

In October 2005, we reported in detail on the fascinating history of the Zuid-Willemsvaart Canal and the almost Mediterranean atmosphere of the Bassin marina for transient boaters in the centre of Maastricht (Serious Pleasure no. 27). The Zuid-Willemsvaart Canal is an evergreen that is becoming more popular than ever among boaters.



Visiting the Province of Limburg via the Willems Route

The attractive alternative for pleasure craft

TEXT THIJS JANSSEN RWS/PETER LINSSEN; PHOTOS RWS/LINSSEN YACHTS

The Willems Route

The Willems Route is an attractive alternative for sailing from Roermond or 's-Hertogenbosch to Maastricht and vice versa. This splendid route is mainly intended for boaters who want more than to simply sail from A to B. An easily passable and pleasant waterway that flows along many attractive places in

Do you wish to enjoy Dutch and Belgian Limburg from the deck of a boat? Then opt for the Willems Route that traverses both provinces. Take your time and enjoy a splendid 'detour' through Flanders: the Bocholt-Herentals Canal towards Lommel and Leopoldsburg.



"...the Bassin marina in the heart of the old centre of Maastricht..."

the Netherlands and the Belgian Province of Limburg.

The route runs via the Wessem-Nederweert Canal, the Zuid-Willemsvaart Canal and the historic waterway through Maastricht to the Bassin marina in the heart of the old town. The Willems Route is tranquil with small locks and many mooring possibilities. The area surrounding the waterway is very attractive for recreation. The minimum clearance is five metres. The only exception to this minimum clearance is the historic waterway through Maastricht, where the clearance is 3.31 metres. However, an alternative route is possible via Bosscherveld lock.

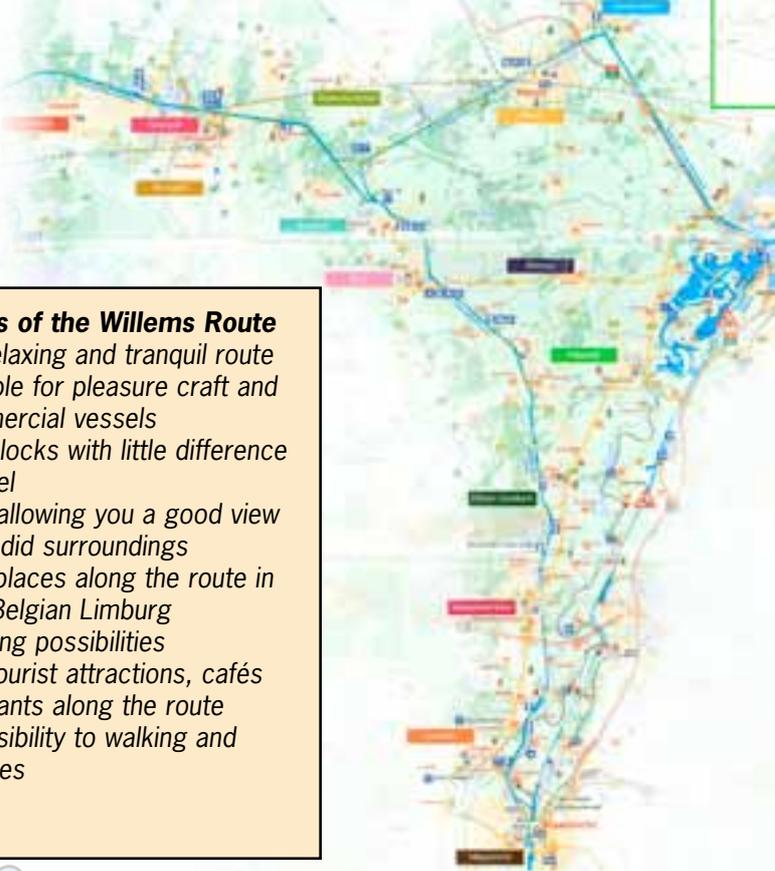
Why the Willems Route?

As part of the 'Future-proof sailing on the Meuse' project, Rijkswaterstaat (Dutch Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management) is currently extending the locks at Born, Maasbracht and Heel in the Netherlands. As a result, a substantial part of the lock capacity on the Juliana Canal will not be available for some time. In order to avoid long waiting times and to help you as a skipper of a pleasure boat, a splendid alternative route is being offered.

Rijkswaterstaat is working hard to prepare the Meuse for two-barge push boats from Nijmegen to Maastricht/Ternaaien and four-layer containers from Nijmegen to Born, which will complete the connection to the River Waal that is already passable for the largest vessels. This is taking place in accordance with European agreements about clearances, which require a clearance of 9.10 metres for four-layer containers (the Rhine clearance) and 7 metres for three-layer containers.

50% discount on the Belgian waterway vignette and special offers!

For sailing on the Flemish part of the Zuid-Willemsvaart Canal, a waterway vignette is obligatory. Boaters using the Willems Route will receive a 50% discount on the Belgian waterway vignette. This waterway vignette is available at lock no 18 only (Bocholt). 



The benefits of the Willems Route

- Beautiful, relaxing and tranquil route
- Only passable for pleasure craft and small commercial vessels
- Nice, small locks with little difference in water level
- Low banks allowing you a good view of the splendid surroundings
- Interesting places along the route in Dutch and Belgian Limburg
- Many mooring possibilities
- Countless tourist attractions, cafés and restaurants along the route
- Easy accessibility to walking and cycling routes



New: free mobile application for the Willems Route

This sailing season, you can use a unique, free mobile application (app) on the Willems Route. This app gives you easy access to interesting information about the Willems Route. It also allows you to share your travel experiences with friends, acquaintances and other pleasure boaters. Moreover, sharing your experiences will give you the opportunity to win a great prize!

The app will give you up-to-date information about the route, but it will also provide you with an overview of the various high points along the route. The Wil-

lems Route has a lot to offer: interesting culture, sports activities, varied nature and delicious food and drink. You prefer shopping? "Shop till you drop" in Maasmechelen Village! The Willems Route app is your personal navigator.

- Install the Willems Route app on your iPhone or Android telephone via the 'app store' or 'market'. Open the app and log in with your favourite social network: Facebook, Hyves or Twitter.
- Share your travel experiences, describe and photograph them and view them again easily in the app, via www.dewillemsroute.eu

[dewillemsroute.eu](http://www.dewillemsroute.eu) and your social media canals.

- The app also offers you a digital guide to ten touristic high points along the route. By sharing a travel experience at such a high point you can earn a digital stamp. At the end of the 2011 sailing season, we will raffle a prize among all participants.



Go to www.dewillemsroute.eu for requests and to download the brochure containing interesting information about the towns en route.