A field of red poppies under a cloudy sky. The poppies are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The sky is a mix of blue and grey, with white clouds. The overall mood is somber yet beautiful.

NATIONAL  
**ARMY**  
MUSEUM

YPRES

A TOUR FOR  
PATRONS OF THE NATIONAL  
ARMY MUSEUM

27TH SEPTEMBER – 1ST  
OCTOBER 2017

# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

WEDNESDAY  
27TH SEPTEMBER

## *Morning:*

Independent arrivals into Lille Europe (suggested Eurostar train at 10.14am, arriving at 12.54pm. Lunch on board).

## *1.00pm:*

Gather at Lille Europe and transfer by coach to Ypres, one of the key centres of sustained battle between the Allied and German forces during the First World War. We begin with a visit to **In Flanders Field Museum**, housed in the city's historic Cloth Hall. The museum tells the story of the invasion of Belgium by German forces, and the four-year trench war in the Westhoek, through to the end of the war in 1918. We enjoy a curator-led tour of the museum's collections.

We drive the short distance to the town of Poperinge, one of the few towns in Belgium that was not under German occupation during WWI, and was used to as a place of recreation and recuperation by British troops. We check in at the **Hotel Recour**, one of the region's best luxury boutique hotels. Housed in a former 18th-century mansion, the hotel fuses both classical and modern decor, and is surrounded by beautiful gardens which are home to wild herbs and magnolia.

## *Evening:*

We dine at the hotel's excellent **Pegasus Restaurant**, serving modern European cuisine in chic surroundings.



IN FLANDERS FIELD MUSEUM



SECOND BATTLE OF YPRES, 1915

# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

THURSDAY  
28TH SEPTEMBER

## *Morning:*

Breakfast at the hotel.

We drive the short distance into Belgium for a visit to the **Brandhoek Military Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery**, begun by the British in July 1917 to replace the original Brandhoek cemetery nearby, in preparation for the losses in the Battle of Passchendaele. We visit the grave of Captain Dr Noel Godfrey Chavasse VC, the only man to win the Victoria Cross twice due to his repeated efforts to save the lives of his fellow soldiers with disregard for his own safety.

Continue to the nearby town of Poperinge for a visit to **Talbot House**. Poperinge was part of unoccupied Belgium during the war, and it was here that Army Chaplains Neville Talbot and Philip Clayton opened an 'Everyman's Club' to offer respite and recreation to British soldiers.

## *Lunch:*

We make our way south for lunch at **'t Blauwers Huys**, a restaurant housed in a beautiful farmhouse surrounded by meadows, offering excellent modern versions of classic Flemish dishes.

## *Afternoon:*

Continue to the **Spanbroekmolen Mine Crater Memorial**, otherwise known as 'The Pool of Peace'.



BRANDHOEK MILITARY  
CEMETERY



TALBOT HOUSE

The crater was the site of the largest of 19 mines exploded by the British Army on the morning of 7th June 1917, signalling the launch of the Battle of Messines. Now filled with water due to the high water table, the mine crater was purchased by Lord Wakefield in the 1920s in order to create a memorial site.

Our final visit today is to the nearby **Bayernwald Trenches**, a 300m section of the German trenches which were laid out in 1916. They have been carefully restored and provide a fascinating insight into the structure and daily life of the WWI trenches. We observe how woven wickerwork branches were used to line the sides of the trenches, and view the mine shafts which reached 40m in depth.

Return to Poperinge.

## *Evening:*

We make our way to Ypres for dinner at **Découverte**, a fine dining restaurant serving delicious modern European cuisine.

# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

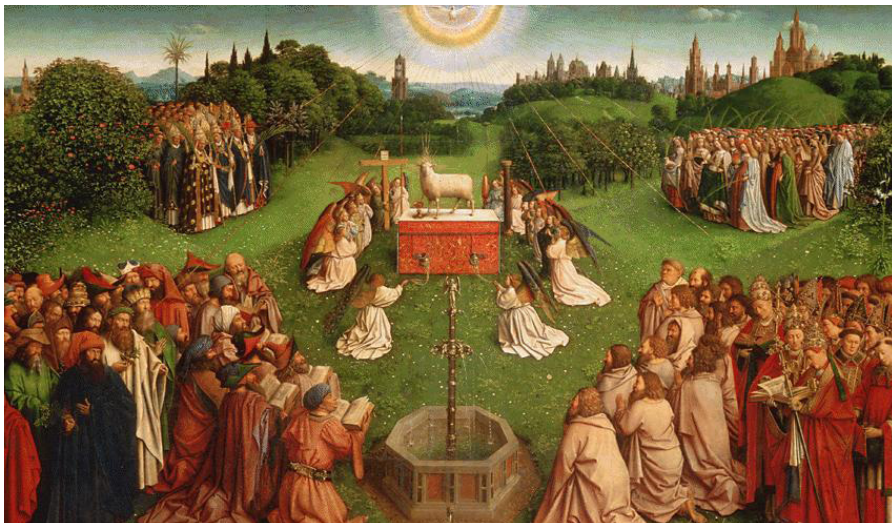
FRIDAY  
29TH SEPTEMBER

## *Morning:*

Breakfast at the hotel.

We spend the morning in **Ghent**, the picturesque capital of the East Flanders province of Belgium and one of the largest and richest cities of Northern Europe in the Late Middle Ages.

We begin with a visit to **MSK, the Museum of Fine Arts**, which holds an extensive collection of works from the Middle Ages to the 20th-century largely composed of works of Flemish art. Our visit focuses on the ongoing restoration of *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, a masterpiece by Jan van Eyck from the mid 15th century which is known simply as **The Ghent Altarpiece** and is widely considered to be one of the first works of the Northern Renaissance. We view the fascinating restoration process in the museum's conservation studio.



THE GHENT ALTARPIECE



OOIDONK CASTLE

# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

SATURDAY  
30TH SEPTEMBER



MASON'S GUILD HALL,  
GHENT

### *Lunch:*

Continue to Ghent's historic centre for lunch at **Pakhuis**, a former 19th-century industrial warehouse which has been stunningly converted into a restaurant serving delicious Flemish cuisine.

### *Afternoon:*

We enjoy a walk in Ghent's centre to view some of the beautiful historic facades, such as the 16th-century Masons' Guild Hall and the extravagant Gothic town hall. We also visit **Saint Bavo's Cathedral**, the original site of The Ghent Altarpiece which currently houses the previously restored side panels.

South of Ghent we enjoy a private visit to **Ooidonk Castle**, home to the 6th Count and Countess t'Kint de Roodenbeke and their family. The present 16th-century structure was built on the site of a 14th-century fortress, intended to defend the city of Ghent and fortify the River Leie. Twice destroyed during the religious wars, it was rebuilt in the Renaissance style with the original moat left intact and elegant gardens laid out, creating one of the most magnificent castles in Belgium.

Return to Poperinge.

Dinner and the evening are at leisure for independent arrangements.

### *Morning:*

Breakfast at the hotel.

This morning we visit the **Memorial Museum Passchendaele**, a museum devoted to one of the most decisive battles of WW1 at Passchendaele in 1917, also known as the Third Battle of Ypres. In only 100 days, over half a million men were killed and only 8 kilometres of ground gained. The museum was installed in the grounds of the historic château of Zonnebeke, and includes detailed outdoor replicas of the trenches and a dugout.

### *Lunch:*

We stroll to the adjacent **Koklikoo Teahouse & Bistro**, the name meaning 'poppy' in Flemish. The cuisine is modern and the decor chic.



PASSCHENDAELE MEMORIAL MUSEUM

# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM



TYNE COT CEMETERY

## *Afternoon:*

Nearby we visit the **Tyne Cot Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery**, the largest war cemetery for Commonwealth forces in the world. It is named after the Tyneside workers' cottages of the Northumberland Fusiliers, known as 'Tyne Cots', which resembled the German bunkers on the site of the cemetery. The location was important to both sides during the war, being strategically located on a rise in the landscape which overlooks the surrounding countryside, and was a crucial site during the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917.

We return to Ypres for a tour and tasting at the **Brouwerij Kazematten**, a historic brewery in the basements of the 17th-century city walls. For centuries the basements were used as shelter for the troops during the many sieges of Ypres, as well as to store ammunition and military equipment. During WWI, they were used as the command headquarters and mess for Allied officers, as well as the home of the trench gazette 'The Wipers Times'. Now a renowned brewery, we enjoy a tour of the basements followed by a tasting of some fine Belgian beers.

## *Evening:*

We make our way to the chic **Brasserie de Trompet** in the main square for an early supper of Belgian specialities and fine wines.

Following supper, we stroll to Menin Gate for the **Last Post**, the traditional final salute to the fallen. The Menin Gate Memorial was opened in 1927, and to express its gratitude towards those who had given their lives for the freedom of Belgium, the city declared that every evening at 8.00pm the buglers of the local fire brigade would sound the Last Post and individuals would be invited to lay wreaths at the memorial.

Return to Poperinge after the ceremony for a nightcap at the hotel.



MENIN GATE

# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

SUNDAY  
1ST OCTOBER

## **Morning:**

Breakfast at the hotel and check out.

On our final morning we visit the **Langemark German Military Cemetery**. The village of Landemark was the scene of the first gas attacks by the German army, which marked the beginning of the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915. Some 44,000 soldiers are buried here, with over 20,000 in a mass grave known as the "comrades' grave".

We continue to **Essex Farm Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery**, where just over 1,200 soldiers are buried. The name commemorates the Essex Regiment, and is most famous for being the site where the war poem *In Flanders Field* was written in May 1915, by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae MD after witnessing the burial of his friend, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer.

## **Lunch:**

Drive south of Ypres for a final lunch at **De Steenen Haene**, one of the region's best restaurants housed in a typical Belgian farmhouse. We enjoy use of a private dining room.

## **Afternoon:**

Continue to Gare de Lille Europe for independent departures to London St Pancras (suggested Eurostar train departing at 5.34pm, arriving in London at 6.05pm)



ESSEX FARM CWGC



*In Flanders Field, by John McCrae, May 1915*

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*



# NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

## Tour Price: Ypres

The cost of the tour to Ypres (4 nights) is:

£2,580 per person, for double occupancy.

£2,925 per person, for single occupancy.

### The tour cost includes:

- 4 nights accommodation in Poperinge at the **Hotel Recour**
- Full breakfast in the hotel restaurant each day
- Meals at restaurants as per the itinerary:
  - 4 lunches
  - 3 dinners
- All visits and special private arrangements as per the itinerary
- Transportation by deluxe motor coach
- All museum entrance fees
- Services of an ArtsAbroad tour director throughout
- All gratuities for restaurants, guides, porters, drivers
- Porterage at the Hotel Recour

### The tour cost does not include:

- Return travel from London to Lille
- Travel insurance
- 1 dinner
- Personal expenditure (such as laundry / telephone calls etc)

• *Room upgrades are available – please call ArtsAbroad if you would like further information.  
We will also be pleased to book additional nights before or after the tour.*



BATTLE OF PASSCHENDAELE, 1917



A vast field of red poppies stretches across the foreground and middle ground, with some flowers in sharp focus and others blurred. The sky above is a mix of dark, heavy clouds and lighter, wispy ones, suggesting a dramatic or overcast day. The overall scene is a classic representation of a poppy field.

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