

FREE

FOR YOUNG TRAVELLERS

MAD BY LOCALS

USE IT

FREE MAP

5 MIN. WAK

TAKE A WALK

You never know, with that bloody virus. If the bars and restaurants or even the museums are closed again, here's what you can do: walk. Walk along the edges of Ghent, see the remains of our industrial past, spot the graffiti walls, be surprised by the beauty of our 'normal' streets. You'll understand why so many of us don't want to live anywhere else.

By the time you are reading this map, the worst of the pandemic is probably over. Well, at least you're here already! However, when we were writing it (February 2021), bars and restaurants were still closed. That means some of these texts were written from memory. However, all the places we mention want to get back at it, in full force. Opening times are the normal ones for non-corona times.

VAN EYCK GRAFFITI

In 2020/2021, Ghent celebrated its greatest Flemish Master: Jan Van Eyck. The corona monster swallowed some of the fun, but don't worry: the Ghent Altarpiece has survived six centuries of war and disease already. It's here to stay (at 49). Street art is never eternal, though, so have a look at six new pieces inspired by Van Eyck, while the colours are still fresh.

See all those icons on the map: we are rightfully proud of our graffiti. The new ROA on 29 just to name one. You can get a street art map with all the names, for free, at the tourist info.

- STROOK** (BE) recycled wood from our Cathedral, art school and the old army barracks
- HYURO** (AR) speaks about the refugee crisis, using draperies and floral motifs
- ISAAC CORDAL** (ES) installed 15 mini versions of Adam and Eve—here is just one, bonus point if you find another
- BOSOLETTI** (AR) created an inverted reality of Adam and Eve, now looking away
- MONKEY BIRD CREW** (FR) was inspired by 15th-century instruments for the backside of Handelsbeurs concert hall
- PASTEL** (AR) used the roses, lilies and columbines from Mary's crown

1 BOATS & SEAGULLS
You are now on the edge of the island called Muide. Well, actually it lies a bit off the map, to the north. When you've crossed the railway track, turn left and look for a spot near the water. Dangle your feet over the edge and take a deep breath. Mmm, that wonderful harbour smell of diesel and seagull sweat. Indeed, this area is on the edge of the Ghent harbour, which is three times the size of the whole city centre. The Muide is a lively neighbourhood that has changed a lot over the years. Young alternative couples with money are slowly moving into new flats, but the area is still quite rock 'n roll. After your walk around, stop over here at the corner of Sassekai and the city ring for a perfectly tapped Stella. BAR OSWALD is a bar with a century of history, still in good hands with Elewout and Linne. They renovated the toilets using Lego and beer kegs and they installed a confession booth for women there too.

2 BEST FRIES IN TOWN
(Every day) Of course, Belgians never agree about the best fries in town, but last year, FRITUIR TOLPOORT won our local competition. It's one of the few real free-standing barracks we still have. Rifaat's uncle was the Turkish mayor of Ghent in the 1960s: a one-man interim office for the first wave of immigrant workers. The little Rifaat got hooked on the smell of fresh fries, though. This 'frietkot' is his childhood dream come true.

3 NEVER THE SAME BEER
Amadeo (23) beer geek (Tue to Sun 11:00 - 23:00)
"DOK BREWING COMPANY is not your average brewery. For one thing, I cannot tell you what they serve there because they don't like to make the same batch twice. When they go crazy, they even experiment with flavours like chili or chili. Last time I went, they did something with a Christmas tree... If choosing from 30 taps stresses you out, just ask Joeri for advice. He'll know and he'll let you taste as well. The loong bar is next to loong tables, where you can order food from any of the other places at Hall 16."

4 A THING OF SUBSTANCE IS A JOY FOREVER
Timon (29) story collector
"Quite a few of my corona walks went to the CAMPO SANTO graveyard. It's where I find serene silence and sublime drama at the same time. Statues of crying angels, the grave of a fallen soldier, stones overgrown with moss, well-placed benches and the occasional flower blossoms drifting over the grass field... I know this is not Père Lachaise, but I think this place deserves your visit." (to get there, walk 5 minutes from here along Antwerpsesteenweg)

5 MUSEUM OF INDUSTRY
(Closed on Wed / Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 09:00 - 17:00 / Sat, Sun and holidays: 10:00 - 18:00 / free under 19 / €2 under 26 / €8) From the Middle Ages till well into the 20th century, Ghent was famous for its textile industry. The factory chimneys you can still spot on the edges of the city are a silent witness to our industrial past, but on the third floor of the INDUSTRIEMUSEUM you see it in live action. Be prepared for loud cloth-spinning (free earplugs) or talk to the experts who use the plants from the museum garden to dye cloth. On the fourth floor, it's all about printing. Designers and print enthusiasts still use that impressive Linotype machine for real as well. It's hard to predict when they will be working, but on most days at least somebody will be making noise!

6 TOTAL TASTE EXPLOSION
(Wed to Sat, dinner) They call themselves an 'izakaya with cocktails'. We had you at cocktails, but for the foodies: izakaya means a cosy place with small bites. For example, ASTROBOY serves a seasonal french ceviche and a perfectly grilled mackerel. Not super cheap but worth it. All of them have a Japanese-style cocktail on the terrace and this city won't get any better.

7 PAINT, ELECTRONICS AND GLASS
Three interesting collectives share the space of NIEUWLAND. The KAPOW crew is your best entry into Ghent's street art universe. They spray, skate, throw concerts, light campfires and load surfboards into their van whenever the waves are good. At neighbouring NEROLAB you're welcome to see and try digital technology in action: laser cutting, 3D printing and electronics. GENT GLAS does live glass blowing demonstrations on Friday night. All of them are pretty open to visitors in general.

8 TURKISH PIZZA
Some say it's AKDENIZ. Some say it's GÖK PALACE. Some say GÜLHAN: every student has his favourite but you can never go wrong with any of the cheap pizzas in Sloopstraat. The menus are full-colour and what you see is what you get (around €9 for a meal + salty Ayran yoghurt drink). This street is the heart of Turkish Ghent, with a soundtrack of jingling trams, yelling children and pimped out BMWs. It's always alive except in summer, because loads go to Turkey on holiday, usually to their grandparents' birthplace Emirli. It's from this small city that almost all of the first Turkish immigrants came in the 1960s, so guys in the rough Ghent textile industry. Today, some work of the third generation have a juicier Ghent accent than most locals.

9 INTERNATIONAL FOOD STREET
OUDBURG is the street to go for international food: African, Indian, Moroccan, Turkish, Nepali, American, Japanese, Creole, Italian... It's a touristy area, but this is still Ghent, so there aren't any real traps. One rule: avoid the empty places.

10 TIME MACHINE
(Thu to Sun) Jacky and Marina took over CAFE FOLLORE 37 years ago and they also intend to change anything. Picnic is allowed, but if there are 'kroakmandels' (fried and salted peas) take your chance, because this is probably the only place in Ghent where you can still taste this local specialty.

11 BEAUTIFUL WILLOWS
LIEVEKAAI is the most romantic place to chill with a bottle of wine on a warm evening. Sit under the beautiful willows with your legs dangling over the water. But don't bring your ghettablaster please, and if you break up, do it nice and quiet. It's just that the locals don't want this to become a second Graslei.

12 FRAGILISTICXPALIDOCIOUS
(closed Thu, lunch and/or dinner) Just when you thought you saw it all, someone will advise you to have lunch in a former laundromat that was a former gas station. SUPERKELLY joyfully opened in the middle of the Covid crisis with tapas and soup and will keep us happy with no-nonsense veggie and the occasional halal meat burger.

13 FLOWERS FOR SAINT RITA
(every day) Saint Rita was always popular in Belgium as the saint of hopeless cases. During the Covid year, the old tradition flourished again. Older people, who went to visit a relative at the nearby hospital or retirement home, regularly dropped by with fresh roses—Rita's favourite flower—or they bought a religious trinket in the shop. The candle room was always hot, even during the darkest winter months. The chapel of Saint Rita is in the corner of SINT-STEFANUS CHURCH, across from the entrance. Keep it quiet and do not feed the fish. (Yes, Rita has an aquarium too.)

14 SIGN LANGUAGE SOUP
(Wed to Sat / lunch) Soup bar SORDO is run by Christophe, who happens to be deaf. So this may be your first attempt at sign language—but pointing works too. The three daily soups range between €3 and €4.50. You won't find cheaper lunch in the historical centre!

15 WHERE ONLY LOCALS GO
Lotar (30) film fanatic
"My ex told me to find a new hobby and I chose the movie club at DE KOPER. Everybody can pick their favourite movie, so the selection goes anywhere. I know this sounds mellow, but that place feels like my second home. I've become a more social person in the bar and at their wild nights. When you find your shoes all red the next morning from the painted dance floor, you know it was a good party. If you want to avoid that, it's best to dance on the tables. Concerts are the best too." (Just off the map, Meiloleemstraat 86)

