

BRUSSELS

GLOBAL CITIES RETAIL GUIDE

2026 EDITION

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BRUSSELS OVERVIEW

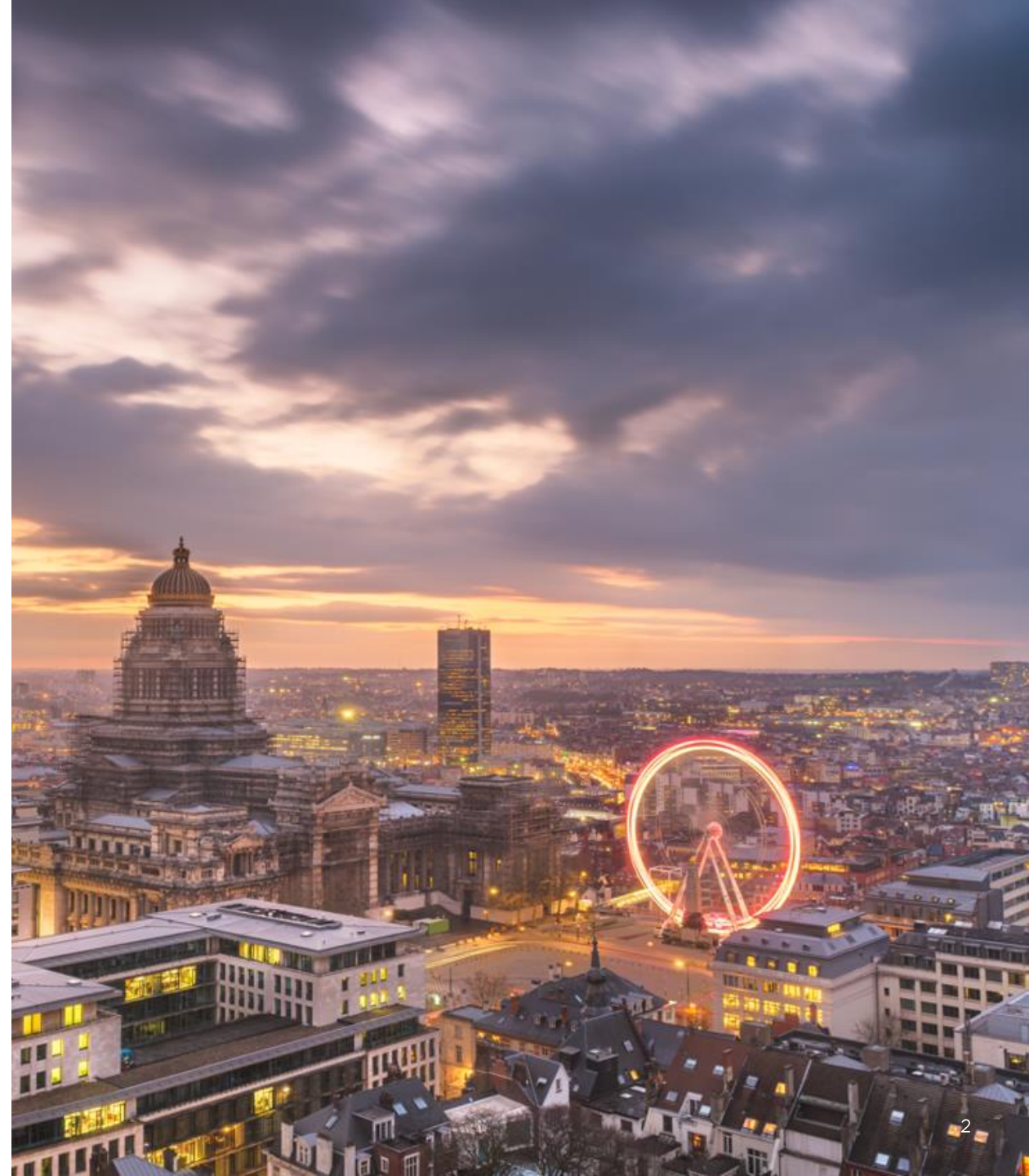
Brussels is Belgium's largest city and serves as the country's political, administrative and economic capital. As the seat of the European Union institutions and numerous international organisations, the city plays a key role on both a national and international level. Its central location within Belgium and strong connectivity underpin its function as a major employment, business and visitor destination. Today, Brussels combines strong economic fundamentals with a highly international character, resulting in a complex but resilient urban retail environment.

With a population of over **1.2 million inhabitants in the Brussels-Capital Region** and a wider metropolitan area exceeding 2.5 million people, the city benefits from a large and diverse consumer base. In addition to its residential population, Brussels attracts a substantial **daily inflow of commuters and international professionals, as well as year-round tourist demand** driven by cultural attractions, business travel and institutional activity. This combination supports consistently high levels of retail and leisure demand across multiple parts of the city.

Brussels' retail market is spread across **several key locations** rather than a single dominant city core. The inner-city retail area is anchored by **Rue Neuve, City2 and the Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert**,

which together generate the highest footfall and attract both local and international visitors. Other established retail streets, including Avenue Louise and Chaussée d'Ixelles, support a mix of fashion, lifestyle and service-oriented retail, reflecting the city's more **fragmented and neighbourhood-driven structure**.

Beyond the city centre, Brussels benefits from a strong network of **regional shopping centres** that play a structural role within the retail landscape. Schemes such as **Westland Shopping Center and Woluwe Shopping Center** serve large residential catchment areas and generate stable footfall. Together with **out-of-town retail locations along major road axes**, these formats broaden Brussels' retail offer and reinforce the city's position as Belgium's largest and most diversified retail market.



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Key Retail Streets & Areas

Rue Neuve

The prime mass-market retail area of Brussels is centred around **Rue Neuve**, forming the city's highest-footfall shopping pitch, with an **average weekly footfall of 166,600***. The street attracts a broad regional catchment and benefits from its direct connection to **City2**, reinforcing its role as Brussels' dominant volume-driven retail destination.

The retail mix is largely composed of international fashion chains, sports retailers and variety concepts, positioning Rue Neuve as **Belgium's leading high-footfall high street**. Its accessibility via public transport and proximity to the city centre further support strong and consistent pedestrian flows throughout the week.

** Source: MyTraffic*

CHAUSSÉE D'IXELLES – AVENUE DE LA TOISON D'OR – AVENUE LOUISE

The retail axis formed by Chaussée d'Ixelles, Avenue de la Toison d'Or and Avenue Louise represents **Brussels' most diverse and dynamic shopping corridor**.

Chaussée d'Ixelles offers a lively mix of mass-market, beauty and lifestyle retailers, supported by strong local footfall and student presence. Moving south, **Avenue de la Toison d'Or** acts as a transition zone with flagship stores and cinema-led leisure activity, while **Avenue Louise** accommodates a more premium fashion and lifestyle offer within an established urban setting. Together, this axis captures both local spending and higher-end demand in a more fragmented, neighbourhood-driven retail environment.

BOULEVARD DE WATERLOO

Boulevard de Waterloo is Brussels' **prime luxury retail destination and the country's leading high-end shopping street**. The boulevard hosts international luxury houses including brands such as Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Hermès and Cartier, benefiting from proximity to the Sablon district and high-income residential areas.

Unlike the volume-driven character of Rue Neuve, Boulevard de Waterloo operates as a **focused luxury pitch**, attracting an affluent local and international clientele. Its stable brand presence and controlled supply underpin its position at the top of the Brussels retail hierarchy.



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Key Retail Streets & Areas

KEY HIGH STREETS	CONSUMER PROFILE	MAJOR RETAILERS PRESENT	NEW ENTRANTS	TYPICAL RENT FOR 200 SQ M UNIT	RANGE OF UNIT SIZES
Rue Neuve	Tourists, local and regional shoppers	Primark, H&M, Zara, Nike Mango, C&A, JD Sports, Snipes, Kiko, New Yorker, Skechers, etc.	Lacoste, Hollister	1,000 – 1,700 €/sqm/year	50 – 10,000 sqm
Chaussée d'Ixelles	Local shoppers	H&M, Zara, Bershka, FootLocker, Primark, Burger King, etc.	Chaussea, Sports Direct	900 - 1400 €/sqm/year	50 – 4,000 sqm
Avenue de la Toison d'Or	Tourists, local and regional shoppers	Apple, & Other Stories, Boggi, Massimo Dutti, Tommy Hilfiger, Fnac, A.S. Adventure, Kiehl's, Aubade, etc.	Lululemon	1,300 - 1,600 €/sqm/year	50 – 5,000 sqm
Avenue Louise	Tourists, local and regional shoppers	Hugo Boss, COS, Longchamps, Michael Kors, Nespresso, MaxMara, Mango, Arket, Zara Home, etc.	New Balance	1,300 - 1,600 €/sqm/year	50 – 2,500 sqm
Boulevard de Waterloo	Tourists, local and regional shoppers	Louis Vuitton, Cartier, Gucci, Todd's, Chanel, Dior, Hermès, Prada, Moncler, Tiffany's.	Zimmerman, Omega	2,000 – 2,500 €/sqm/year	50 – 600 sqm

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Food & Beverage

Brussels is Belgium's largest and most international dining market, offering a broad and diverse food & beverage scene.

Brussels has one of the **country's most established and diversified food and beverage markets**, supported by its role as capital city and European administrative hub. The large residential base, daily commuter flows and international visitors generate consistent demand across all price segments, from quick-service concepts to high-end gastronomy.

The city stands out for both the scale and quality of its culinary offer. According to recent **Michelin Guide listings**, **approximately 110 restaurants** in Brussels are featured on the Michelin platform, including several starred establishments. In addition, around **107 restaurants** achieve a score of 12/20 or higher in the **Gault&Millau guide**, underlining the depth and competitiveness of the local dining scene. Flagship restaurants such

as Comme Chez Soi, Bozar Restaurant and a broad mix of contemporary and internationally inspired concepts contribute to **Brussels' strong gastronomic reputation**.

Food and beverage activity is distributed **across multiple districts** rather than concentrated in a single core. The historic centre around the **Grand-Place** attracts a visitor-oriented offer, while **Place Sainte-Catherine and the Dansaertstraat district** are known for trend-driven and independent concepts. The **Flagey and Châtelain** areas host a strong neighbourhood and internationally oriented restaurant scene, while the European Quarter supports weekday lunch and after-work demand. This broad spatial spread reinforces F&B as a key driver of urban vitality across Brussels.



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Food & Beverage

KEY AREAS	CONSUMER PROFILE	FOOD & BEVERAGE OPERATORS
Historic centre / Grand-Place	Tourists & mixed city-centre visitors	Traditional brasseries, international restaurants, leisure-oriented concepts
Sainte-Catherine / Dansaert	Trendy local & international	Contemporary dining, wine bars, independent concepts
Sablon	Affluent local & international clientele	High-end dining, chocolate houses, wine bars and refined brasserie concepts
Flagey / Châtelain	Local & international residents	Casual dining, brunch concepts, premium neighbourhood restaurants
European Quarter	Office & institutional demand	Lunch-oriented concepts, cafés, after-work bars



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Shopping Centres

Brussels' retail structure combines a strong high street environment with a well-established network of shopping centres across the metropolitan area. Rather than being dominated by a single scheme, the market is characterised by several urban and regional centres, each serving a distinct catchment and retail function within the wider Brussels region.

One of the most centrally positioned schemes is **City2**, directly connected to Rue Neuve. With approximately 39,500 sqm of retail space and annual footfall exceeding 13.6 million visitors, City2 ranks among Belgium's largest inner-city shopping centres. **Fully integrated into the prime retail core** and benefiting from direct metro and rail connections, the centre reinforces the mass-market positioning of Rue Neuve and functions as a natural extension of the capital's dominant high-footfall shopping pitch.

To the east of the city, **W Shopping** represents one of Brussels' traditional suburban shopping centres. Comprising around 47,000 sqm, the scheme serves an affluent residential catchment and attracts approximately 6.3 million visitors annually. Its tenant mix combines international fashion brands and convenience retailers, positioning W Shopping as a stable, recurring-footfall-driven centre embedded within a **strong suburban environment**.

In the western part of the region, **Westland Shopping** acts as a major regional retail hub. With approximately 51,500 sqm of retail space and around 6.4 million visitors per year, the centre captures a broad catchment area supported by strong car accessibility and parking provision. Ongoing renovation and extension works aim to modernise the asset and reinforce its role within the western Brussels retail landscape.

More recently developed, **Docks Bruxsel** (43,000 sqm) introduced a mixed-use and experience-oriented retail format to the market when it opened in 2016. Located along the **canal area in the north of the city**, Docks combines retail with leisure, food and event components, targeting both local residents and destination-driven visitors. While operating in a competitive environment, it contributes to the diversification of Brussels' shopping centre offer and strengthens the city's overall retail mass.



Source: City2



Source: Westland Shopping

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Retail Warehousing/ Big-box Retail

Out-of-town retail in Brussels is primarily concentrated along **major road infrastructure and the RO ring**, with clusters located in **the north-east and south-west periphery of the metropolitan area**. These locations benefit from strong car accessibility, visibility and large regional catchment areas, positioning them as preferred destinations for large-format and price-driven retail concepts.

Retail warehousing in Brussels is typically characterised by furniture, DIY, electronics, sports and discount operators accommodated in **stand-alone units or retail parks with on-site parking**. Unlike the city centre retail

core, these areas capture demand driven by convenience, accessibility and comparison shopping rather than pedestrian footfall.

Within Brussels' wider retail structure, peripheral retail corridors absorb formats that are less compatible with dense urban locations, reinforcing the **functional distinction between high street retail and destination-driven big-box environments**.



RETAIL PARK	CONSUMER PROFILE	RETAILERS PRESENT	PRIME RENT	RANGE OF UNIT SIZES
Brixton Retail Park (Zaventem)	Regional & car-oriented shoppers	Swiss Sense, X ² O Badkamers, Juntoo, Kwantum, Jysk	185 €/sqm/year	700 - 3,000 sqm
Rue de Stalle (Drogenbos)	Mass-market regional shoppers	Sportsdirect, Dreamland, X ² O Badkamers, Hypermarkt Carrefour, Vanden Borre, Juntoo, Aldi	170 €/sqm/year	700 - 3,000 sqm



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