

Santa Barbara Museum of Art

*Masterpieces of the Low Countries
with Nigel McGilchrist*

May 16 to 26, 2027

*An SBMA-exclusive, intimate, custom-designed canal cruise
From Amsterdam to Bruges*

Travel along the historic waters of the Netherlands and Belgium aboard the newly launched, 16-cabin *Magnifique X*. In the company of beloved art historian Nigel McGilchrist and expert local guides, encounter Dutch Golden Age masterpieces, rare Michelangelo drawings, the Ghent Altarpiece, private art collections, historic estates, gardens, and beautifully preserved medieval cities.

Designed exclusively for a small group of SBMA travelers, this distinctive journey combines exceptional access, thoughtful scholarship, and the pleasures of traveling through the Low Countries by water.

[CLICK TO RESERVE!](#)

Itinerary

Sunday–Monday, May 16–17

HOME / AMSTERDAM

Depart the U.S. on May 16 on an overnight flight to Amsterdam. Upon arrival on May 17, transfer to the Conservatorium Hotel, one of Amsterdam's top hotels and ideally located near the Van Gogh Museum and Rijksmuseum. This evening, board a **private canal cruise**, an age-old tradition of transportation and leisure, and take in views of gardens, picturesque bridges, and the city's diverse architecture from the unique vantage point of the water. Enjoy a **welcome reception on board**, where Nigel will greet the group and introduce the artistic themes that will unfold throughout the journey. Conservatorium Hotel (R)

Tuesday, May 18

AMSTERDAM

Begin with breakfast and a **morning briefing and introductory remarks by Nigel**, followed by an **expert-led guided tour of the world-renowned Rijksmuseum**, home to masterpieces by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Van Gogh, and other celebrated artists. The **remainder of the day is at leisure** to enjoy Amsterdam, including the Van Gogh Museum if you have not been. Conservatorium Hotel (B,L)

Wednesday, May 19

AMSTERDAM

Enjoy a **specially arranged and studio visit and discussion** with an accomplished large-format portrait painter. After lunch independently, visit the renowned **Kröller-Müller Museum**, home to one of the world's finest collections of works by Van Gogh. In the late afternoon, **embark *Magnifique X*** in Breukelen. Settle into your cabin, then join Nigel and your fellow travelers for a **welcome dinner** while cruising to Haarlem. *Magnifique X* (B,D)



Thursday, May 20

HAARLEM

In Haarlem, view 16th- and 17th-century masterpieces alongside modern and contemporary works at the **Frans Hals Museum**. Continue to the **Teylers Museum** for a private curator-led viewing of rare preliminary Sistine Chapel **drawings by Michelangelo**. The day concludes with a **private recital on the historic organ played by Mozart** when he

was 10 years old. Back on board, attend a **lecture by Nigel** before dinner together.
Magnifique X (B,L,D)



Teylers Museum

Friday, May 21

THE HAGUE / ROTTERDAM

The day begins with an **early-opening tour of the Mauritshuis Museum**, home to an exquisite collection of Dutch Golden Age masterpieces, including works by Rembrandt and Vermeer. Continue to Rotterdam to visit **Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen**, the world's first publicly accessible art storage facility. Explore an extraordinary collection of more than 154,000 works of art before admiring the striking architecture of the Markthal. Dinner is at leisure in Rotterdam. *Magnifique X* (B,L)

Saturday, May 22

KINDERDIJK / ANTWERP, BELGIUM

Arrive in Kinderdijk and visit its 19 historic **windmills**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built in the early 18th century for land drainage, this beautifully preserved network of working mills continues to operate today. Continue to Dordrecht, the oldest city in Holland, for a walking tour. Later, visit the stunning **Huys ten Donck Estate**, home to **one of the oldest landscape gardens** in the Netherlands. Enjoy a private viewing of the estate's art collection and gardens, followed by a wine reception. This evening, the educational

program continues with a **lecture by Nigel** and dinner while cruising to Antwerp.
Magnifique X (B,L,D)

Sunday, May 23

ANTWERP / GHENT

Explorations in Antwerp include the Cathedral of Our Lady, home to **Rubens' *Assumption of the Virgin Mary***, completed in 1626. Enjoy time at **leisure to explore Antwerp**, including Guildhall Square in the heart of the old city. This afternoon, hear a talk by Nigel as *Magnifique X* cruises toward Ghent. *Magnifique X* (B,D)

Monday, May 24

GHENT / BRUGES

In Ghent this morning, view the world-renowned *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, also known as **the Ghent Altarpiece at St. Bavo's Cathedral**. Continue by coach to **Bruges, a charming city of medieval buildings, historic waterways, and cobbled lanes**. Enjoy a **canal cruise** on arrival, followed by a private tour of a nearly intact example of a 15th-century urban **family estate**, including a private cathedral and an art collection that spans 17 generations. Dinner is at leisure in Bruges. *Magnifique X* (B,L)

Tuesday, May 25

BRUGES

This morning, view pivotal **15th-century masterpieces by Hans Memling**, then visit the **Groeninge Museum, whose collection spans six centuries of Belgian art**. The **afternoon is at leisure** for independent exploration. Rejoin *Magnifique X* this evening for a celebratory **farewell dinner, during which Nigel will share reflections on the art, places, and experiences encountered through the journey**. *Magnifique X* (B,D)

Wednesday, May 26

BRUGES / HOME

After breakfast, disembark *Magnifique X* and transfer to Brussels Airport for return flights to the U.S. (B)

Study Leader

Art Historian Nigel McGilchrist was born in Scotland, educated in England, and for the past forty years has lived and worked in Italy, Greece, and Turkey. He studied first at Winchester College in England, and then at Oxford University, where he received First Class Honors and three University prizes and medals in English and Art History. He lectures widely on art and archaeology at museums and institutions in the U.S. and Europe. He is the author of 21 books on the Greek Islands, including *Blue Guide to Greece: The Aegean Islands*. His *McGilchrist's Greek Islands*, a series of twenty books covering the art, architecture, and history of the Aegean Islands, was selected by *The Economist* as one of the ten best travel-related books of 2010.

Ship



The newly converted *Magnifique X*, set to ply European waters at the end of 2026, is the elegant result of a painstaking conversion from a barge to a passenger vessel by master shipbuilder Walter van Berkum. Accommodating no more than 32 passengers, plus crew, the vessel is designed to create a welcoming, relaxed elegance on board. The upper deck features a spacious salon with air conditioning, a bar, and a lounge. The inviting restaurant is separated from the kitchen by a glass wall, allowing guests to watch the talented chefs in action. Meals are served in a single seating and feature fresh, flavorful Euro-fusion cuisine. The teak sundeck invites travelers to enjoy the scenery as it drifts by.

The upper deck features 10 suites (204 sq. ft.) with two hotel-style beds positioned together, a sitting area, and a French balcony, while the lower deck houses six twin cabins (150 sq. ft.) with two beds and a fixed window. All cabins offer flexible bed configurations and include a private bathroom with shower, basin, and toilet, as well as individually controlled air conditioning, satellite television, minibar, safe, and hair dryer. Junior suites also include a coffee maker. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available throughout the vessel.



Pricing and Deck Plan

PROGRAM RATES

LOWER DECK CABIN

(150 sf, window), per person, sharing **\$12,990**

UPPER DECK JUNIOR SUITE

(204 sf, French balcony), per person sharing **\$14,990**

LOWER DECK CABIN

Single occupancy **\$22,990**

UPPER DECK JUNIOR SUITE

Single occupancy **\$25,990**



CLICK TO RESERVE!

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROGRAM RATES INCLUDE

Two hotel nights and seven nights aboard Magnifique X • Meals and excursions as specified in the itinerary including nine breakfasts, five lunches, and five dinners • Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures, and presentations • Shared airport transfers on group arrival and departure dates • Baggage handling • Gratuities to porters, waitstaff, guides, and drivers • Gratuities to shipboard personnel • Port charges • Entrance fees • Welcome wine reception • House wine, beer, and soft drinks with group lunches and dinners and on board Magnifique X • Professional tour manager throughout the program.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS

U.S. domestic and international airfare is not included in the program rates. You are welcome to book your air transportation through your local travel agent, an online travel site, or the airline of your choice. Further information about making flight arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants.

MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

REQUIREMENT

Travel is a benefit of SBMA Museum Membership. Nonmembers must join at the “Friend” level (\$100 or \$80 for seniors) or higher and will receive full membership benefits for a year. Members at the “Curator’s Circle” (\$1,000) level and above receive advanced notice about SBMA custom tours.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The pace of this tour is moderately active with considerable walking each day, often over very uneven and cobblestoned terrain, and extended periods of standing. Participants must be in good health and able to keep up with the group without assistance from tour staff. All participants will be required to follow safety/sanitization protocols

set forth by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art or Criterion Travel, our tour operator; local staff; and host country laws. If the tour manager decides that a participant cannot visit a site safely or in a timely manner, their judgment will be final. Where possible, an alternate activity may be suggested; additional costs may apply.

GROUP SIZE

This program is limited to 32 participants from the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

PROGRAM RATES DO

NOT INCLUDE

U.S. domestic and international airfare • Passport/visa expenses • Medical expenses and immunizations • Private airport transfers or airport transfers outside of group arrival and departure dates • Travel and trip cancellation insurance • Excursions that deviate from the scheduled tour options • Airline baggage charges • Meals not specified in the itinerary; dishes and beverages not part of the included meals; alcoholic beverages or soft drinks except as noted • Laundry or dry cleaning • Telephone, internet, and email charges • Room service • Other items of a personal nature.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance for trip cancellation and interruption, medical problems, baggage loss and delay, etc., is highly recommended. Trip cancellation policies that apply to this expedition are included in this brochure. Information about travel insurance will be sent to confirmed participants.

A NOTE ABOUT RATES

Tour rates are based upon current fuel prices, currency values, taxes, tariffs, and a minimum number of participants. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed rates, they are subject to change. If there are significant

changes, details and costs will be advised prior to departure.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Complete Terms and Conditions including Statement of Responsibility will be made available to you at time of registration, or in advance upon request. A signed "Terms & Conditions, Release from Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Clause" is required from each applicant prior to participation on the tour.

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS

An initial deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to reserve space on this program. Reserve your space online at https://account.criteriontravel.com/Booking/RefStart/SBMA/270516_DWM_SBMA/tour or complete the reservation form included in this brochure and mail it with your check or credit card information to: SBMA Travel, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101. You may also fax the form to (805) 966-6840. An interim payment of \$2,000 per person is due 6 months prior to departure, which is November 16, 2026. Final payment deadline is January 16, 2027. Interim and final payments may be made by check, wire transfer or credit card (credit card payments will incur a processing fee of 2%).

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Upon payment of the \$1,000 per person deposit, reservations are subject to the cancellation provisions set forth below and by which the passenger agrees to be bound. Cancellations shall not be effective until they are received in writing and confirmed by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Deposits are refundable, less a \$500 per person admin fee, if written notice of cancellation is received within 30 days of booking; after that, deposits are 100% nonrefundable.

After the November 16, 2026 interim payment deadline: All payments are 100% nonrefundable, regardless of booking date. For this reason, we strongly urge participants to purchase trip cancellation insurance. No refunds will be made for any part of this program on which you choose not to participate. NOTE: Neither the Santa Barbara Museum of Art nor Criterion Travel, the tour operator, accepts liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in conjunction with this tour.

HEALTH

All participants should be in good health and capable of keeping up with an active group of travelers. By forwarding the deposit for passage, the passenger certifies that he/she does not have any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other passengers.

ITINERARY CHANGES

The itinerary presented for this tour is subject to modification and change by Criterion Travel. Every reasonable effort will be made to operate the program as planned; however, should unforeseen world events and conditions require the itinerary to be altered, Criterion Travel reserves the right to do so for the safety and best interest of the group. Any extra expenses incurred in this situation are the responsibility of the participant. California Seller of Travel Program CST #2088800-40