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# PLAISIRS D'HIVER WINTERPRET

**BRUXELLES 24.11 > 31.12.23\* BRUSSEL**

\*PROLONGATION / VERLENGING > 07/01 @ place de Brouckère, place de la Monnaie, Grand-Place / De Brouckère- en Muntplein, Grote Markt

[plaisirsdhiver.be](http://plaisirsdhiver.be) / [winterpret.be](http://winterpret.be)



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# 1. EDITORIAL

Everyone knows that there are a thousand reasons to come to Brussels! But there's one particular reason which takes on a very special dimension. It's Winter Wonders - the long-awaited end-of-year holiday event!

Since its inception, Winter Wonders has been transforming the capital into a winter fairytale, to the delight of young and old alike. The event has made Brussels a must-see destination for city trips and holiday activities. With almost 3.5 million visitors, it continues to attract and delight both locals and tourists from Belgium and beyond.

Once again, over 5 weeks in the city centre, in the neighbourhoods with its famous Winter Pop, Brussels is lit up and invites everyone to stroll through its streets and enjoy its wonderful activities.

At the heart of these activities are the majestic fir tree and the sound and light shows on the historic façades of the Grand-Place, the traditional chalets and their delicious dishes, the giant Ferris wheel, the merry-go-rounds, and also an ice rink open to skaters of all levels.

Alongside these Winter Wonders favourites, the magic of the 2023 edition will be weaved this year by its guest of honour, the 11 Indigenous Nations of Quebec. There's no need for long speeches to understand that the invitation is part of a context of openness and inclusivity which is being renewed time and time again. This collaboration will also offer Winter Wonders spectators a new, unique and immersive programme of shows.

It also goes without saying that dreams and tradition are synonymous with special attention to the environment. As every year, a series of actions will be taken to ensure that the event is as sustainable as possible. Respect for biodiversity and the community are at stake.

It's a great joy for the City of Brussels - and for me in particular - to see the return of its Winter Wonders, which to me is a byword for diversity and shared emotions, with caring and living together. It's the event for children, parents, families, friends, colleagues and everyone who wants to see Brussels sparkle with a thousand lights!

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**Delphine Houba,**  
Alderman for Culture,  
Tourism and Major Events

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## 2. WINTER WONDERS: A PLACE TO MEET AND SHARE

The City of Brussels is celebrating the 23rd edition of Winter Wonders from Friday 24 November to Sunday 31 December 2023. The festivities will be extended to 7 January 2024 on Place De Brouckère, Place de la Monnaie and the Grand-Place. This unmissable event sets the heart of the capital ablaze and layers it in colours and sparkles with its cosy, picturesque and magical atmosphere.

Winter Wonders is a byword for celebration and meetings among the inhabitants of Brussels and visitors from all over the world, contributing to the capital's attractiveness during the holiday period. Indeed, this major event represents a significant economic interest for various sectors such as the hotel, restaurant, recreation, mobility and retail industries in Brussels. In 2022, it is estimated that visitors will spend almost 260 million euros in the Winter Wonders zone.

The City of Brussels is firmly determined to warm hearts, especially during this end-of-year holiday period.

Winter Wonders combines elegance and seduction with tradition and innovation, bringing new blood and arousing curiosity during the five weeks of festivities. The City and its organisers pride themselves on finding new and surprising entertainment and great collaborations. It's this mix which enables the event to appeal to everyone's tastes and make it a unique family experience.

Winter Wonders also includes a giant Ferris wheel, an ice rink, merry-go-rounds, exhibitions and choirs, not to mention wood-panelled chalets creating inviting aromas to delight gourmets, and other stalls to attract the curious in search of original gifts.

This year, these attractions are joined by a host of major new features: immersive programming devised by the 11 Indigenous Nations of Quebec as guests of honour, after ski evenings on the ice rink, and even more initiatives to enhance the sustainable nature of the event.

Winter Wonders is of course synonymous with a majestic fir tree and a life-size nativity scene. Both are invited to our beloved Grand-Place, decorated and enhanced by a breath-taking sound and light show realised by our guest of honour, the 11 Indigenous Nations of Quebec.

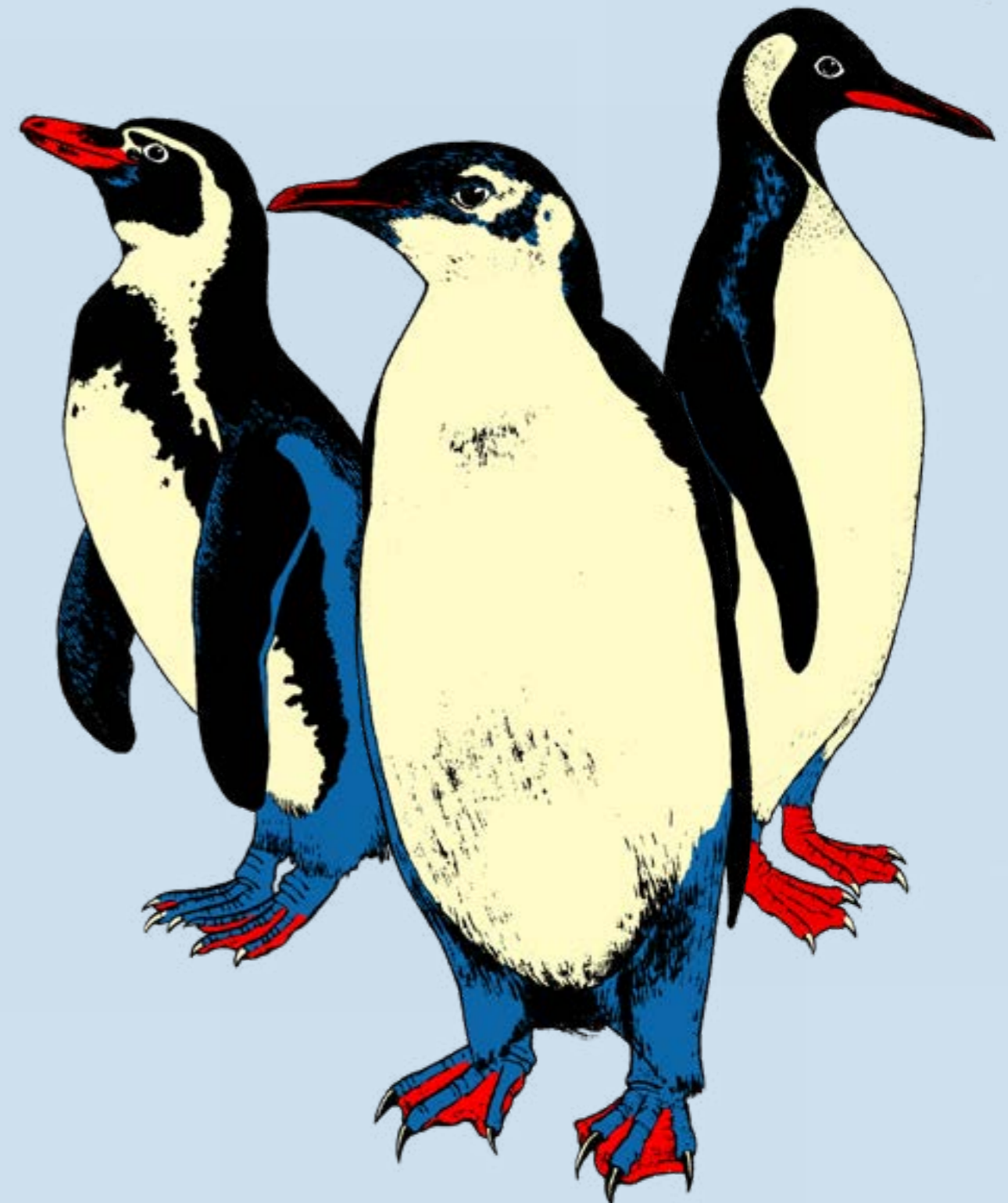
It's an original combination of one of the most popular Christmas markets in Europe (source: European Best Destinations) and the diversity of activities on offer which makes Winter Fun such a magical event with a unique signature style.

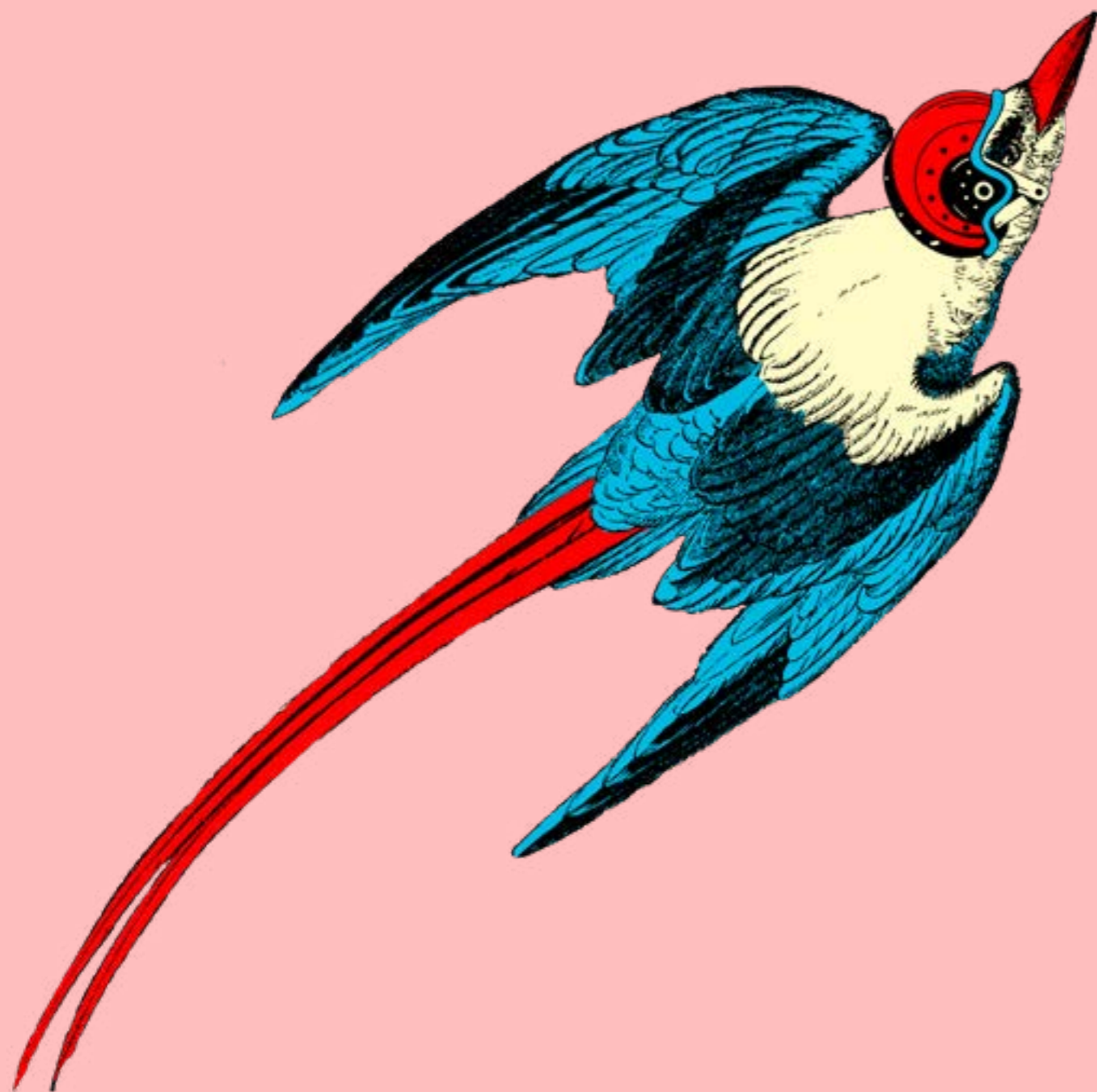
A dynamic map will be available on the event website to quickly and easily identify all these attractions. This high-performance digital mapping tool will offer an aerial view, which thanks to easy-to-use filters will provide a global vision for an optimal visualisation of the locations of the installations, attractions, chalets and craftspeople of Brussels. The main aim is to offer an overview of the mobility and the architectural and landscape heritage of the heart of Brussels at a glance.

But there's more! The magic of the Brussels by Lights illuminations will cover ever more streets, shopping thoroughfares, and Brussels neighbourhoods.

There's simply no doubt about it: a magical end to the year awaits visitors to Brussels and Winter Wonders!

And for the sixth year, the Winter Pop travelling village will be distilling magic and warmth in three districts of the City of Brussels over three consecutive weekends.





## 3. NEW FEATURES

An original programme sees many new features.

This year, regular activities (which are in addition to the classic programme) from Tuesday to Sunday will complement the classic programme available 7 days a week.

### GUEST OF HONOUR: THE 11 INDIGENOUS NATIONS OF QUEBEC

For thousands of years, Indigenous Quebec has been distinguished by its rich historical culture which combines ancestral and now contemporary traditions in a highly-sought-after, quality tourism offer marked by its authenticity. For over 30 years, Tourisme Autochtone Québec has invited the public to discover all it has to offer: experiences based on the protective values of our culture and heritage, combining art, culture, nature and adventure. All the activities are based on the fantastic heritage of the Indigenous peoples of Quebec, allowing the greatest number of people come and share exceptional, warm and simply unforgettable moments in a magnificent setting.

The City of Brussels is giving a warm welcome to the 11 Indigenous Nations of Quebec - who are nothing less than the guests of honour at Winter Wonders! The village dedicated to them on Place de la Bourse will give visitors a unique experience in the Shaputuan

tent (a large traditional Indigenous tent), with an enhanced programme on Fridays. On the menu are dances, songs, traditional know-how, lectures and multimedia experiences (to name but a few).

The Grand-Place is also pulling out all the stops, with the sound and light show, the Christmas tree decoration and the artwork in the City Hall Courtyard all conceived by our guest of honour.

#### INFO

- 📍 Place de la Bourse
- 🕒 from 12 noon to 10 pm.

## ÉLOGE DE L'AIR (IN PRAISE OF AIR) @MONT DES ARTS

To be kinetic without a motor, sonorous without a sound system, interactive without technical overkill - this was the challenge taken up in creating the Éloge de l'Air. This innovative co-production between Quebec and Europe is based on the principle of inventing an installation dedicated to intercontinental travel and collaboration. It symbolises travel and embodies the idea of movement.

Éloge de l'Air is set on 9 flagpoles, each embellished with a transparent flag which reflects gold. It invites the audience to sway to activate the lights on either side of the swings, with a very special atmosphere (particularly at night).

This sober, minimal installation has been installed at the Mont des Arts, following a stint at the Constellations international festival in Metz. It will then end the year 2024 in Montreal.

Founded in 2007, Chevalvert is a visual design studio based in Paris. The studio's uniqueness lies in its object-oriented, systemic approach to images, where the process counts as much as the result. The studio's work covers graphic design, interaction, publishing, video and spatial and interactive installations. The installations are winners of several European awards and travel to many countries.

**Creation:** Chevalvert

**Realisation:** Chevalvert and Hémisphère

**Co-production:** City of Brussels via Brussels Major Events asbl, Constellations International Festival in Metz, Quartier des Spectacles International (QDSI) in Montreal

### INFO

- 📍 Mont des Arts, daily
- 🕒 from 12 noon to 10 pm

## AFTER SKI EVENINGS ON THE ICE @ DE BROUCKÈRE

On Thursdays, A DJ set will keep skating fans entertained on Place De Brouckère from 6 pm to 10 pm, with a programme which reflects Brussels' diversity of promoters and musical styles. In this way, groups with an established reputation are brought to the fore, alternating with other emerging groups.

What's more, the Winter Wonders ice rink includes a larger area dedicated to toddlers, three curling lanes and a terrace, so you can enjoy the atmosphere of Place De Brouckère right beside the ice.

To round off the event in style, a Disco on Ice evening is being organised on the ice rink on Saturday 6 January 2024 from 6 pm to 10 pm.

The Dream Space is moving a stone's throw away from the ice rink, and was present in Place de la Monnaie last year. Alongside it is a brand-new attraction this year, Santa's Reindeer, where you can take a ride on a reindeer!

## TOUR NOIRE, THE PLACE TO BE FOR CHILDREN

Wednesday is the "half day," and it's kids' time with Afterschool! Storytelling, mascots, street art and a host of other surprises await you at the Enchanted House at the Tour Noire. On Sundays, Magic Sundays are filled with wonder with performances by passionate magicians. Winter Vox is also back at weekends: groups (three on Saturday and three on Sunday) offer recitals: Christmas carols, gospel, sacred songs, pop and contemporary.

## WORLD MUSIC @ DE BROUCKÈRE

Every Tuesday, Place De Brouckère is brightened up by a series of musical strolls which weave their way through the streets. There's something for everyone, with brass bands of different styles each week: Indian, Balkan, Latin, African, Arabic, and more. The closing evening is hosted by Belgian Krewe on 2 January.

### INFO

- 🕒 Tuesdays from 6 pm to 8 pm

## GUIDED TOURS OF THE TOWN HALL

Do you know why the wing on the right of the tower is shorter than the wing on the left, and why the entrance is asymmetrical? Did you know that the building retains some of its original features, but also contains many additions and restored elements?

A guided tour is essential if you want to know everything there is to know about this building, which has been the nerve centre of political and administrative life for over 600 years.

### INFO

📍 Town Hall, Grand-Place

- 🕒 Monday: 1 pm - 5 pm
- Wednesday: 1 pm - 5 pm
- Friday: 3 pm - 5 pm
- Saturday: 3 pm - 5 pm
- Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm

⚠️ There are no panoramic tours from 25/11 to 7/1.

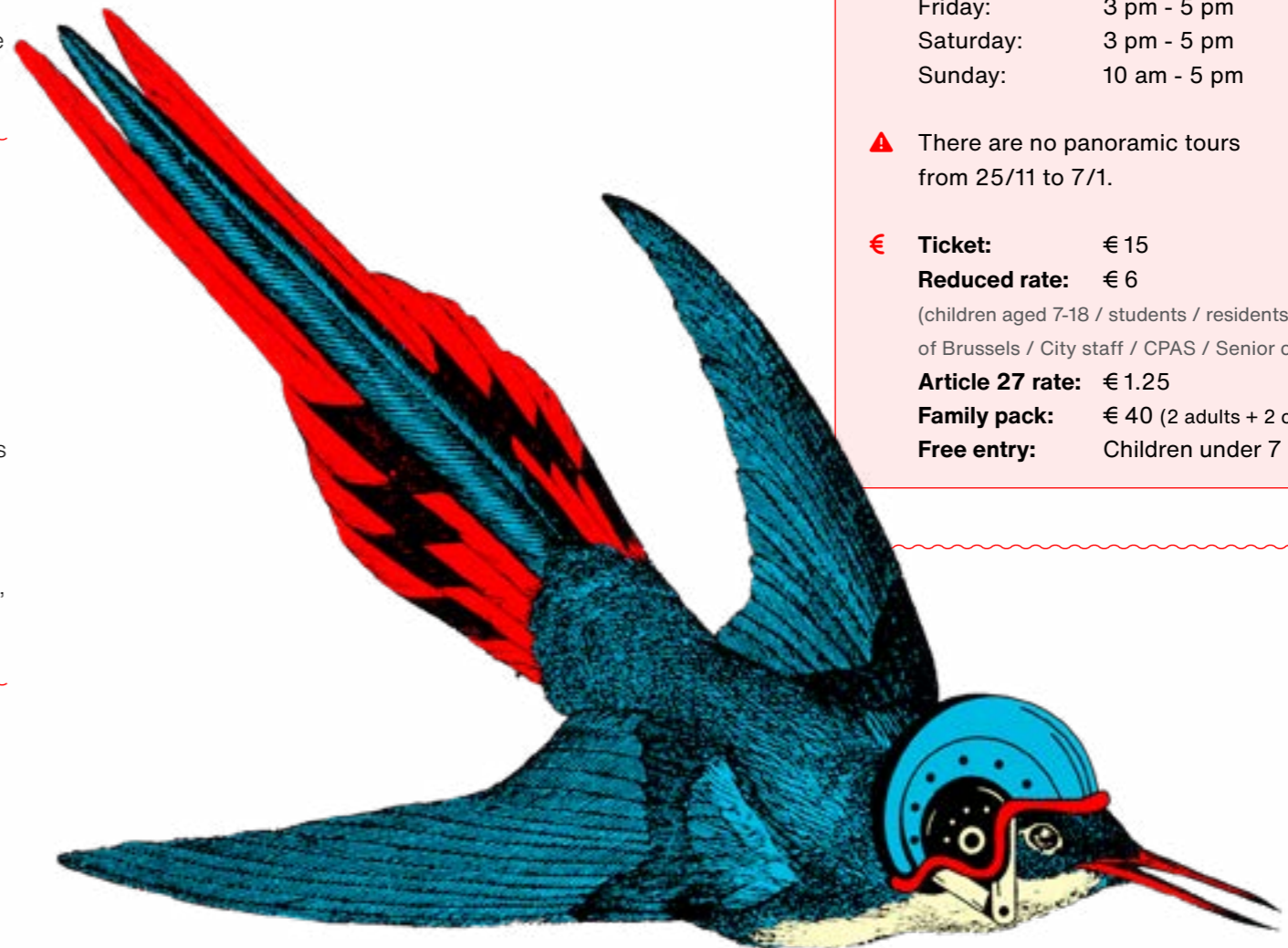
€ **Ticket:** € 15  
**Reduced rate:** € 6

(children aged 7-18 / students / residents of the City of Brussels / City staff / CPAS / Senior citizens)

**Article 27 rate:** € 1.25

**Family pack:** € 40 (2 adults + 2 children)

**Free entry:** Children under 7



## VIEW TOWER EXPERIENCE

Discover the Town Hall Tower for a 360-degree panoramic view of Brussels.

You'll have a breathtaking view of Brussels and the huge Christmas tree on the Grand-Place!

Attention: Please note get to the panorama you have to climb a 200-step spiral staircase from the courtyard of the Town Hall, so you'll need to be in good physical condition.

### INFO

📍 Porch of the Town Hall, entrance from the Grand-Place

📅 From 25 November to 23 December, open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays

From 25 December to 7 January, open 7 days a week

Closed on 24 and 31 December

🕒 **Opening hours:** 5 pm to 10 pm

💶 **Ticket:** € 10

**Reduced rate:** € 6

(children aged 7-18 / students / residents of the City of Brussels / City staff / CPAS / Senior citizens)

**Article 27 rate:** € 1.25

**Free entry:** Children under 7

✔ Book online or in the lobby of the Town Hall

## TRIBUTE TO MAGRITTE

To mark René Magritte's 125th birthday, the City of Brussels has chosen to honour the famous Belgian painter with a range of artistic installation in collaboration with the Fondation Magritte and the Royal Museums of Fine Arts. Surrealism was also a cross-cutting theme in various events this year.

During Winter Wonders you can still explore the "In the Footsteps of Magritte" trail, and some of the collages will be highlighted.

### INFO

🕒 from 12 noon to 10 pm

👉 [www.surlestracesdemagritte.be](http://www.surlestracesdemagritte.be)

## VISUAL

As every year, we're calling on a new artist to bring a (very) personal touch to the event. This year's Winter Wonders poster features the colours and style of Brussels-based illustrator Elzo Durt.

Born in 1980, this graphic designer and illustrator from Brussels creates his images from engravings, drawings and textures, which he scans from books he finds anywhere and everywhere. He then composes, deconstructs, restructures and colours his images, (which are somewhere between surrealism and pop art) always in flashy colours.

His compositions feature fantastic characters, straight out of a dream. This faraway winter wonderland allows the collective imagination to be inspired... the emblematic characters of Winter Wonders are represented here to form an unusual and joyful timeless family.



## 4. A GUEST OF HONOUR: THE 11 INDIGENOUS NATIONS OF QUEBEC

At the invitation of the City of Brussels, the 11 Indigenous Nations of Quebec are being honoured at Winter Wonders, which welcomed some 3.5 million visitors in 2022 with significant economic spin-offs for the capital.

Welcoming the First Nations and Inuit to the Belgian capital represents a unique economic, tourism and cultural opportunity. In addition, their visit is helping to raise the profile of Brussels and Winter Wonders internationally, and is also a fantastic showcase for Quebec as a travel destination. Last June, the Quebec government announced a partnership with the City of Brussels “to develop and highlight Indigenous,” with a view to the 2023 edition of Winter Wonders organised by Brussels Major Events.

For thousands of years, Indigenous Quebec has been distinguished by its rich historical culture, which combines ancestral and now contemporary traditions in a highly-sought-after, quality tourism offer marked by its authenticity.

For more than 30 years, Tourisme Autochtone Québec (TAQ) has invited the public to discover all it has to offer: experiences based on the protective values of our culture and heritage, combining art, culture, nature and adventure. All the activities are based on the fantastic heritage of the Indigenous peoples of Quebec, allowing the greatest number of people come and share exceptional, warm and simply unforgettable moments in a magnificent setting.

This transatlantic collaboration has resulted in a rich and varied programme throughout the five weeks of the event. As announced by the Quebec government, “A Shaputuan, a large traditional Indigenous tent, will be erected for the duration of the event. This

installation is the focal point of the event produced by TAQ. Activities to promote Indigenous tourism in Quebec will include workshops, cultural conferences and screenings of short films and videos on Indigenous realities, languages, culture, literature and tourism experiences.”

The programme also takes into account the sustainable dimension of the event, offering an experience which is as responsible and authentic as possible while opening up to the Indigenous communities who have come to share their heritage with the public.

## 5. THE WORLD’S MOST BEAUTIFUL SQUARE IN GRANDIOSE STYLE

### THE CHRISTMAS TREE

If there’s one thing which truly symbolises the spirit of Winter Wonders, it has to be its famous tree. The latter will be enthroned alongside the traditional nativity scene at the centre of the sound and light show in the Grand-Place.

Cut down on Wednesday 15 November in Duffel, the conifer will be erected on the Grand-Place on Thursday 16 November from 6 am. It will be adorned with strong symbols representative of certain nations (a star, an inukshuk, snowshoes and a dream catcher), carved in wood and created by Pascal Sioui, among others. It will come to life for the very first time on Friday 24 November during the inauguration ceremony starting at 6 pm.

### THE JAZZED-UP COURTYARD OF THE TOWN HALL Sacred Journey

A renowned traditional Anishinaabe artist, Frank Polson is responsible for the work in the courtyard of the Town Hall. Strongly influenced by his childhood (when he went hunting and trapping with his father), Frank Polson reproduces a natural world where loons, wolves, eagles and other wildlife abound. Anxious to preserve and promote his traditions, the painter also draws on his rich ancestral culture to choose his themes. He sees his art as a method of healing for all future generations.

With Sacred Journey, he wants to convey the message that “each and every one of us has a sacred path to walk to ensure that our culture and our way of life remain strong.”

#### INFO

- 📍 Courtyard of the Town Hall
- 🕒 from 24/11/2023 to 07/01/2024 from 5 pm to 11 pm

### The sound and light show on the Grand-Place

Renewed each year to transport visitors into a different universe, the Grand-Place sound and light show is the creation of Kanien’kehá ka (Mohawk) artist Leilani Shaw.

#### CREDITS

- Sound and light show:** Leilani Shaw
- Production:** LSE
- Sound composition:** Nicolas Ottawa

#### INFO

- 📍 Grand-Place of Brussels
- Inauguration:**
  - 🕒 Friday 24/11 from 6 pm
  - Sound and light show of 6 to 8 minutes: from 24/11/2023 to 7/1/2024 from 5 pm to 10 pm.
  - From Monday to Thursday on the hour Friday to Sunday every 30 minutes.
- ⚠️ No shows on Saturday 24 and 31 December



## 6. A WELCOMING CHRISTMAS MARKET

Offering a perfect balance between tradition and modernity, the Winter Wonders Christmas market in the heart of Brussels remains one of the most popular in Europe (source: European Best Destination, European Best Christmas Market).

For five weeks, about 250 traders will ravish the eyes of the curious and tantalise the taste buds of gourmets. Here you can taste world cuisine and find a gift for someone special (or treat yourself!). The activities taking place on Place De Brouckère, de la Monnaie and Grand-Place will be extended until Sunday 7 January.

The market takes on an even more magical appearance at dusk!

### THE VISMET AND PLACE SAINTE-CATHERINE

This is where most of the chalets are concentrated. They offer all sorts of sweet and savoury foods, and gifts which are each more original than the last! Between purchases, visitors can enjoy numerous activities such as the Ferris Wheel, Andréa's marry-go-round rides and much more.

The beauty of Saint Catherine's Church, recently renovated by Beliris, has had its beauty enhanced by illumination from 5 pm to 11 pm.

### PLACE DE LA BOURSE

The beautiful square is once again illuminated at the front and back with numerous chalets offering all kinds of dishes.

Indigenous Quebec is taking part in the festivities as the guest of honour at Winter Wonders. Combining ancestral and contemporary traditions, the rich culture of these peoples can be discovered at Place de la Bourse - Rue Auguste Orts.



## PLACE DE LA MONNAIE

Place la Monnaie is hosting chalets offering typical mountain food and drink along with a wide range of sweets and other treats to delight those with a sweet tooth.

## PLACE DE BROUCKÈRE

Place De Brouckère has been a pedestrian area for several years, and will host the ice rink and the curling rinks as well as numerous catering chalets and covered terraces to create a warm and friendly mini village. Here, the traders are for the second time using reusable tableware, again participating in a test which augments the ever-increasing existing sustainability measures. This initiative is being extended to Place de la Monnaie and Place de la Bourse this year.

## THE TOUR NOIRE

Located behind the Saint Catherine's Church, the Tour Noire is one of the best-conserved relics of the first fortifications of Brussels constructed at the start of the 13th century.

On a stage in the shape of an igloo, the spellbinding voices of the Winter Vox choirs will ring out one after the other, amplifying the magic of this hidden treasure location.

For the first time the Tour Noire will host the Enchanted House, where children are the kings and queens of the party.

Quebec is once again well represented with preparations based on maple syrup and other characteristic products with their inimitable taste, including the legendary Poutine, a more-typical Quebec dish composed of fries, cheese curds and brown sauce.

## COMMON COVERED TERRACES

The common covered terraces are the meeting point of the walk with protected, equipped and lit areas offering visitors a special moment of relaxation in a welcoming environment.

## WINTER WONDERS CRAFTS

The City of Brussels is keen to ensure that craftspeople from Brussels and beyond benefit from the Winter Wonders commercial showcase.

This year, no less than 30 chalets will display the label with the distinctive sign of the "craftsperson-producers." They meet certain quality criteria to obtain this Winter Wonders label (such as the origin of the products).

## THE STELLA ARTOIS PAVILION, A CHRISTMAS MARKET MUST-VISIT!

In the heart of Winter Wonders, on the Vismet, the Stella Artois Pavilion welcomes visitors in an attractive atmosphere and invites them to take the time to savour this local beer during a visit which has become a must.



# 7. OTHER WONDERS

## BRUSSELS BY LIGHTS

From the centre of Brussels to Neder-Over-Heembeek, via Haren and Laeken, the capital is aglow with lights in the streets and shopping streets. Each year Brussels reveals itself in a show of new light creations in all shapes and forms: snowflakes, geometric jellyfish, snowmen and much more.

Since 2013, it has become one of the best habits of the City of Brussels to illuminate ever more and more of the capital's streets and commercial thoroughfares (both literally and figuratively). This year, the eleventh edition features no less than 168, including 8 new ones.

This extension is justified by the constant desire to support the commercial activities of the city's neighbourhoods - which are also involved in the decisions concerning the illuminations which concern them. The decorations are chosen in close collaboration with the various traders' associations in each district.

In addition, the city centre is becoming the playground for a unique artistic experience combining digital and physical art to host a geocaching trail.

### INFO

#### Inaugurations:

📍 City centre,  
📅 22/11 at 5 pm

📍 Place Emile Bockstael,  
📅 23/11 at 5 pm

📍 Place Peter Benoit,  
📅 1/12 at 5 pm.

👉 [www.brusselsbylights.be](http://www.brusselsbylights.be)



## WINTER POP: A TRAVELLING VILLAGE TO BRING THE PARTY TO EVERYONE

With Winter Pop and Summer Pop, the City of Brussels wants to delocalise its events from the city centre and offer the inhabitants of other districts the opportunity to take part in the festival. Winter Pop's warm and friendly little caravans will be distilling the magic of Christmas in order to share it with as many people as possible.

It has been a great success since 2017, which was the first outing of this this touring trip.

For this sixth edition, Place Peter Benoît, Place Willems and Square Ambiorix will take it in turns to host the Winter Pop caravan over three successive weekends.

Thanks to the close links forged with neighbourhood associations, a host of fun and creative activities for all are on offer: concerts, brass bands, dances, choirs, short film screenings, various initiations, theatre and fire shows, festive walks, face painting, association stands, and much more... something for everyone is guaranteed! Along with snacks and some braziers to thaw out in the glittering light of the colourful garlands.

### INFO

📅 From Friday 1 to Sunday 3/12  
📍 on Place Peter Benoit in Neder-Over-Heembeek

📅 From Friday 8 to Sunday 12/12  
📍 on Square Ambiorix Ambiorix district in Brussels

📅 From Friday 15 to Sunday 17/12  
📍 on Place Willems in Laeken

#### 🕒 Opening hours

Fridays and Saturdays from 3 pm to 9 pm  
and Sundays from 2 pm to 7 pm

## WINTER TUNES

Experience an exhilarating moment in or in front of the Church of Saint Catherine or the St. Michael and St. Gudula Cathedral. Winter Wonders offers a dozen concerts of non-denominational music to visitors in search of peace and quiet and a chance to discover the heart of the capital's churches. The programme includes organ, string instruments, carillon and choirs.

### INFO

📍 Saint Catherine's Church  
🕒 From 3/12 to 30/12  
every Saturday at 8 pm

📍 Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula,  
concert on Sunday  
🕒 3/12 at 2 pm  
10/12 at 1 pm  
17/12 at 1 pm  
24/12 at 2 pm  
31/12 at 2 pm



## 8. FOR KIDS ONLY

### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Inside the Enchanted House, ears prick up and eyes open wide as tales and other delights create a magical atmosphere in the dreamy setting of this double chalet.

Wednesday is the "half day," and it's kids' time with Afterschool! Storytelling, mascots, street art and a host of other surprises await you at the Enchanted House near the Tour Noire.

On Sundays, Magic Sundays are filled with wonder with performances by passionate magicians.

#### INFOS

- 📅 Wednesday - Afterschool
- 🕒 from 2:30 pm to 5 pm
- 📅 Sunday - Magic Sundays
- 🕒 From 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm

### BABY CORNER

This little cocoon is available at the Bourse, near the Belgian Beer World gift shop. It allows families to change their baby and warm up their bottle or a meal in peace and quiet.



## 9. CULTURE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Don't miss out on any of the (winter) wonders: these five weeks will also allow you to take advantage of the extremely rich cultural offer proposed in the city centre.

### CENTRALE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

The group exhibition "l'Art de Rien" (the art of nothing) brings together artists, mostly from Brussels, who share a talent for the smallest gesture and a predilection for humble materials: for aesthetic and poetic purposes, they reuse and divert poor materials or restore dignity to ordinary, everyday objects - the kind that are discarded once consumed in the household chaos of the modern world.

► <https://centrale.brussels/expos/lart-de-rien-exposition/>

In "A Bread in the Wall", Sofhie Mavroudis questions the notion of transmission, particularly through language and tradition.

Starting from an incomplete knowledge of her paternal language, she uses gesture to initiate a change of state and gives the different objects she creates a symbolism of their own.

► <https://centrale.brussels/expos/sofhie-mavroudis/>

The timeless strangeness which emanates from Antoinette d'Ansembourg's installations is drawn from the territory of the city, where new building sites spring up daily. In these areas which are off-limits to the public and of uncertain temporality, the artist reveals the connections between rubble and plants which are able to grow in hostile environments.

► <https://centrale.brussels/expos/antoinette-dansembourg/>

## DIANE VON FURSTENBERG. WOMAN BEFORE FASHION @ MUSÉE MODE ET DENTELLE

The emblematic wrap dress is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The museum is dedicating its new exhibition to the designer Diane von Furstenberg. This is a first in Europe! Discover the inspiring career of this Brussels-born fashion icon.

Woman Before Fashion is not a retrospective. It's rather a free approach to Diane von Furstenberg's work. The exhibition presents the work and the person of the famous Belgian-American fashion designer. The tour begins with fashion and ends with women through a selection of more than 50 models and a vast iconography.

➤ [www.fashionandlacemuseum.brussels/en/](http://www.fashionandlacemuseum.brussels/en/)

## HÉRITIÈRES EXHIBITION @ HALLES SAINT-GÉRY

Conceived as part of the Art Nouveau year, "Héritières" aims to create a dialogue between past and present by connecting Art Nouveau artists and contemporary artists working in the same media (textiles, silk painting, sculpture, engraving, etc.). The aim is to get to know these artists better and to see how their shared practice creates a real link between them.

While the Art Nouveau style advocated equality between all the arts, gender parity was far from being a reality at the time. While history has remembered the names of Art Nouveau artists, women were rarely focused upon unless they were associated with men. Their invisibility is sometimes linked to the fragility of the chosen medium, but more often than not to a withdrawal in the face of society's dictates.

➤ [www.hallessaintgery.be](http://www.hallessaintgery.be)

## THE WARDROBE OF MANNEKEN-PIS

Located just a stone's throw from the fountain, this unique museum displays almost 150 exceptional outfits by Brussels' most famous inhabitant. They come from all over the world, featuring trades, personalities, civic or sporting associations, and not forgetting carnivals and folklore. Every year, more than twenty new costumes are donated to enrich the wardrobe, which now boasts more than 1100 of them! Young and old alike can test their dexterity by dressing up the ketje! It's not as easy as you'd think: it's a real job!

Discover our magnificent Pop-Up window dedicated to the festive season!

➤ [www.mannekenpis.brussels/en/](http://www.mannekenpis.brussels/en/)

## MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF BRUSSELS – MAISON DU ROI

Located on the most beautiful square in the world in a veritable architectural jewel, the Museum of the City of Brussels tells the story of our capital through its rich collections. Paintings, tapestries, ceramics, engravings, models, maps and plans Made in Brussels. On the first floor, the Espace Parenthèse invites you to discover capsule exhibitions presenting some of the pieces taken out of storage.

On the top floor, a room reveals the development, transformations and behind-the-scenes of the Grand-Place, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1998. To round out your visit, don't forget to admire the original statue of Manneken-Pis!

➤ [www.museedelavilledebruxelles.brussels](http://www.museedelavilledebruxelles.brussels)

## CONTINENTAL & WINTER CREATIVE MARKET

The Continental presents the Winter Creative Market. Brussels, the capital of creativity and innovation, is gearing up for a season of festivities with its brand-new designers' market, taking place at the Continental. The Winter Creative Market is located in this temporary occupation already renowned for its creative market and is a further addition to the range of independent designers on offer. This unique market is spread over several floors of the Continental, showcasing Belgian designers and creators brimming with talent. It's the perfect opportunity to discover original, handcrafted products and complete your list of unique gifts for the festive season.

On the ground floor, a bar and restaurant await you to warm up and enjoy a hot meal.

Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy the festive season at Le Continental, where creativity, Belgian craftsmanship and gastronomy come together for an unforgettable festive experience. Come and join us for some friendly shopping in a unique and warm atmosphere.

➤ [www.plaisirsdhiver.be/en/culture/](http://www.plaisirsdhiver.be/en/culture/)

## BOURSE | BELGIAN BEER WORLD

Immerse yourself in the magic of Christmas at the Bourse in Brussels. You're warmly invited to join us at Winter Wonders for a magical experience. Our special installation promises you a warm and festive time for young and old alike. Discover our sparkling decorations and surprises for all the family. The merry atmosphere of Christmas at the Bourse will warm your heart!

➤ [www.plaisirsdhiver.be/en/culture/](http://www.plaisirsdhiver.be/en/culture/)

## CINEMAMED - BRUSSELS MEDITERRANEAN FILM FESTIVAL

The 23rd Cinemamed takes place from 1 to 8 December 2023 in Brussels, at the Cinéma Palace, the Cinéma Aventure and Bozar.

The Cinemamed programme features recent Mediterranean productions, including feature films, shorts and documentaries.

The Cinemamed also organises concerts, evening events and exhibitions, providing an opportunity to take a break from winter and celebrate Mediterranean culture in all its diversity.

This year, Spain is in the spotlight as part of its Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

➤ [www.cinemamed.be](http://www.cinemamed.be)

## DETOURS FESTIVAL

Detours Festival stands on the border between hip hop and contemporary dance, between the street and the stage, anchored in the present and looking toward the future.

This urban arts festival is a springboard for creations in progress, a showcase for finished works and a vehicle for social cohesion through its free street activities.

Detours Festival goes out and meets its audience in the streets, where the Detours Cyphers take their place.

These Detours Cyphers bring people together, crossing artistic disciplines to create unique performances. They are divided into 3 parts:

- An open stage which is open to all
- A street performance: a creation designed for the street, in dance, circus and street art.
- A dance "battle" in a different style every week

👉 [www.detoursfestival.be](http://www.detoursfestival.be)

## HEARTMADE @ RAVENSTEIN

Heart Made is a market of designers and creators promoting Belgian craftsmanship.

Discover the many talents of Belgian artists and craftspeople, brought together to offer you the crème de la crème of creative, 100% handmade products.

And there's plenty of activities for families: cinema, screen printing and drawing workshops, concerts, and much more.

### INFO

📅 from 16/12/2023 1/1/2024  
👉 [www.instagram.com/heartmade.be](https://www.instagram.com/heartmade.be)

## PLEIN PUBLIEK BXL — HAPPINESS EXPO

Located in the magnificent Palais de la Dynastie on the Mont des Arts, Plein Publiek BXL has built up a buzz on the Brussels events scene. As well as events, they serve delicious Lebanese dishes in their restaurant.

Since March 2023, the exhibition Happiness Expo has been on show, an initiative of BEYOND.CULTURE in collaboration with Studio Irma.

Art makes us happy! A recent study by the World Health Organisation (WHO) shows the correlation between the experience of art and an increase in dopamine, the "happiness hormone." Put your happiness to the test in the new digital art exhibition "Happiness." This immersive experience is full of great ideas for your brain!

👉 [www.happiness-expo.be](http://www.happiness-expo.be)

# 10. COUNTLESS EVENTS

## THE INAUGURATION

Winter Wonders opens its doors on Friday 24 November at 12 noon.

The inauguration takes place at 6 pm on the same day, with the lighting up of the Christmas tree in the Grand-Place followed by a performance of traditional dances by the Sondakwa troupe (Huron-Wendat), Inuit songs from Nunavik and the first sound and light show of this 2023 edition. It's also an opportunity to showcase the new features and some of the most striking installations.

## WINTER VOX, CHOIRS AT THE HEART OF THE CITY

Winter Vox is back each weekend, with six professional or amateur choirs will offer recitals - three on Saturday and three on Sunday, focusing on Christmas songs, gospel, sacred chants or a more pop and contemporary repertoire.

### MORE INFO

📍 at the Tour Noire  
📅 every Saturday and Sunday from 25/11 to 17/12,  
🕒 from 4 pm to 8 pm.

## MAKE-A-WISH

Make-A-Wish makes dreams come true for very ill children. The association carries out actions to raise money to fulfil their individual dreams. Among other things, Make-A-Wish will be selling small cardboard stars upon which the public can write a wish. These stars will then be hung on the majestic fir tree in the Grand-Place.

The Polyfolies Choir, a group of some twenty singers who perform every year on Winter Wonders at the Tour Noire, will be honouring us with a concert at the foot of the Christmas tree on Saturday 9 December at 2 pm.

### INFO

📍 Grand-Place,  
📅 Saturday 9/12,  
🕒 from 12 noon to 8 pm.

#### Make-A-Wish Belgium South:

📞 +32 (0) 2 420 22 24,  
@ [contact@makeawishsud.be](mailto:contact@makeawishsud.be)  
👉 [www.makeawishsud.be](http://www.makeawishsud.be)

# 11. THE MUST-SEE ATTRACTIONS

## SKATING

This sportiest of the Winter Wonder attractions will once again be located on the Place de Brouckère and will remain open until Sunday 7 January. This year, a terrace will be added near the entrance to the ice rink.

There will also be a 112 m<sup>2</sup> area for toddlers to ensure some completely safe first experiences on the ice. Skates which can be attached to shoes will be available.

No reservation is required, except for schools (see above). The rink is of course wheelchair-accessible with a companion, on the ice and outside.

### INFO

- 📍 De Brouckère
- 📅 from 24/11 to 7/1
- 🕒 Every day from 12 noon to 10 pm (last entry at 9 pm)
- 📅 24 and 31 December  
12 noon to 6 pm (last entry at 5 pm)
- 📅 25 December and 1 January  
12 noon to 10 pm (last entry at 9 pm)

€ **Prices (including skate rental)\***

adults (over 16):	€ 10
under 16:	€ 5
schools:	€ 3/student
family (2 adults + 2 children):	€ 25

\*Free of charge for persons accompanying PRM  
- not recommended for children under 6 years old.

The organisers suggest that you avoid peak hours and preferably come on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12 noon to 5 pm. Reservations only possible for schools between 12 noon and 5 pm:

📧 [info@bmeo.be](mailto:info@bmeo.be) 📞 02/318 64 70.

## CURLING

Want to experience the spirit of winter sports right in the heart of Brussels? Three ice curling rinks are available alongside the ice rink at De Brouckère.

### INFO

- 📍 De Brouckère
  - 📅 from 24/11 to 7/1
  - 🕒 **Opening hours:** from 12 noon to 10 pm
  - € **Prices:**
- |                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| adults (over 16):              | € 8 |
| adults (over 16) via Payconiq: | € 6 |
| under 16:                      | € 4 |

30-minute games, equipment available upon presentation of an ID document.



## LOTTO FERRIS WHEEL... PLACE YOUR BETS!

From atop the 55 meters of one of the most spectacular attractions of Winter Wonders, the view of Brussels and the festive city centre is out of this world. The 42-cabin Ferris Wheel also provides for persons of reduced mobility with a specially-equipped cabin available for them.

### INFO

- 📍 Vismet
- € **Prices:** adults €10 / under 12s €6

## ANDREA'S MERRY-GO-ROUND

Another classic must-see, this merry-go-round features handmade fantastic characters from the poetic world of Jules Verne. A timeless moment!

### INFO

- 📍 Place Sainte-Catherine
- € **Price:** € 3/(2-11 years)

## ICE MONSTER

There are only seven of these 45-metre long dinosaurs (designed by the American Lord of the Rings and Harry Potter company) in the world! Guess where the only example of this prehistoric animal with a ferocious appetite can be found in all of Europe? At Winter Wonders of course, ladies and gentlemen! Thrills and chills guaranteed during a terrifying walk featuring special effects.

### INFO

- 📍 Vismet
- € **Prices:** €5/person - family tickets: €12/3 persons - €15/4 persons

## DREAM SPACE

Comfortably seated in reclining seats mounted on actuators, the visitors to Dream Space will enjoy incredible virtual experiences: meetings with mummies or dragons, discovery of a haunted house, space exploration, a ride in a Christmas sleigh, and more! Larger-than-life experiences for every taste and age!

### INFO

- 📍 De Brouckère
- € **Price:** € 7

## SANTA'S REINDEER

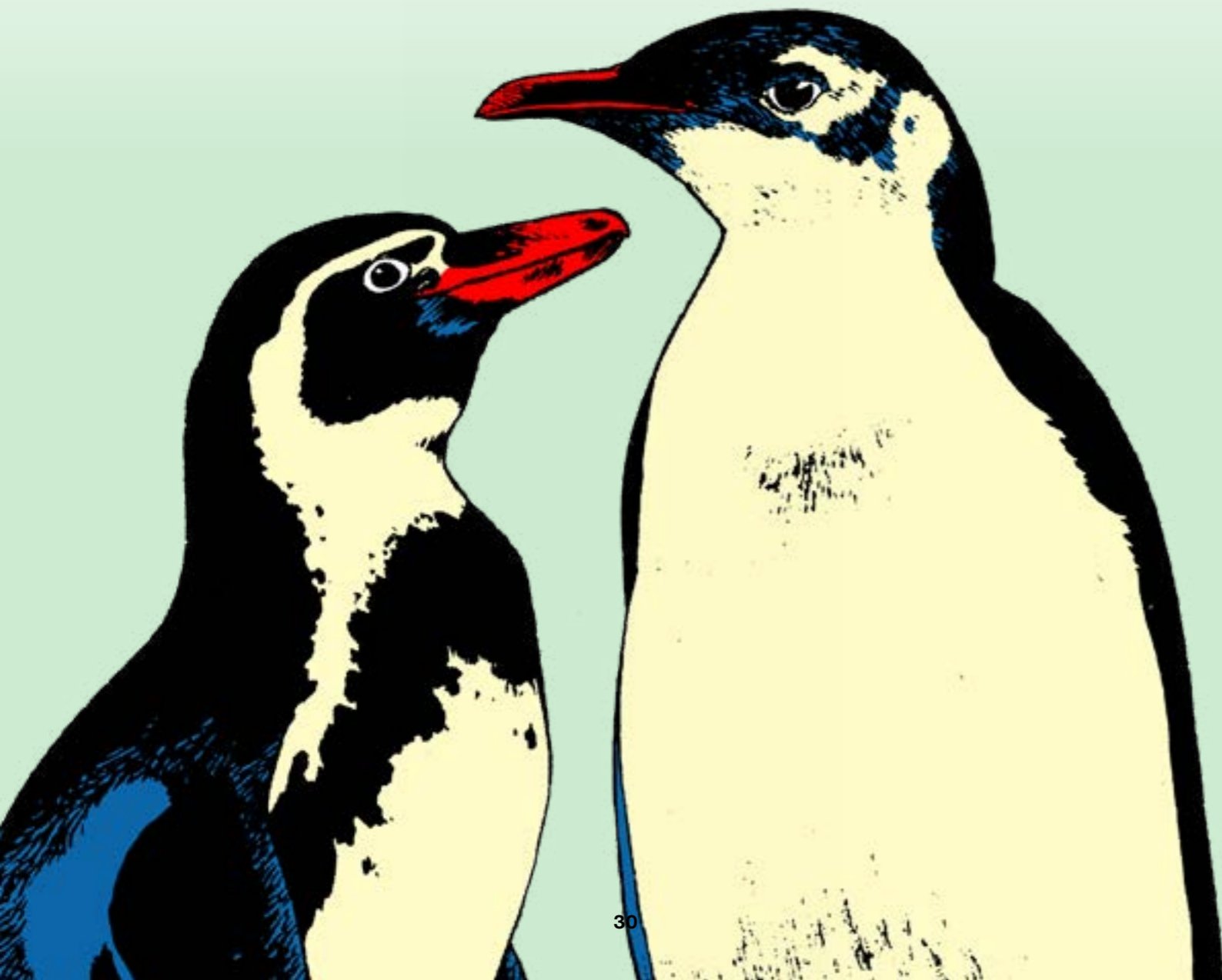
This enormous Santa, a 2023 novelty, can carry up to 32 people in his 8 reindeer- and sleigh-shaped gondolas. The peak reaches a height of 10 m, and the gondolas can take passengers up to four metres high so that they can admire the market site in complete safety.

This attraction has already proved very popular at many Christmas markets, and is a big hit with children.

### INFO

- 📍 De Brouckère
- € **Price:** € 5

# 12. THE CITY ACTS



The City of Brussels is clearly demonstrating its commitment to sustainability.

For several years now, the non-profit Brussels Major Events has been exploring various ways of making the events it organises as sustainable as possible.

Many actions have already been carried out to further this goal, some for several years and others for the very first time.

- Use of LED bulbs for the Winter Wonders illuminations
- Since 2016, reusable cups have been used throughout the market
- For several years, recycling of the Christmas tree (given to the Academy of Fine Arts for transformation into a work of art, transformation into benches and tables by a Belgian craftsman, transformation into trophies for the BXL TOUR and decoration by Brussels artists)
- Raising of awareness among traders to reduce energy consumption. For example, for several years now the consumption of electric heaters inside chalets has been limited
- Since 2021, no more heaters on the terraces
- Reduction of street lighting hours: from 5 pm to 1 am (instead of 1 pm to 1 am)
- New in 2023: the City of Brussels is developing its own reusable dishware supply chain and will be providing the merchants of the Place De Brouckère, Place de la Monnaie and Place de la Bourse (excluding specific formats)
- Setting up a system for the recovery, redistribution and re-use of surplus food from the market
- Waste sorting for traders
- Plastic Metals Cardboard sorting reinforced and improved for the public
- Highlighting of the label for craftspeople participating in the Christmas market
- Study and reinforcement of a specific mobility plan for the period of the event
- Specific facilities for PRM
- Establishment of a family reception area, the Baby Corner
- Since 2022, addition of new technology “dry” toilets on Place De Brouckère
- Collaborations with ever more artists, associations, Brussels and Belgian organisations
- Support for the campaign against street harassment
- Reinforcement of the cleaning teams of the City of Brussels
- Creation of a “Happy Team” which ensures that the infrastructure of the event site is as clean as possible (toilets, tables, snack stands, etc.).

A study and analysis is underway to continue the research and ensure the progressive implementation of new measures.



## MOBILITY, A CRUCIAL CONCERN DURING Winter Wonders

Several measures are implemented in order to harmonise the interaction of the flows within and around the event.

Brussels Central Station is strategically located in the city center. It is therefore highly recommended to use public transport to get to the event, thus avoiding the major construction sites underway in and around Brussels during this busy end-of-year period.

During the weekend, return train services (from Friday at 7 pm to Sunday) benefit from a reduction of 50%. What's more, the SNCB is offering a special Winter Wonders ticket at half price during the school holidays. Train users can also access station car parks at a reduced rate.

➤ [www.belgiantrain.be](http://www.belgiantrain.be)

The numerous public transport links serving Winter Wonders are a major asset in terms of accessibility. From the STIB stations Gare Centrale, Bourse and De Brouckère stations, visitors can reach the heart of the event via metro lines 1 and 5, trams 3 and 4, and multiple bus lines.

➤ [www.stib-mivb.be](http://www.stib-mivb.be)

The bicycle remains the easiest and most flexible means of transport. Cycle parking facilities are available in the vicinity of Winter Wonders for the duration of the event. Shared bikes can be hired via Villo! and the multiple shared mobility application. More than 800 underground cycle parking spaces, accessible 24 hours a day by lift or staircase, are available at Bourse and De Brouckère stations. Access to the secure spaces is via a €30/year subscription linked

to the Mobib card. Non-secure parking spaces are also available for occasional use.

➤ <https://mobilite-mobiliteit.brussels/fr/se-deplacer/mobilite-partagee#APPS>

Parking of scooters and shared bikes is prohibited on the event route. Drop zones are available. The use of scooters is prohibited on the Vismet during the five weeks of the event.

The event is accessible by car (if there is no other alternative). In order to avoid any inconvenience, we strongly advise you to navigate with Waze or Google Maps to a Park & Ride zone (Ceria or Crainhem) for €3 or free if you have a STIB/De Lijn ticket. These zones will be free of charge during the Winter Wonders weekends (24/11 - 1/1). From there, the heart of Winter Wonders is only 20 minutes away by metro.

We strongly recommend that you follow the signs indicating free parking areas and park your vehicle in an Interparking area outside the pentagon: Rogier, Albertine, Poelaert, Loi (special rate of €6 from 7 pm until 5 am - or €5.40 for Pcard holders) and Passage 44 (€10/24 h or €9 for Pcard holders, and €6 between 7 pm and 5 am - or €5.40 for Pcard holders).

➤ [www.parkandride.brussels](http://www.parkandride.brussels) - [www.parking.brussels](http://www.parking.brussels) - [brussels.pcard.be](http://brussels.pcard.be)

The area around the Vismet will become a restricted area during peak hours: Friday to Sunday from 4 pm to 11 pm. This restricted area is only accessible to local residents with a sticker, traders and people with reduced mobility, thanks to two filter zones.

The various points mentioned above will be integrated into the dynamic plan of Winter Wonders.

➤ [www.winterpret.be/mobiliteit](http://www.winterpret.be/mobiliteit)

## PRM AT THE HEART OF OUR CONCERNS

For many years, here too the City of Brussels has paid particular attention to persons of reduced mobility and has implemented every means to ensure them easy access to the entire site of Winter Wonders.

The metro stations Gare Centrale, Bourse, De Brouckère and Sainte-Catherine are equipped with lifts to allow PRM to easily reach the heart of the event.

The Interparking Ecuyer, Monnaie, Brucity and De Brouckère have adapted parking spaces and lifts.

Parking spaces are also reserved for PRMs throughout the city and in off-street car parks.

The toilets in place on the event route are accessible to persons of reduced mobility with the help of specially designed, and tailored ramps.

The same applies to the skating rink and the Big Wheel, which has a cabin adapted for wheelchairs.

The flooring and the cable passageways are adapted to facilitate everyone's movement.

## CLEANLINESS, AN IMPORTANT ISSUE

There are sorting areas for traders at each site. Brussels Major Events asbl, managing organiser of the event, will provide a team to transport the waste from the chalets' traders to the areas equipped for this purpose and separate them correctly. Traders can now have used oil collected in collaboration with OlioBox. This helps prevent the creation of residual waste and allows the oil used to be recycled.

Nearly 150 waste bins in the form of sorting islands are deployed at the various Winter Wonders sites. Teams from the Cleaning Service of the City are on hand during this period to ensure that the public enjoy the event in all its glory. The course is cleaned every day by mechanised teams. The Grand-Place, Bourse, De Brouckère, and Vismet zones will be cleaned simultaneously from 6:30 am.

When the chalets are opened, teams on foot will take over the site cleaning and the emptying of public dustbins. During the week, teams will be on site until 8 pm and until 10 pm at weekends.

# 13. PRACTICAL INFO

From Friday 24/11/2023  
to Sunday 31/12/2023

Extension of the festivities on Place De Brouckère  
Place de la Monnaie and Grand-Place  
until 7 January 2024.

## OPENING HOURS

Every day from 12 noon to 10 pm,  
except Sunday 24 and 31/12/2022  
from 12 noon to 6 pm.

## HOW TO GET THERE

[www.plaisirsdhiver.be](http://www.plaisirsdhiver.be)

## PRESS CONTACTS:

### City of Brussels:

- Carole Poncin  
Mayor's Office  
@ [carole.poncin@brucity.be](mailto:carole.poncin@brucity.be)  
☎ +32 (0) 488 04 38 24
  - Eloïse Pirard,  
Office of the Alderman for Culture,  
Tourism and Major Events  
@ [eloise.pirard@brucity.be](mailto:eloise.pirard@brucity.be)  
☎ +32 (0) 474 41 05 44
  - François Descamps,  
Office of the Alderman for Climate and Sports,  
@ [francois.descamps@brucity.be](mailto:francois.descamps@brucity.be)  
☎ +32 (0) 474 90 28 39
  - Anne-Sophie Dekeyser,  
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Employment, the Smart City and Administrative  
Simplification  
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- Organisation:
- Adelaïde de Patoul,  
Brussels Major Events asbl  
@ [a.depatoul@bmeo.be](mailto:a.depatoul@bmeo.be)  
☎ +32 (0) 496 87 88 86

# 14. DYNAMIC PLAN

An interactive map is now available on the Winter Wonders website. This easy-to-use, fun and powerful map offers a dynamic aerial view of the event and the city with a wealth of information on key locations such as the Christmas market chalets, art installations, attractions, emblematic buildings, crafts and mobility.

The creation and development of this interactive map was carried out in collaboration with the Brussels graphic design studio STOEMP. More information on [stoempstudio.com](http://stoempstudio.com).

🖱 <https://map.plaisirsdhiver.be>





# 15. THE PARTNERS

The City of Brussels and Brussels Malor Events have the pleasure to rely on the support of dynamic partners. We thank them all very warmly!

Thanks to these multiple partnerships, creative and fun activities are organised to make visitors feel even more pampered!

