



Port of
Antwerp
Bruges

Antwerp is counting down to The Tall Ships Races and presents Antwerp Crew

Sustainable, connecting and inclusive

26 May 2022 - From Friday 22 to Monday 25 July, 43 of the world's most beautiful sailing ships will moor up in Antwerp for the Tall Ships Races, organised by the city of Antwerp and Port of Antwerp-Bruges in collaboration with Balthazar Events and numerous sponsors and partners. Preparations for this spectacular sailing competition, whose 2nd leg this time is from Antwerp to Aalborg in Denmark, are in full swing. Many Belgian trainees, united in the Antwerp Crew, are also impatiently counting down to the arrival of the Tall Ships.

43 Tall Ships will moor up at the Scheldt quays, the Kattendijk dock and the docks around the MAS from 22 to 25 July. This is the seventh time the city has been able to welcome these impressive ships. The Tall Ships Races consist of 2 races: a first race from Esbjerg in Denmark to Harlingen in the Netherlands, after which they sail on from Harlingen to Antwerp. The second race departs Antwerp on 25 July and will set sail for Aalborg in Denmark.

Mayor Bart De Wever: *"The Tall Ships Races brings the cathedrals of the sea to Antwerp and offers a unique encounter between past and present in the heart of our city. Along with many others, I am therefore hugely looking forward to this wonderful event in which, moreover, we can finally make Antwerp shine even more with a grand fireworks display."*

The last edition to visit Antwerp, in 2016, attracted more than 500,000 visitors to the city. The organisation now hopes to match those numbers.

Alderman for Tourism Koen Kennis: *"Each time the 'Tall Ships' visit our city, it turns a popular festival, 1 of the largest in Flanders. At the same time, in its periphery, numerous events take place that provide a layer of glamour and standing particular to the sailing world. Antwerp and the Tall Ships Races are a good marriage – that much is clear."*

Cathedrals of the sea

Participating ships are divided into classes, designated by a letter from A-D, with A-ships being the largest. 16 of those class A ships will be on display during the stop in Antwerp, alongside a host of B, C and D ships.

Training ship Dar Młodzieży, a Class A ship, already gave a preview on 22 April when it moored up at the cruise terminal along Het Steen. The Polish ship came to drop off 100 cadets from the Antwerp Maritime Academy (the former Higher Maritime School) who were allowed to go out to sea with it for four weeks.

Antwerp Crew

With an extensive recruitment campaign, the city and port managed to attract about a hundred Belgian young people. Selection was inclusive, including young people with mental or physical disabilities and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. They will sail along as trainees during The Tall Ships Races. The Races are precisely about those young people, who can have an incredible experience during the race. They will learn all about the ins and outs of being on a ship and roll up their sleeves themselves. In addition, they will be given the opportunity to develop and hone competencies that they can use in everyday life, at school and later in their jobs. Among other things, they will learn to work together as a team, problem-solve challenges and take responsibility.

The trainees will sail during one of the two legs, from Harlingen to Antwerp or from Antwerp to Aalborg.

Port alderman Annick De Ridder: *“We are all looking forward to the arrival of the most beautiful sailing ships in the world, which will be on display here in Antwerp from 22 to 25 July. But those looking forward to this Tall Ships race the most are surely the 100 young people in the Antwerp Crew. After all, these young people, aged 15 to 25, will get the chance to learn the ins and outs of such a magnificent ship as a trainee. In addition to this shipboard experience, this very diverse group will learn some important skills that will serve them well later in their professional lives. And above all, lifelong friendship! Secretly, I hope they will be minded to aspire to one of the many wonderful jobs at our port later on.”*

These young people have gone through an extensive fundraising process. In doing so, they were able to draw upon expert support from regular coaches, who will accompany them throughout the process. In addition to the financial support from the city of Antwerp, Port of Antwerp-Bruges and the various sponsors, they had to raise their own money by organising various activities to pay for their ‘package deal’. This includes the journey on a Tall Ship, as well as the extensive support and the trip back home.

Sustainable, connecting and inclusive

This year, The Tall Ships Races are being held in the theme of sustainability. For example, the organisation will ensure the planting of trees in Flanders, in order to compensate for the CO² emissions that this event entails.

Electricity will be provided by wind power through a partnership with VLEEMO. If that wind energy is not available, the organisation will turn to other wind or solar farms.

The organisation is also supporting River Clean Up, an organisation that uses volunteers worldwide to clean up waste in and around rivers and is also active in Belgium, including Antwerp. Furthermore, the event will work with reusable cups so as to minimise waste. Part of the contribution made by sponsors through a partnership will be invested into these sustainable initiatives by the organiser. Alongside this sustainability, the organisation is also working on inclusiveness, by giving a dozen young people with disabilities the opportunity to work with it as trainees. Finally, this event focuses on connection. On the one hand, this is a nice collaboration between the city and the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, while on the other, young people from all over the world will work together as a team during the Races.

Organisation and sponsors

The Tall Ships Races Antwerp are organised by the city of Antwerp and Port of Antwerp-Bruges under the umbrella of Sail Training International (STI). Sail Training International is the leading organiser and provider of races, events, conferences, seminars, publications,

research and other services for the international sail training community. One of the founding members of STI is Sail Training Association Belgium, the umbrella sailing organisation in Belgium and a partner of The Tall Ships Races.

The main sponsor of The Tall Ships Races 2022 is Orange Belgium. Other sponsors are: MSC, PSA, Securitas, Nextensa, Duvel, Lantis, J&M Catering, Van Bavel, Antwerp Nautical Centre, Royal Belgium Shipowners Association, EuroChem and Ceusters NV.

More information on The Tall Ships Races 2022 can be found here:
<https://tallships.antwerpen.be/en/>