

A perfect day in Brussels

It's nearly impossible to have a bad meal in Brussels—a city which boasts more Michelin stars per head than many other cities in the world. Speaking with three Belgian celebrities, we learn what inspires a perfect day in their lives with a focus on culinary treats.

Text and photos: Cindy-Lou Dale



➔ Elric Petit, Belgium's acclaimed interior designer, draws much of his inspiration from the original Art Deco interiors of the Royal Library (Boulevard de l'Empereur 2) while breakfasting on a croissant and coffee. "From my usual table, I look across the city and fall in love with her all over again. Following breakfast, I like to browse at Own (Place du Jardin aux Fleurs) a good designer store filled with new names like N. Hoolywood from Japan, Acne and Whyred from Sweden, and Belgium's own Atelier 11. After shopping, I'll reward myself with a good French Bordeaux at Le Petit Canon (rue Lesbroussart, 100), a new wine bar in Ixelles. For a simple, traditional lunch, I'll head to Le Pigeon Noir, a soulful Michelin-starred restaurant located at the corner of the Rue de la Chenaie and Rue Geleynsbeek.

From there, I like to spend time at L'Archiduc (Antoine Dansaert, 6), a legendary Art Deco style bar known for its artists, cocktails and live jazz music. La Paix (Rue Ropsy-Chaudron 49) is a gem of a restaurant attached to a delicatessen. I get particular satisfaction selecting my choice cut of their meat. I'd take my night-cap at Le Bar du Matin (Chaussee d'Alsemberg, 172) and enjoy their great music."

FASHION FORWARD

On an ideal day, multi award-winning fashion designer, Cathy Pill, would start with freshly-squeezed orange juice and great coffee with some friends on the terrace at Gaudron (Place George Brugmann 3). "Then I would go to the city center and walk through the beautiful stores on the Rue Antoine Dansaert, a fashion slave heaven with designer boutiques crammed into every available space. There, I would definitely go to Stijl

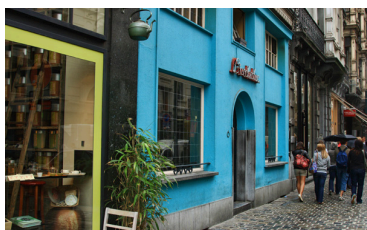
"For a light lunch, I'd choose a brasserie like Le Passage, under the domed glass roof of the Galerie de la Reine. My afternoon would be devoted to writing and catching up on correspondence. To complete my dream day, I'd like to visit a gallery of fine arts, take in a classical music concert, and have a late dinner with friends at Notos."

(Dansaert 74), the mecca of contemporary Belgian haute couture to see the new collections. I'd also visit Icon (Place du Nouveau Marché aux Grains, 5) to check out their new trends.

"Later, for dinner, I'd go to the Le Macon (Rue Joseph Stallaert 87). It's roomy, not too pricey, has a great wine cellar and an uncomplicated menu. There, I'd order the world's best Belgian fries served in a traditional paper bag with homemade mayonnaise. Topping off a perfect day, you'd find me at the Kaai Theatre (Square Saintelette 20) watching an Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker ballet."

INSPIRING STORIES

For Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt—the world's most read French-language author and playwright—the perfect day would begin with a croissant and coffee at one of



the many street cafes at Place du Grand Sablon. "The Sablon is threaded with antique shops, old bookstores and art galleries. Here, I'd acquire more of their priceless objects d'art to decorate my castle in the sky. If I'm feeling particularly rakish, I'll indulge in a chocolate or two. After breakfast, I take my Shiba Inu dogs for a walk in Forêt de Soignes—an extensive forest in the center of Brussels which our former king gave to the city. I keep my dogs on a short leash as they like the deer and might give chase to them or the horses ridden along the paths.



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