

## ITINERARY

Immerse yourself in vibrant culture and bright blossoms on a springtime river cruise through Holland and Belgium aboard your ship. Glide through vivid landscapes dotted with age-old windmills; dock in charming waterfront towns; and experience history and art in the majestic cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp. Explore UNESCO World Heritage sites from the windmills of Kinderdijk to the medieval gem of Brugge alongside a National Geographic Expert and a National Geographic Photography Expert; and enjoy options for bike rides, farm visits, concerts, and tastings of chocolate and cheese along the way.

### DAY 1: AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Arrive in Amsterdam and board the ship this afternoon. Settle into your cabin before meeting your National Geographic Experts at a welcome reception and dinner tonight. Enjoy a lively performance of Dutch music and dance, or join your National Geographic Photography Expert for an informal tutorial before our explorations begin.

Meals Included: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: AmaMora or AmaCerto for the entire voyage

### DAY 2: AMSTERDAM

Spend the morning exploring this enchanting city on a variety of excursions. Delve into Amsterdam's history and architecture on a canal cruise aboard a glass-roofed boat, gliding past steep-gabled houses and beneath flower-bedecked bridges. Head for Amsterdam's museum district to encounter the work of the Dutch masters at the Rijksmuseum, and trace the life and work of one of the Netherlands' most famous sons at the Van Gogh Museum. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon of cruising. Attend talks by our experts and afternoon tea as we make our way along peaceful waterways.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### DAY 3: KINDERDIJK/ROTTERDAM

Discover the World Heritage site of Kinderdijk, where 19 windmills were built in the 18th century to drain marshy lowlands known as polders. Examine the intricate engineering of the site on a visit by electric boat and on foot. Or pedal along the row of picturesque windmills on a guided bike ride. Enjoy a late morning talk by our expert as you continue to Rotterdam, one of the largest ports in the world. Choose from four afternoon excursions. Admire the city's elegant—and avant-garde—architecture on a walking tour, and stop in at the otherworldly Market Hall to sample local cheese. Or, you may choose to explore historic Delfshaven, one of the few districts in Rotterdam spared by bombing during World War

II; and visit Pilgrim Fathers' Church, where, legend has it, a group of pilgrims attended a final service before their voyage on the Mayflower. Alternatively, learn about the world-famous blue-and-white pottery of Delft on a visit to a porcelain factory and museum, or take a bike tour of Rotterdam. Join our expert for a talk over cocktails this evening.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### DAY 4: ANTWERP, BELGIUM

Dock in Antwerp and set out to discover this vibrant city, where art, high fashion, and, of course, diamonds, meet stunning medieval and Renaissance architecture. Take a walking tour of the old city, including Grote Markt square, the Cathedral of Our Lady, and waterside Het Steen castle; ride down the historic Cogels Osylei street on a bike tour, passing gems of Tudor, art nouveau, and neoclassical architecture; or venture into the Rubens House museum, the home of 17th-century artist Peter Paul Rubens. In the afternoon, enjoy a tasting of Belgian specialties, from waffles and chocolates to beer, or head to Groot-Bijgaarden Castle, home to more than a million tulips, to see the annual Floralia flower show. This evening, savor a classical music performance on board.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### DAY 5: GHENT/BRUGGE

Step ashore in Ghent, a medieval manufacturing center that was once one of Europe's wealthiest cities. Choose a walking tour of this charming canal-lined city, including Cloth Hall, the Belfry, the celebrated Adoration of the Mystic Lamb altarpiece, and the 12th-century Castle of the Counts. Then head to a renowned chocolaterie for a chocolate-making workshop and a glass of champagne. Or take a half-day tour of Ghent and then travel to Brugge for the afternoon. Wander Brugge's narrow cobbled lanes along canals dotted with swans, and stroll through grand squares lined with magnificent architecture that dates back to the 13th century. Alternatively, spend the entire day in Brugge and enjoy time in the afternoon to explore the town on your own. Cruise back into the Netherlands tonight.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### DAY 6: MIDDELBURG, NETHERLANDS

Wake up in Zeeland, a scenic delta where four rivers converge and charming historic towns dot the landscape. Stop in Middelburg and take a walking tour of the well-preserved medieval old town; or go on a bike ride, cycling through the lovely countryside to the village of Veere, and pausing at a cheese farm for a tasting. Alternatively, travel to Ouwkerk to learn about the devastating flood of 1953 and see the

impressive engineering of the Delta Works that have helped prevent floods ever since. As we sail north this afternoon, enjoy a talk by our expert. Join our National Geographic Photography Expert on deck to learn techniques for capturing the setting sun. Tonight, we're treated to a special meal crafted by the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, an international gastronomic society established in Paris in 1950.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### DAY 7: HOORN/AMSTERDAM

Located on what is now a freshwater lake in North Holland, Hoorn was once a base of the Dutch East India Company. Tour the city and trace the history of the once-powerful trading company at the Westfries Museum. Or head for the blossoms with a visit to a tulip farm. Meander through the greenhouses and learn about the cultivation and trade of this beloved flower over tea and snacks. Alternatively, hop on a bike to explore Hoorn's waterfront and historic center, and then pedal into the countryside to see windmills and old villages. This afternoon, get immersed in a riot of colors and fragrances at the breathtaking Keukenhof gardens, where more than seven million vibrant tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, and other flowers show off their bright hues. Stroll acre after acre of one of the world's largest flower gardens, taking in a beauty that lasts just a short time each spring. You may also head back into Amsterdam for a tour or time at leisure. Celebrate our trip together at a farewell reception and dinner hosted by the captain tonight.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### DAY 8: AMSTERDAM

After breakfast, disembark and transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Meals Included: Breakfast