

## 5 great stops for LUNCH

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### 51 DE PARKIET

**Kraanlei 31**  
**Patershol ②**  
**+32 (0)494 88 91 95**  
**[deparkiet.be](http://deparkiet.be)**

This lunch spot occupies a historic town house in the heart of Ghent. The interior has a sober Nordic look with bare walls, wooden furniture and potted plants. It also has a terrace outside on the cobbled pavement with small tables looking out on the River Leie. The menu lists tasty Flemish comfort food, including vegetarian options, along with local beers.

### 52 LEPELBLAD

**Onderbergen 40**  
**Central Ghent ①**  
**+32 (0)9 324 02 44**  
**[lepelblad.be](http://lepelblad.be)**

This relaxed restaurant occupies a 19th-century house with a sober modern interior. It attracts a young, fashionable crowd who come for the friendly service and the buzzing atmosphere. The menu includes fish dishes, tajines, salads and a delicious cheesecake. It's always crowded so you really have to book.

### 53 ALICE

**Onderbergen 6**  
**Central Ghent ①**  
**+32 (0)9 277 92 35**  
**[alice-gent.be](http://alice-gent.be)**

This nostalgic restaurant occupies three intimate rooms with baroque painted ceilings, pink tablecloths and a collection of teapots. Named after the owner's mother, it's an elegant spot where locals meet for brunch, lunch or high tea.

### 54 KRUIDTUIJN

**Kortrijkse-  
steenweg 27**  
**Citadelpark ⑤**  
**+32 (0)9 311 99 89**  
**[kruidtuingent.be](http://kruidtuingent.be)**

This stylish restaurant on the ground floor of a handsome town house has brought contemporary cooking to the Citadelpark neighbourhood. The chef and his team focus on a small range of dishes using fresh ingredients, flavoured with herbs from the owner's own *kruidtuin* (herb garden). On warm days, tables are set out in a walled back garden.

### 55 SPAZIO24

**Wiedauwkaai 24**  
**Northern Ghent ⑦**  
**+32 (0)496 34 11 77**  
**[spazio24.be](http://spazio24.be)**

This stylish coffee bar, lunch restaurant and concept store occupies a converted industrial building on the edge of Ghent. The simple tables occupy a bright space with a polished floor, whitewashed brick walls and iron columns. The lunch menu features classic Italian dishes coupled with a touch of creativity.



54 KRUIDTUIJN

## 5 excellent COFFEE ROASTING SHOPS

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### 96 MOKABON

**Donkersteeg 35**  
**Central Ghent** ①  
**+32 (0)9 225 71 95**  
[mokabon.be](http://mokabon.be)

Hidden down a narrow lane, this is a warm, dark place filled with the smell of slow roast coffee. Set up by a young Italian in 1937, it's now run by a friendly, energetic team. The interior is decorated with red walls, small round tables and a red neon sign. You can sit with a perfect La Marzocco espresso or pick up a bag of Mysore beans to take home.

### 97 SÃO PAULO

**Koestraat 24**  
**Central Ghent** ①  
**+32 (0)9 225 44 11**  
[saopaulo.be](http://saopaulo.be)

The smell of fresh coffee hits you the moment you enter São Paulo. They have been roasting coffee here since the Ghent World Fair in 1913. The coffee is stored in a row of gleaming brass dispensers behind the counter. The shop also stocks 200 different types of tea.

### 98 VANDEKERCKHOVE KOFFIEBRANDERIJ

**Brabantdam 55**  
**Central Ghent** ①  
**+32 (0)9 225 81 89**  
[vandeckerckhove1854.be](http://vandeckerckhove1854.be)

Louis Vandekerckhove's family has been involved in the coffee business since 1854. The roasting is done in the basement of the shop using beans shipped from Brazil and Kenya. They sell about 30 different varieties including several unique blends.

### 99 WAY

**Dok-Noord 4-E/001**  
**Docklands** ⑦  
[way.gent](http://way.gent)

This stunning coffee bar and roastery is located in the Dok Noord district. Head roaster Charlene De Buysere has won several awards for her roasting skills. You can try her barista coffee and a vegan pastry in a lofty dockland space with white concrete walls, metal lamps and long wooden tables.

### 100 FULL CIRCLE COFFEE

**Zuidstationstraat 5**  
**Central Ghent** ①  
**+32 (0)479 04 81 97**  
[fullcircleghent.com](http://fullcircleghent.com)

This coffee bar and roastery occupies a building near the city library. The spacious interior is a blend of white tiles, vintage armchairs and potted house plants. The friendly baristas who work here are skilled in the art of coffee making. There is a second branch called Full Circle Astrid near Sint-Pieters station.





# 45 PLACES TO SHOP

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## 5 inspiring GHENT DESIGNERS

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### 216 AESAERT

Kortrijkse-  
steenweg 322  
Citadelpark ⑤  
+32 477 05 40 60  
aesaert.be

Griet Aesaert gave up her job as an architect to create handmade leather bags and briefcases. She works in a tiny atelier crammed with soft leather, zips and fine tools. Her bags are made using sustainable leather from a Belgian workshop.



### 217 SCHMITZ&BITS

Kalversteeg 1-E  
Patershol ②  
+32 (0)498 10 79 17  
arletteschmitz.be

Sophie De Laere worked for many years as a journalist before she set up a store dedicated to sustainable slow fashion. She sells clothes and accessories by local designers such as Tamu Fashion and Wild Muse. She also has a workshop next door where she creates her own fashion collections under the name Arlette Schmitz.

### 218 LA FEMME GARNITURE

Brabantdam 56-B  
Central Ghent ①  
+32 (0)494 81 12 98  
lafemmegarniture.be

Designer Sabine Van Acker creates fine knitwear for women in her Belgian workshop. Her unique scarves, shawls and cushions combine bold colours with rich textures. She sells her latest creations in an inspiring minimalist store on Ghent's Brabantdam.

### 219 LA FILLE D'O

Burgstraat 21  
Central Ghent ①  
+32 (0)9 334 80 10  
lafilledo.com

The rebellious Ghent lingerie designer Murielle Scherre started her business selling sexy bras and knickers in her living room. She gradually built up a loyal following that includes celebrities like Lady Gaga and Rihanna. Now she has her own shop where she sells edgy lingerie and sometimes organises daring fashion shows in the window.

### 220 MAYENNE NELEN

Maisstraat 35  
Suburbs  
+32 (0)488 57 37 00  
mayenne-nelen.com

Designer Mayenne Nelen creates unique leatherware including shoulder bags, laptop bags and men's braces. Her leather is tanned using a vegetable-based process to avoid harmful chemicals. You can visit her workshop in the Ghent suburbs. Just call to make an appointment.

## The 5 most striking MODERN BUILDINGS

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### 256 **STADSHAL**

**Emile Braunplein**

**Central Ghent** ①

*visit.gent.be/en/see-do/  
city-pavilion*

Some local people call it the sheep shed. Others consider it a sublime modern building. The controversial Stadshal doesn't leave anyone indifferent. It was designed in 2012 by the partnership Robbrecht & Daem and Marie-José Van Hee to serve as a modern covered hall for concerts and events. It is now a popular meeting spot where musicians sometimes perform and locals gather at New Year to celebrate with a *Nieuwjaarsdrink*.

### 257 **NEW ZEBRA**

**Zebrastraat 32**

**University Quarter** ④

*zebrastraat.be*

The inspiring New Zebra complex embraces a unique 1906 utopian workers' housing complex built in southern Ghent by Charles van Rysselberghe. The elliptical building known as De Cirk (the circus) forms the centrepiece of the modern New Zebra project. It includes apartments, an art gallery and a pastel pink cocktail bar, along with a bright yellow rooftop sculpture by the artist Nick Erving. The site hosts the summer festival Zebra Beach and a winter festival called Zebra Woods.



## 5 curious URBAN DETAILS

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### 321 DULLE GRIET

**Grootkanonplein**  
**St-Jacobs Quarter** ③

An enormous red wrought iron cannon stands near the Vrijdagmarkt. Constructed in the early 15th century, it was considered one of the most formidable weapons in mediaeval Europe. Named Dulle Griet after a legendary mad woman in Flemish folklore, it was only fired once during a siege in the 16th century when the heavy cannonball fell harmlessly to the ground.

### 322 STREET GARDENS AND BENCHES

**VARIOUS LOCATIONS**  
**gevelbank.be**

The people of Ghent have come up with some creative ideas for improving urban life. One project involves a team of guerilla gardeners who have gone around planting little pavement gardens in front of terraced houses. Meanwhile, two students attached simple wooden benches to house façades to bring neighbours together and maybe even create the mood of a lively Italian town. Some 1200 *gevelbanken* have been placed so far. Most of them are in Ghent, but you can also spot them in other cities in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.

### 323 HORSE AND DOG FOUNTAINS

**OPPOSITE:**

**Kraanlei 25**  
**Patershol** ②

The city has preserved six 19th-century cast iron drinking fountains decorated with dogs, horses and birds. Placed by the Society for the Protection of Animals, they incorporate three drinking bowls – one at the bottom for dogs, one higher up for horses and a third one at the top for birds. You can find them at various locations throughout the city centre.

### 324 BUNKERS

**Jozef Kluyskens-  
straat**  
**Bijloke Quarter** ④

Two concrete bunkers covered with grass are still standing in the grounds of the former Bijloke hospital. Used as air raid shelters for hospital patients and nurses during the Second World War, these mysterious structures are now occupied by bat colonies.

### 325 DE GENTSE BARGE

**Koophandelsplein**  
**Central Ghent** ①  
**+32 (0)473 48 26 59**  
**gentsebarge.be**

The most beautiful boat in Ghent is moored outside the old law courts. The gorgeous white and gold barge is a modern reconstruction of the 17th-century barges that sailed on the canal between Bruges and Ghent. The replica was made by the Ghent artist Walter De Buck working alongside local unemployed people.

## 5 places to hunt for STREET ART

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- 346 **VISSERIJ  
BLANK WALL**  
Jongenstragel  
Dampoort Quarter ⑥
- The Belgian street artist Joachim was invited to Ghent in 2018 to cover a wall on a narrow waterfront path behind a local school. He created a large work in pop art style that shows a student drawing red hearts. But look more closely and you will see peepholes in the wall made by a second street artist Michel François to let people see into the school yard.
- 347 **VERDEDIGINGSTRAAT**  
Kortrijksepoort-  
straat 279-281  
University Quarter ④  
[visit.gent.be/en/  
street-art-ghent](http://visit.gent.be/en/street-art-ghent)
- The Ghent street artist Mr Mong sprayed two side walls of houses at Kortrijksepoortstraat as part of the Sorry Not Sorry street art festival. Working with black and red paint, he created two science fiction murals in the lane called Verdedigingstraat featuring futuristic machines and heroic women.
- 348 **SINT-JACOBS-  
NIEUWSTRAAT**  
Corner with  
Erpelsteeg  
St-Jacobs Quarter ③
- The street artist Klaas Van der Linden has created an immense monochrome work on a corner house titled *Heist*. It illustrates a notorious robbery in London in 1906 in which police chased an armed gang as they escaped on a tram.

349 **TWEEBRUGGEN-  
STRAAT**

Tweebruggenstraat 34  
Central Ghent ①

The city commissioned 35 artists to create street art on a blank wall outside a Catholic school. The artists were asked to create works on the theme of cycling. The street artist Din Din created an affectionate paste-on drawing of a mother cycling with her six children in a typical Belgian *bakfiets*.

350 **SLEEPSTRAAT**

Sleepstraat 79  
Patershol ②

The artist A Squid Called Sebastian created a large mural titled *The Traveller* on a house wall next to a gap site in the Turkish neighbourhood. It is filled with details from his wanderings across the world. On the wall opposite, the Portuguese artist Violant has added a mystical work titled *Abacadabra*.



## 5 authentic FESTIVALS

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### 421 GENTSE FEESTEN

[gentsefeesten.stad.gent](http://gentsefeesten.stad.gent)

It started out in 1969 as a small festival with a few local bands on a makeshift stage. Now the Gentse Feesten is the biggest street festival in Europe, attracting more than two million revellers. People come for the music, the beer, but most of all for the wild atmosphere that lasts ten days and nights, beginning on the Friday before the 21 July Belgian national holiday.

### 422 ODEGAND

+32 (0)9 225 01 01  
[odegand.gent](http://odegand.gent)

A magical festival of classical music is held in the late summer in various venues along the canals. Small ensembles and soloists perform in unexpected locations. The audiences move around by canal boat, sampling an eclectic programme of classical, jazz, fado and techno.

### 423 GENT JAZZ

AT: DE BULOKE  
Godshuizenlaan 2  
Bijloke Quarter ④  
[gentjazz.com](http://gentjazz.com)

Jazz fans gather every summer at the historic Bijloke complex for a relaxed music festival. Founded in 2002, Gent Jazz focuses on young experimental musicians who bring fresh new ideas to the festival. But it can also attract some big names like Joan Baez and Grace Jones.

### 424 LOTTO SIX DAYS OF FLANDERS-GHENT

AT: 'T KUIPKE  
Citadelpark ⑤  
[lottozesdaagse.be](http://lottozesdaagse.be)

This tough cycling race has been held every autumn since 1922 in the Kuipke velodrome in the Citadelpark. Cycling fans flock here on damp November nights to cheer on professional cyclists who complete thousands of laps over six days. By the end, the air is thick with the smell of beer, hamburgers and damp sweat.

### 425 LICHTFESTIVAL GENT

[lichtfestival.stad.gent](http://lichtfestival.stad.gent)

Ghent organises a light festival every three years in the depths of winter. Skilled artists and designers create extraordinary light effects including entire buildings made out of coloured light bulbs.

