

# HOLLAND & BELGIUM

BY FIRST CLASS BARGE



## Holland & Belgium by Barge with MPR!

April 22 – May 1, 2025



Join me, **YourClassical MPR** host, **Melissa Ousley**, and like-minded public radio travelers who share your passion for art, gardens, culture, and classical music! Tiptoe through the tulips with a spring trip to Holland! Travel back in time to a bygone era: Holland's 17<sup>th</sup> century Golden Age. This was a time when Dutch ships plied the Seven Seas, Rembrandt painted endless masterpieces, and merchants moved the nation's bounty inland by canal. Gliding along Holland's many charming waterways, you'll visit open-air markets and picturesque towns. In addition, we will celebrate the lives of the Dutch Masters and delve into Dutch and Belgian history, taste delicious local cuisine and be treated to fields of tulips bursting with color. This tailor-made expedition is aboard the gorgeous **MS Magnifique II** and includes tickets to the world-renowned **Concertgebouw Symphony** hall! Space is limited!

### TRIP AT A GLANCE

2 Nights – Amsterdam – pre-Cruise nights

7 Nights – Aboard the 1<sup>st</sup> class MS Magnifique II



**EARTHBOUND  
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

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## JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

Sailing through Holland when thousands of acres of tulips are in bloom ♦ Tickets to the world renowned Concertgebouw concert hall ♦ Guided museum visits highlighting the works of Dutch masters ♦ Exploring the famous Keukenhof tulip garden ♦ The world's largest flower auction of Aalsmeer ♦ Visiting a Delftware factory where the delicate blue and white pottery is made ♦ Visiting Kinderdijk, the UNESCO World Heritage site of windmills ♦ Learning how the Dutch have successfully pushed back the sea ♦ Enjoying locally crafted beer, mussels and cheese

## IT'S INCLUDED

- With YourClassical MPR host, **Melissa Ousley**
- With expert local hand-selected Dutch guides
- Seven nights of relaxation and fun aboard the 1<sup>st</sup> class MS Magnifique II
- Two pre-cruise nights at a centrally located 4-star hotel in central Amsterdam
- Tickets to the **Keukenhof Tulip Fest** and Aalsmeer Flower auction
- Tickets to the world-renowned **Concertgebouw Symphony** concert hall  
Concert program on page 13.
- Multi-course dining on shore and aboard the MS Magnifique II
- Fascinating excursions to towns, museums, markets, castles and gardens
- A private tour of the Rijksmuseum, highlighting works by Dutch Masters
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers (tips for ship crew not included)
- Activities and entrance fees for all items as listed in itinerary

## TRIP DETAILS

10 Days / 9 Nights (not including air travel)  
From \$6,395 per person (see page 9 for details)  
Trip begins: April 22, 2025 at in Amsterdam  
Trip ends: May 1, 2025 after breakfast in Amsterdam



## SAVE UP TO \$200

MPR and Earthbound Travel alumni save \$100 per person ❖ Pay final balance by check and save \$100 per person





*Enjoy two pre-cruise nights in historic Amsterdam!*

## Welcome to Holland!



### **DAY 0: Depart the U.S. for Amsterdam**

Remember, you must depart the U.S. no later than April 21 in order to arrive by April 22.

### **DAY 1: April 22 - Arrive in Amsterdam**

Arrive in Amsterdam and transfer to your centrally located four-star hotel. Enjoy a stroll through the old town or along the historic canals before meeting your Earthbound Expeditions guide and fellow travelers for an orientation and welcome dinner. *Sleep in the heart of Amsterdam (D)*

### **DAY 2: April 23 - The Dutch Golden Age**

After breakfast, discover the hidden and historic sights of this fascinating city. Enjoy a private tour of the Rijksmuseum and see Rembrandt's famous *Night Watch*. History and art lovers may wish to visit the Van Gogh Museum, Anne Frank House or the Hermitage Amsterdam independently. There is free time this afternoon to pursue your interests. *Sleep in the heart of Amsterdam (B, D)*

### **DAY 3: April 24 - Flower Auction, Keukenhof Gardens and Embarkation**

The Aalsmeer Flower Auction is the largest in the world. Twenty million flowers from all over the world are sold daily here. This morning you'll tour the facilities and see where the auction takes place. Also known as the Garden of Europe, Keukenhof Gardens is the world's second largest flower garden after the Dubai Miracle Garden. After a full day outing, return to Amsterdam just in time to board the MS Magnifique II. Welcome drinks and dinner will be served on board. *Sleep on board (B, D)*



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*View the Night Watch, by Rembrandt, 1642*

“The earth laughs in flowers.”

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*



#### **DAY 4: April 25 - Historic Haarlem and Evening Concert**

Sit up on the top deck this morning and enjoy a relaxing cruise through the Dutch countryside.

In 1625, Dutch settlers in the new world named New Amsterdam (later changed to New York) after their own beloved city. Today we'll also visit Haarlem, namesake to the neighborhood in New York. You'll have time for an independent lunch here.

A guided stroll through the delightful old town square of Haarlem is included today. Deepen your understanding of Holland's Golden Age at the Frans Hals Museum, named for one of the Netherlands' most famous painters. If available, you'll also be treated to a concert on the very organ Mozart played while visiting Holland in 1765 - 66. Tonight, you have tickets to the world renowned **Concertgebouw Symphony** hall *Sleep on board (B, L)*





*Discover the Hague!*

*“God created the world, but the Dutch created the Netherlands.”*  
Old Dutch Saying



#### **Day 5: April 26 - Historic Leiden**

After a leisurely breakfast we set out to discover the fascinating Cruquius Museum. The Cruquius Museum explores the age-old Dutch battle against the water. The reclamation of Haarlemmermeer by means of steam power marked the breakthrough of the Industrial Revolution in the Netherlands. The Cruquius houses the worlds’ largest steam engine.

After our visit we make our way to Leiden where we will enjoy an independent lunch. After lunch enjoy a guided tour of the city center. It’s known for its centuries-old architecture and for Leiden University, the country’s oldest, dating from 1575. The university houses the Hortus botanicus of Leiden, founded in 1590, where the tulip was introduced to Western Europe. The Museum de Lakenhal displays works by the Dutch Masters including Rembrandt, who was born in Leiden. In the late afternoon, we make our way back to the *Magnifique II* and the town of Utrecht. Dinner served on board this evening. *Sleep on board (B, D)*



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**DAY 6: April 27 - The Hague, Delft & Kings Day:** After a hearty breakfast we depart for



The Hague. Enjoy an exclusive tour of the Mauritshuis Museum, where you will view the best of Dutch painting from the Golden Age. The compact, yet world-renowned collection is situated in the heart of The Hague, right next to the government center. Masterpieces such as Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* by Rembrandt, *The Goldfinch* by Fabritius and *The Bull* by Potter are on permanent display in the intimate rooms of this 17<sup>th</sup> century monument.

You'll also see the Peace Palace, home of the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial body of the United Nations.

After an independent lunch, we make our way to the charming city of Delft. It is not just the historic city center and rich history of Delft that will amaze you. The city is full of special surprises.

Famous for its blue ceramic pottery, there are still three Delftware factories in operation. There is no standard for the designs used on the pottery, each factory creates its own designs inspired by Chinese porcelain. The main images are floral designs and various birds, including peacocks. *Sleep on board (B, D)*



### **DAY 7: April 28 - Antwerp, Belgium**

Antwerp is a port city on Belgium's River Scheldt, with history dating to the Middle Ages. In its center, the centuries-old Diamond District houses thousands of diamond traders, cutters and polishers. Antwerp's Flemish Renaissance architecture is typified by the Grote Markt, a central square in the old town. At the 17th-century Rubens House, period rooms display works by the Flemish Baroque painter Peter Paul Rubens.

Enjoy an included in-depth walking tour of the historic city center. Then, you'll be treated to a traditional Belgium feast. We return to the *Magnifique II* in the late afternoon.

*Sleep on board (B, L, D)*





*"I dream of painting and then I paint my dream."* Vincent van Gogh

**DAY 8: April 29 - Windmills and Cheese Tasting: Rotterdam, Kinderdijk and Gouda**

Tour the lively market of Rotterdam and also learn about the city's tragic past. Now known as the "Manhattan on the Maas," many are unaware that this is Europe's largest harbor.

Later in the day, we visit quaint Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This is where it all happened! It is an amazing experience to witness the resourcefulness and determination of a nation's successful efforts to beat back the sea and reclaim land that was once under water. You can climb up inside the belly of these tremendously powerful, wind powered, pumping stations. This is the largest collection of authentic, working 18<sup>th</sup> century windmills in the world.



After your tour, meet up with your floating home and enjoy lunch while cruising through the Dutch countryside. The Magnifique II travels next on to Gouda. Your walking tour includes the Gothic city hall, completed in 1450, and Sint Janskerk (St. John's Church), with its world-famous 16<sup>th</sup> century stained-glass windows. You will also have free time to explore this lovely traditional Dutch city. Independent dinner in town this evening.

*Sleep on board (B, L)*





*The 1st class, lovingly restored MS MAGNIFIQUE II*

**DAY 9: April 30 - Exploring Dutch Edible Specialties**

Stroll Gouda's local market and join a visit to the cheese-weighing house, De Waag, where you will sample some of the appealing varieties. Yes, there is more than one kind of Gouda! We'll have lunch on board and continue along the canals toward Gouwsluis, a small Dutch town, renowned for its historic vertical lift bridge and also home to the futuristic Steekterpoort building, the facility which controls all of the 24 moveable bridges in South Holland. After dinner on board, enjoy a presentation and tasting of locally-crafted Dutch beers. *Sleep on board (B, L, D)*

**DAY 10: May 1 - Homeward Bound**

After breakfast, disembark and transfer to Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport for your flights home or enjoy some more time in Europe. Cities such as Paris and London are just a few hours away by high-speed train. Return home with a lifetime of happy memories! (B)

## RESERVATIONS & QUESTIONS

206 842 9775

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~ Tour Details Subject to Change ~



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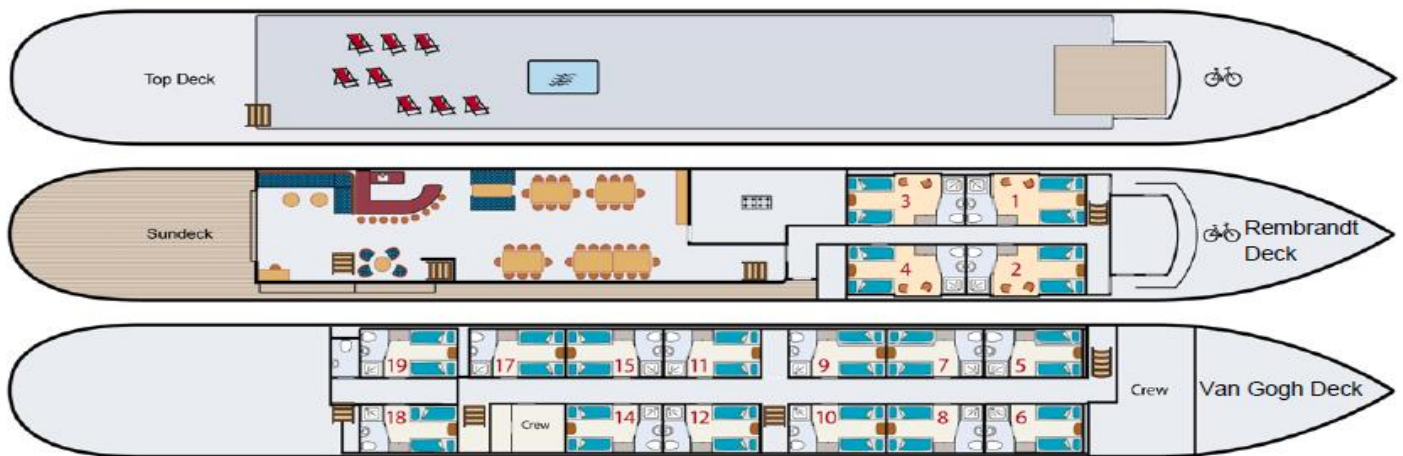




## Your Exclusive, First-Class Classical Adventure

### Barge: The MS Magnifique II

Relax and enjoy! Our first-class ship boasts bright, modern and cheery cabins with emphasis on superior comfort. A tastefully furnished salon and restaurant, a full bar, a gorgeous lounge and wooden sun deck with chairs and tables and hot tub are available, just for you!



	Per Person before discounts	Travel Alumni save \$100 per person	Pay by Check Discount* save \$100 per person	Per Person after discounts
Van Gogh Deck	\$6,395	\$100	\$100	\$6,195
Rembrandt Deck	\$6,995	\$100	\$100	\$6,795

**Single Supplement:** \$2,495 all cabins (excluding suites). Single availability is limited.

**Savings:** Discounts apply for all MPR Travel Club and Earthbound alumni. If you pay final balance by check, you can save an additional \$100 per person. To qualify there must be a remaining balance of \$3000 per person at time of final payment.

**Not Included:** Gratuities for ship crew, travel insurance and any items not mentioned in your itinerary. Port taxes, charges, fees are currently \$125 per person and are additional.

View photos of the Magnifique II barge at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/boatbiketours/sets/72157685719067514/>



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**All cabins are bright and spacious. Each comes equipped with bathroom and shower.**

*Lower Van Gogh deck cabin (photo left)*



**Bar and dining: A great place to relax & commune with fellow travelers**



**Enjoy wonderful multi-course meals in the elegant dining room**



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*Enjoy an evening at the world-renowned Royal Concertgebouw*

## Meet Your Host



**Melissa Ousley** is an on-air regional host on YourClassical MPR. In the fall of 2020, she became the regular host of Minnesota Public Radio's live broadcasts with the Minnesota Orchestra. Those Friday nights quickly became a highlight of her week. As she puts it, "The exhilaration that comes from playing a small part in bringing such outstanding concerts to our listeners is hard to describe." Melissa's passion for music began as a kid growing up just outside of New York City. Her parents encouraged her to go to concerts and visit art museums, and that's exactly what she did. While she earned a bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music, she's quick

to point out that her decades of work in radio is what has taught her the most. When she's away from the airwaves, Melissa loves to run, read, and spend time with friends and family. This will be her third time hosting an international adventure with listeners.

**ABOUT: The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra**, based in Amsterdam, is considered to be one of the best orchestras in the world. It was established in 1888 and has collaborated with some of the greatest conductors and soloists, including Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, and Igor Stravinsky. The orchestra's unique sound is a result of the chief conductors who have influenced it, as well as the exceptional acoustics of The Concertgebouw. <https://www.concertgebouwkest.nl/en/about-the-orchestra>



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**April 24, 2025**

**You have tickets: The Amsterdam Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra**

**PROGRAM:** Semyon Bychkov, Chief Conductor and Music Director of the Czech Philharmonic, leads the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Dmitri Shostakovich's monumental 'Leningrad' Symphony.

**About Maestro Semyon Bychkov** (*pictured above*)

Bychkov was born in Saint Petersburg. His younger brother was Yakov Kreizberg, is also a conductor. Bychkov studied at the Glinka Choir School for ten years before moving to the Leningrad Conservatory. In 1973 he won the Rachmaninov Conducting Competition, but was denied the usual prize of conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic by the authorities after he applied for an exit visa. His family had suffered after expressing views critical of the Soviet regime. He decided to leave the country in 1974, going first to Vienna with only \$100 in funds.

**Studies and career in the United States**

In 1975, at age 22, he left Vienna and emigrated to the United States. Bychkov attended and graduated the Mannes School of Music then becoming the director of the Mannes College Orchestra. From 1980 to 1985, Semyon Bychkov served as music director



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## The Amsterdam Royal Concertgebouw Symphony Hall

of the Grand Rapids Symphony in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and through his Mannes connection with fellow alumnus Julius Rudel became principal guest conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. Again through his connection with Rudel, Bychkov made his debut conducting *Carmen* at the New York City Opera on September 30, 1981. On 4 July 1983, he became a United States citizen. In 1985, he became music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic and held that post until 1989. During his time in Grand Rapids and Buffalo. In 1984 he was invited to conduct the New York Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He was subsequently signed to a 10-year recording contract with Philips Classics Records, and made his debut recording conducting the Berlin Philharmonic in Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5.

### **Career in Europe**

From 1989 to 1998, Bychkov was music director of the Orchestre de Paris. He became Principal Guest Conductor of the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra in 1990, principal guest conductor of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in 1992, chief conductor of Dresden's Semperoper in 1998 and chief conductor of the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne in 1997. He remained in Cologne until 2010, during which time he made a series of recordings including Brahms' Symphonies No. 1-4, Shostakovich's Symphonies Nos. 4, 7, 8, 10 and 11, Mahler's Symphony No. 3, Rachmaninov's *The Bells* and *Symphonic Dances*, Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* and *Eine Alpensinfonie*, Verdi's *Requiem*, as well as Strauss' *Elektra*, *Daphne* and Wagner's *Lohengrin* which won BBC Music Magazine's Record of the Year 2010.

Bychkov made his debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 2003 with a new production of *Elektra*, and returned later that year to conduct *Boris Godunov*. In 2012, he assumed the newly created Günter Wand Conducting Chair with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, a post specially created for him. He holds the Otto Klemperer Chair of Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

In October 2017, the Czech Philharmonic announced the appointment of Bychkov as its next chief conductor and music director, effective with the 2018-2019 season.



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# Know Before You Go

**Reservations and Deposits:** A \$750 per person deposit is required to confirm your space on this journey. Deposits can be made via credit card or by calling the Earthbound office at 800.723.8454. A deposit packet will be emailed confirming the receipt of your deposit. Deposits are refundable, minus a \$250 per person cancellation fee, for 30 days from the processing date or until 90 days prior to departure, whichever comes first. Deposits made 90 days prior to a trip departing are not refundable. Final payment is also non-refundable, which is why we strongly urge guests to purchase travel insurance.

**Not Included:** International airline tickets, alcoholic beverages, room service and gratuities for ship crew and staff, hotel staff, travel insurance, meals not listed in brochure, and any activities or items not listed in your itinerary.

**Physical Requirements:** It is the responsibility of each guest to be aware of their physical abilities or limitations and to be in sufficient good health to undertake the trip. [Click here](#) to read “Is an Earthbound trip right for you?” or call the Earthbound office for more details.

**Travel Insurance:** Earthbound Expeditions strongly encourages the purchase of travel insurance coverage. We include information on trip insurance in your deposit information.

**Events and Hosted Journeys:** If a planned event is cancelled for any reason, another event will be included in its place. This is not cause for refund. Events are subject to change. Also, if a host or special guest is unable to attend as planned, Earthbound Expeditions will do its utmost to find another host who has similar interests, talents, and expertise. The inability of a host to participate in a tour is not grounds for a full or partial refund.

**Terms & Conditions:** Click [here](#) to read the full terms and conditions.

## Reservations and Questions!

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