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WINTER WONDERS

winterwonders.be

PRESS KIT

HAPPY 25







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FAMILY TIME

25 Years of Magic, Encounters and Memories

For 25 years, Plaisirs d'Hiver has made the heart of Brussels beat to the rhythm of lights, encounters and shared emotions.

Over the years, the event has become much more than an end-of-year celebration: it has become a cherished tradition, a special moment we eagerly look forward to, and a place where we love to come together, with family and friends.

Beyond the illuminations, the chalets and the festive atmosphere, it is above all about people, stories and memories. The children discovering the magic of Christmas, families coming together, artisans keeping their craftsmanship alive, visitors from near and far, and all those who, year after year, have helped make Plaisirs d'Hiver an institution deeply rooted in the heart of Brussels.

To celebrate this 25th anniversary, the City of Brussels has decided to go all out, notably with a brand-new village at Mont des Arts, further enriching the event's route and creating new connections between the iconic locations of our city centre.

For more than a month, the city will come alive with shows, light installations, exhibitions, attractions, concerts, workshops and artisanal creations. Much of the programme is free of charge, in keeping with our commitment to making the streets and squares of the capital places for meeting and sharing, open to everyone.

This anniversary edition will also be an invitation to discover new horizons, with the Pyrénées-Atlantiques region, spanning Béarn and the Basque Country, taking centre stage. It will bring its culture, traditions and the warmth of France's South-West to the heart of our Brussels winter.

But celebrating 25 years also means looking back at the journey we have taken together. Through the participatory exhibition Souvenirs d'Hiver, featuring archival photographs, behind-the-scenes images and testimonials from visitors, we are giving a voice to all those who have helped shape the history of Plaisirs d'Hiver. It is a collective memory that reminds us that the true magic of this event lies, above all, in the people who bring it to life.

I would like to extend my warmest thanks to Brussels Major Events, which has been behind these festivities for 25 years and without whom none of this would have been possible. My particular thanks go to Olivier Mees, who was instrumental in creating Plaisirs d'Hiver and laying the foundations for this remarkable success story.

I now invite you to discover this very special edition and, above all, to continue writing this wonderful Brussels story together.

I wish you all a magical Plaisirs d'Hiver and a very happy 25th anniversary!

Nawal Ben Hamou
Alderwoman for Tourism and Major Events
President of Brussels Major Events





25 Years of Winter Wonders



From 27 November 2026 to 3 January 2027, the City of Brussels will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders

For 25 years, Winter Wonders has kept the heart of Brussels beating to the rhythm of the festive season. Having become one of the capital's most iconic winter events, it brings together residents, Belgian and international visitors, craftspeople, local traders, associations and cultural organisations every year for a festive, warm and distinctly Brussels-style experience.

Over the years, Winter Wonders has evolved whilst remaining true to its core values: celebrating the magic of Christmas, fostering connections and showcasing the richness of the city's heritage, culture and local craftsmanship. Combining traditions, contemporary creations and entertainment for all ages, the event helps to promote Brussels' reputation far beyond its borders.

Attracting several million visitors each year, Winter Wonders has become a major cultural, tourist and economic driving force for the capital. Its chalets, light installations, iconic attractions and numerous local partnerships help to strengthen social ties and support the vibrancy of Brussels' neighbourhoods.

The Grand-Place, the symbolic heart of Winter Wonders, is reinvented each year through two installations that create a dialogue between heritage and innovation.

To mark its 25th anniversary, Winter Wonders reaffirms, more than ever, the values that have made it such a success: conviviality, creativity, solidarity and openness. It is an invitation to rediscover Brussels at its most beautiful in winter, in a magical and unifying atmosphere.

"Twenty-five years ago, Plaisirs d'Hiver was a gamble. Today, it has become one of the major Christmas events and an internationally renowned attraction. But its success is also measured by the economic activity it generates for our local businesses, the platform it provides for our artisans and, above all, its continued ability to attract visitors in such large numbers."

Philippe Close
Mayor of the City of Brussels

An Anniversary Edition Filled with Festivities, Emotion and New Experiences

Anniversary showcase 18 December on the Grand-Place

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders in style, the Grand-Place will be transformed into an open-air dance floor for an exceptional anniversary evening! On the programme: **a free anniversary party** in a festive and electric atmosphere. An invitation to everyone to gather in the heart of Brussels, to move to the beat of the music and to celebrate together a quarter of a century of magic, connections and conviviality.

A moment of celebration and appreciation to bring together all those who, for a quarter of a century, have kept Winter Wonders alive, helped it grow and allowed it to shine.



The new panoramic village: the Mont des Arts Village

An exceptional panoramic view of Brussels, a glass of champagne in hand and the magic of Winter Wonders as a backdrop: this year, the Mont des Arts is set to become a new must-visit destination on the route. With its spectacular view of the capital, the Mont des Arts Village offers a chance to experience Winter Wonders in a peaceful atmosphere.

With its spectacular view of the capital, the Mont des Arts Village offers a different way to experience Winter Wonders. Visitors can gather on a terrace to share an aperitif whilst taking in one of Brussels' most beautiful panoramic views, savour oysters and champagne on the covered terrace, or spend the evening in an atmosphere that is at once elegant, contemporary and warm. A specially designed photo opportunity to mark the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders will allow visitors to capture these moments against a unique backdrop.

25 years of Winter Wonders: a story told at Place Royale

From 27 November to 3 January, Place Royale will host the urban exhibition **'Souvenirs d'Hiver' (Memories of Winter), a participatory retrospective comprising 24 photographic displays celebrating the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders** through the faces, testimonies and defining moments of its history.

For this retrospective, a call was put out to the general public, inviting them to share their photos and the stories behind them. A selection of these contributions will bring the event to life through the eyes of those who experienced it, from moments shared with family or friends to encounters with local traders, artists and the teams who work behind the scenes every year, particularly to ensure everyone's safety. These memories all speak to the human richness of Winter Wonders and celebrate those who have helped create its magic for the past 25 years.



Textile cake & ‘Happy 25’ badge

To mark its 25th anniversary, Winter Wonders is treating itself to a **birthday cake** like no other! This festive and delicious symbol has been brought to life by visual artist **Stephan Goldrajch**, who has created **a monumental crocheted version standing nearly 1.90 metres tall**. Displayed under a glass dome at the entrance to **the Vismet**, this artwork invites the public to discover an original creation that celebrates, in its own unique way, Winter Wonders’ 25th anniversary and adds an artistic and quirky touch to the festivities.

In this exuberant creation, wool is transformed into a sculptural medium. Soft, familiar and comforting, it evokes winter whilst lending itself to a daring interplay of bold colours, volumes, textures and characters. The result: **a cake as surprising as it is joyful, at the crossroads of textile art and festive imagination**.



Guest of Honour 2026: Béarn-Pyrénées and the Basque Country

This year, Winter Wonders is showcasing the **Pyrénées-Atlantiques department (64), situated between Béarn and the Basque Country**, which is setting up on **Place de la Bourse and Rue Auguste Orts** with a refined selection of local producers and passionate craftspeople. Through their products and expertise, they invite visitors to discover a region rich in traditions, gourmet specialities and a unique heritage of craftsmanship.

This immersive village will be a true invitation to embark on a journey into the heart of the cultural and natural riches of this distinctive region, nestled between the Pyrenees, the ocean and the art of living.



A new Basque-Béarn nativity scene

The Pyrénées-Atlantiques Department has also taken up the challenge of designing this year's nativity scene. It will be placed at the foot of the Christmas tree on the Grand-Place.

Crafted from wood by young apprentices aged 12 to 16, who are training at **the Lycée des Métiers d'Art de la Coarraze**, this creation combines tradition, craftsmanship and creativity. It reimagines the traditional nativity scene by incorporating unique references to the Béarn and Basque Country regions and their history: the Three Wise Men come to pay homage to the Baby Jesus, who lies in a cradle made from a tortoise shell – a nod to Henry IV, an iconic figure of Béarn. A wooden wheelbarrow, echoing the Maison de la Brouette on the Grand-Place, completes this original composition, where local heritage meets the magic of the festive season.

THE 64 ECONOMIC MEETINGS
8 AND 9 DECEMBER 2026

As part of this special 25th anniversary edition of Plaisirs d'Hiver in Brussels, the Pyrénées-Atlantiques Department is organising **a major economic promotion initiative**. On 8 and 9 December 2026, Brussels will host the"64 Economic Meetings", bringing together around **twenty companies from Béarn and the Basque Country, representing key sectors including healthcare, agri-food, aeronautics, aerospace, defence, energy and the energy transition, and chemicals**.

The programme includes: networking opportunities for business leaders, exchanges with European institutions, notably at the European Parliament, and new opportunities for collaboration to showcase the expertise and know-how of both territories.

Find out more: https://pro.tourisme64.com/actus/rencontres-btob-bruxelles/

Key figures

237
traders

36
craftspeople with the Quality Label

38
days of free entertainment

8
attractions



38
days of operation

10
venues for the Christmas market

An interactive map to help you find your way around

Available on the Winter Wonders website, the interactive map has been further enhanced this year to offer a more intuitive and comprehensive visitor experience. This engaging map allows visitors to explore the event from a bird's-eye view and easily locate the various venues, chalets, attractions, entertainment, art installations and points of interest.

The entire route is designed to be accessible to everyone: adapted toilets, access ramps, safe flooring and cable management, and routes suitable for people with reduced mobility are provided. The ice rink and the Ferris wheel have cabins suitable for people with reduced mobility.

Families can make use of a 'Baby Corner' at the Bourse, a comfortable space for changing babies and preparing a meal or a bottle.

map.plaisirsdhiver.be



The Grand-Place in all its splendour

Opening ceremony: Friday 27 November from 6 pm

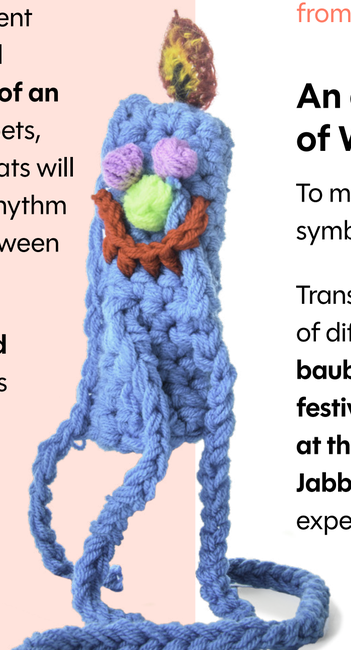
The opening night will kick off this anniversary edition by transforming the heart of Brussels into an **open-air stage**, where light, music and shared emotions will come together in a festive atmosphere that is quintessentially Brussels. With light installations, heritage brought to life and moments of togetherness, **this celebration will honour the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders and the capital's creative richness**.

Thanks to monument video mapping and lighting effects covering the entire Grand-Place, this production will offer a **360° immersive experience.** The **original soundtrack** by Romain Constant, **blending music, sound effects and sound design**, will enhance this sensory journey into the heart of Brussels.

The highlight of the evening will be the **lighting of the grand Christmas tree** and the new nativity scene – an educational and artistic project – which will celebrate the magic of the festive season and officially open this exceptional edition of Winter Wonders.

To mark the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders, the City of Brussels has a new surprise in store for its audience with 'Canopée', a spectacular production by the French Remue-Ménage company. True to the tradition of presenting a brand-new show each year, this year's event invites the public to discover a **fantastical forest that comes to life over the course of an enchanting, light-filled stroll**. Giant puppets, animal-like creatures, dancers and acrobats will bring the streets of Brussels to life to the rhythm of this poetic experience, somewhere between dream and reality.

An exceptional event, free of charge and accessible to all generations, to mark this quarter of a century with wonder and to surprise visitors once again.



An immersive tribute to the soul of Brussels

To mark the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders, the Grand-Place will host 'Inspired by Brussels', a new video mapping show celebrating Brussels' history and heritage. Produced by **THEORIZ Studio**, this first three-minute chapter blends an organic aesthetic with Art Nouveau influences, traditional craftsmanship and Brussels' gilded heritage. **A 360° immersive experience,** enhanced by **Romain Constant**'s original soundtrack, which invites visitors to rediscover Brussels in a whole new light.

Dates and times:

Every day, except 24/12, 31/12 and 03/01
A 3-minute show running every 20 minutes,
from 6 pm to 10 pm, with the final show at 10 pm

An anniversary tree to mark the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders

To mark its 25th anniversary, Winter Wonders is reinventing one of its most iconic symbols: **the Christmas tree on the Grand-Place**.

Transformed into a veritable anniversary tree, it is adorned with **800 decorations** of different sizes, shapes and materials, including **XXL ornaments, multicoloured baubles, mirror effects, metallic accents, ribbons, bows and nods to the world of festive celebrations**. A deliberate profusion, designed as an **explosion of colour at the heart of the Grand-Place**. Standing **nearly 20 metres tall and hailing from Jabbeke this year**, this original creation lights up at nightfall to offer a spectacular experience, brilliantly celebrating a quarter of a century of Winter Wonders.

The City Hall, at the heart of the magic

Les Enfants du Vent, an interactive installation in the City Hall courtyard

With 'Les Enfants du Vent' (Children of the Wind), **artist Romain Tardy** gives a physical presence to the wind, that invisible element which shapes our urban landscapes. Inspired by his childhood memories of La Défense, the installation takes the shape of an office tower, reimagined on a human scale. **Set in motion by the wind, measured in real time, the mirrored surfaces shift and constantly transform the artwork's reflections**. A poetic visual experience where architecture, technology and nature come together.

Tours of the City Hall

A true jewel of Brussels' heritage, the City Hall opens its doors for an immersive journey through six centuries of history, architecture and traditions. From the Grand-Place, its flamboyant Gothic silhouette invites visitors to step inside this **iconic building, a privileged witness to the capital's history.**

At the heart of Winter Wonders, an **exceptional dance performance** invites the public to rediscover Brussels' heritage in a new light:"**Heritage in Motion**". In this historic venue transformed into a living stage, **dance creates a dialogue between history, contemporary creation and emotion**. More than just a visit, it is a vibrant encounter with the history of Brussels, where the richness of the past blends with the creativity of the present to offer a unique cultural experience in the heart of the capital.

Visits – City Hall

From 29 November to 3 January,
on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays
From 11 am to 5 pm
Last admission at 4 pm
Prices and bookings: https://www.bruxelles.be/hotel-de-ville

Heritage in Motion – 18 Performances at the City Hall

04/12 – 5 pm – 6:45 pm – 8:30 pm
05/12 – 5 pm – 6:45 pm – 8:30 pm
06/12 – 3 pm – 5:45 pm – 7:30 pm

28/12 – 3 pm – 5:45 pm – 7:30 pm
29/12 – 3 pm – 5:45 pm – 7:30 pm
30/12 – 3 pm – 5:45 pm – 7:30 pm



Winter Wonders x Classissimo

Already a summer staple at the Théâtre Royal du Parc, Classissimo is making its debut in the Winter Wonders programme. To mark the occasion, **a mini-series of concerts** will take place in the reception rooms of the City Hall, offering the public a fresh opportunity to **discover classical music in the exceptional and cosy** setting of the festive season.

On the programme: **a clarinet ensemble** conducted by Ronald Van Spaendonck; **a musical collaboration** between Marc Grauwels, artistic director, and Logan Lopez Gonzalé, **countertenor and pianist**; and a **gospel concert** performed by a group from Lille. These performances bring together different styles and voices to offer a unique musical experience within the festive atmosphere of Winter Wonders.

Dates and times:

18 and 21 December – **Brussels Clarinet Quartet**
19 and 20 December – **Trio avec le contre-ténor Logan Lopez Gonzalez, le flûtiste Marc Grauwels et piano**
22 and 23 December – **Neema Gospel**
Time: 8 pm (approximately one-hour performance)



View Tower Experience

Climb the 200 steps of the City Hall's spiral staircase and **discover Brussels as you've never seen it before**. On the way, treat yourself to a digital interlude lasting a few minutes: an **immersive light show** transforms this intimate space into a magical realm, where Brussels' heritage is revealed to the rhythm of an original musical composition.

As you ascend, light displays and soundscapes awaken the senses and fuel a sense of wonder. The highlight of the experience: **a 360° panoramic view of the Grand-Place, the giant Christmas tree and Brussels decked out in its finest lights**.

Available **by booking only**, this immersive experience combines heritage, poetry and innovation to offer a moment suspended in time and a unique perspective on the City Hall and the capital.

Dates and times:

From 3 December to 26 December, Thursday to Saturday
From 28 December to 2 January, every day
From 3 pm to 9 pm

Winter Wonders 2026

Plaisirs d'Hiver is open every day from 12 pm to 10 pm, except on 24 and 31 December and 3 January, when it closes at 6 pm.



Brussels Major Events asbl (BME), the organiser of Winter Wonders, puts its event expertise at the service of the City of Brussels. For over twenty years, the association has been devising and developing urban events that bring together culture, innovation and positive economic impact, whilst incorporating sustainability considerations. BME has a single ambition: to bring to life a dynamic, inclusive and inspiring capital city that brings its communities together and celebrates its identity.

www.brusselsmajorevents.be

Place de la Monnaie

Place de la Monnaie, a long-standing favourite at Plaisirs d'Hiver thanks to its chalets and local traders, is reinventing itself while retaining its welcoming, **convivial spirit**. This year, **a new carousel for all ages** will add to the attractions, while an **après-ski atmosphere** will invite visitors to get together, enjoy the pleasures of winter and keep the festivities going in the heart of Brussels.

At the foot of the steps of the Royal Theatre of La Monnaie, an **exhibition window invites visitors to step into the magical world of the Cinderella fairy tale**. The iconic scene in which Cinderella tries on the lost slipper at the ball is brought to life, showcasing the exceptional craftsmanship of La Monnaie's opera costume workshops. Rossini's La Cenerentola ossia La bontà in trionfo will be performed at La Monnaie from 15 to 31 December 2026.

The experience continues inside the theatre during the Plaisirs d'Hiver opening celebrations. The **Cassandra Koor Choir**, conducted by Laurence Renson, invites visitors into the Grand Hall to enjoy a selection of songs celebrating hope, peace and joy as winter approaches. For an entire afternoon, **La Monnaie** will also **open its doors**, allowing visitors **to explore** some of its iconic spaces at their own pace: the illuminated Grand Hall, the grand ceremonial staircases, the Grand Foyer and, as a special highlight, a glimpse of the Main Auditorium.

Combining entertainment, heritage and creativity, Place de la Monnaie offers a festive stop where the spirit of Christmas meets Brussels' artistic craftsmanship.

Under the **direction of Emmanuel Trenque, the La Monnaie Women's Choir** will celebrate the festive season on the Wintervox stage (Black Tower) with an eclectic programme of Christmas songs, ranging from traditional carols to Broadway favourites, including the ever-popular White Christmas by Irving Berlin.

Visitors are invited to discover:

Dates and times:

27/11 – 03/01 – **"Cinderella and Her World"**

27/11, 6.30 pm – **Cassandra Koor Choir**, Grand Hall, **La Monnaie**

28/11, 2 pm – 6 pm – Self-guided tour – discover La Monnaie

20/12, 7.30 pm – **La Monnaie Women's Choir,** Black Tower, **Place Sainte-Catherine**

Place De Brouckère

Place De Brouckère is once again taking on its winter atmosphere with the return of the Winter Wonders **ice rink** and its **three curling rinks**, offering plenty of thrills in the heart of Brussels. Young and old alike can enjoy an **area specially designed for little ones**, with adapted skates to help them take their first steps on the ice. Fully accessible to wheelchair users, accompanied by a carer, the ice rink helps to make Place De Brouckère **a place for people to meet and socialise**.

Around the square, local shops are also playing their part in bringing the festive season to life. Nearby, in front of the former administration building, other attractions invite visitors to extend their exploration, notably **'Father Christmas's Reindeer'** and a **virtual reality experience**. All these activities make this neighbourhood an unmissable stop on the 'Winter Wonders' trail.

Place de la Bourse

Place de la Bourse is a vibrant meeting place where **culinary delights, craftsmanship and discovery** come together. Its chalets invite visitors to enjoy a wonderful variety of sweet and savoury specialities, festive drinks and handcrafted creations.

A must-visit stop on Place de la Bourse is the **guest of honour's chalet**, offering a taste of the flavours of south-west France. Artisans and cooperatives, drawing on generations of expertise and local traditions, invite visitors to sample and discover authentic products, lovingly crafted using traditional methods.

It is a wonderful opportunity to **explore the richness of the region's culinary heritage and enjoy a delicious moment filled with flavour, tradition and stories** along the Plaisirs d'Hiver trail.

Palais de la Bourse

Knitting café

The **Knitting Café** returns for its second edition in La Bourse's Agora space, in partnership with **Waka-Up**, a **non-profit organisation**. This welcoming, participatory space invites visitors of all ages **to knit, crochet and enjoy a convivial moment** over a solidarity coffee or tea, while discovering handmade creations.

Creative workshops, cultural activities, board games and an exhibition showcasing the Tisse-Reines project round out this initiative, which encourages intergenerational encounters, sharing and social connections. This year's programme includes **slam poetry evenings, board game nights, stand-up comedy, documentary screenings and concerts**.

This year, the Knitting Café is expanding its programme and joining forces with **Les Petits Riens** to create a warm and welcoming setting. Thanks to **furniture provided by the Brussels-based charity**, the space is transformed into a cosy haven, offering the perfect setting for creativity, conversation and the pleasure of coming together.



Agora Space
(on level -1 of the Palais de la Bourse)

From 27 November to 3 January,
Wednesday to Monday

1 pm to 8 pm on Mondays,
Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays

1 pm to 10 pm on Fridays and Saturdays

Yoga on Monday and Thursday
mornings, from 10 am to 11.30 am.

Creators factory

Over the weekend of 12 and 13 December 2026, the Bourse will be transformed into a **veritable hotbed of local creativity** for the fifth edition of Creators Factory. **Around forty creators** will take over its majestic nave to showcase their talents, innovative ideas and commitment to more sustainable creation. Organised in collaboration with hub.brussels, Entreprendre and the non-profit organisation Mabele Ya Bozui, this event celebrates **local talent and creative entrepreneurship** in an exceptional heritage setting.

Public gallery of La Bourse

12 and 13 December
From 12 pm to 8 pm

Sexisme Pépouze

The collective exhibition Sexisme Pépouze, conceived by journalist Myriam Leroy, offers an **artistic and thought-provoking perspective on sexism and cyberharassment**.

Drawing on thousands of hateful and sexist messages received by the journalist, **a dozen artists** have transformed this **digital material into original works spanning painting, poetry, sculpture, comic art and performance.**

Through this collective approach, the exhibition gives renewed visibility to forms of abuse that are too often trivialised. It invites visitors to take a critical look at online sexism while providing a space for reflection and awareness-raising.

Public gallery of La Bourse

25/11 – 10/12
12 pm – 8 pm

"As Alderman for Trade, I am delighted to see a greater role being given to our local businesses by enabling them to become part of Plaisirs d'Hiver. This reflects our shared commitment to extending the positive economic benefits of this Christmas market to our local traders.

Plaisirs d'Hiver will once again extend to the Poelaert site and Place de l'Albertine. This expansion to new locations is part of our efforts to better integrate this much-loved event into the heart of our shopping districts!"

Didier Wauters

Alderman for Economic Affairs, Employment, Trade and Municipal Facilities of the City of Brussels



Winter Wonders: a celebration of craftsmanship

With Winter Wonders, the City of Brussels offers local and international craftspeople a **prime showcase** in which to highlight their expertise and introduce people to their creations.

36 chalets bear **the quality label, which recognises the authenticity, quality and provenance of the products**. By also including artisans from the Creators Factory, a total of 38 artisans are being celebrated through this initiative to promote craftsmanship.

This initiative showcases talent, builds visitors' confidence and makes Winter Wonders an unmissable event for discovering original creations and high-quality products.

Tour Noire

Throughout the event, Winter Wonders offers a free daily programme combining shows, entertainment, choirs and performances by artists. An invitation to discover local creativity and share festive moments with family or friends.

Combined with the area hosting free entertainment, this magical atmosphere transforms the Black Tower into a veritable **family village**, designed as a place for meeting, relaxing and marvelling at the heart of Winter Wonders.

Throughout Winter Wonders, **Father Christmas's chalet** will welcome young and old alike for a series of creative workshops, with sessions dedicated to children and others open to the whole family. Two special highlights will feature in the programme: a meeting with **Saint Nicholas** on **6 December** and with **Father Christmas** on **23 December**. These are wonderful opportunities to share in the magic of the festive season and take home some unforgettable memories.

Dates and times:

Saint Nicholas: Sunday 6 December, from 2 pm to 6 pm.
Father Christmas: Wednesday 23 December, from 3 pm to 7 pm.

Combined with the area hosting free entertainment, this magical atmosphere transforms the Black Tower into a veritable **family village**, designed as a place for meeting, relaxing and marvelling at the heart of Winter Wonders.

Find the full programme at www.plaisirsdhiver.be.

Day	Activity
Monday (monnaie)	World Music
Tuesday	Quebec Music (live)
Wednesday	After School
Thursday	Acoustic Thursday
Friday	Candlelight
Saturday	Winter Vox (choir)
Sunday	Winter Vox (choir) / Creative workshops

Vismet

Vismet invites you to enjoy a gourmet break with a selection of savoury and sweet specialities, and to peruse the many stalls brimming with original gift ideas. As you stroll along, entertainment punctuates your visit, notably the Ferris wheel, which offers a spectacular view of the market and its illuminations. At the heart of this bustling atmosphere, the **Stella Artois** pavilion welcomes visitors with a warm and friendly ambience. It's the perfect opportunity to share a moment over this iconic Belgian beer and make a must-visit stop during Winter Wonders.

Mont des Arts Village

With an exceptional view of Brussels, a glass of champagne in hand and the magic of Winter Wonders as a backdrop, the Mont des Arts Village stands out this year as a new must-visit destination on the route. In this open, airy setting, offering a spectacular view of the capital, visitors can gather on the terrace for an aperitif, savour oysters and champagne in a covered area, or continue the festivities in an atmosphere that is at once elegant, contemporary and warm. A merry-go-round will delight young and old alike, whilst a photo booth specially designed to mark the 25th anniversary of Winter Wonders will invite everyone to capture their visit against a unique backdrop.

A mini Christmas village at Place Poelaert

At the foot of the Ferris wheel, Place Poelaert is hosting a charming, intimate Christmas village for the second year running. This welcoming space invites visitors to take a gourmet break in a cosy atmosphere, enjoying seasonal specialities, comforting drinks and breathtaking views of Brussels.

Must-see attractions

The ice rink (De Brouckère)

The Winter Wonders ice rink is back at Place de Brouckère. A special area has been set aside for very young children, allowing them to try out the ice in complete safety. Skates that clip onto shoes are available to make learning easier. The ice rink is fully accessible to wheelchair users, accompanied by a carer, both on and off the ice.

Curling (De Brouckère)

To recapture the spirit of winter sports right in the centre of Brussels, three curling rinks have been set up in front of the ice rink on Place de Brouckère, offering visitors the chance to try their hand at this fun game which is accessible to everyone.

This year, Charles Liégeois is partnering with Plaisirs d'Hiver: its coffees will be available at the Delacre chalet on Place De Brouckère, while the brand will also feature across the curling lanes. To mark the occasion, every player can enjoy a special offer by presenting their curling ticket at the Delacre chalet: buy one coffee and get a second one free.

The Lotto Ferris Wheel (Vismet)

From a height of 55 metres on one of the most spectacular attractions at Winter Wonders, the view over Brussels and the city centre in festive mode is simply breathtaking. With 42 cabins, the Ferris wheel also caters for people with reduced mobility, offering a cabin specially adapted for them.

Andrea's Carousel (Sainte-Catherine)

On Place Sainte-Catherine, Andrea's Carousel, featuring fantastical, hand-crafted characters from the poetic world of Jules Verne, offers visitors a moment suspended in time.

The Virtual Reality Dome (De Brouckère)

Comfortably seated in enveloping armchairs mounted on hydraulic jacks, visitors to **the VR Dome** are immersed in virtual reality adventures: encounters with mummies or dragons, exploring a haunted house, going on a space journey or a Christmas sleigh ride... Spectacular experiences suitable for all ages.

Father Christmas' Reindeer (De Brouckère)

Father Christmas transports up to 32 people in his eight reindeer- and sleigh-shaped gondolas. Reaching a maximum height of 10 metres, this ride allows visitors to fly over the market at a height of up to 4 metres, offering a breathtaking and completely safe view of the site.

Baroque Carousel (Place de la Monnaie)

This new attraction, a baroque-style chain carousel, immerses visitors in the magic of Christmas and winter sports. Its hand-painted panels and 20 seats shaped like Christmas baubles make it a truly unique attraction, combining traditional craftsmanship with a spectacular airborne experience.

In Brussels, the magic of Winter Wonders extends beyond the confines of its Christmas market to bring the whole city to life. The event brings together different neighbourhoods in the city centre, institutions, artists, residents and visitors, all united by a shared desire: to share, discover and marvel together.

Thanks to collaboration with cultural, institutional and private partners, Winter Wonders offers a rich and varied programme, combining unique experiences, exhibitions, concerts and original initiatives. These are all opportunities to showcase the talents, iconic venues and vibrant communities that bring Brussels to life throughout the year.

Light installations, heritage discoveries, classical concerts and artistic events invite the public to explore the capital in a new light, in a festive and inspiring atmosphere. Each event opens a new window onto the city and offers a different way to experience the magic of the festive season.

With over four million visitors each year, Winter Wonders showcases Brussels far beyond its festive chalets, highlighting the richness of its cultural fabric, the creativity of its people and the joy of coming together.

Discover all the partners and events on offer along the route and throughout the city at http://www.winterwonders.be/.



Moments to share across the city

Enjoy BXL by lights

Every winter, Brussels is decked out in thousands of lights and transformed into a vast illuminated trail. In 2026, the **Kanal District** – one of the neighbourhoods in the spotlight – joins this sparkling trail and invites the public to discover the area in a new light. Three complementary light experiences that invite you to rediscover the canal's surroundings through art, light and poetry:

MONAD, an audiovisual show by Norwegian artist **Anastasia Isachsen**, presented by **Scenitz**, combining artistic projections onto a water screen suspended beneath the **Suzan Daniel Bridge** with an original soundtrack. The bridge will also be illuminated with LED lighting. Finally, along the **Quai des Péniches**, five illuminated peonies by **the TILT collective**, each around six metres tall, will form an artistic installation along the quay.

In the streets and shopping districts, illuminated decorations suspended above the streets invite people to stroll and create a festive and convivial atmosphere. From the city centre to Laeken, via Haren and Neder-Over-Heembeek, the illuminations adorn many of Brussels' neighbourhoods, complemented here and there by large Christmas trees and other light displays.

Designed in consultation with local traders' associations, the illuminations reflect the identity of each neighbourhood and turn the lighting display into a genuine community project, bringing together residents, visitors and traders. To extend the experience, several **illuminated walking routes** will be available online, taking in different neighbourhoods of Brussels. Accessible via a map, they will allow the public to explore the illuminated streets and easily plan their walk at their own pace.

Dates and times:

From 25 November 2026 to 3 January 2027

Opening on 26 November at 6 pm

Opening on 26 November at 6 pm
MONAD – Water screen show

25 November – 3 January, between 1 pm and 1 am
Lighting display on the Suzan Daniel Bridge and illuminated peonies



Winter @ NOH

For the **third year running**, Winter@NOH returns to Place Peter Benoit, in the heart of Neder-Over-Heembeek, with an intimate Christmas village offering a warm and festive atmosphere.

Through these festive initiatives, the City of Brussels spreads the magic of the festive season across its entire territory, from the historic centre to the more outlying neighbourhoods of Laeken and as far as Neder-Over-Heembeek. These local events bring the spirit of Winter Wonders closer to residents, whilst **promoting local identities, local businesses and neighbourhood life**.

On the programme: a proper **ice rink** for young and old alike, wooden chalets hosting local traders, seasonal treats and a varied programme combining street performances, workshops and live acts.

Dates and times:

From 11 December to 20 December
Every day from 12 pm to 8 pm
Open to schools and youth organisations from 14 to 18 December, from 09:00 am to 12:00 pm
Live performances / workshops / street performances:
Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays,
between 3 pm and 6 pm
Place Peter Benoit

The Ice Forest

This year, Place Fontainas is transformed into a veritable Ice Forest. At the heart of the square, around ten illuminated fir trees of varying sizes create a spectacular winter landscape, bringing a magical atmosphere to life, particularly after nightfall.

This new installation has also been designed as a luminous link between Rue du Marché au Charbon and Rue des Riches Claires, naturally extending the illuminated trail and creating a seaml

Dates and times:

25 November – 3 January
Place Fontainas



Winter Wonders: experiences to enjoy and share

Christmas Fairies

The Christmas Fairies invite young and old alike to enjoy a magical experience on the Grand-Place, amidst sparkling decorations and a chance to meet Father Christmas, in the warm and enchanting setting of the Roy d'Espagne.

Dates and times:

From 27 November 2026 to 3 January 2027
From 2 pm to 10 pm
or 4 pm to 10 pm
Roy d'Espagne, Grand-Place



Brussels Christmas Tour by Tootbus

Tootbus invites you to discover Brussels in a whole new light with its Christmas Illuminations Tour. Aboard 100% electric panoramic buses, visitors cruise through the streets and admire the capital's iconic monuments decked out in their finest festive lights.

The experience continues on foot with the Christmas Tootwalk, a guided tour linking the must-see spots of Winter Wonders, punctuated with anecdotes about Brussels' history and culture.

Dates and times:

from 3 December to 27 December 2026 inclusive – every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Departure: 58 Rue Antoine Dansaert, 7 pm
Duration: approx. 60 mins, depending on traffic

Brussels Card

With the Brussels Card, set off to discover Brussels and its cultural treasures: gain access to 48 museums and enjoy numerous discounts at partner attractions, restaurants and shops. It's the perfect passport to explore the capital at your own pace during Winter Wonders and extend the experience well beyond the illuminated city centre.

Make-A-Wish

On the Grand-Place, meet the volunteers from Make-A-Wish Belgium South and discover the dreams they've made come true for seriously ill children. Cuberdon sweets, soft toys and charity items are on sale to support their cause. Everyone is also invited to hang their own dream on the big Christmas tree, to help build a beautiful chain of hope and solidarity together.

Dates and times:

19 December
From 1 pm to 7 pm
Grand-Place

AIDS Prevention Platform

On the occasion of World AIDS Day on 1 December, La Plateforme invites the public to discover its interactive cube and put their perceptions of HIV-related prejudice to the test.

Through a series of challenges, visitors will learn to recognise the signs of"Stigmatitis", a symbolic condition affecting the way we see and judge others, leading to discrimination against people living with HIV. The experience aims to raise awareness of the mechanisms behind stigma and discrimination.

The installation will be located in front of Brussels Central Station on Monday 30 November, from 1 pm to 8 pm, and Tuesday 1 December, from 10 am to 8 pm.

More information: www.la-plateforme.be

Dates and times:

From 30 November to 1 December
Carrefour de l'Europe

Viva for Life

The charity programme **Viva for Life** returns for its 14th edition and, once again, rallies the people of Brussels behind a common cause: combating child poverty.

So many opportunities to take part in a nationwide chain of generosity.

Dates and times:

Highlights in the capital include:

6 December – Speculoos bake sale with Tipik.
21 December – Stop on the *Viva for Life Tour*



Manneken-Pis Corrida

On 26 December 2026, the Manneken-Pis Corrida has something new in store for the youngest participants: for the first time, a 'Corridatje' – a **600-metre race specially designed for children** – will take place along the Galerie de la Reine at **8 pm**.

As in 2025, the **15th Manneken-Pis Corrida**, covering a distance of **6 km**, will set off at **8.45 pm** from the majestic Mont des Arts. The route will take runners past some of the capital's most iconic landmarks, from Place des Martyrs to the Galerie de la Reine, via Rue Neuve and the Grand-Place. New this year: the Halles Saint-Géry are also part of the route. All runners will finish at the Place d'Espagne.

A festive and convivial occasion to get together with family or friends, and to round off the year in style!

Dates and times:

26 December at 8.45 pm
Starting at **Mont des Arts**, finishing at **Place d'Espagne**

A commitment to sustainable development and public cleanliness

Winter Wonders continues to evolve, remaining true to a **philosophy of continuous improvement and experimentation**. Each year's event allows us to refine concrete initiatives that combine a sense of community, inclusion and environmental responsibility.

For several years now, the event has been making steady, incremental progress: **reusable cups**, **compostable containers, LED lighting**, **reduced use of electric heaters**, **improved waste sorting** and **the promotion of Brussels-based craftspeople** have become established sustainable practices. The **Christmas tree on the Grand-Place**, which is recycled every year into street furniture, trophies or, this year, crowd barriers, embodies this commitment to extending the life of materials and giving meaning to every action.

Sustainable development also has a social dimension. **Training for 'Winter Wonders' staff**, **Health and Safety protocols** and **awareness-raising campaigns** along the route reinforce a culture of respect and kindness.

Winter Wonders is strengthening its commitment to **public cleanliness** through an increased number of litter bins, over **100 recycling points and daily cleaning** provided by the City and BME. The event also promotes sustainability, notably through the **collection of surplus food**."

Anas Ben Abdelmoumen

Alderman of Finance and Public Cleaning highlights the measures implemented by the City of Brussels and BME to ensure public cleanliness:

"Thanks to comprehensive and thorough daily cleaning of the Winter Wonders site, additional cleaning operations in the surrounding streets and the provision of no fewer than 180 extra bins, we are making considerable efforts to ensure that Winter Wonders is not only the friendliest Christmas market, but also the cleanest in the country. At the same time, we are calling on all visitors to adopt responsible habits when it comes to keeping the area clean. During Winter Wonders too, keeping our city clean is everyone's responsibility."

"Year after year, Winter Wonders strengthens its commitment to sustainability through concrete actions. Building on the progress made last year, we are continuing this transition with determination.

Reusable cups and compostable tableware are now an integral part of the event. Through clearer communication and improved signage, we also aim to make waste sorting as straightforward as possible.

Our ambition is to make Winter Wonders an increasingly sustainable event."

Frederik Ceulemans

Alderman for Urban Renewal, Climate, Citizen Participation and Dutch-language Affairs



Accessibility: a priority during Winter Wonders

To make the most of Winter Wonders, **active mobility and public transport are encouraged**, so that visitors can easily reach the heart of the event whilst minimising disruption caused by traffic and end-of-year roadworks. **New this year, three Park & Bike facilities will be available to make cycling to Winter Wonders easier: Ganshoren, Woluwe and Anderlecht.**

Secure cycle parking is available nearby, particularly at **the Bourse and De Brouckère stations**. Parking shared scooters and bikes is prohibited along the route, but dedicated areas have been set up in the surrounding area.

Brussels-Central station is a strategic access point to the city centre, with a direct link to the walking route. SNCB passengers benefit from **a 30 per cent discount on return tickets at weekends** (from Friday at 7 pm to Sunday), as well as reduced rates in station car parks. The STIB Gare Centrale station, located in the immediate vicinity, also allows visitors to reach the market by metro, tram or bus. Lifts provide easy access for people with reduced mobility. pour les personnes à mobilité réduite. *Please note: Due to renovation works, the lifts providing access to the metro platforms at Brussels-Central are out of service until the end of 2026. Please check the STIB website for the latest accessibility information. At Brussels-Central metro station, lifts are available for people with reduced mobility.*

For those **travelling by car**, several **Interparking car parks** within walking distance (Rogier, Poelaert, Entre 2 portes and Loi) offer practical alternatives, with discounted evening rates. **The Vismet area is subject to access restrictions** during busy periods, whilst a Kiss & Ride zone allows for short-term drop-offs. Finally, Park & Ride (P+R) car parks on the outskirts offer another option, with direct metro links to the city centre.

Accessibility and comfort

The entire route is designed to be accessible to everyone: adapted toilets, access ramps, safe flooring and cable routing, and pathways suitable for people with reduced mobility are provided. The ice rink and the Ferris wheel have cabins suitable for people with reduced mobility. Families can make use of a 'Baby Corner' at La Bourse, a comfortable space for changing children and preparing a meal or a bottle.

All practical information (transport, car parks, accessibility) is available on the official website: www.plaisirsdhiver.be/accessibilite

"Winter Wonders is a festive and welcoming event that should remain accessible to everyone. We want to make it easier to get to the event while preserving residents' quality of life and avoiding congestion in the city centre as much as possible.

This year, we are introducing a new initiative: Park & Bike. Visitors can park their cars for free in a car park on the outskirts of Brussels and cycle to the city centre via a safe and pleasant route. This solution combines different modes of transport, helps avoid traffic jams and can even save time: cycling is often faster than driving when travelling into the city centre!

We also encourage visitors to make use of public transport, particularly during the opening weekend, which coincides with Black Friday and the opening of Kanal, while the Sainctelette construction works will still be ongoing.

Let's make getting to Winter Wonders part of the pleasure!"

Anaïs Maes

Alderwoman for Urban Planning, Public Spaces, Roadworks, Mobility and Dutch-language Education of the City of Brussels

Practical information

From Friday 27 November 2026 to Sunday 3 January 2027.
Open daily from 12 pm to 10 pm, except on Thursdays 24 and 31 December 2026 and Sunday 3 January 2027, when it is open from 12 pm to 6 pm.

Where to stay?

'Winter Wonders' is all about a 360° experience: Christmas market, ice rink, Ferris wheel, illuminated streets... Everything you need to fully experience the magic of Brussels throughout the festive season. The capital offers **a wide range of accommodation options** to suit all tastes and budgets.

Here are two hotels we recommend:

Citadines Sainte-Catherine Aparthotel is a long-standing partner of Winter Wonders: the Citadines Sainte-Catherine enjoys an exceptional location, right in the heart of the Vismet district, just a stone's throw from the Ferris wheel and five minutes from the Grand-Place.

The **Hilton Brussels Grand Place** is a new partner of Winter Wonders! This four-star hotel, located at Carrefour de l'Europe, close to Brussels-Central Station and the Grand-Place, is the perfect choice for those wishing to extend the magic of the event and enjoy an extra moment of conviviality.

Press information and contacts

www.winterwonders.be/en/media-en

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Partners

The City of Brussels and Brussels Major Events would like to extend their warmest thanks to all their partners for their commitment and contribution.

These collaborations go far beyond mere support: they enable the design and delivery of creative activities, artistic works, events and community initiatives that enrich the experience of visitors.

Each partner plays their part. Together, they transform Winter Wonders into a collective project where commitment, creativity and influence come together to connect residents, artists and the city as a whole.

BXL

LA VILLE
DE STAD

27.11.26 → 03.01.27

WINTER WONDERS

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