



Follow me on my Scenic River Cruise Journey from Amsterdam

Day 5: Antwerp - Ghent

After arriving in the fascinating city of Antwerp- vibrant and modern yet still bearing scars of WWII, I decided to take the excursion to Ghent which was about 45 - 60 minutes away.

What an interesting city! Founded in 630 when an Abbey was established at confluence of rivers Scheldt and Lys, it was a powerful trading city known for its cloth industry based in English wool. It had 2 golden eras - 13 and 14 th century and late 19th century yet today it is thriving as a less crowded, enjoyable alternative to a very busy Bruges with its beautifully ornate churches- some have been converted into supermarkets and even Air BnB's - and museums, medieval architecture, canals, picturesque harbour and colourful history. It's even a stop at church of St James for pilgrims doing the Camino. The infamous Charles V was born here and rose to be the emperor of Holy Roman Empire, King of Spain and Archduke of Austria. He was not a nice man and tried to humiliate the local people when they rejected his taxation by having them walk barefoot through city wearing a noose around their neck. They would not submit and held their heads high and to this day they wear the noose during certain festivals as a symbol of resistance against tyranny and they are called the Stroppendragers or noose bearers.

I could go on and on as there is so much to see, eat and drink. The array of different beers - each kind with its distinctive glass, the waffles and of course the chocolate!

And how about the famous local candy made of sugar and gelatine with a gooey syrup inside called Cuberdons- so many colours and flavours!

Of course the most famous artwork here to visit is the Adoration of Mystic Lamb- a 12 panel piece of art painted by Jan Van Eyck in 1432 which is located in the incredibly beautiful St. Bavos Cathedral. It has been stolen many times and was almost destroyed by the Nazis in WWII. The movie Monument Men was based on this part of the history of the alter piece and apparently it is fairly accurate in its depiction of how it was recovered and saved from destruction. One piece of the 12 is still missing and remains a puzzle to this day.

Antwerp or Ghent- 2 Incredible cities to visit on an excursion- you must choose and you will not be disappointed either way!

Check back tomorrow for Day 6: **Arnhem**
Today's Events and Photos from today.





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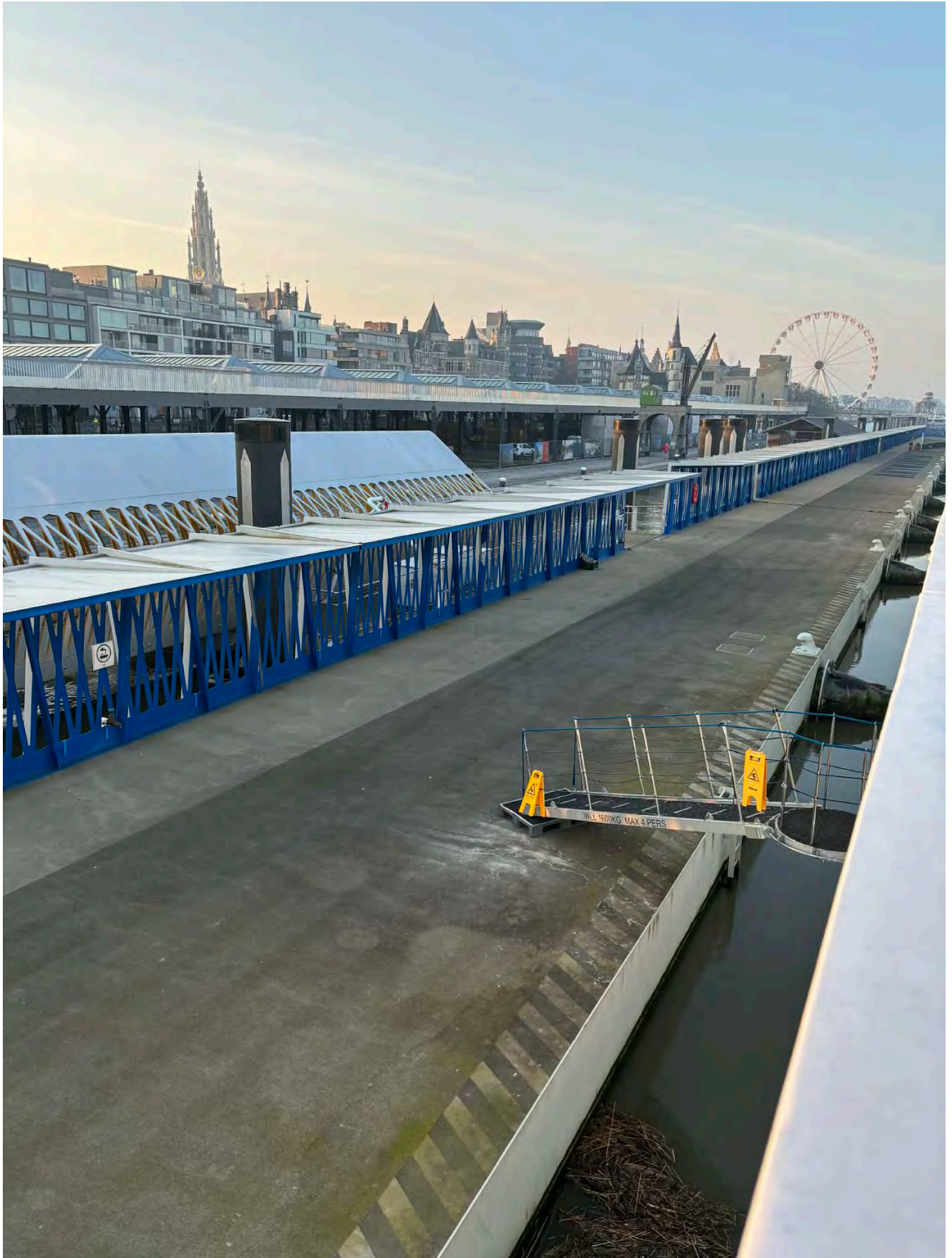


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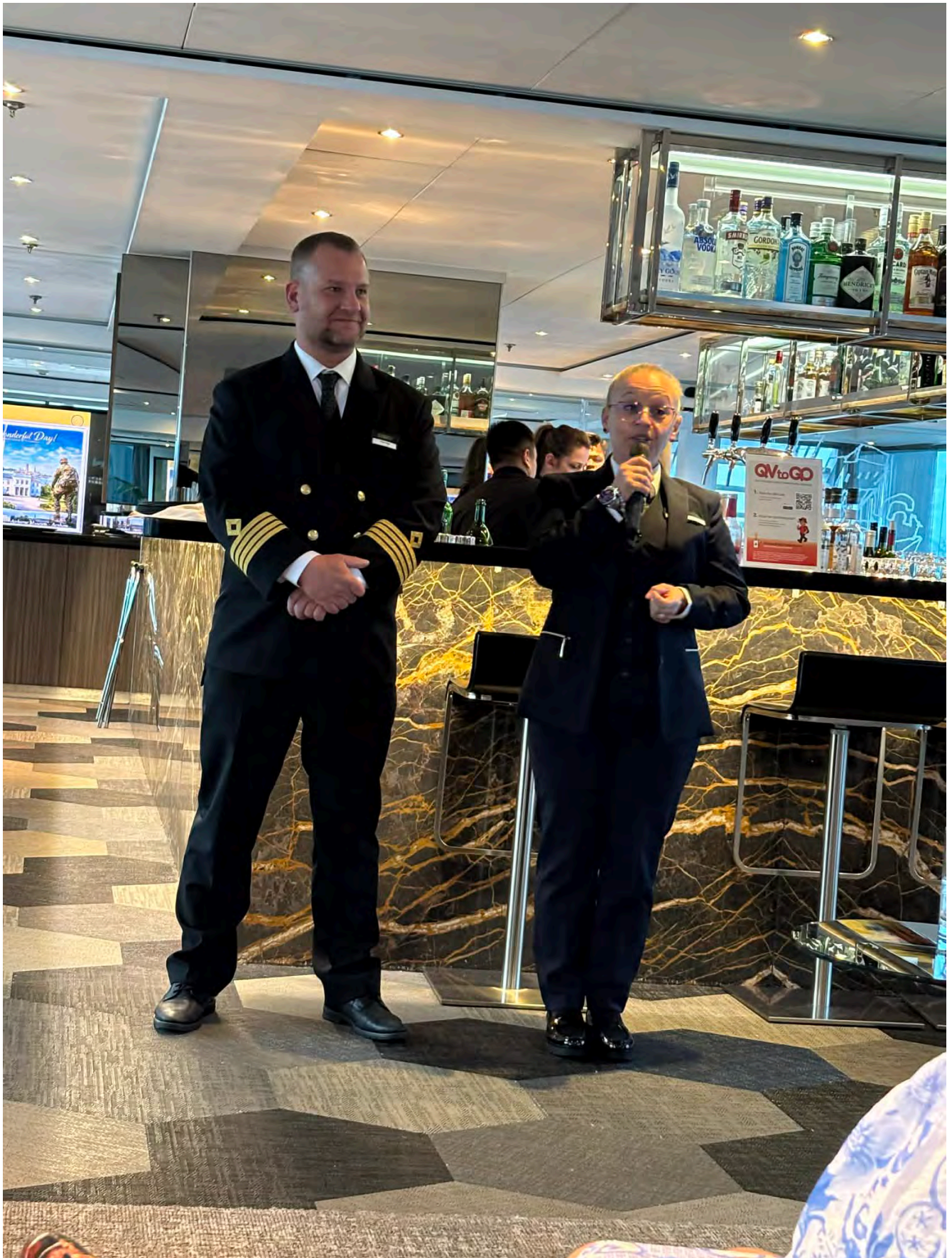
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