

BELGIUM BATTLEFIELDS OF WORLD WAR I



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YPRES SALIENT

In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres: The renovated In Flanders Fields Museum, located in the Cloth Hall, confronts the visitor with the consequences of the Great War. The In Flanders Fields Museum has always emphasized the personal stories in the larger story of a conflict that co-defined the history of the world. Besides hundreds of authentic objects and images that are presented in an innovative and experience-orientated layout, there is attention for the story of the 'ordinary people' in the new museum too. To increase the experience even more, every visitor receives a personal 'poppy' bracelet on arrival. The microchip in the bracelet automatically sets the language choice and enables the visitor to discover 4 personal stories throughout the permanent exhibition. The new scenography of the museum gives a lot of attention to the current landscape as one of the last tangible witnesses of the war history.

The Menin Gate: The famous British war memorial of the First World War and by far the most important edifice in Ypres to the British visitor. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, the names of 54,896 missing soldiers are engraved on its walls. Every evening since 1928, the Last Post has been sounded beneath its imposing arches. Your group may wish to stay for the Last Post in which case a packed lunch would be provided instead of dinner on that day.

Canadian Forces Memorial at St. Julien: This was erected in remembrance of the 3,000 dead soldiers of the first Canadian Division who fell during the counter-attack after the German gas attack of April 1915.

The Platoon Experience – the Road to Passchendaele: A unique programme where your

group puts itself in the position of an Australian platoon in 1917 following the bloody track to Tyne Cot Cemetery. Your day includes a guided tour in the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917; a hot "Tommy Tucker" meal; personal stories to experience; battlefield walk in authentic kit; guided tour at Tyne Cot Cemetery and educational support by one or two guides.

Passchendaele and Tyne Cot: The village of Passchendaele gave its name to one of the most gruelling battles of the Great War. Many of those who died in 1916 fighting to capture the village are buried in the nearby Tyne Cot cemetery, the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world. In the Memorial Museum 1917, completely renovated in 2013, visitors are given an overview of the five battles of Ypres by means of authentic material and artefacts. A new wing, entirely dedicated to the Battle of Passchendaele, focuses on the contributions of the different Commonwealth nations involved in the battle with an outdoor trench experience and remembrance gallery.

Essex Farm Cemetery: On the bank of the canal you can see the impressive memorial column of the 49th West Riding Division. During the war, Essex Farm was used as an Advanced Dressing Station, an important aid station of the Field Ambulances. It was here, in one of the bomb-proof dug-outs, that the Canadian doctor, John McCrae, wrote the famous poem "In Flanders Fields the poppies blow".

German Cemetery at Langemark: The four figures of the Munich sculptor, Emil Krieger, add an interesting touch to this rather forbidding cemetery of 44,061 German soldiers.

Sanctuary Wood Museum: This museum contains a wealth of war relics. A piece of authentic war

landscape was conserved here with trenches, craters, vaulted passages and weapons.

Talbot House, Poperinge: In the heart of the bustling town of Poperinge, the Army chaplains, Philip Clayton (known as Tubby) and Neville Talbot opened an "Every Man's Club" on 11th December 1915, where soldiers of all ranks could come to regain physical and mental strength. The inspired way in which Tubby ran his 'home from home' turned Talbot House, or 'Toc H', into the best-known soldiers' club of the British army. An audio-visual staging of a Concert Party in the newly-restored Concert Hall entertains today's visitors and they can also see the hop store, bath-house and garden.

NOT INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR PRICE: ADMISSION CHARGES WHERE APPLICABLE. THE SERVICES OF A BATTLEFIELDS TOUR GUIDE IF REQUIRED.



CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Visit the atmospheric Christmas market at Ostend with its open air ice rink.



ACCOMMODATION



PEACE VILLAGE, YPRES

Description: Very recent purpose-built hostel with 40 small 'houses'.

Location: Messines, 10 minutes from the Ypres Market Square or the Menin Gate.

Rooms for pupils: 24 bedded duplex bedrooms (some exceptions have 6 beds) with separate bathroom & WC, living room with comfy seats and desk.

Facilities: Evening activities on site, free WiFi, bar, conference room, two football fields, netball, camp fire, ping-pong, pool table, table football, board games, library, live sports, karaoke, basketball, disco (payable – pre booking essential).

GENERAL EXCURSIONS

Depending on your location and itinerary, these may be incorporated into your programme on your travel days:

- Medieval City of Bruges
- Bellewaerde Adventure Theme Park in Ypres
- The Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo, World War II Museum in Dunkirk
- The Ultimate Shopping Centre at the mouth of the Channel Tunnel

TRAVEL NOTES & PRICES

Minimum length of tour:

3 days / 2 nights

Half Board Staff free 1:8

Channel Crossing:

Dover – Calais or Dunkirk by ferry

Folkestone – Calais by shuttle

Approximate journey time:

From Calais: 1½ hrs. From Dunkirk: 1 hr.

Prices from:

£237 per pupil (40-47 paying)

£247 per pupil (32-39 paying)

£268 per pupil (24-31 paying)

Additional nights £90 per pupil

Packed lunches available at extra charge.

Spend an extra day in the Ypres Salient area or explore further afield in the Somme.