

SURVIVAL KIT



AOECS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
17-18 OCTOBER 2025

BOOSTING INNOVATION IN HEALTHCARE FOR COELIAC PATIENTS

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BRUSSELS AT A GLANCE

Brussels, the capital of Belgium and of the European Union, is a city where politics, culture and international life converge.

The Brussels-Capital Region is home to about 1.2 million residents, while the wider metropolitan area reaches nearly 2.5 million.

Remarkably diverse, around 30% of its inhabitants are foreign nationals, reflecting Brussels’s role as host to the European Commission, the European Parliament, NATO and hundreds of international organisations.

Belgium has three official languages — French, Dutch and German. Brussels is officially bilingual in French and Dutch, though in practice French dominates (spoken by 85–90% of residents). Around 30% also speak Dutch, while German is rarely used. English, however, is widely spoken in institutions, business and daily life, making Brussels a truly multilingual city.

Culturally, Brussels balances grandeur with charm. The Grand Place, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, showcases ornate guildhalls and Gothic architecture. Modern icons such as the Atomium and the city’s rich Art Nouveau heritage highlight its creativity.

Brussels is equally renowned for its culinary delights Belgian chocolate, waffles, fries (frites) and a vast variety of beers.



WHERE TO FIND GLUTEN-FREE IN BRUSSELS

Gluten-free products are available in health food stores (Bioplanet, Färm, Vibio, Bi'OK, The Barn, Biocap) and in some supermarkets (Delhaize, Colruyt, Carrefour), as well as in pharmacies.

On the route from Zaventem Airport to Central Station (Gare Centrale):

At Zaventem Airport:

KlingeLe Cocoa Rice – Lactose & Gluten Free snacks are sold in airport shops (shop.brusselsairport.be).

In Brussels city centre / near Central Station:

Gluten-free cafés such as The Sister Brussels Café (Rue Chair et Pain 3, 1000 Brussels).

Pharmacies:

Outside regular hours, look for pharmacie de garde / apotheek van wacht (on-duty pharmacies). Brussels operates a rotation system, so there is always one open.



WHAT TO PACK IN YOUR COELIAC “SURVIVAL KIT”

ESSENTIALS TO BRING SO YOU’RE ALWAYS COVERED:

ITEM	USE
A few gluten-free snack bars / nuts / dried fruit	For when you can’t immediately find a safe meal
Gluten-free crackers or crispbread	For emergencies when bread is standard at meals
Travel-size gluten-free condiments / spreads	Many sauces hide gluten; safer to bring your own
Allergy / coeliac translation card (French / Dutch / English)	Helps staff understand your needs
Hand sanitiser and wipes	To clean tray tables or surfaces where crumbs linger
Medication / supplements	Always have spares in case pharmacies are closed
Small water bottle	Stay hydrated while travelling





WHILE TRAVELLING

Keep your translation card handy and show it at restaurants:

- **French:** “Bonjour, je ne peux pas manger de gluten car je souffre de la maladie coélique. Auriez-vous des plats sans gluten, s’il vous plaît?”
- **Flemish/Dutch:** “Goedemorgen, ik kan geen gluten eten omdat ik coeliakie heb. Heeft u glutenvrije gerechten, alstublieft?”

Locate the nearest pharmacy if you need something urgently.



USEFUL PHRASES FOR EATING OUT

ENGLISH	FRENCH
I have coeliac disease	J'ai la maladie coélique
I cannot eat gluten	Je ne peux pas manger de gluten
Is this 100% gluten-free?	Est-ce que c'est 100% sans gluten ?
Is there a risk of cross-contamination?	Y a-t-il un risque de contamination croisée ?
Do you have gluten-free bread/pasta?	Avez-vous du pain / des pâtes sans gluten?



WHERE TO EAT

Here is a list of restaurants and cafés in Brussels offering gluten-free options. Each of them has been contacted to ensure the safety of their offer; however, we cannot guarantee that the restaurant has fully implemented the information provided. **We therefore recommend that you ask the restaurant to confirm their gluten-free procedures** and raise any questions you may have regarding safety protocols or menu items.

In addition, the AOECS Annual Conference will feature an open gluten-free marketplace showcasing Belgium's best artisan food producers. You can pre-order via their websites or simply try products on the spot!

RESTAURANTS WITH GLUTEN-FREE OPTIONS:

- **Les 4 jeudis** – Rue du Marteau 36A, 1210 Saint-Josse-ten-Noode | +32 2 721 10 49 | les4jeudis.be
- **Le Botaniste Schuman** – Rue Franklin 2, 1000 Brussels | +32 2 646 44 47 | schuman@lebotaniste.eu | lebotaniste.eu
- **Tapiocaria Brussels** – Pt Rue des Bouchers 12, 1000 Brussels | +32 466 35 67 41 | lacai.be
- **Terter** – Chau. de Waterloo 264, 1060 Saint-Gilles | +32 490 38 67 57
- **Vegan Pot** – Galerie Agora 48, 1000 Brussels | +32 484 12 44 25
- **Chambelland Bakery** – Av. de l'Université 42, Ixelles, 1050 Brussels | +32 322 751 4844 | contact@chambelland.com
- **Arepa's Factory** – Ravenstein Gallery, Kantersteen 5, 1000 Brussels | +32 479 43 43 91 | [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/arepasfactory)
- **Egò Ristorante-Pizzeria** – Bd Charlemagne 21, 1000 Brussels | egoristorantepizzeria.eu
- **Frites Atelier** – Rue Sainte-Catherine 32, 1000 Brussels | +31 8 587 698 38 | info@fritesatelier.com



BELGIAN TREATS – WHAT’S SAFE?

- **Fries (frites):** Often fried in shared oil with breaded items. For safety, go to Frites Atelier (Rue Sainte-Catherine 32) or Frit’Flagey (Pl. Eugène Flagey, 1050 Ixelles).
- **Moules-frites:** Same fryer issue – always ask.
- **Belgian waffles:** Traditional ones are not safe. Try VeganWaf (Galerie Agora 48) for gluten-free alternatives.
- **Chocolate:** Stick to plain varieties. Brands like Leonidas, Valentino, and Neuhaus label gluten-free pralines clearly.
- **Beer:** Opt for cider or gluten-free beers. At Delirium Café (Imp. de la Fidélité 4), Brussels’ most iconic beer hall, you’ll find several gluten-free options.



CULTURAL SUGGESTIONS

WALKING TOUR

(1.5 hours from nHow Brussels)

Suggested route: nHow Brussels → Parc de Bruxelles → Royal Palace → Mont des Arts → Grand Place → Manneken Pis & Jeanneke Pis → Galeries Saint-Hubert → Place Royale & Sablon → Return to hotel.

Estimated times: 5–15 minutes between each stop.

IF YOU’RE MORE INTO MUSEUMS...

- **Comics Art Museum** – Rue des Sables 20 | Tue–Sun, 10:00–18:00 | comicscenter.net
- **Magritte Museum** – Place Royale 2 | Tue–Fri, 10:00–17:00; Sat–Sun, 11:00–18:00 | musee-magritte-museum.be
- **MOOF Museum** – Rue du Marché aux Herbes 116 | Fri–Sun, 10:30–18:00 | brussels-comics-figurines-museum.be

OTHER KEY VISITS

- **European Parliament** – Rue Wiertz 60 | Sat–Sun, 10:00–18:00
- **Atomium** – Avenue de l’Atomium 1020 | Daily, 10:00–18:00



AOECS CONFERENCE VENUE

NHOW BRUSSELS HOTEL

RUE ROYALE / KONINGSSTRAAT 250, 1210
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

+32 2 220 66 11

nhow-hotels.com/en/nhow-brussels-bloom

GETTING THERE:

- **Metro:** Botanique (Lines 1 & 2 from Gare Centrale)
- **Tram:** Lines 92 & 93
- **Bus:** Line 61
- Download the **STIB app** stib-mivb.be for routes & timetables.



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THANK YOU

To the National Coeliac Societies who made this event possible in cooperation with AOECS.

