in this open-air market are all run by fishing families who have been in the profession for generations. Open from early in the morning, closed in stormy weather.

Vistrap, Visserskaai 35, 8400 Ostend

HERITAGE THROUGH YOUR OWN EYES SHRIMP FISHERMEN ON HORSEBACK

Sturdy draught horses stride through the surf of the North Sea, towing large nets behind them. Fishermen in yellow oilskin coats sit on their backs. This ancient craft – recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural World Heritage – is still alive and kicking in Oostduinkerke. If you are lucky, you might get to experience a cooking demonstration on the beach.

Oostduinkerke

www.visitkoksijde.be/nl/visit-koksijde/zien-en-doen/onze-garnaalvissers

ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES GO TRAWLING FOR SHRIMP YOURSELF

Shrimp you have caught yourself tastes twice as good. In Ostend, you can take part in shrimp trawling workshops. This means putting on a brightly coloured wading suit and heading out into the surf with a net. After the workshop, you get to take home your catch.

Ostend

www.horizoneducatief.be



Experience the **North Sea shrimp**

The grey shrimp is inextricably linked with tradition and craftsmanship. Experience this centuries-old story with your own eyes and ears.

THE NATIONAL FISHERIES MUSEUM

Fishermen have been at home here for centuries. At the NAVIGO National Fisheries Museum, you'll discover the history of Icelandic sailors and beach fishermen, fishing families at sea and ashore, ship models, North Sea animals and an authentic fisherman's cottage. Complete your visit with shrimp croquettes at De Peerdevisscher, the museum inn run by a fishing family.

Oostduinkerke

www.navigomuseum.be/en

HEAD OUT TO SEA ON A WOODEN FISHING BOAT

Want to explore the North Sea on a piece of genuine heritage? You can do so on board De Nostalgie: a renovated wooden fishing vessel over 60 years old, once one of the last of its kind on the North Sea. NAVIGO Fisheries Museum brings you on board for a wonderful cruise.

Nieuwpoort

www.navigomuseum.be/en

THE SHRIMP STORY

How does North Sea shrimp end up on your plate? The Shrimp Story in Nieuwpoort explains it. The Municipal Fish Market has a multimedia experience centre where you can dive into the archives, brave the waves on a fishing boat and watch alongside fishermen and auction staff. It's a great way to discover the story of the shrimp.

Nieuwpoort

www.visit-nieuwpoort.be/en/the-shrimp-story



There are many stories about grey shrimp, but the taste is what really counts. Under the motto 'the fresher, the better', Gault&Millau selects the very best spots to enjoy North Sea grey shrimp.

At the seaside

Bistro Mathilda

This bistro at the impressive Casino-Kursaal has been serving refined, contemporary local cuisine for three decades.

Ostend **www.bistromathilda.be/en**

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

Brassi Casino

Within the casino, Brassi surprises you with its generous brasserie cuisine. The home-made shrimp croquettes are a definite must. The accompanying Grand Café is also highly regarded.

Ostend **www.brassi.be**

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
12 out of 20

De Peerdevisscher Inn

The inn at the National Fisheries Museum (NAVIGO) is run by a fishing family. Shrimp croquettes are served in both traditional and contemporary styles.

Oostduinkerke **www.estaminet-de-peerdevisscher.com**

Fort Napoleon

First an educational visit, then a delicious meal. In the brasserie at this historic fort, you can enjoy shrimp croquettes served in a paper cone, to enjoy on the go or in the good old-fashioned way.

Ostend **www.fort-napoleon-brasserie.be**

Gastrobar Sam

Sam is a child of the North Sea. He works with fresh night-caught fish and serves delicious shrimp croquettes made according to grandma's recipe.

Ostend **www.gastrobarsam.be**

Julia

Julia opened a fish shop over 100 years ago. It is now run by her great-grandson Angus, building upon a century of knowledge and devotion, in the fish restaurant that bears her name.

Ostend **www.julia-baaldje.be**

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

At the seaside

De Kruier

Two brothers, an open kitchen and a traditional menu. Starring delicious shrimp croquettes, tomaat-garnaal (shrimp-stuffed tomato) and shrimp bisque. The choice is yours.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
14 out of 20

Knokke-Heist **www.kruier.be**

North

This brasserie is a four-time champion of the annual Shrimp Croquette Festival in Ostend. That says it all.

Ostend **www.restaurant-north.be**

Ten Doele

Traditional brasserie on the coast. Naturally, shrimp croquettes feature on the menu. The polder potato with poached egg, mousseline sauce and freshly peeled shrimp tastes like heaven.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

Blankenberge **www.tendoele.be**

't Werftje

A great name when it comes to shrimp croquettes. The beauties from 't Werftje have won multiple awards.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
12 out of 20

Zeebrugge **www.twerftje.be**

The rest of Flanders

Au Vieux Saint Martin

A brasserie in the historic heart of Brussels, dating back to 1968. Walls with modern art, plates with delicious shrimp croquettes and fine North Sea shrimp salads.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13 out of 20

Brussels **www.auvieuxsaintmartin.be/en**

La Belle Maraîchère

With a name that translates as 'beautiful market gardener', this restaurant stands out for its classic fish and seafood dishes. The generously rolled shrimp croquettes have a nice crust and delightfully creamy filling.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
14 out of 20

Brussels **www.labellemaraichere.be/en/home-2**

Bistro Belix

The North Sea may be far away but it's always close by in thought. This Limburg bistro serves stunning home-made croquettes based on a Brussels recipe and bursting with fresh shrimp.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

Tongeren **www.bistrobelix.be**

Brabohoeve

A popular and attractive brasserie, with dishes based on classics from Belgian, French and Spanish cuisine. Shrimp croquettes as a snack or starter are a must.

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
14 out of 20

Schilde **www.brabohoeve.be**

The rest of Flanders

Les Brasseries Georges

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
12 out of 20

This lively, elegant brasserie has been popular in Brussels for three decades. Ideal for those who adore North Sea shrimp, seafood and culinary classics.

Brussels **www.brasseriesgeorges.be**

Les Brigittines

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

Captivating brasserie with an Art Deco interior on the edge of the Marolles, a popular neighbourhood in Brussels. Chef Dirk Myny knows his classics and serves them in a flash.

Brussels **www.lesbrigittines.com**

Fernand Obb Delicatessen

This Brussels delicatessen is a *true example* of Belgian popular cuisine. The home-made shrimp croquettes are served in the classic style or with a roll and tartare sauce.

Brussels **www.fernand-obb.be/?lang=en**

Fortuin

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

A modern establishment in Kontich, just south of Antwerp. Former winner of Gault&Millau Brasserie of the Year. Nostalgic dishes, quirky and contemporary.

Kontich **www.fortuinkontich.be**

Friture René

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
12 out of 20

An iconic, almost 100-year-old brasserie in Brussels. The tomaat-garnaal (shrimp-stuffed tomato) with fresh fries and the delicious shrimp croquettes are two of the menu's stars.

Brussels • Place de la Résistance 14, 1070 Anderlecht

Roosenberg

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13 out of 20

Gastronomic brasserie that is out of this world. On the richly varied menu, you will find grey North Sea shrimp both in croquettes and in a southern-style fish soup.

Waasmunster **www.roosenberg.be**

Silo's

GAULT&MILLAU SCORE
13.5 out of 20

Classic brasserie, specialising in traditional dishes. Including grey shrimp, of course. Silo's motto? *You don't need a silver fork to eat good food.*

Boortmeerbeek **www.silos.be**

Shrimp fishermen on horseback, **UNESCO World Heritage**

You might not believe your eyes on the beach at Oostduinkerke. In this small resort on the Flemish coast, sturdy draught horses stride through the surf. On their backs are riders clad in a bright yellow oilskin jackets. Behind them, they tow a large net, gathering as many grey shrimp as possible.

Oostduinkerke beach is the ideal spot for this splendid tradition. It is one of the widest stretches along the Flemish coast, has no breakwaters and slopes gently. This means that the fishermen on horseback can get far enough out in the sea for hours of fishing. The channels behind sandbanks are where they find their delicacies. When their nets are full, the fishermen sort the catch. Once only shrimp remains, they are cooked in a large pot with salt water on the beach.

The shrimp fishermen from Oostduinkerke are one of a kind. It is the only place in the world where shrimp are still caught in this traditional manner. This ancient custom is still very much alive here. Since 2013, it has been on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

WANT TO SEE THIS SPECTACLE FOR YOURSELF? SCAN THE QR CODE AND DISCOVER WHEN YOU CAN EXPERIENCE IT.

Incomparable **classics**

If perfection exists, it would be a shrimp croquette. Encased in a golden, crispy crust. After that first crunch, you bite into a velvety-soft and creamy filling packed with North Sea shrimp, freshly caught and lovingly prepared. Every bite is an ode to the Flemish coast. Authentically made and irresistible, the ultimate comfort food.

The shrimp croquette

Tomaat-garnaal
(shrimp-stuffed tomato)

Simply sensational. This classic dish is a juicy tomato, carefully hollowed out and filled to the brim with the finest, hand-peeled North Sea shrimp. Mixed with a generous spoonful of mayonnaise, embracing the salty zing of shrimp. On the side, a portion of golden Belgian fries, crispy on the outside, tender on the inside. A dish that will blow you away in many bistros, brasseries and restaurants along the entire length of the North Sea coast.

‘Straight from the net, freshly cooked. That is my benchmark.’



Michelin-star chef Willem Hiele is a child of the North Sea and the grandson of a fisherman. He declares his love for the grey shrimp.

‘The sea reflects my soul: sometimes tempestuous, sometimes still. The first shrimp he ever tried came straight from the net, freshly cooked. That’s my benchmark. I want only the best.’

’If you want to get to know me, you must try my shrimp bisque, a nostalgic dish. That bisque tells you who I am and where I come from. When I taste it, it feels like I am back in my grandparents’ living room. My grandmother blindly peeling shrimp, my grandfather playing cards, and taking occasional sips from his coffee and a glass of brandy. On the stove, shrimp shells are turned into a delicious stock. All those aromas and flavours are in my bisque: you taste the coffee in the cream floating on the bisque, the butter is flavoured with brandy and the shrimp are in the soup. I serve it in my grandmother’s old blue-and-white cups.’

Willem is passionate about this fabulous product and he’s 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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State of the Art

www.visitflanders.com/en

@goestinginflanders



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