

Alex Bourke of Vegetarian Guides enjoys a family-friendly break in the capital of Europe.

BRUSSELS



PLACES TO GO

Just two hours from London by train, Brussels is a wonderfully easy break and perfect for families, with its child-friendly museums (including chocolate and comic strip ones!), sights and activities, such as the Océade water park. Of course there's also the cobbled streets, designer fashion shopping, markets, summer music festivals, art from Brueghel to Dali and Picasso, and some notoriously potent fruit beers in the art nouveau bars. Many hotels offer discounted weekend and July/August holiday rates, or you could stay in one of over 5,000 Airbnb apartments and homes.

Greenway fast food vegetarian café, opened in February this year, is conveniently next to the Eurostar terminal at Gare du Midi. Call in for a breakfast of

sweet mini-pancakes or a bowl of soya yogurt topped with coconut granola, cranberries and goji berries. There are chicken-style 'chick-piece' burgers with a chickpea base, falafels, kebab wraps, plus Moroccan and Peruvian salads. Round off with cheesecake, vegan brownies and carrot cake, washed down with cappuccino or chai latte made with soya milk.

A few minutes away on foot is the fabulous **Ozfair** Fairtrade store and organic vegetarian lunch café. There's a dish of the day (*plat du jour*, €10.50 inside or €9.50 outside) such as couscous tagine, soups, salads, and sandwiches like adzuki bean tapenade with crudités (two courses with drink €14.50). They also do continental breakfast,

and you can relax at tables inside or out till 6.30pm with a juice, coffee or tea. The shop is great for presents too, with two floors of organic and Fairtrade foods, Belgian chocolate, beers and wines, and stacks of clothing, jewellery, cosmetics, baby things, and even bamboo socks.

Dolma is the locals' favourite, a proper sit-down vegetarian restaurant with bright colours, lots of natural wood and lanterns. The excellent buffet is all-you-can-eat plus a dessert (lunch €18, dinner €24.50, children €10), including soup with seeded bread, starters and mains such as seitan with mushrooms, chickpea stew, and tofu and lentil loaf. Dolma has an organic health food shop and patisserie too.



NEED TO KNOW

Greenway

www.greenway.be/en

Ozfair

www.ozfair.be

Dolma

www.dolma.be

Mr Falafel

53 Boulevard Maurice Lemonnier (Metro Anneessens)

Chana Falafel & Pakora

Facebook: Chana falafel & pakora

Moonfood

Facebook: Moonfood

Den Teepot

www.bioshop.be/winkels/brussel.html

Vegasme

vegasme.be

Le Pain Quotidien

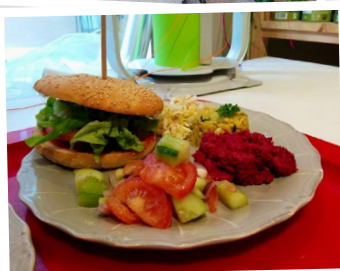
www.lepainquotidien.be

● For more info visit

www.brussels.info

www.brussels151.com

www.airbnb.co.uk



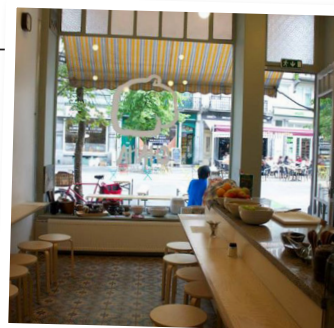
Also recommended...

● **MR FALAFEL** does bargain falafels with self-serve salad bar. Or try a mezze platter at **CHANA FALAFEL**.

● **MOONFOOD** is a spacious vegan organic raw café near the Royal Palace and park, with salads, wraps, soup and cold-pressed juices.

● **DEN TEEPOT** serves old-school macrobiotic lunches with miso soup, brown rice, soba noodles, tofu, tempeh, seitan and seaweed.

● **VEGASME** vegan food shop is ideal for picnic supplies and self-catering, with vegan cheeses, ice cream, wine,



chocolates, cakes and pastries, plus takeaway soup, pizza, quiche and salad.

● **LE PAIN QUOTIDIEN** is a Belgian bakery chain with veggie and vegan soups, salads, sandwiches made from hand-baked breads, cakes and pastries.

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OH, PARIS!

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