

BOTANIC  
SANCTUARY  
ANTWERP



THE LEADING HOTELS  
OF THE WORLD®



# Press Pack

## Enter the Botanic Experience



SUPERIOR



# NAVIGATING THE BOTANIC ...

## ROOMS

- 1 St. Joris
- 2 Monasterium
- 3 St. Elisabeth
- 4 Alnetum
- 5 Filips van Marnixhuis

## GASTRONOMY

- 1 1238 Restaurant
- 2 Henry's Bar
- 3 Hertog Jan
- 4 Bar Bulot
- 5 Fine Fleur
- 6 Het Gebaar

## SIGHTS

- 1 Front Office
- 2 Chapel
- 3 Botanic Health Club & Botanic Health Spa
- 4 Main entrance (Leopoldstraat 26)
- 5 Entrance Mechelseplein (Lange Gasthuisstraat 45)
- 6 Kloostertuin
- 7 Pastorietuin
- 8 Botanische tuin "Den Botaniek"
- 9 Kruidentuin Hertog Jan

## SHOPS

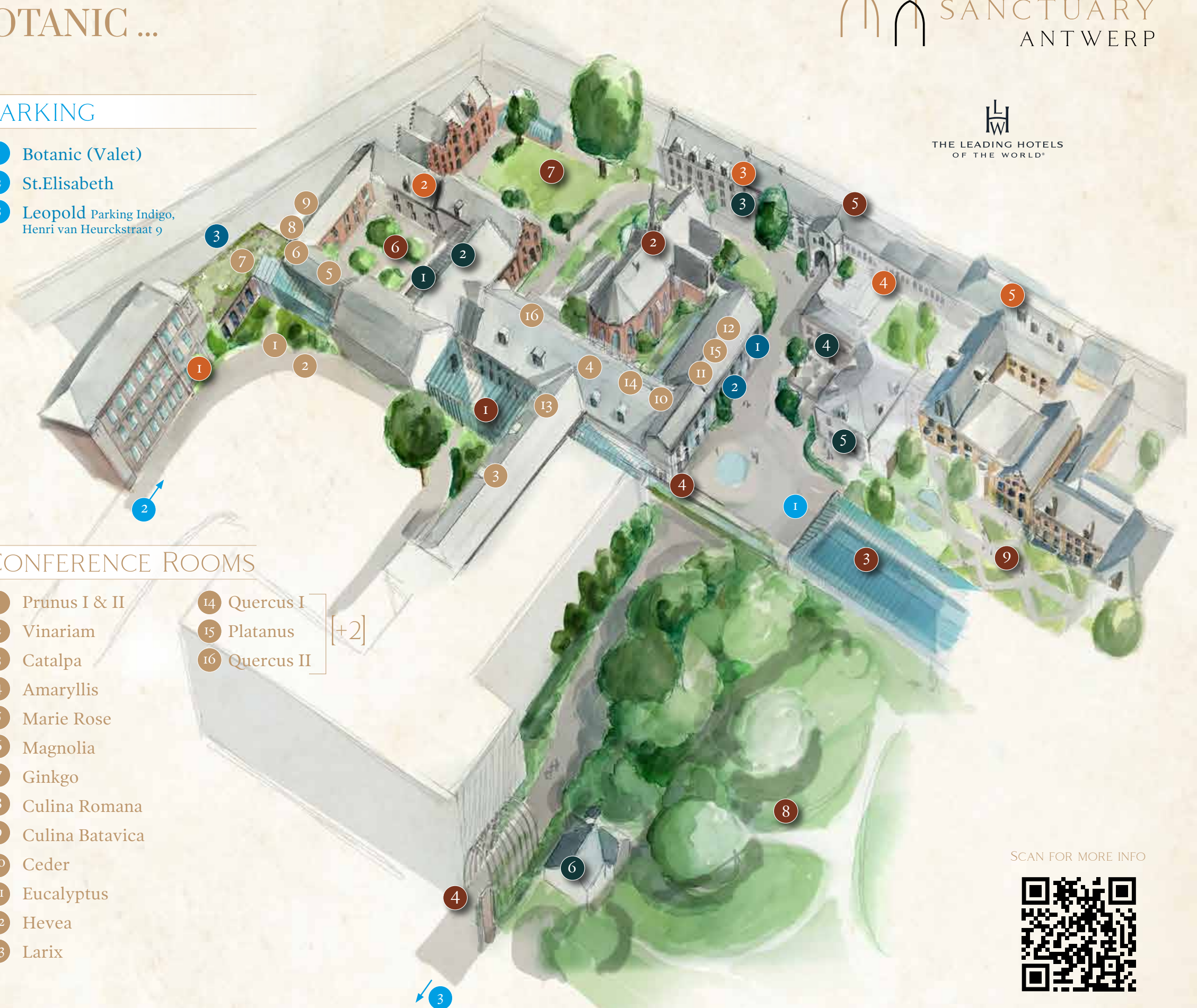
- 1 Granada Gallery
- 2 Saint Charles Apothecary
- 3 Beautique Botanic

## PARKING

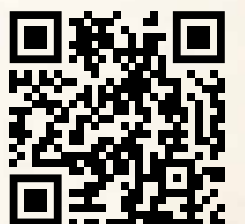
- 1 Botanic (Valet)
- 2 St. Elisabeth
- 3 Leopold Parking Indigo, Henri van Heurckstraat 9

## CONFERENCE ROOMS

- |      |                   |               |
|------|-------------------|---------------|
| [-1] | 1 Prunus I & II   | 14 Quercus I  |
|      | 2 Vinariam        | 15 Platanus   |
|      | 3 Catalpa         | 16 Quercus II |
|      | 4 Amaryllis       |               |
| [0]  | 5 Marie Rose      |               |
|      | 6 Magnolia        |               |
|      | 7 Ginkgo          |               |
|      | 8 Culina Romana   |               |
|      | 9 Culina Batavica |               |
| [+1] | 10 Ceder          |               |
|      | 11 Eucalyptus     |               |
|      | 12 Hevea          |               |
|      | 13 Larix          |               |



SCAN FOR MORE INFO







The historic apothecary



# Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp

## Where the Story Begins

Opulent and historic, the Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp is one of the *Leading Hotels of the World*, a 5\* superior city-centre gourmet, spa and weekend destination hidden away in the heart of this great Belgian city. But the story behind this five-star superior hideaway, with its tranquil gardens, atmospheric apothecary, five restaurants and spa, starts almost 800 years ago.

Historic records show it was 1238 when an order of monks moved to this site to set up a monastery and the St Elisabeth hospital for the local sick and poor. In the 1400s, the order was able to add an infirmary and chapel. Magnificently restored, these 15<sup>th</sup> century Gothic gems still stand, now the spectacular setting for special events and celebrations.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the famous pharmacist Peeter van Coudenberghe established an apothecary in the hospital and a medicinal garden next to it, to grow herbs for the remedies. From 1501 to the 1560s Antwerp enjoyed its 'golden era', when this cosmopolitan North Sea trading port became one of the wealthiest cities in Europe. Among the cargoes of silks, spices, diamonds and gems on ships arriving from Africa and India would have been plants Coudenberghe would have seized on eagerly.

In 1798, the hospital was taken under the management of Antwerp's Board of Almshouses, which enabled it to continue its mission of healing and care. In 1836 the building at the front of the site – a block deep, running along *Lange Gasthuisstraat*, *Sint-Jorispoort* and *Leopoldstraat* – and the main entrance were constructed. A new apothecary and its adjacent buildings followed in 1847. The large extension on the *Sint-Jorispoort* side was added in 1856.

The mid 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw the revival of Coudenberghe's garden, which over the centuries had fallen into disrepair. The hospital's chief surgeon, Claude Louis Sommé, and head pharmacist, Francois Verbert, replanted it as the Botanical Garden seen today. In 1950 the botanical garden became a listed space, and in the 1990s, following the addition over the years of various slipshod extensions, the first and top floors of the by then sadly shabby old monastery were converted into hotel rooms.

All these layers were unravelled by historian Anneleen Cassiman during her research into this ancient site. Her extensive study of the literature, archives and the buildings on the site provided the basis on which the sensitive restoration and repurposing project was built.







# Introducing Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp

Luxurious comfort and seclusion distinguish this historic five-star  
superior city-centre gourmet weekend hideaway  
with an apothecary and spa.

The project to turn five historic buildings and a listed botanical garden into the spectacular five-star superior hotel seen today was a challenge of gargantuan proportions.

The mission was twofold: to preserve the legacy of historic buildings, a former monastery and hospital dating back to 1238, and to breathe new life into the site through a focus on its tradition of botanical study.

Starting in 2017, the restoration of the old buildings, including a 14<sup>th</sup> century infirmary and chapel, took place alongside the construction of new buildings. These included additional restaurants and an ultra-modern three-storey spa, which incorporated the red-brick garden wall of the original old orangery.

A spirited sense of innovation drove the restoration, coupled with a sensitivity towards the need for sustainability and to preserve numerous elements of the fabric and environment of this historically important site. In 2020 and 2021, pandemic-related restrictions delayed progress on the project.

But good things are worth the wait! The Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp, one of the *Leading Hotels of the World*, welcomed its first guests in 2022.

Managing Director Marc Alofs was instrumental in the destination's development. His distillation of the Botanic's magic: 'We believe that luxury is in the experience. Creating unique moments to make the Botanic the epicentre of hospitality is our mission.'

*What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare ...*  
Step out of Antwerp's urban fashion hub into monastic tranquillity: enter  
a world of luxury where craftsmanship, innovation and ecology meet  
tradition, and a botanical garden offers refuge.





# From Shabby to Spectacular

How a Former Monastery Became one of the  
*Leading Hotels of the World*

In 2017, when the husband and wife behind the IRET group, Belgium's leading property developers, signed a 99-year lease on a run-down 20,000sqm city-centre site with five dilapidated historic buildings and a neglected botanical garden, they knew they faced a challenge.

But Eric De Vocht and Maryse Odeurs had long had their eyes on the site. A former monastery and hospital dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, part of it was then being run as The Elzenveld Hotel and Congress Centre. As veteran developers, the couple also knew this could be the project of a lifetime: a chance to restore and repurpose an important historic landmark.

Transforming the old buildings into one of the *Leading Hotels of the World*, a tranquil hideaway and opulent city-centre destination – with four Michelin stars, a state-of-the-art spa, extensive meeting facilities and, in its 15<sup>th</sup> century chapel, an unparalleled wedding, concert and event venue – took five years.

But before the process of restoration and rebuilding could begin, historian and researcher Anneleen Cassiman had to conduct a thorough investigation into the history of the buildings. The earliest building dates back to 1238, when monks founded a monastery and St Elisabeth hospital. Both had flourished, with new buildings and a precursor to the botanical garden added in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (the North Sea trading port of Antwerp's 'golden era' of prosperity).

Research completed, IRET's architects and designers got to work in 2019. Stripping away extensions, additions and ornamentation that had been added over the centuries, the various crews uncovered long-hidden ancient stonework and structures.

Out of that restoration and repurposing has emerged not only a complex that sets new standards in the renovation of historic buildings, sustainable design and innovative construction, but Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp also offers an exceptional level of ultra-luxe hospitality, combining a profound sense of history with all the expected comfort and convenience of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Antwerp's first member of the *Leading Hotels of the World*, it is a destination in its own right, a true landmark.

Besides 108 rooms and suites, all located in the five old original buildings, Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp has:

- Five gourmet restaurants, between them already awarded four Michelin stars
- Three-storey Botanic Health Spa & Club
- 14-room conference centre
- Restored 19<sup>th</sup> century apothecary
- Unparalleled wedding, classical concert and event venue in the 15<sup>th</sup> century chapel
- Secret venue for VIP members' investment club devoted to Scotch whisky







# Architecture & Design

## Sustainable Luxury Meets Historic Heritage

Before the architects could tackle the job of restoring and repurposing the five grand historic buildings, they had to undertake a thorough study of the fabric of the old complex. By the summer of 2017, when the lease on the site was signed, it had seen many 20<sup>th</sup> century and earlier renovations and extensions, and was looking somewhat shabby and gloomy.

That site research identified a multitude of spaces and interior gardens which needed to be stripped of insensitive additions and repairs. As well as preserving as much as possible of the protected old buildings, the development project also required the architects to design completely new structures, including the three-storey Botanic Health Spa. All this was done in close consultation with the City of Antwerp and their Conservation Department.

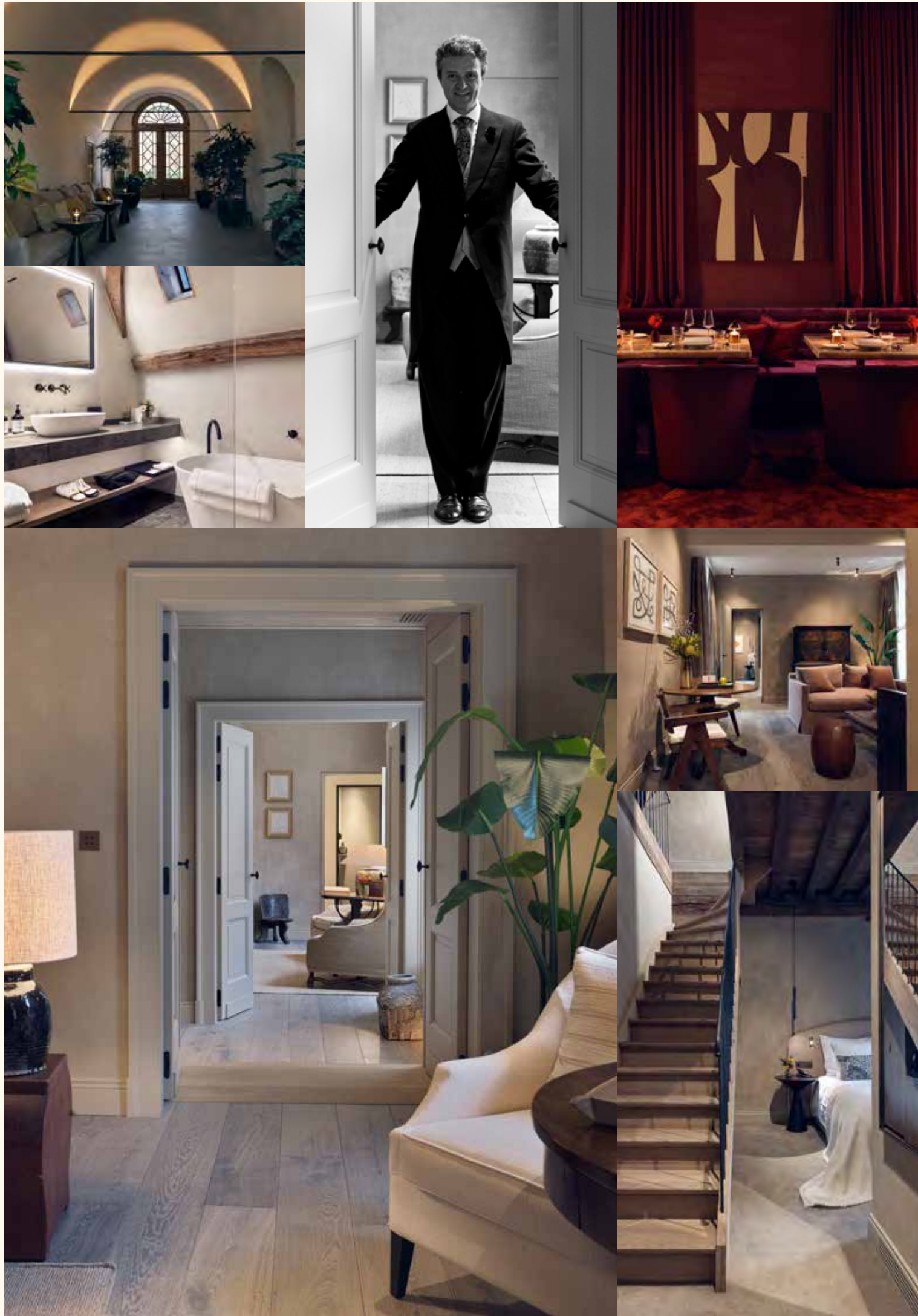
To link the different buildings, and save guests having to brave the elements – northern European winters can be bitterly cold and snowy – the architects designed elegant conservatory structures based on the hospital's 19<sup>th</sup> century glass canopy. These also connect the interior with the exterior spaces, adding 'oxygen' to the overall project as well as making it possible to elegantly integrate new functions.

The architects faced particular challenges in the need to integrate mechanical and electrical services and contemporary standards of acoustics, thermal comfort, fire safety and accessibility within the historic framework. But they succeeded. The hotel now runs like a well-oiled machine and feels like a tranquil sanctuary.

To emphasise the authenticity of the rooms, suites and public areas, natural materials were used throughout: stone, wood, and fine fabrics such as silk, linen and wool. Artisanal details and old painting techniques were reinterpreted to harmonise with the buildings' spirit and history. Furniture, fittings and lighting were custom designed, sober and contemporary in style, while decorative features subtly reflect botanical elements, whether interpreted in a wrought iron handle or woollen wall hanging. Every eclectic element was designed for comfort and delight.

In collaboration with Guy Stockmans of Linears, the gardens were partly redesigned based on old drawings and the Botanical Garden. The brick paving has restored a sense of peace and simplicity, underlining the tranquillity of the overall site. The gardens are, of course, essential to the Botanic Sanctuary experience, and include a kitchen garden and greenhouse where the chefs behind the five restaurants at the Botanic can source their herbs.





# A World of Tranquillity

## Step Into a Peaceful Past

Arriving at the Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp begins a delectable journey. Entered via the old courtyard at the heart of this historic complex, the reception lounge is located within one of the airy, plant-filled conservatory-style structures that now link the original old buildings.

Exploring the hotel, guests encounter a series of sophisticated spaces. Sensitively integrated into the historic buildings, each inspires a sense of wellbeing and delight, privacy and security. Elegant contemporary furnishings and design elements harmonise with the spirit of the original centuries-old buildings. Cloistered peaceful gardens embrace the ancient spirit of the monastery.

## Rooms & Suites

### Luxuriate Amid Comfort and Authenticity

Spread across five historic buildings – *Sint-Joris*, *Monasterium*, *Sint-Elisabeth*, *Alnetum* and *Filips Van Marnix Huis* – the 108 rooms and suites all bear testimony to the site's historic past. Skilfully integrated into the fabric of the old buildings, many feature original fixtures such as centuries-old overhead beams. Wood-shuttered windows look onto a courtyard, garden, or across to the stained-glass windows of the 15<sup>th</sup> century chapel.

Craftsmanship and traditional materials are evident everywhere, from wood and iron to silk and wool, all beautifully worked. Soft fabrics in calming colours, the art and interiors books and objets d'art found in each room have all been carefully chosen to reflect both the unworldly history of the monastery that once stood on this site and the almost miraculously peaceful city-centre location just a 10-minute walk to the newly reopened Museum of Fine Arts.

No two of the 108 rooms and suites are alike. The architects have also taken care to ensure the Wi-Fi is great, the water piping hot, the lighting right, the sound-proofing exemplary – and that these modern additions meet strict standards of sustainability. The hotel's exalted status is further substantiated by amenities such as each suite's wine cabinet.

The unique Spa & Healthness Suites and the Diamond Spa Suite have their own private spa treatment spaces plus a Finnish sauna, whirlpool, Technogym bike, treatment table and separate shower. All are fitted with air-filter and purification systems.

The Botanic's 108 rooms and suites are categorised as: \*Comfort \*Deluxe \*Deluxe with Terrace \*Junior Suite \*Junior Suite with Terrace \*Junior Suite Duplex \*Suite \*Suite with Terrace \*Grande Suite \*Spa & Healthness Suite \*Diamond Spa Suite



g<sup>star</sup>az<sup>star</sup>ing

GASTRONOMY  
at Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp

Five Restaurants

Four Michelin Stars

World-Renowned Chefs

The 2022 Michelin Guide:  
2 stars for Hertog Jan  
1 star for Fine Fleur  
1 star for Het Gebaar

Embark on a stellar journey into culinary heaven



1238 RESTAURANT



HET GEBaar



HERTOG JAN



BAR BULOT



FINE FLEUR



HENRY'S BAR





Pascal Duvivier

## 1238 Restaurant

14.5/20 Points and 2 Toques in the Gault&Millau Belgium 2023 Guide

*1238's cuisine deliberately breaks with the usual hotel restaurant tradition. We celebrate gastronomy that's unruffled and unfussy, bringing the pure potency of each ingredient to the plate. Our idea of luxury is the opposite of complex and sophisticated garnishes. We ensure that only the best-quality, home-grown products are used to create dishes with care, respect and craftsmanship. Sustainability, regionality, authenticity and elegance combine for a pure and genuine taste experience.*

At the airy Restaurant 1238, named after the year the monastery here was founded, and overlooking the Monastery Garden, both cuisine and ambience reflect the power of nature: its sustaining variety and soothing tranquillity. The '1238 Taste' is a straightforward synergy of best-quality, regional ingredients and a relaxed take on classic French and Belgian cuisines. Adding to the delicious authenticity inherent to 1238, Chef Pascal Duvivier uses produce grown in the restaurant's own gardens and greenhouse. As one eats, the aromas that arise from such natural ingredients blend with the view of trees and plants, further enhancing the subtly sensual delights at the heart of Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp. Signature dishes include North Sea cod cooked with lemon thyme, baby spinach, smoked eel and a cockle and caper sauce.



Roger van Damme

## Het Gebaar

1 Michelin Star

17/20 Points and 4 Toques in the Gault&Millau Belgium 2023 Guide

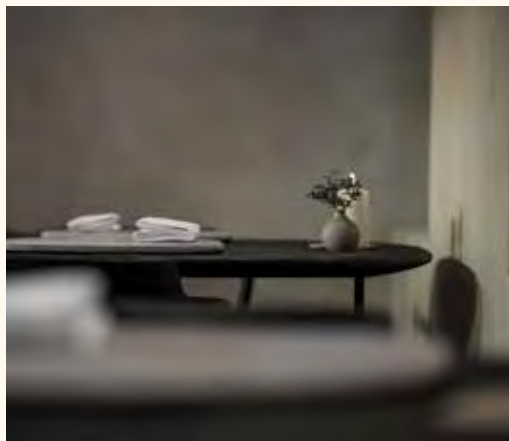
Open for lunch and dessert, Roger van Damme's superb restaurant at Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp is appropriately housed in a fairy-tale-like 'gingerbread house'. The restaurant's fame is based on creative, innovative desserts and modern twists on sweet classics, although savoury starters and mains also testify to the chef's inquisitive creativity – anyone for cherry shrimp with notes of yuzu and jalapeño? Followed perhaps by an equally mouth-watering Beef Wellington and, of course, a delectable dessert.

Roger van Damme

Roger's versatility, technical skills and repertoire have not only earned him a well-deserved Michelin star but also made him a star among pastry chefs. And, in case anyone might think mouthful after mouthful at Het Gabaar is sweet sweet sweet, van Damme has also developed a sophisticated repertoire of savoury delights to make every lunchtime an adventure and teatime treat an excitingly varied experience. Van Damme's is a labour-intensive, high-tech cuisine, informed by his travels ... and his great-grandfather, a baker by trade who left a lasting impression on this star of Antwerp's culinary scene.







# Hertog Jan



2 Michelin Stars

18/20 Points and 4 Toques in the Gault&Millau Belgium 2023 Guide

Hertog Jan at Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp has already received two Michelin stars – a mere seven months after opening. As well as beginning a new chapter in Hertog Jan Restaurant Group’s history, Gert De Mangeleer and Joachim Boudens have created a unique series of near spiritual experiences at their Hertog Jan Antwerp. Within the intimate interior designed by Benoît Viaene, the dynamic duo has devised a culinary journey that takes guests through the worlds of imagination, art and indulgence, with multiple flavours from their own herb garden producing a scintillating symbiosis of aromas and textures.

Understated and elegant, the interior offers no distractions from the dishes these astounding chefs deliver. This, and the restricted number of tables, directs attention to the experience of enjoying an exceptional cuisine. Once again, De Mangeleer and Boudens’ ambition to scale new culinary summits by offering something spectacular succeeds – spectacularly.



*Gert De Mangeleer & Joachim Boudens*

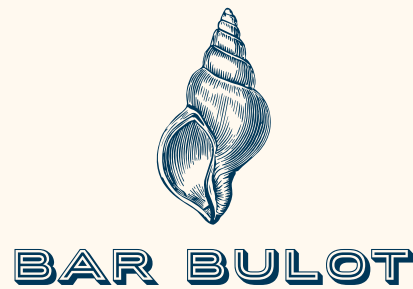
## Gert De Mangeleer & Joachim Boudens

By the time he was nine, Gert De Mangeleer knew the only thing he wanted to be when he grew up was a chef. Similarly, the five-year-old Joachim Boudens apparently loved nothing more than to don his little chef’s hat and play with a toy stove – clearly where his attention to presentation and service was born.

As the two grew, so did their ambition: only the top would do. De Mangeleer and Boudens met in 1999, at Zeebrugge’s ‘t Molentje, and, three years later, moved on to what was then the Brasserie Hertog Jan in Sint-Michiels, a suburb of Bruges. By 2005, they had taken over the business, and a year later they were awarded their first star, with a second following in 2009.

In 2010, De Mangeleer and Boudens bought an old farmhouse in Zedelgem with its own kitchen garden – and their home-grown produce further raised their culinary standing. In 2011 Boudens received recognition as Belgium’s best sommelier and Hertog Jan was awarded its third star. In 2014, De Mangeleer was voted European Chef of the Year, and Hertog Jan moved into the renovated farmhouse, freeing up the restaurant in Sint-Michiels for LESS, a world cuisine sharing concept. In 2018, De Mangeleer and Boudens announced the closure of Hertog Jan to allow them to pursue fresh adventures, and in no time at all the Hertog Jan Restaurant Group had opened three new restaurants. In private, however, they continued to harbour a particular dream ... which came true in 2022, thanks to the exciting reawakening of Hertog Jan at the Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp.





# Bar Bulot

14/20 Points and 2 Toques in the Gault&Millau Belgium 2023 Guide

Fans rejoice: Bar Bulot has a new home with the recreation of Gert De Mangeleer's celebrated brasserie concept at Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp. The stylish restaurant's Franco-Belgian bistro cuisine testifies daily to chef Koen Gussenhoven's talent and finesse. Seemingly simple yet perfectly executed, this is the kind of cuisine that requires top-quality ingredients and impeccable craftsmanship.

An exceptional wine list and impeccable service under Elske Mostert's direction complete the setting for a sensational visit, whether for an omelette and glass of wine or four leisurely courses. The counter seats with views of the large open kitchen are a must for foodies.

The Gault&Millau Belgium 2022 guide has this to say:

*Our former Brasserie of the Year opened a second location at the end of 2021. In addition to Bruges, we can now also enjoy impeccably executed classics such as vol-au-vent and onglet à l'échalote in the prestigious setting of Antwerp's Botanic Sanctuary hotel. Hostess Elske Mostert and chef Koen Gussenhoven expertly uphold the vision of founders Gert De Mangeleer and Joachim Boudens. We start with a clever preparation of brawn, finished with crispy crackling. Gravadlax from superior quality salmon is nicely accompanied by dill cream, aniseed and lemon. The vol-au-vent turns out to be a spectacular Bresse chicken ragout with homemade puff pastry, sweetbreads, mousseline sauce and hand-peeled shrimps. We just have room to finish with an excellent rum baba: this address absolutely deserves its two toques!*

Elske Mostert  
& Koen  
Gussenhoven



Jacob Jan Boerma &  
Thomas Diepersloot

# Fine Fleur

1 Michelin Star

16/20 Points and 3 Toques in the Gault&Millau Belgium 2023 Guide

Jacob Jan Boerma and Thomas Diepersloot are two of Belgium's most celebrated restaurateurs, and with the opening of Fine Fleur at the Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp they've cooked up a Michelin star in record time. This restaurant has quickly become a culinary hotspot in Antwerp, a city where the Belgian love of dining out finds full expression and where visitors tend to come back for more, too, once they've discovered the city's ever-evolving restaurant scene.

Culinary globe-trotters, Boerma and Diepersloot deservedly enjoy great critical acclaim. With a shared cosmopolitan outlook and love and appreciation of skilled craftsmanship, theirs is a cuisine finessed with unrelenting perfectionism. Local ingredients take the lead, but their kitchens are always heady with spices and aromas from all over the world, inspiration coming especially from Asia, Spain, southern Europe and North America. Their creativity is also evident in Fine Fleur's interior, where guests encounter the open kitchen before entering the restaurant. Restaurant manager Mark Reynders adds lashings of charm to the heady experience of a meal here.

Jacob Jan Boerma & Thomas Diepersloot

As a child, Jacob Jan Boerma became hooked on the art of cooking by reading his first Michelin Guide while on a family holiday. After studying at a college of hotel management he gathered experience by working in Germany, England and Belgium before joining the Michelin-starred de Nederlanden in Vreeland, Netherlands, as chef de cuisine – and earning them a second star. In 2002, the kitchen virtuoso and his wife Kim set up their own restaurant, De Leest in Vaassen, Netherlands. Six months later, the first star sparkled over De Leest, the second in 2007, and the third in 2013.

Thomas Diepersloot was also bitten by the gourmet bug at a young age. At 17 he travelled the world and immersed himself in Asian cuisine. On his return to the Netherlands, he joined Boerma at De Leest, and then worked at Restaurant Voltaire in Leersum, where he cooked up a star. At Fine Fleur, Diepersloot and Boerma are together again – a superb symbiosis of culinary talent.





henry's  
BAR



## Henry's Bar

### Sample a Taste of The Botanic

Antwerp's definitive rendezvous for cocktails and canapés, presented with the Botanic's distinctive flair and panache. Named after the 19<sup>th</sup> century botanist and director of Antwerp's Botanical Garden, Henri-Ferdinand van Heurck, Henry's Bar mirrors his delight in the ever-fascinating world of plants.

Like the Botanic Sanctuary itself, Henry's is a succession of captivating spaces. One enters via the salon, and its high ceiling and huge fireplace, low tables and inviting décor. This leads into the cosmopolitan buzz of the main bar – a firm favourite with Antwerp's movers and shakers. The next room offers a relaxing wine and dine area. Behind its plush curtains, the seductively secluded Burgundy Room is a dream of velvet and cosiness, perfect for small private gatherings.

In addition to fine wines served by the glass, guests can order bottles from the Vinariam, the vaulted monastery cellars. Henry's also offers a comprehensive selection of spirits and liqueurs, a menu of classic cocktails – including non-alcoholic options – and signature drinks.

Tempting food is always on offer and includes an eclectic selection of bites presented in lacquer boxes as well as classic bar foods. The 24/7 room service is also based on the bar menu.



## The Botanic Breakfast Experience

### Start the Day in an Incomparable Way

Breakfast at the Botanic is an event, a luxurious experience to savour and remember. It starts with a special morning greeting – a Belgian waffle, crisp, warm and light as a feather; and a stimulating smoothie shot made to a secret recipe by Fine Fleur's acclaimed chef, Jacob Jan Boerma. Then, in the spacious, gracious setting of the high-ceilinged Catalpa, its elegance complemented by magnificent potted plants and antique botanical illustrations, there's a buffet to daze and amaze.

The Morning Rise team strive for breakfast perfection, and it would be hard to know how they might do any more to achieve that. They pay close attention to local producers in sourcing the delicate fish, variety of seafoods, and artisanal charcuterie. Belgium's long tradition of cheesemaking is celebrated by Van Tricht, Antwerp's famous family of cheese affineurs. The croissants are a flaky soft-centred joy, and there's a stop-and-ponder variety of delicious rolls and breads. Overnight oats, granolas, fruit, salads, yoghurts, pastries, eggs, bacon, jams and juices, excellent Belgian butters ... one could stoke up for the whole day. Organic teas, carefully selected by tea sommelier Ken Calander, or coffee by the steaming cup, encourage one to linger. And then there's the seasonal à la carte menu featuring breakfast favourites with a twist: Eggs Benedict, full English, French toast ... everything cooked to order. Perfection achieved.


## The Botanic Brunch

### Make it a Weekend to Remember

Every Sunday, and on special occasions, the Botanic team creates a joyously lavish brunch in the atmospheric old Amaryllis hall. After a Nicolas Feuillatte Blanc de Blancs 2015 Champagne welcome, live music accompanies a fabulously luxe series of culinary treats: lobster and oysters among the starters, mouth-watering grilled and roasted meats, fish and vegetarian dishes for the main course, and, after an assortment of Belgium's choicest cheeses, a superb selection of all things sweet to round off the experience. The sommelier carefully pairs each dish with wines, of course.







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# Botanic Congress Centre

## A New Business Lifestyle

Botanic Sanctuary is also home to Antwerp's leading and largest congress centre. With 2,450sqm of banqueting and events spaces in a centuries-old location, the 14 multifunctional conference rooms combine historic ambience with a full spectrum of state-of-the-art technology.

There are few more spectacular settings for any event. With easy access by rail as well as road – Antwerp's magnificent Centraal Station ensures a spectacular start to any trip – the Botanic makes an especially appealing destination for international incentive groups.

The centre's welcoming series of spaces can be utilised in a variety of flexible configurations. The Botanic's in-house events team ensures every element of each event runs smoothly. The catering is tailor-made to taste. And privacy and seclusion in a safe and healthy environment are guaranteed.

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The 325sqm Larix auditorium can accommodate 290 people and features two interpreters' booths and a fully equipped technical control room.

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The 238sqm Ceder room, just beyond the Larix auditorium, makes a great breakout space and is spacious enough for receptions and banquets, with its own private bar.

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The grand, 421sqm Amaryllis hall on the ground floor is the ultimate showcase for exhibitions, events and product launches, with a portico that allows automobile access.

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The 51sqm Hevea is where teams come together and imagination roams free – with Technogym equipment in the room and a wall to write on, not your normal meeting room.

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The Ginkgo boardroom features luscious leather chairs and an in-room bar and benefits from an air purification filter to guarantee a healthy, clean meeting environment.

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The Monastery Garden offers an energising immersion in nature.

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The historic 15<sup>th</sup> century chapel is a unique venue for receptions and celebrations.

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The Culina Romana and Culina Batavica are quirky private dining areas, based in the old monastery kitchens and possessing some original kitchen features.

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The elegant ground-floor Marie-Rose is an 81sqm meeting room with botanical décor.

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The 48sqm Eucalyptus is a light and airy room, perfect for meetings of up to 30 people.

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The historic Quercus 1 and 2 are separate meeting rooms with a partition that can be removed to create an area of 182sqm and feature their original wooden beamed ceiling.

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The Catalpa is a beautiful, light-filled space for special seminar lunches.

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The 102sqm Platanus makes an exceptional setting for multi-day conferences.

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# Celebrations & Events

## Style it Spectacular at the Botanic

History meets high-tech meets *mmmm!* in the 2,450sqm array of banqueting facilities at Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp. In a series of ancient, atmospheric spaces recalling both the hotel's own past and Antwerp's 16<sup>th</sup> century 'golden era', Johan Van Raes – the popular and hugely capable former chef-patron of Antwerp's Michelin-starred restaurant The Glorious – masterminds the catering.

Taking care of everything else is the Botanic's professional in-house events team. From room configuration to decor to lighting, audio and any entertainment, every element is carefully organised – and then carried out to the sophisticated standard customary at the Botanic.

# Botanic Concert Experiences

## Step Into a Sanctuary for Music Lovers

Music has always played a major role at the Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century and onward it formed part of worship at the St Elisabeth hospital, where monks took care of travellers as well as the sick and the poor. The monks' hypnotic chants were also used for healing, since it was believed that chanting imparted not only spiritual blessings but also had curative powers. Modern science is beginning to come to similar conclusions ... and as the sound of that chanting seems to echo across the centuries at the Botanic, who are we to disagree?

## Listen to Celestial Sounds in the Chapel

The Botanic's 15<sup>th</sup> century chapel is a venue like no other. With its soaring roof, stained glass windows and old stone walls, the chapel that once echoed to generations of chanting monks now makes a celestial setting for classical music events. From harpists to small orchestras, fine musicians love performing here. And whether guests are listening to a soloist or a symphony, the musicians' almost palpable pleasure adds to what is always an enchanting black-tie experience.

## Enjoy Amazing Acoustics at the Amaryllis

What might the monks have thought of this development? Pop, rock and jazz have found a perfect home in the Botanic's grand historic hall, the Amaryllis. Once the province of the monks, the amazing Amaryllis is now a knockout gig and musical event space. Big enough to generate a rollicking atmosphere, but not so huge it feels impersonal, the many-pillared Gothic Amaryllis makes a venue to complement the Botanic's more sedate cultural experiences with an exciting flurry of fun.







# Weddings

## Make it a Love Story ... Saying *I Do* at The Botanic

From first dates to engagement parties to weddings – small and elegant or gloriously extravagant – the Botanic provides a romantic setting for many of life’s most magical moments.

Celebrity jewellery designer, Jochen Leën, is on hand to help the starry-eyed couple choose their dream rings. In the lead-up to the big day, the Botanic’s attentive in-house wedding team can organise everything else, from despatching invitations – online or handwritten and posted – through advice on the flowers to liaising with the pastry chefs about the all-important cake.

Pre-wedding spa treatments and detoxes, and bridal make-up and hairstyling on the day itself are all within the spa team’s remit.

Wedding parties coming from abroad meet with an especially reassuring welcome, with the Botanic team offering plenty of expert local knowledge and helpful hand-holding to smooth the way.

Steeped in a sense of centuries past, yet equipped with state-of-the-art lighting and temperature-control, each of the historic, atmospheric spaces provides a beautiful backdrop for both the ceremony and reception, be it the great Amaryllis hall or the wood-beamed salons. Now deconsecrated, the 15<sup>th</sup> century chapel is an idyllic venue for ceremonies of all religious traditions and none, and the Monastery Garden makes a marvellous place for the essential outdoor wedding photographs.

Every conceivable kind of wedding is possible at the Botanic – from an intimate family affair to an absolute showstopper. So – no stress! Kiss kiss!

The Botanic’s wrap-around wedding service includes:

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Help with choosing a celebrant or cleric and music for the ceremony

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Devising menus according to individual preferences

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Organising a bespoke wedding cake and wedding favours

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Personalised bridal bouquets, bridesmaids’ posies and floral room decorations

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Organising drinks, from Champagne to coffee

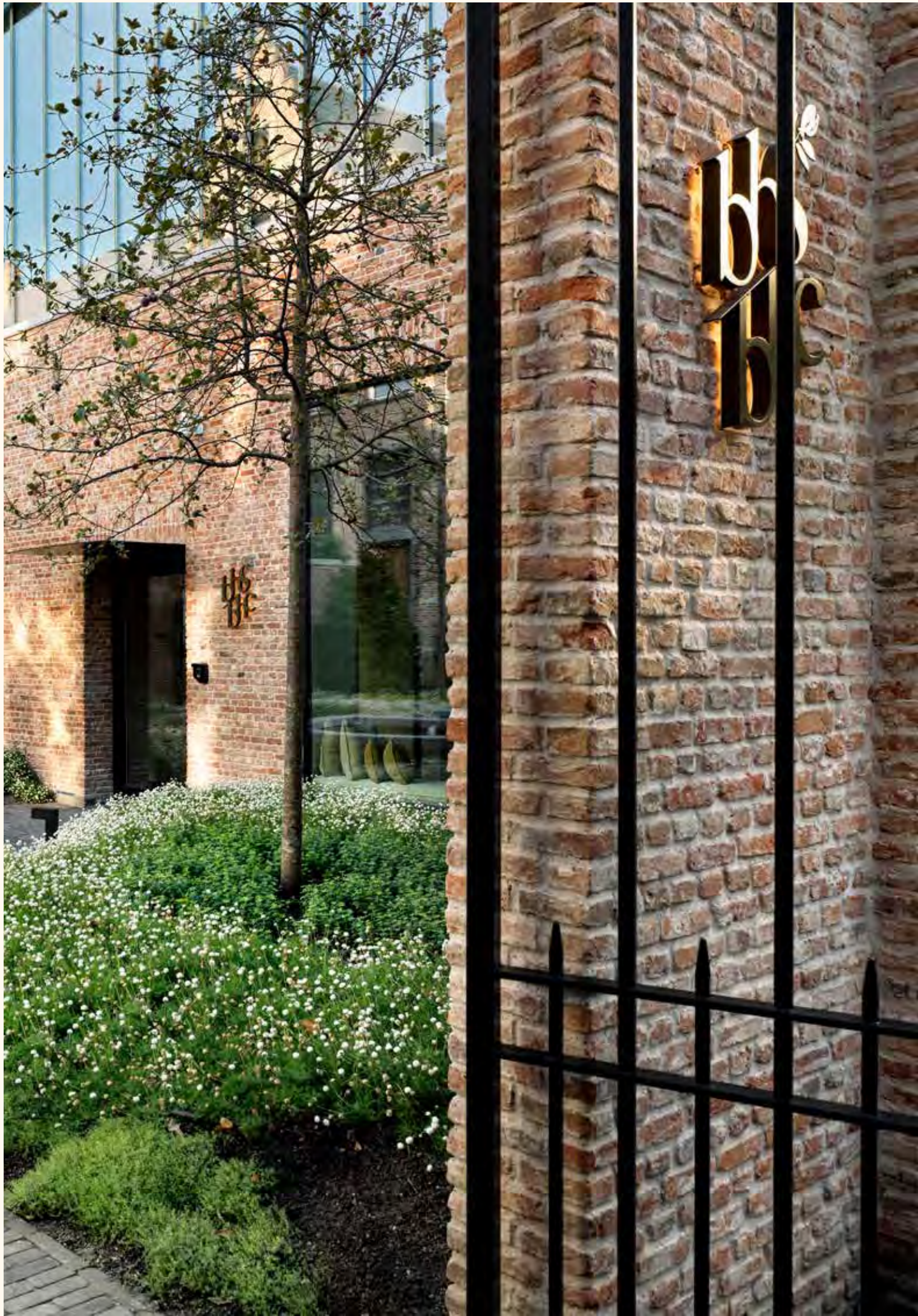
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Covering all wedding stationery requirements

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# Botanic Health Spa

Change Your Lifestyle ... Feel Reborn

Sleek and luxurious, the Botanic Health Spa is Belgium's leading destination spa. Designed by star spa architect Heinz Schletterer, with a wall of the old orangery incorporated into its base, the glass, wood and stone building is one of the new additions to the former old monastery complex.

Inside the zen-calm, fragrant building, the soothing visual simplicity is underlaid by sophisticated next-gen technology that helps conserve the natural resources the spa uses and contributes to its ongoing environmental sustainability.

Besides traditional hands-on treatments, provided in 10 treatment rooms by a team of therapists using a range of healing modalities, state-of-the-art cellular analytic equipment allows guests to quickly access a detailed physical assessment.

International spa consultant Claudia Reichenberger developed the concept for the spa. This sees director Xavier Le Clef, a specialist in both Traditional European Medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine, overseeing advanced programmes in health, fitness and personal development. The revolutionary Mylife Changer® concept is at the core of the spa's philosophy. This is a research-driven, botanical approach to impacting the ageing process and makes use of performance skincare by Méthode Physiodermie® to create tailored solutions for skin alterations. These are based on the T<sup>3</sup> principles of morphological diagnosis, hyper-personalised products administered by means of cutting-edge technology, and treatment protocols founded on morphological predominance. This ground-breaking approach rests on ancient typological theories that are today reflected in the latest scientific findings.

The spa operates in synergy with the apothecary, just across the courtyard, which stocks a comprehensive variety of the herbal and plant-based remedies that have been tried and tested over centuries by practitioners of Traditional European Medicine.







Spread across three floors, the 1,000sqm spa offers:

Cutting edge cellular-analysis equipment
10 treatment rooms
Traditional European Medicine: consultations and diagnosis
Traditional Chinese Medicine: consultations and diagnosis
Journeys, retreats and workshops
Yoga, meditation and mindfulness classes
Manicures, pedicures and waxing
Massages and full-body treatments
18m panoramic swimming pool
Panoramic Finnish sauna with herbal infusions
Kneipp walk
Ice fountain
Himalayan salt-stone sauna
Infrared textile sauna
Steam bath
Foot reflexology basins
Infinity whirlpool
Herb and vitamin bar
Relaxation area
Top-floor bistro
Technogym equipment

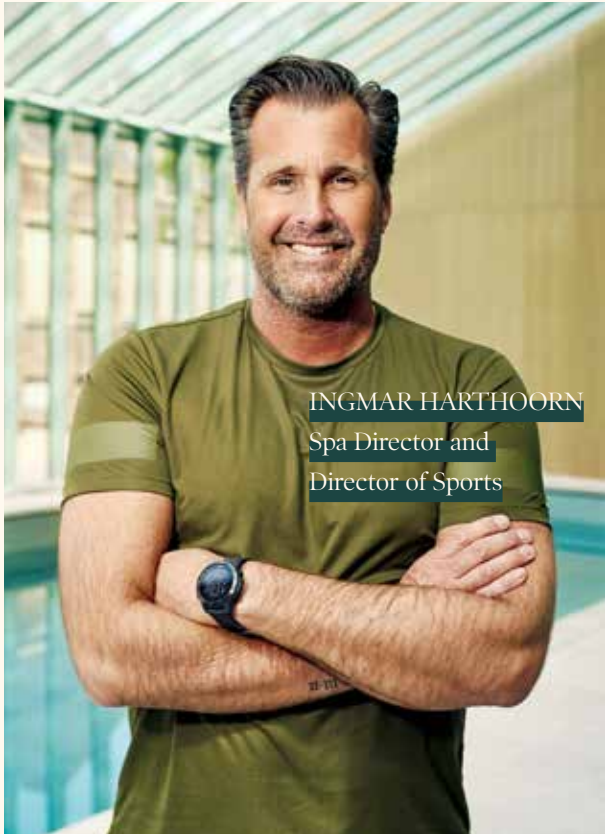
Traditional European Medicine meets Traditional Chinese Medicine

The holistic focus of the Botanic Health Spa is on a mix of tried and tested healing and preventive methods. But it is the synergistic combination of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Traditional European Medicine (TEM) that is the quintessential expression of the spa.

Spa Director, holistic medicine and TCM practitioner, Xavier Le Clef explains: ‘As a practitioner, I daily see the effects of our lifestyles becoming more and more evident in physical and emotional complaints. Only a holistic approach can offer lasting solutions.’



XAVIER LE CLEF  
Spa Director,  
Holistic medicine and  
TCM practitioner



INGMAR HARTHOORN  
Spa Director and  
Director of Sports





### Skincare at the Botanic Health Spa

Beautiful skin is a blessing. But hormonal and digestive issues plus pollution and toxicity can prove a problem. The innovative skincare practised at the Botanic Health Spa is based on the use of two medical-grade Swiss-made product ranges, designed to tackle and solve such problems.

More than 40 years dedicated to research and development in cosmeceuticals for skincare to visibly improve the quality of the skin and obtain visible results! Méthode Physiadermie® represents a perfect synergy between the most powerful natural ingredients and cutting-edge Swiss technology. The brand was born after an in-depth study of morphological tendencies and their effect on individual aesthetic variations.

Clinical Swiss Organics, an organic, natural skincare line certified by Ecocert Greenlife in compliance with COSMOS organic standards, which offers maximum ingredient transparency. Medical-grade treatment techniques use active ingredients to achieve optimum results, supporting detoxification and boosting metabolic function, and the range's multisensory treatments are based on the purest, best-quality aromatherapy products.

### Customised Journeys

The approach to healing at the Botanic Health Spa reflects the destination's monastic history. Customised Journeys are soothing spa treatment programmes offering additional dimensions for self-exploration and growth. Whether the aim is to improve fitness, reverse the signs of ageing, or de-stress after a long day at the office, the Botanic Health Spa can deliver a bespoke solution.

### A Bite at the Botanic Health Bistro

The Botanic's holistic approach naturally extends to the spa's bistro. In this airy, glass-walled, third-floor space at the top of the spa, there's a range of healthy treats on offer, including a two-course set Spa Menu. Home-made kombucha will improve digestion, and for an instant boost of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, there's a range of healthy cold-pressed juices. Perfect for a refreshing pause in the course of a spa day.

# Botanic Health Club

bhcf

## Experience a New Level of Fitness and Health

Supermodern and high-tech, the Botanic's gym and private members' fitness club offers the latest, state-of-the-art Technogym equipment. Here on the airy top floor of the Botanic Health Spa, open 24/7, there's a total dedication to fitness. Floor-to-ceiling windows blur the boundaries between inside and out, so whether on a spring morning, sunny day or frosty evening, every workout takes place against a backdrop of treetops and ancient roofs.

Spa Director and Director of Sports, Ingmar Harthoorn, genial former professional athlete, conducts personal training sessions and helps guests and members devise and reach their own individual fitness goals. Kick-starting this process, state-of-the-art analytic equipment can produce an almost instant evaluation of an individual's level of fitness.

Membership is sought after, however guests of the Botanic Sanctuary can access the gym for free. Available for a fee:

Personal training
Activity classes
Bio circuit training
Yoga and Yogalates
Health coaching
High-tech personal fitness analysis



*‘A gym for tailored fitness solutions where everyone is welcome –from beginner to pro.’*





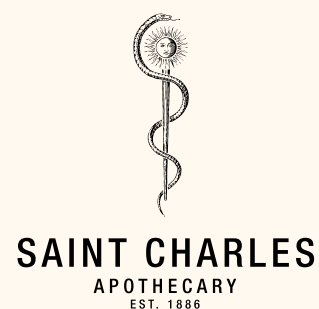
# The Saint Charles Concept Store

## Step Into an Enchanting Old Apothecary

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Peeter van Coudenberghe (1517–1599) added an apothecary to the St Elisabeth hospital and planted a medicinal garden to grow the herbs and flowers needed to supply remedies.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the garden had fallen into a sorry state. But the apothecary had evolved and survived. And in 2017, when planning for Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp got underway, the developers discovered to their joy that the Victorian-era apothecary was still largely intact. Cobwebbed and crumbling, but restorable.

So today it is with great delight that the Botanic can share this entrancing old space – complete with its original Victorian cabinets and fittings – with anyone who cares to step inside. They will find themselves inside a fragrant, intriguing world. Here, thanks to a combination of meticulous restoration and a chance meeting in Vienna with the sixth-generation descendent of the 19<sup>th</sup> century founder of Saint Charles, mixers and makers of traditional herbal and plant-based remedies, skincare, and aromatic and healing products, the spirit of van Coudenberghe lives on.



This Saint Charles Store is the only one outside Vienna to stock this niche company's full range, each potent product packaged in brown or violet glass, offering the safest protection for the precious contents. In addition to Saint Charles, the apothecary shelves are also filled with skincare, room fragrances, soaps, cosmetics supplied by the exclusive niche brands the Botanic Health Spa uses for treatments. A specially created fragrance, other signature products and limited-edition accessories – hand-made and sustainable – together with freely given advice and information augment what this wonderful and exceptional store has to offer.

*'We aim to provide our customers with a memorable experience, while also familiarising them with nature's healing treasures and offering expert advice. This is why the products within the Botanic's Saint Charles concept store appeal to as many of the senses as possible, with olfactory effects on psyche and body playing a key role.'*

MARC ALOFS

Managing Director Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp

## Bountiful Bazaars

### Granada Gallery

Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp is also delighted to be the home the Granada Gallery, showcase for a unique curation of treasures. Moving from the natural world to the craftsman's bench, the Gallery shines a spotlight on intriguing examples of nature's innate creativity alongside human ingenuity. Jewellery designer Jochen Leën shares the Gallery's passion for gemstones, and that has resulted in an exclusive collection bearing gems sourced from the Gallery's own mines and excavation sites.

### The Unprecedented

Something to savour in the moment, sure. Who, though, would have guessed whisky could prove quite so rewarding long-term? Scotch Whisky Investments presents The Unprecedented. Located in the vaulted cellars, only members of Scotch Whisky Investments may enter this exclusive club.







IRET Development  
office in Antwerp

# IRET and Antwerp

## A Dream Team

At the heart of Antwerp are some of the most magnificent 16<sup>th</sup> century buildings in Europe. Hence Antwerp’s enduring appeal as a weekend destination, helped by its magnificent Centraal Station, where EuroStar and other sustainably-minded guests arrive, and the reopening in 2022, after 12 years, of the Royal Museum of Fine Arts – just a 10-minute walk from the Botanic.

As one of the leading real estate developers in Belgium, with 30 years’ specialist experience in overseeing large-scale schemes and complex inner-city real estate projects for offices, retail, apartments and hotels, and with a long-standing affection for the city of Antwerp, IRET was the perfect partner to develop Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp.

Projects the IRET group has invested in and developed across Belgium include Tour & Taxis in Brussels, Rive Gauche in Charleroi, and Kievitplein in the mixed project and office site Post X in Antwerp.



The group is also active in Luxembourg and France. IRET has also gained a notable track record for integrating hotel operations and related businesses into mixed-use city-centre projects. For example, a Golden Tulip hotel was integrated within the Kievitplein Project, a Novotel hotel within the Rive Gauche Project and a Park Inn hotel within the Post X Project. More recently, IRET acquired the Hilton Hotel, Antwerp, located in an outstanding historic building near the Groenplaats, the 16<sup>th</sup> century heart of the city, where it is planning an in-depth refurbishment. And for Botanic Sanctuary, a globally unique development, IRET pulled out all the stops.

*‘Our hometown has long had an impressive variety of hotels,’ say IRET owners, Eric De Vocht and Maryse Odeurs. ‘But it was missing something truly luxurious, a hotel that paid rightful homage to Antwerp’s great past, its golden age, and a city that today stands as a centre for art and design, fashion technology, and multifaceted trade. As the city’s first 5-star superior hotel, Botanic Sanctuary now places Antwerp firmly on the map as a destination for international guests who enjoy exploring the very best the world has to offer. The hotel’s historic authenticity, added to its city-centre yet tranquil location adjacent to the Botanic Garden, and its status as a gastronomic destination, made this an exceptional project and one especially close to our hearts.*

*‘We are delighted to have recruited Marc Alofs and his wife Stéphanie Stulens. And we pay tribute to the resourceful and talented teams of architectural, interior and landscaping practices responsible for the Botanic’s design excellence.’*

Architecture	AIDarchitecten
Interiors	Maryse Odeurs & Rebecca Verstraete
Hertog Jan	Benoit Viaene Architectenbureau
Fine Fleur	‘D’ Architectural Concepts
Henry’s Bar	Dieter Vander Velpen
1238 Restaurant	Dieter Vander Velpen
Botanic Health Spa	Schletterer Consult
Landscape	Linears Landscapers
Project Development	Johan Van Laer
Brand Architecture Development	marketing deluxe



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