

# SUPERCHARGED

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR TESLA OWNERS AND ENTHUSIASTS

MAY 2021 N°18



**SUPERCHARGE**



**SUPERCHECKIN**



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Issue:  
Brussel X - P925633  
RE: Erik De Ridder  
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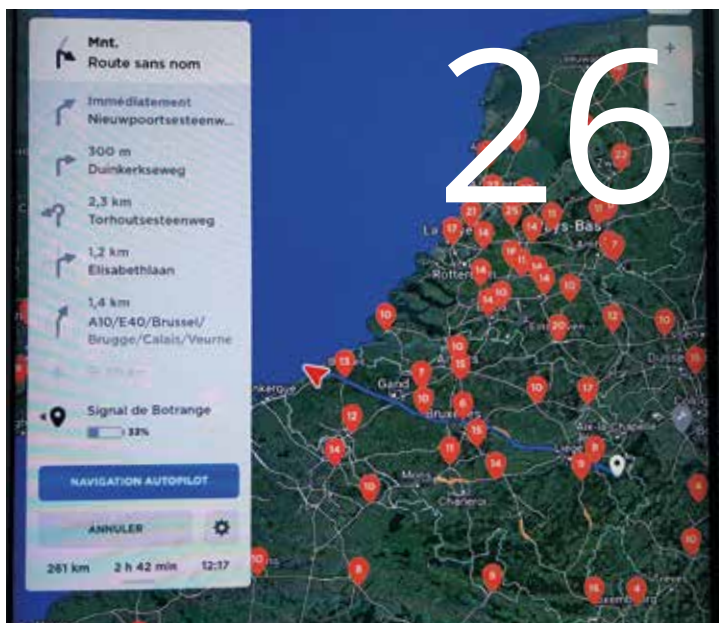
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DEAR NEWEST OWNERS !  
DEAR ROADSTER AND CYBERTRUCK ENTHUSIASTS,  
DEAR READERS,  
DEAR TESLA OWNERS AND CLUB MEMBERS,  
DEAR RESERVATION HOLDERS,  
DEAR SHAREHOLDERS,  
DEAR EV ENTHUSIASTS,  
DEAR SPACE TRAVELLERS,



In these hectic times, still, we are hoping that everyone is safe and taking care of each other. Things are 'still what it is' since our last edition. Nonetheless, we must use extra caution when going out and interacting with Peers. It has become the 'new norm'. Most events and activities have been reduced to the minimum if not cancelled at all. At least spring came up and we are now fully enjoying our whereabouts aboard our Gorgeous cars as we can now roam during daylight hours and enjoy better weather conditions.

We are still facing difficult times with the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. We can only hope for the Best and we look forward to seeing you safely 'face to face' as soon as possible with great EEvents, gathering and catching up sessions. We look forward to the vaccination program and heading back to a 'somewhat' normal life. Just like you, we miss the interactions and the meetups.

**STAY SAFE, BE SAFE.**

Tesla Owners Club Belgium Board and their Members would like to **wish belated Birthday to Elon Musk** who is turning 50 on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your ongoing support and Leadership in the acceleration of the world's transition to sustainable energy

**Welcome** to your eighteenth edition of SuperCharged, your independent Magazine for Tesla Owners, Reservation holders, Club Members, Shareholders and EV enthusiasts.

**Welcome** TO ALL new Owners ! The more the merrier, the 'Extended Family' is growing everyday ! We are delighted to have you onboard and we look forward to our exchanges ! Supercharged is a great way to break the ice and join the Community.

For new readers or simply wanted to read past editions ?

SuperCharged is available online, with past editions : <https://www.teslaclub.be/supercharged>

Well, do I have to say it again ? Well I do ! I never get tired of saying it out loud but...You know it by Heart by now : "We may sound 'like a broken record', still, but Supercharged is only 'as good as the energy' we are putting in along with qualitative content. We welcome as always your topics proposals and your invitation for collaborating with the editorial team." True Team Work at its Finest.

We look forward to hearing from you, contact us through our Club website.

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust.

It is with great satisfaction and pleasure that we can announce a rich content for this eighteenth edition. We lined up topics that are of interest and that should be under on our radar, stories and information based on your inputs and our exchanges.

We'll start this edition with the Test Achats - Test Aankoop Challenge. When an EV test journey goes out of the boundaries and does not reveal the major flaws of its travel plans, the Community is always ready to grasp the Challenge to gather (safely) and prove to these testers what they have done incorrectly. No attacks nor agenda, just the willingness to communicate clearly on how EV's are today's reality and do actually work for quite a long time now ! Read more about this Challenging weekend that took back EV Owners from all over Belgium for a successful and uneventful journey from Oostende (Belgian Coast) to Botrange (Belgian Ardennes).

Then another major news, an important Tesla Milestone : Tesla has reached a new milestone in the continuous roll-out of Superchargers across Europe with 6,039 Superchargers in 601 locations ! If not already convinced, Tesla strength is above all its Charging network for our greatest convenience.

Remember last edition nr 17 with the interview of nerdy Robin, well Community is not at rest as many of us are nurturing ideas and projects. We reached out to Bram. Bram Luyten is a Tesla enthusiast and technology entrepreneur from Leuven. He is the creator of a new website which lets you track your exploration of the supercharger network while virtually connecting and gaming with friends. Great outcome.

At least during these hectic times, COVID is not stopping the Quest for Mars... and we are always like 5 years old when we are witnessing launches towards the stars. In the Amazing Adventure, Belgium is taking an active part. Have you ever wondered what kind of experiments SpaceX takes up to the International Space Station? Karine Von Doninck, Professor at the Université Libre Brussels (ULB) and Associate Professor at the University of Namur, tells us about her research... and .. a new word to our vocabulary : the rotifers ! Find out all about it in this interview.

Electrification is all around us and moving into many designs and processes. Space is not left alone in this course. The well known SABCA [(Société Anonyme Belge de Constructions Aéronautiques) is a Belgian aerospace company. Its main sectors of activity are civil aviation, space and defence.] just celebrated her 100th Anniversary. Challenges are all over the places, how do you proceed ? Well part of the answers is the electrification of the rockets actuators. We reached out to SABCA's CEO, Thibault Jongen, Technology Expert, Dan Telteu and Design Engineering Manager, Mathieu Claeys to learn more and get to know their detailed insights. So buckle up and get ready for Launch !

As we see since we started SUPERCHARGED, technologies are constantly evolving. We are very proud of all the entrepreneurs taking Leadership and shaping the present and future. Meet Octave who is reusing EV batteries for energy storage. The potential waste of used batteries is one of the criticisms often heard about electric vehicles. Not anymore! Belgian start-up Octave has a new life for these batteries. What's even better is that these batteries will be used to optimise storage of renewably-produced energy on the grid. Maxime Snick, co-founder of Octave told us more.

Belgium is a wonderful country but sadly we do have too many charging stations disparities between Wallonia and Flanders. Why couldn't we just challenge our elected officials and all parties involved to embrace the rEvolution and take the successful Luxembourg example as a reference goal ? No dreams, no promises, they just did it : over 800 public charging stations (that are not just dots on a map but are operational) and the new arrival of fast charging station SUPERCHARGY. Read more about their ambitious goals. We reached out to Jacques Piroux, Luxembourg Country Manager of Pluxx, the company that develops the supervision systems for Chargy and SuperChargy, to learn more.

And more lifestyle topics in this edition.

Thank you for your readership.

**On behalf of Tesla Owners Club of Belgium vzw/asbl,  
Martin Gillet  
Vice President Global Communications and Marketing Tesla Owners Club Belgium asbl/vzw.**

## ON BEHALF OF TESLA OWNERS CLUB BELGIUM VZW/ASBL



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# ABOUT THE (STUNNING) COVER



You have probably been stunned by the Magnificent cover! Was your reaction like ours? Did we miss the European press conference for the Roadster? Well almost ... Picture composition is led by Tesla Owner and Photographer Hugo Pinto from Tesla Owners Club Portugal. We reached out to Hugo to find out more ... don't hold your breath but you might be surprised ...

## HI HUGO CAN YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF ?

Hi ! First of all, thanks for having me! My name is Hugo of course, and I am a small software company founder and manager - as well as a software architect (my original background) - living in Lisbon, Portugal. I guess some people also know me for being a hardcore Tesla enthusiast as well.



## WHAT'S YOUR CONNECTION TO THE EV WORLD AND TESLA ?

I drive a Tesla Model S 75 (the rear wheel drive version!) since June 2017 - it was my dream car since I first laid eyes on the Model S presentation in 2011, and getting to own one really was a dream coming true. As for the reasons for driving an EV, this was something already in my mind for quite some time back then - electric mobility made perfect sense from a conceptual standpoint, and I was already a convert - albeit without a car. And in those years, the only choice you had for a non-compromising, performant, long range EV really was solely a Tesla.

## CAN YOU TELL US MORE REGARDING THE TESLA OWNERS CLUB IN PORTUGAL ?



In Portugal we have our local Club named Tesla Club Portugal, part of the Tesla official owners club programme. It was started in late 2016 by João Nunes, who curiously lives in Finland, but was very active recruiting owners and enthusiasts in the Portuguese social network groups. I joined some time after, and these days, together with João, Helder Teixeira and Bruno Figueiredo, I help administer and support the national Tesla owners and enthusiasts community. The group grew to be 13.500 members strong!

We're a very active group, and have strong, friendly ties with the national Tesla structure, which fortunately helps us help our members when something needs more immediate and assertive action - this has been very fruitful to this day.

Tesla is still growing rapidly in Portugal - both in organization, infrastructure, and sales - and we're more than welcome to accommodate and introduce new members to our easy-going community.

## CAN YOU TELL US A BIT MORE ABOUT THE PICTURE CONTEXT ? 'YOUR EU ROADSTER PRESS CONFERENCE' HELD IN LISBON ?

So, one of the things we were sorely missing in Portugal was an automated web store for Tesla products, accessories and merchandise items. One could typically order the most relevant items via email, but the whole shopping experience was simply unavailable. In mid March, however, the official Portuguese web store finally opened, and I immediately jumped the gun and ordered myself a Tesla Roadster miniature - something I was wanting to do for many months.

Upon ordering the miniature I immediately started thinking about performing some kind of practical prank - and I imagined how cool it would be if Tesla had sneaked a real Roadster to Lisbon to make an European public unveil.



## CAN YOU TELL US HOW THE PICTURE IDEA CAME ALONG ?

I'm an amateur photographer for some years now (even though this past year the pandemic pretty much took photo shooting to a halt), and I am usually a very technical photographer, always wanting to experiment with different tools and techniques. When my Roadster model arrived, I was immediately drawn to experiment with a very well known cinema technique called Forced Perspective, in which you carefully align scale models with the backdrop or scenery to give the illusion that the miniature is a real-sized object in the real world. That would be a PERFECT use for the Roadster miniature, and I started scouting for potential scenarios. The 25th April Bridge was a top location for its iconic distinctive look, and I ended up settling for that.

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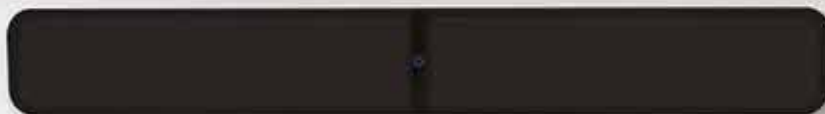
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### WHY THIS SCENIC CONTEXT ? (NOTE : IF YOU ARE UNFAMILIAR WITH PORTUGAL, YOU MAY THINK THIS IS THE BAY AREA IN CALIFORNIA WHERE BOTH BRIDGES HAVE MANY SIMILARITIES).

Well, the 25th April Bridge (originally named after António Salazar, which led the dictatorial regime in Portugal in most of the mid 20th century, but then renamed after the Carnation Revolution in 1974) is an iconic landmark of the city, but, having being designed and built in the late 60's by the United States Steel International company, which was responsible for the bridges in the Bay Area, is a near twin to San Francisco's Golden Gate suspension bridge design, and if you get to the right spot at the right angle, you'd almost be fooled to think you're standing somewhere in the Presidio area). Thus, I thought that a photo with the bridge in the background would be both unique, but also wide reaching with an international modern appeal. And that's what the Roadster is about as well.

### HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO GET THAT FINAL SHOT?

Well, it took a bit of preparation, as well as a couple tries to get it right. The preparation is apparently simple: in forced perspective shots, you need your models to stand on a scale foreground - usually a piece of floor, cement, something at-scale that matches what is on the real location, and where you put the miniature in. I opted to make my own "asphalt" with thick cardboard, sand, glue, and black spray paint. That took the best part of an afternoon.



Then, excited to try it that same day (I was aiming for strong shadows against a saturated-blue sky, pretty much like Tesla uses in their website), I went alone and took the whole kit: camera, "asphalt", miniature car, and tried to take the shot before sunset. But I failed miserably - it was terribly windy, the bridge was not lit properly (the Sun sets on the right side of the image, which kept the bridge in shadow at that time), and I came home frustrated.

The next day, I enlisted the help of my wife Vânia and son Rodrigo, and dragged them before sunrise at 7am to the location. With their help, and the training session of the day before, I now had the advantage: the sky was beautifully blue, the bridge properly lit from the Sun that had just risen, and the shadows making every bit of the miniature real and magical. I finally took the shot (and a few more for extra assurance!) and came home happy that day.

### ANY BACKSTAGE INSIGHTS ? PERHAPS SHARE PHOTOGRAPHER TIPS AND TRICKS ?



Yes, the principle in itself is rather simple: if you have a 1:18 scale model, you measure the distance between the miniature model and the camera (say, 50 cms), and then multiply that distance by the scale (50 cms x 18 = 9 meters), and, projecting that from the lens' point of view, that's the point in



the real world in which you'll be projecting your car to have real-world dimensions.

Then, you carefully experiment and line up your model, foreground plane and perspective, and frame the shot as you want. If you are careful, the end of the foreground "asphalt" will line up nicely with a natural element such as the end of a road, a crossing section, or something like that. You lock the whole thing in a tripod, and take your shot. The amazing thing in forced perspective is that since the miniature is indeed on the location, you immediately have all of the color casting, reflections and light that the scene would naturally have - something much more difficult to create if post production compositing the image in a fake studio. Photographically speaking, there are two options regarding aperture: either you shoot at very very small apertures ( $f/18-22$  or even smaller), or you open up the lens a bit and take a series of photos at different focus levels, covering the whole model, and then perform a Focus Stacking operation in your favorite image editor. I took both types of shots when we were on location, and chose the best looking one.

### ANY OTHER INSIGHTS, ANECDOTES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS ?

The whole thing came out rather good (even if I myself can only see the inaccuracies - don't ask me where they are!), and I posted the image in a series of facebook groups and in my twitter account. I was amazed at how many people actually thought it was the real deal, but I'm way too honest and everytime after just a few minutes I'd open up and show them the backstage pictures. In hindsight, I should have waited a bit longer :)

**Thank you Hugo for your Leadership and stunning composition.**

Well, Thank you so much for the opportunity to feature the image in SuperCharged! It's an honour, and I see it mostly as a testimony of the huge quality and appeal of the Tesla Roadster miniature - the scale model's detail is amazing, and it is undoubtedly the star of the shoot.

You can visit Tesla Club Portugal on Facebook (search for "Tesla Club Portugal"), as well as our website at <https://teslaclub-portugal.com> - every Tesla enthusiast is Welcome !

# CLUB EVENTS

Club is always looking for great venues and ideas to organize cheerful events and memories. Feel free to submit ideas and locations, Community at work, the more ideas, the more creative, the merrier. Team Work !

Join us and plan ahead as places might be limited due to popular demand : <https://www.teslaclub.be/en/events>

# NEXT EVENTS & CLUB EVENTS

All Club events can be found under <https://www.teslaclub.be/events> - Join us ! The more the merrier ! Electrifying and cheerful moments as always !

*Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances with the Coronavirus, we had to take the challenging decision to cancel many Events. Safety First. Situation is still ongoing, sadly in 2021. We are always looking at other options for the forthcoming months and will get back to you with ideas for more events.*

*We thank you for your understanding. Stay Safe, Be Safe.*

## 2021 Easter Break : A night at the Movie

Source and Credit Kelly Van Eekel

On April 12th, we had our first Corona Proof "live" event of the year at the parking lot of Plopsaland De Panne. Kinopolis on Tour chose this particular location for a unique drive-in experience, during the Easter holidays.

With the Tesla Owners Club Belgium we had the opportunity to arrange you a pre-registration, in order to have as many Tesla's as possible gathered! And this is exactly what happened! About 100 Tesla's, with more than 200 members, were as excited as we were to meet up for a night out! It was great to see that Tesla members of all generations were present: on the one hand, the ones that are members of our Club since the beginning of our existence, almost 10 years ago. On the other hand, the new Club members: having a Tesla for less than 1 year.

Of course, due to Corona there were strict regulations: we had to stay in our Tesla, couldn't go out the car and see you all. We'd like to thank all of you for your presence, your messages and posts through social media that night! We felt united anyway!

For our members who didn't see the movie yet. "Le Mans 66" is a true story that is worth watching! If you like cars, some history, racing... the movie has it all!

On our way home, we had the chance to meet some of you at the supercharger in Bruges. This was like in the "old" days: having an event and meeting each other again at the Supercharger located nearby.

Due to Corona measures: we had to make sure to be home the latest at midnight if living in Flanders. Some of you took the occasion to spend an extra day in a hotel at the beautiful city of Bruges or at the seaside! We like your creativity: finding solutions for things that may seem at first an obstacle! We're looking forward to meeting you again soon for another "live" event! Stay tuned!

**More Events to come ! Watch this space :**

<https://www.teslaclub.be/en/events>



# NEWS IN A NUTSHELL

## Tesla Q1 2021 Vehicle Production & Deliveries

Tesla is proudly releasing this statement : "PALO ALTO, Calif., April 2, 2021 – In the first quarter, we produced just over 180,000 vehicles and delivered nearly 185,000 vehicles. We are encouraged by the strong reception of the Model Y in China and are quickly progressing to full production capacity. The new Model S and Model X have also been exceptionally well received, with the new equipment installed and tested in Q1 and we are in the early stages of ramping production."

Source : Tesla <https://ir.tesla.com/press-release/tesla-q1-2021-vehicle-production-deliveries>

	Production	Deliveries	Subject to operating lease accounting
Model S/X	-	2,020	6%
Model 3/Y	180,338	182,780	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>180,338</b>	<b>184,800</b>	<b>7%</b>

## Tesla Recall or refund of 8GB eMMC

Well, we are very pleased to see that all Owners Club discussions and actions with Tesla helped support this MCU hiccup. Tesla has reached out to Owners with an 'older' Model S and X :

"Tesla has decided to voluntarily and proactively recall some Model S and Model X vehicles to update software and to replace the 8GB embedded MultiMediaCard (eMMC) in the media control unit (MCU). This recall applies only to Model S and Model X vehicles built before March 2018 that are equipped with an 8GB embedded MultiMediaCard (eMMC) in the MCU that may experience a malfunction due to accumulated wear. Model S and Model X vehicles built on or after March 2018 are not equipped with the 8GB eMMC and are not affected by this recall."

More information can be found online <https://www.tesla.com/support/8gb-emmc-recall-frequently-asked-questions>?

Check if you are eligible or if your car has a recall : <https://www.tesla.com/win-recall-search>

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Thanks to our main **Partners**, we can keep the membership of the **Tesla Owners Club Belgium** for free:



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A special thanks to the Tesla Leadership and the Tesla Owners Club Program for nurturing this amazing community. Thanks to all the Tesla staff and all parties involved. Don't drink and drive.

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### **Oled-technologie.**

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### **Geluidservaring.**

Het krachtige geïntegreerde stereogeluidssysteem heeft een gesloten basreflexluidspreker en zes speakers die 80 watt puur muziekvermogen genereren. De soundbar geeft warme tonen en lage frequenties af die de kamer vullen met rijke geluiden. De intelligente Mimi Defined™-technologie herkent optimaal geluid en toon in realtime. U kunt het aanpassen aan uw persoonlijke luisterprofiel.

### **Opnemen en afspelen.**

De ingebouwde dr + harde schijf maakt het mogelijk om uren op te nemen. Met een opslagcapaciteit van 1 TB is de Loewe bild v. ontworpen om aan uw planning te voldoen. U kunt twee programma's tegelijk opnemen terwijl u tv kijkt op een derde kanaal. Het tv-programma kan worden gepauzeerd en op een later tijdstip worden voortgezet. Met de Loewe-app is het ook mogelijk om het programma op uw mobiele apparaat te bekijken terwijl u onderweg bent.

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# COMMUNITY AT ITS FINEST: "TA CHALLENGE"

Insights gathered and consolidated by Martin Gillet.

Pictures source & credit : see respective owners in picture file name

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### THE SHOCK THAT LED TO THE RISE OF THE 'TA CHALLENGE'

Mid-March, the Belgian Consumers Association, a cooperative organization, under the name Test-Achats - Test Aankoop, published an article, rather shocking but we'll come to that, regarding an EV test driver going for a cross country journey from Belgian Coast in Oostende to the Belgian Ardennes in Botrange. Footage released came as a shock as it seems the Test driver made several unfortunate rookie mistakes and seemed completely unprepared for such a journey.

A wise move would have been to reach out to the Amazing EV Community always willing to support and help each other. Much ongoing social media exchanges went on for quite a few hours and days. The Community quickly realized that the same journey would have to be repeated with better preparation, supporting the business real life example, free from car manufacturers, in a general manner, that EV does work. It was pointless to attack the association 'ad hominem'. Rather engage in a constructive way and prove them wrong although this came as a total shock as all of us had higher expectations from a Consumer Association. This could be quiet as we had to share the debunking of this journey.

The 'TA' (standing for Test Achats / Test Aankoop) was born.

### THE MASTER PLAN

Quickly after the footage and article were released, a group of EV Owners, covering most of the current offer on the market rapidly gathered online to get organized. The main idea was to repeat this journey in real conditions (even more challenging as wind and cold weather joined the initiative on that day). The plan was to leave from Oostende and head to Botrange, safely; with no overnight stay in Leuven. Showcasing how EV do work even if some concerns raised are legitimate such as the charging infrastructure.



© Courtesy Google

Very interesting to notice that the initiative spread all over Belgium. A dutch speaking group organized itself to travel on Saturday March 13th 2021 and the french speaking group organized itself for Sunday March 14th 2021. The french speaking group, to remain safe and sound, even pushed the details to the distribution of radio so that everyone could communicate in real time from his/her bubble.

A Roadmap or storyboard was even drawn in order to capture every moment in order to assemble a dedicated video footage and have a detailed debriefing.

The energy and the dedication of these individuals are very energizing when you witness the time spent on this journey.

### WHO'S IN ? Team BELGIUM

### Saturday March 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 Crew

- KIA André
- KIA Tijis
- Tesla Model 3 (TM3) Danny
- Polestar Jochen
- Tesla Model X (TMX) Peter
- Ampera Paul
- Mercedes EQC Philip
- Volkswagen ID-3 Bjorn
- Polesta Geert
- Renault Zoe Yann
- Nissan Leaf Luc

### Sunday March 14<sup>th</sup> 2021 Crew

- Tesla Model 3 (TM3) Chris Tophe
- Renault ZOE40 Ulric
- Mercedes EQC Jean-Pierre
- Tesla Model X (TMX) Phill
- Tesla Model S (TMS) Legacy 2015 Arnaud
- Tesla Model S (TMS) Raven LR 2019 Thierry
- PoleStar 2 Olivier
- AUDI eTron Frederic
- BMW I3 Günther

**THE JOURNEY**

Both journeys departed from the same point of origin: Oostende. Despite gusts of winds and colder temperatures, the journey was uneventful as drivers could their destination - YES EV's are normal cars -. On their way to Botrange, they even had to cancel their night at the Leuven hotel as they had enough power and juice to reach their destination.



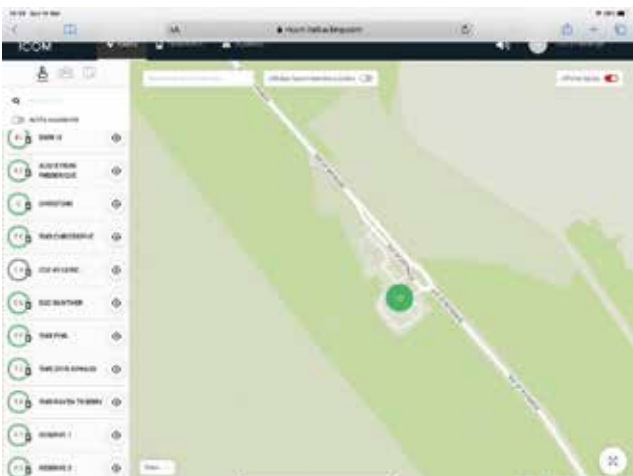
Legend : Departure from the FASTNED Charging station



Legend : Departure Briefing from the FASTNED Charging station



Legend : En route



Legend : Arrival in Botrange

What car could do the trip in one go?				Who used less energy?		
	Car	Batt cap	Used kWh		Car	Wh/km
1	André	Kia	71%	64,0	45,4	180
2	Tijs	Kia	76%	64,0	48,4	176
3	Danny	Model 3	79%	72,5	57,3	197
4	Jochen	Polestar	82%	75,0	61,5	188
5	Peter	Model X	89%	76,5	68,1	206
6	Paul	Ampere	91%	80,0	54,6	211
7	Philip	EQC	91%	80,0	72,8	223
8	Bjorn	ID-3	95%	58,0	55,1	227
9	Geert	Polestar	98%	75,0	73,5	251
10	Yann	Zoe	145%	41,0	59,5	294
11	Luc	Leaf	155%	36,0	55,8	270

What car can go the furthest in these circumstances?				Who did the trip the cheapest?	
	Wh/km	Battery	100% range (km)		€
1	André	Kia	159	64,0	€ 0,08
2	Tijs	Kia	170	64,0	€ 7,77
3	Danny	Model 3	221	72,5	€ 8,02
4	Jochen	Polestar	227	75,0	€ 17,63
5	Philip	EQC	256	80,0	€ 20,37
6	Peter	Model X	251	76,5	€ 21,63
7	Paul	Ampere	197	80,0	€ 25,46
8	Bjorn	ID-3	205	58,0	€ 29,59
9	Geert	Polestar	270	75,0	€ 30,71
10	Yann	Zoe	223	41,0	€ 32,20
11	Luc	Leaf	198	36,0	€ 42,53

Trip	Start	End	Distance	Time	Energy	Cost	Speed	Consumption	Range	Remaining
Payment trip	08:00	08:00	0 km	0 min	0 kWh	€ 0,00	0 km/h	0 kWh/km	0 km	0 kWh
Departure briefing	08:00	08:05	0,5 km	5 min	0,1 kWh	€ 0,01	0,1 km/h	0,2 kWh/km	0,5 km	0,1 kWh
Departure	08:05	08:10	1 km	5 min	0,2 kWh	€ 0,02	0,2 km/h	0,4 kWh/km	1 km	0,2 kWh
En route	08:10	08:30	20 km	20 min	4,0 kWh	€ 0,40	60 km/h	0,2 kWh/km	20 km	4,0 kWh
Arrival	08:30	08:35	0,5 km	5 min	0,1 kWh	€ 0,01	0,1 km/h	0,2 kWh/km	0,5 km	0,1 kWh
Total	08:00	08:35	21,5 km	25 min	4,4 kWh	€ 0,44	51 km/h	0,2 kWh/km	21,5 km	4,4 kWh
Consumption (average)	08:00	08:35	21,5 km	25 min	4,4 kWh	€ 0,44	51 km/h	0,2 kWh/km	21,5 km	4,4 kWh
Consumption (per km)	08:00	08:35	21,5 km	25 min	4,4 kWh	€ 0,44	51 km/h	0,2 kWh/km	21,5 km	4,4 kWh



**FACTS AND FIGURES**

Unlike "Internal Combustion Engine" (ICE) cars, electric cars identify their energy consumption in Watt-hour 'Wh' per kilometer. "The watt-hour (symbolized Wh) is a unit of energy equivalent to one watt (1 W) of power expended for one hour (1 h) of time. The watt-hour is not a standard unit in any formal system, but it is commonly used in electrical applications. An energy expenditure of 1 Wh represents 3600 joules (3.600 x 10<sup>3</sup>)."

## KEY MESSAGES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE CREWS

We reached out to the Drivers to capture the key messages they would like to pass on and what would be the key lessons learned driving an EV.

For Gunter, *"it is better to plan your trip the day before at least so you have to leave with a reasonable car search With an electric vehicle".*

For Geert : *"TA said afterwards that their main point was the lack of fast chargers and the abundance of apps and cards, making things confusing for their readers, the average Joe. Nevertheless, the one thing people will remember is that they needed two days for a 270km drive. They still refuse to recognise this to this day."*

For Ulric : *"Call on the community for tips and tricks, be active on social media because things move fast! High-tech stuff".*

For Thierry : *"The Model S LR is certainly not the model that will democratize the EV, however the Model 3 is much more accessible and takes advantage of all the experience of Tesla in the efficiency of the "electric concept" wanted by Elon Musk.*

If a small manufacturer has succeeded, it is because it is possible. And this is what large groups should strive for, particularly with regard to the example of superchargers. To match, then overtake the pioneer, and accelerate the transition to renewable energies.

Even in the current state of the infrastructure, the right information (which dealerships should provide) and the right research (you have to learn to read Google Maps and interpret information from specialized apps like Chargemap or ABRP) make it possible to think of a long EV trip as a cruise in calm water on a yacht rather than as a descent of a rapid in a kayak ...".

For Arnaud : *"As with all vehicles, you must refuel before leaving. Whether fuel or electricity. And in this case turn goes wonderfully. In addition, it is enough to trust the car, it will indicate when and where to charge. Whether it's a Tesla or another brand."*

For Peter : *"The pain points regarding the charging infrastructure (its functioning, breakdowns, tariffs) could certainly be highlighted. Their decision-making process could also be called correct. The story sketched (trip distances, times, consumption, misuse of a vehicle) is disgraceful and can never be catalogued as observational reporting. (And least of all for a consumer organisation)".*

Raphaël : *"A Renault Zoé has arrived at its destination with just one intermediate charge. She even pitted a Mercedes EQC and a BMW i3 to the pole. The car, however, was rather urban, with reasonable consumption and the driver was certainly more used to it than the journalist of TA facing his Polestar for a day.*

Why did this journalist not take more care to leave with a fully charged battery, as he does with his cell phone or even his camera, before going to work each day? Leaving with an almost empty gas tank in an unknown country involves the same risks ...".

Danny Verlaek sums and says it all : *"Driving through our country is no problem with a modern EV."*

## CONCLUSION

We reached out to Danny Verlaek (EV Belgium Community) for the conclusion : *"What has emerged from the hard numbers of the Polestar-TA challenge ? The EV rider gets there as fast as his gasoline friends. The effective " driving times " ranged between 2 h 36 and 3 h 32.*

The entire team travel time was between 2 h 36 and 4 h 39. Depending on the need to load and / or the need to stretch legs, drink a coffee, make a sanitary stop. Not to mention that it wasn't a " Cannonball race " but had to remain a pleasant trip. But it can also be done in one junk.

Bjorn even took his whole family in his ID 3 to see the sea AND the High Venen in one day. Departing from Limburg, it must have been quite an experience for the kids. They crossed the whole country twice in just one day! A 591 km trip and they were home even before nightfall. This fact in itself says enough about the intention Test purchase had.

The average EV rider in the group did this trip of 270 km in 3 h 37, which is a very normal time, also for a 2 litre gasoline that needs a break on the way to stretch your legs or to satisfy your appetite.

The cost of energy for this trip is quite another story though. It was between 6,08 € and 45,40 €. On average our team spent 23,42 € from Oostende to Botrange. I suspect that a 2 litre gasoline can't reach the highest point in Belgium with this amount."

Thank you to all participants and parties involved for their Leadership and willingness to strive for a more Sustainable Future.  
Kudos to all participants for sharing their insights and material.



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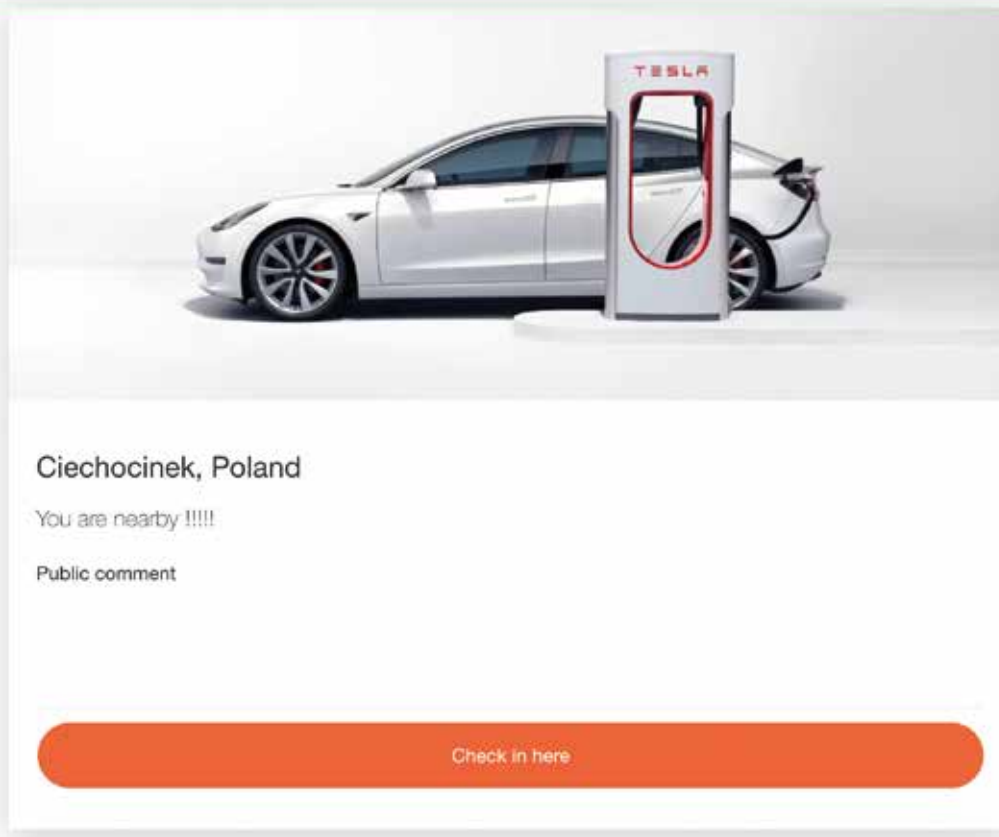
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# SUPERCHECKIN

## SHARE YOUR SUPERCHARGING JOURNEY MAP

Text Martin Gillet , Bram Luyten and Joanna Pays - Photos Bram Luyten

Bram Luyten is a Tesla enthusiast and technology entrepreneur from Leuven. He is the creator of a new website which lets you track your exploration of the supercharger network while virtually connecting and gaming with friends.

### PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND YOUR BACKGROUND IN TECHNOLOGY

I am a 37 year old entrepreneur living in Leuven. Growing up in the eighties, I got my first taste of computing on my dad's Commodore 64. I started my entrepreneurship by making and selling websites to a few local businesses as a teenager.

15 years ago, I co-founded Atmire, a venture-capital-backed spinoff from K.U. Leuven University. Atmire accelerates science, by addressing the problem of fast, global and free access to the latest scientific discoveries. This area is dominated by a handful of very large scientific publishers, who generally put scientific articles behind paywalls. We are trying to change this, so that universities retain the copyright over what they produce and share it themselves, through online databases called "Institutional Repositories". We are helping them to build these repositories.

## SuperCheckIn

### WHEN DID YOU MAKE THE CONVERSION TO TESLA?

I fell in love with Tesla after the announcement of the Model S. I remember seeing Byron's video when he goes shopping and remotely opens his trunk for his groceries. Back in those days, the Model S was not within my budget and I didn't have a garage to keep it safe, so it remained something to aspire to.

This changed after the announcement of the Model 3. I placed my order as soon as the configurator opened in December 2018. I have now been driving the Model 3 Long Range for over 2 years and 50,000 fantastic kilometres.

### TELL US MORE ABOUT SUPERCHECKIN

The SuperCheckIn (<https://www.supercheck.in>) website lets you track your exploration of the supercharger network, together with your friends. Each time you visit a supercharger location, you can use the site to "check-in" on that location.

Besides the interest of seeing who has already used a particular supercharger station, you can also win badges that allow you to compete with your friends and other users. For example, you can compare who has visited the most supercharger locations in Belgium, or who is the most active user.



**BELGIUM**

You are conquering Belgium! Check in to different Belgian superchargers to advance this badge. Which superchargers you are missing to complete this badge? Now, we don't want to make it TOO easy!!

Level: 9 / 15

#### Check-ins for this badge

12-Dec-2020 18:45	Warem, Belgium
27-Dec-2020 21:31	Huveden-Zolder, Belgium
20-Oct-2019 15:11	Verviers, Belgium
09-Feb-2020 15:12	Edegem, Belgium
26-Jul-2020 17:13	Aron, Belgium
14-Mar-2019 19:30	Machelen, Belgium
08-Mar-2020 14:28	Antwerp, Belgium
14-Mar-2021 09:42	Aalst, Belgium
14-Mar-2021 15:54	Lokeren, Belgium

#### Friends Badge progress



### WHAT TECHNOLOGY DOES SUPERCHECKIN USE?

Because I am most comfortable programming in Java, I started this project with Spring Boot and Thymeleaf templates. I also use the Google Maps API for visualizing maps, and work with various time zones. The site runs on Heroku, a cloud platform that makes it very easy to release and manage applications.

Maybe the most important technology in this project is the free and open data from supercharge.info, a website and community that collects and curates details about all the superchargers in the Tesla network.

### HOW DID THE PROJECT BEGIN?

Ten years ago, there was a wave of applications that rewarded users with badges for checking into locations. You might remember these as Foursquare (now Swarm) and Gowalla. For example, the more you visited and checked into airports, the higher level you would attain for your "Jetsetter" badge on Foursquare. I've always found this gamification of travel and exploration a very interesting concept.

During a road trip through Switzerland last summer, I started wondering which of my Tesla friends have already visited the same supercharger locations. Was I the first one? The idea was born!

### WHAT IS THE ATTRACTION OF SUPERCHECKIN?

It is almost impossible to explain the passion and excitement of visiting new supercharging stations to drivers of non-electrical cars. It's hard to blame them. What's exciting about visiting a smelly and dirty gas station?

In my experience, a visit to a supercharger is fundamentally different. It starts with trying to find it! As our vehicles direct us to the locations, there are little to no arrows or indications. The first visit to a supercharging location therefore always feels somewhat like a treasure hunt.

As these locations are exclusive to Tesla, it always gives me a fuzzy community feeling of belonging, spending time, having a chat with other drivers. When you visit places like Dietlikon in Zürich, or Hilden in Germany, you can taste the potential of the future supercharging experience.

### HOW FAR HAVE YOU DEVELOPED THE SITE?

Right now, the website has all of the basic features needed to check-in, view locations, view badges, and see what your friends are doing. There is also a built-in friend request system.

## SuperCheckIn

Look and feel wise, I still want to work together with a designer to develop a proper style and logo for SuperCheckIn. The current styling is still very much temporary. At some point in the future, I would also like to release SuperCheckIn as a native application for iOS and Android.

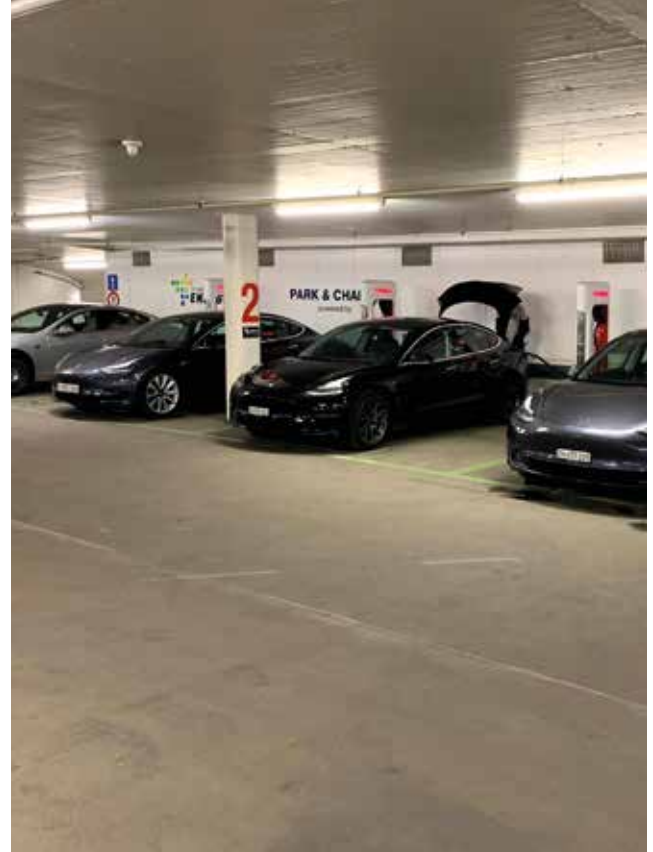
### **WHAT ARE THE LATEST FEATURES AND WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO ADD?**

I am actively developing additional features and bug fixes, with deployments happening multiple times per month. The most recent new features are the backlog feature and automated syncing with supercharge.info data.

The backlog feature is all about completing your historical supercharging track record. For example, if you have already supercharged your way to the north of Norway, you can use the “backlog” feature, to check-in on a date and time of your choice. That applies to any supercharger in the world.

Thanks to the automated syncing, new supercharger locations, or changes to existing superchargers, now show up in SuperCheckIn within 24 hours of these changes being published on supercharge.info.

I’m still thinking about new badges to add. Some countries, like the United States, are very big. For those, it makes sense to track progress by state or province, aside from the country badge.





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### HOW CAN USERS CONNECT WITH SUPERCHECKIN?

At the time of writing, there are around 30 beta users active on SuperCheckIn. Most of them are my personal Tesla friends and contacts, but there are also users from Poland and the U.S. Anyone is free to sign up with the invitation code "inelonwetrust".

The main reason for still using this invitation-code approach, is to be able to block signups in case the performance of the system is affected by heavy traffic. I have already worked on a lot of performance optimization, so I don't expect many problems scaling it up, but you never know ...

It took Google 5 years to finally remove the "beta" label from Gmail. I have the same philosophy, in that I want to continue making improvements by close interaction and listening to users.

Even though everyone is welcome to join, I envision that SuperCheckIn will remain "beta" for a while. Through the Facebook group, beta users can submit feature requests, bug reports, and general updates about their supercharging and SuperCheckIn experience.

### THE MISSION

The higher purpose that drives me, is to convince people to ditch airplanes and choose their Tesla vehicles for their next vacation across the continent. I realise that not everyone will be as enthusiastic to "catch 'm all", when it comes to supercharger locations. The ability to make the difference for a limited part of the community that is crazy about supercharging, is already a win.

### HOW CAN OUR READERS HELP YOU?

I welcome anyone to register on [www.supercheck.in](http://www.supercheck.in) and start their journey into the badges of the app. It's great to receive praise on the areas users like, but constructive criticism is really helpful to improve specific aspects!!!

I would like to offer my thanks to the Tesla Owners Club Belgium for being such an open and welcoming community. I remember

attending the 2019 New Year's dinner. At the time, we were awaiting delivery of our Model 3, so we had to take our Ford Mondeo there. Nevertheless, we were welcomed with open arms! This was probably what kick-started my motivation to try and do something that serves the Tesla community.



# EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS ON **SPACEX CARGO**

Text: Joanna Pays, Martin Gillet - Photos: Marc Guillaume

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Have you ever wondered what kind of experiments SpaceX takes up to the International Space Station? Karine Van Doninck, Full Professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and at the University of Namur (UNamur), tells us about her research...

### **SCIENTIFIC LINKS BETWEEN EVOLUTION, MOLECULAR GENETICS AND CANCER RESEARCH**

Karine Van Doninck's fields of expertise cover interlinking areas on molecular genetics, evolution and genomics.

"I studied biology at the Vrije University Brussels (VUB) because I was interested by questions on cancer and how it evolves within our ecosystem, the body. During my studies I became even more fascinated by evolution in general, and how living organisms adapt

to their environments. That led to the beginnings of my research on broader questions concerning evolution. I'm also fascinated by the fact that all living organisms come from the same ancestor, 3.5 billion years ago. The huge diversity we see around us today, all evolved from this one cell.

Leading on from my Degree in Biology, I completed a PhD in Evolutionary Biology. In my research on the evolution of life forms, an important criterion for survival is to create variation. Species need to be able to constantly change and adapt to their environment. During my PhD, I studied exceptions and paradoxes in nature. Some life forms are asexual and reproduce by cloning. So the paradox is, how do these species create evolutionary variation? How do those species survive and adapt?"

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# De voorpret begint bij het dromen

Wachten. Het kan frustrerend zijn... Behalve wanneer u de tijd naar uw hand zet. U kunt namelijk nu alvast dromen dat u ergens ver weg uit een vliegtuig stapt. Een andere cultuur in, nieuwe ervaringen tegemoet. Genieten van een longdrink aan het strand, terwijl u naar een spectaculaire zonsondergang kijkt en een zwoele zeebries uw huid kietelt.

Wat zou het geweldig zijn als dat weer zou kunnen. Gelukkig kan dromen altijd en overal. En het mooie is: dromen kost niets! Daarom is dit de tijd om optimaal te genieten van reisdromen over droomreizen. Want één ding is zeker: binnenkort gaan ze weer in vervulling.

Om uw dromen een vliegende start te geven, hebben wij vast een aantal suggesties voor onvergetelijke, op maat gemaakte reizen door Australië en Nieuw-Zeeland op een rijtje gezet. Ga naar [www.travelessence.nl](http://www.travelessence.nl) voor de beste reisinspiratie.

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### WHAT ARE ROTIFERS?

“To broaden my knowhow in evolutionary biology, by including molecular biology, I did a post-doctoral stay at Harvard University (USA) with the renowned Professor Matthew Meselson on bdelloid rotifers, which are the smallest animals on earth (<1mm). These tiny water-living animals are fascinating as, despite their small size, they have a nervous system, digestive system, excretory system

and well-developed reproductive system. There are only females, no males, so they clone.

Rotifers need water to live and reproduce, but they can dry up – or even be frozen – at any stage of their life cycle and then be reanimated. Observing rotifers from glaciers, we can see that even ones that have been frozen in ice for 20,000 years can be brought back to life. They are also resistant to high levels of ionizing radiation.

That's something we really wanted to study with the Rob-1 and Rob-2 experiments we sent to the International Space Station."

### **COSMIC RADIATION**

"Radiation is dangerous to living organisms as it damages the proteins and DNA inside all living cells. When cancer patients are treated by proton therapy we expose cancer cells to radiation to break down their genetic material and stop them from multiplying. Unfortunately radiation can also damage the surrounding healthy cells. Rotifers are able to survive and repair their DNA after huge doses of radiation and we would like to understand more about how they are able to do that.

With the experiments in the space station, we are looking whether rotifers retain their exceptional DNA repair capacity and survive when exposed to cosmic radiation present in space and low gravity during long periods. Rotifers are one of the best animal model systems to study the effects of space and cosmic radiation on living organisms, being very resistant. This is research that can be used to discover more about the impact of space travel on other living organisms – including humans. I'm also interested in the molecules used by rotifers to protect their proteins against radiation and which ones are used to repair efficiently their DNA after being exposed to radiation. In the long term see how we can use this research to maybe help in cancer treatments."

### **SPACEX TAKES ROB-1 EXPERIMENT TO SPACE STATION LAB**

"In 2016, our project 'Rotifers In SpacE (RISE)' got selected by the European Space Agency to send three experiments with rotifers to the International Space Station (ISS), which is in orbit 400 kilometres above Earth. So far, our first two experiments have been part of two different SpaceX cargo launches to the space station.

On the 5th of December 2019, the Rob-1 experiment was launched on board of Falcon 9 Space X-19 at 12.28 pm EST. With Rob-1 we wanted to study the effects of space on the reproductive capabilities of rotifers and if they were still able to lay eggs and experience any reduction of their metabolic activities. A key finding from Rob-1 is that the metabolism of rotifers is reduced in space, but they are still able to reproduce."

### **ROB-2**

"Rob-2, was launched on the 6th of December 2020 on Space X CRS21. For these experiments we prepared dried rotifers in the laboratory and then exposed them to high levels of X-ray and proton radiation. Some of the batches were sent to ISS, others were kept on earth. We then rehydrated both batches - in the earth lab and the space lab - at the same time. Here, the main goal was to study whether space environment has an impact on the ability of rotifers to repair their radiation-damaged cells. The rotifers from this experiment came back at the end of January and we are now analysing the results. To know more about the details of our experiments, check our website <http://rotifer-in-space.com/the-project/>

Besides these space experiments, we are also studying how rotifers are protecting themselves against oxidative stress, created by

desiccation, freezing, radiation and space environment. We want to discover the key mechanisms of their extreme resistance.”

### **COLLABORATIONS, ART COLLECTIVE AND GOALS**

“We worked with Kayser Italia, which is an aerospace engineering company, to create special living experimental units for the rotifers, to prepare them for sending into space. Kayser were able to design special Teflon bags that let oxygen in, without leaking water, for Rob-1.”

For more information about Kayser Italia visit <http://www.kayser.it/> and check the Rob-1 and Rob-2 modules on our website.

Three years ago, Prof. Karine Van Doninck also began collaboration with different artist collectives. Karine is an art lover and promotes transdisciplinary interactions. One of the artist collectives is SEADS, which stands for Space Ecologies Art and Design (<https://seads.network/>). SEADS has prepared artworks that went together with the experimental Rob units to ISS and is working on an art installation

which is evolving and integrating scientific data from the Rob-1 and Rob-2 experiments. There will be an exhibition of this scientific artwork at PILAR VUB from April to July 2022.

“I’m very interested in working on cross-disciplinary projects and developing relationships between art and science is something that I am passionate about” says Karine.

“I have been researching rotifers for more than 13 years. On a larger scale, I want to use data from the space station experiments to answer questions about evolution in general, as well as for research on cancer and aging. Thanks to a large grant I obtained in 2017 (ERC Consolidator Grant), I have been able to bring some exceptional scientists on board to work on these important programmes and interesting scientific questions on rotifers. We are looking forward to announcing some exciting results.”

For information about Karine’s passion, visit soon <http://karinevan-doninck.be>



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Kris Baele beheerst als een van de weinige juweelontwerpers zowel de goudsmeedkunst als de verlorenwastechniek. Daarom kan hij perfect inspelen op de vraag van elke klant.

## VAN OUD NAAR NIEUW

Wilt u eer doen aan het verleden, maar toch mee zijn met de toekomst? Kom dan zeker eens langs om de mogelijkheden te bespreken voor nieuwe creaties van bestaand materiaal!





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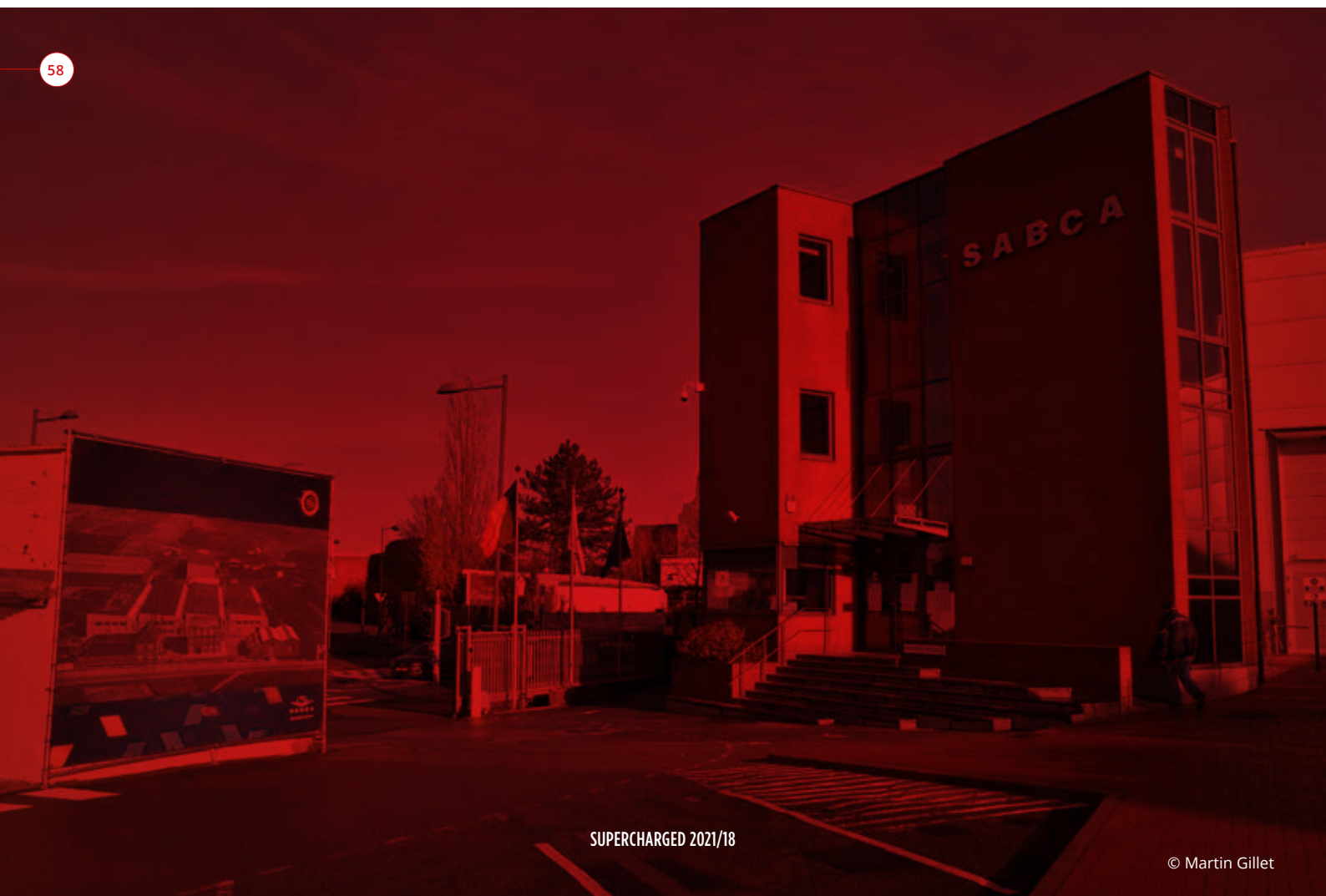
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# SABCA CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF AEROSPACE INNOVATION AND LOOKS TO AN (ELECTRIC) FUTURE

Text Joanna Pays, Martin Gillet





© Martin Gillet

Société Anonyme Belge de Constructions Aéronautiques (SABCA) is one of Europe's leading aerospace and defence companies. On the occasion of the group's 100th anniversary, Supercharged met with SABCA's CEO, Thibauld Jongen, Technology Expert, Dan Telteu and Design Engineering Manager, Mathieu Claeys.

**FIRST THIBAUD, PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT SABCA**

SABCA is an important player in aerospace and in fact we are active on pretty well everything that flies - aircraft, helicopters, drones and the space sector. The group has four centres of excellence – in-

tegrated assemblies, actuation systems, maintenance & upgrades and unmanned autonomous systems (drones). We produce complex metallic assemblies for aircraft and space launchers, as well as advanced thrust vectoring systems for space launchers. We have been involved in all the European space launches and some experimental re-entry vehicles. On the aircraft side we work on cargo, passenger and military planes, including aircraft for the Belgian, Dutch, Danish and US Air Force. Our aircraft expertise includes manufacturing structural equipment such as wing parts and cockpits, as well as carrying out repairs and maintenance at our Charleroi site.

We were the first aeronautics company in Belgium and recently celebrated our 100th anniversary. There is a lot of interesting history there, so we decided to do something original to tell the story. We had an artist create a history book of our 100 years in a comic book. There are a lot of great technical drawings and anecdotes.

### WHO OWNS SABCA?

Our ownership recently changed hands from Dassault to the Blueberry Group, the new aerospace group owned by Sabena

Aerospace and the Federal Holding and Investment Company (SFPI/FPIM) – which is the sovereign fund of the Belgian government. The latter invests in strategic companies for Belgium, particularly those involved in the logistics, pharmaceutical and aviation industries. All of these sectors require long term investments and in the aerospace industry we need to look 15 to 20 years ahead. With the new ownership, SABCA is now in the best position to accelerate and intensify its growth.





© Martin Gillet



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### THIBAUD, CAN YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF?

I love technology, science and especially aerospace, so I consider myself blessed to do what I do. I believe that progress comes from technology and that technology can be the driving force for the good of human kind. I have an Engineering Degree in Applied Mathematics and for me mathematics is one of the most beautiful things there is. I also have a Master's degree in Mechanics from the Von Karman Institute and a PhD in Mechanics from the Swiss

Polytechnic Institute and NASA. My original plan was to follow an academic career, but I changed my plans as academia tends to be more individual and I am more interested in teamwork. My engineering career began with Unilever where I did some interesting work on modelling. My passion for aerospace soon brought me to this industry and I began working in testing facilities for jet engines. During this time, I did a lot of work around the world. Then, in 2015, I was approached to join SABCA as CEO.



© Martin Gillet

# THE GALLERY



## WONEN IN HET BRUISENDE HART VAN ANTWERPEN ZUID?

In de gezellige wijk Het Zuid, in de schaduw van het historische Zuiderpershuis, verrijst The Gallery. Deze hoogstaande ontwikkeling bestaat uit 21 appartementen en 2 kantoren die volop inzetten op klassevolle luxe. In dit topontwerp van **Binst Architects** geniet u van fenomenale uitzichten, riante terrassen, ruime parkeerplaatsen en tal van andere troeven. Ook de ligging van The Gallery is er een om u tegen te zeggen. De verkeersluwe Leuvenstraat ligt wondermooi tussen de heraangelegde Scheldekaaien en het nieuwe park Dok Zuid aan de Waalsekaai.

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**DAN AND MATHIEU, CAN YOU GIVE US SOME BACKGROUND ABOUT YOURSELVES?**

Dan – I am in charge of research and future technology projects at SABCA. I'm also an expert innovator in electric systems. Currently I'm working on our transition from hydraulic to electric actuators in the field of aerospace. I have a PhD in applied sciences from the Catholic University of Leuven and I have been with SABCA since 2004.

Mathieu - I am the design manager of the actuation systems business unit. We make electrical systems for aerospace, managing the design, development, testing, analysis and certification. I have a Degree in Aerospace Dynamics and a PhD in Control Systems from the University of Toulouse.

**YOU MENTION THE TRANSITION TO ELECTRIC ACTUATORS? CAN YOU TELL US WHAT ACTUATORS DO?**

Dan and Mathieu – In the engineering world, an actuator can be compared to the link between the brain and movement. It is the muscle that transforms thoughts into action. For us it's the transition between something virtual, an instruction if you like, into a physical movement.

Our design work in actuating systems covers everything that is needed to make this happen, including control systems, virtual interfaces, signalling, status reporting, measurement systems and feedback loops.

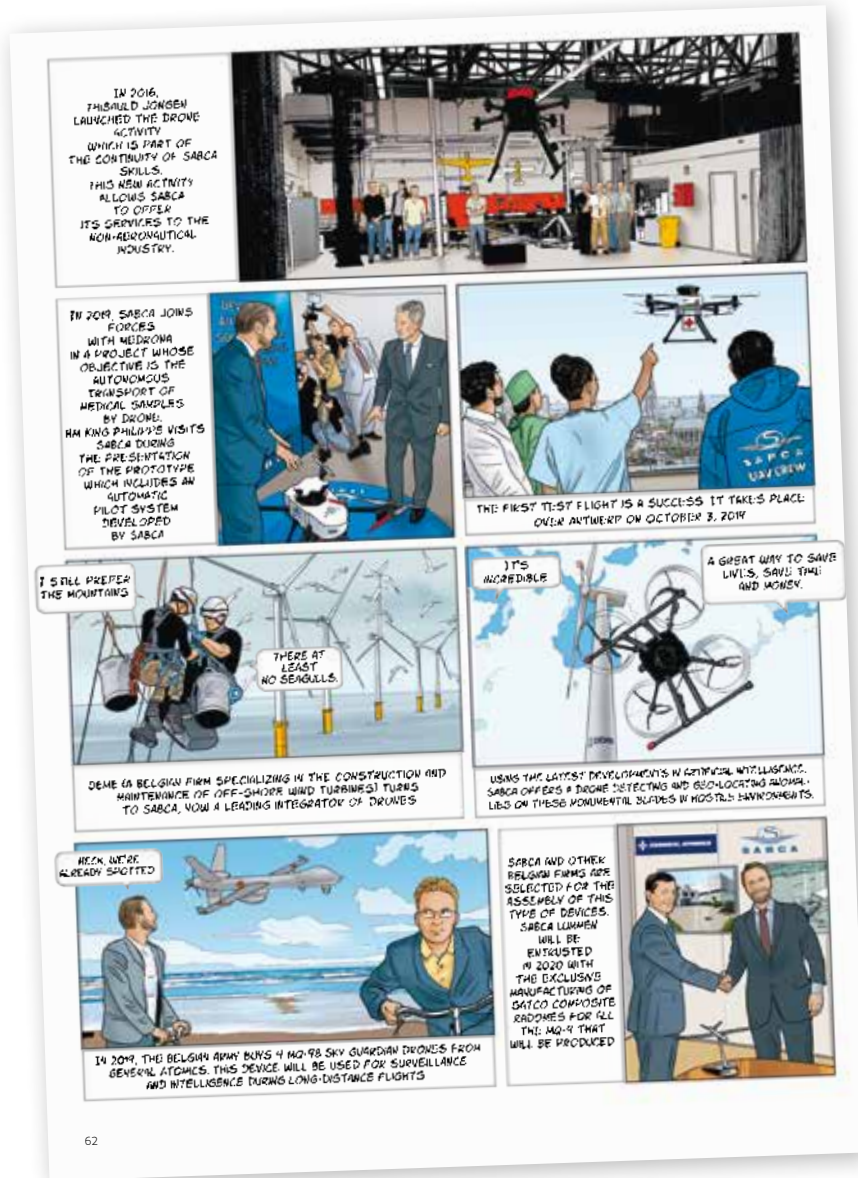




SABCA provides actuating systems for the air and space sectors, including launching systems for different European programmes. When a space craft is launched, our actuating systems control the vectors of the thrust nozzles, allowing them to change direction.

One of the new advances we are working on at SABCA is to transition from the legacy technology of using hydraulics for actuators, to electric actuators. The key technology enabling this transition to

electric is well known by Tesla owners, as it's the same principle used for the control of motors, managing the rotation and torque. SABCA is the first company in the world to apply these technologies to rocket launchers. There are many advantages in moving to electric actuators including lower mass and savings in space and energy. These systems are also easier to integrate and offer maximum reliability. There are less parts to go wrong, so they are simpler to maintain and safer.



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### WHERE COULD ELECTRIC ACTUATORS HAVE OTHER POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS?

Dan and Mathieu – Actuators are present everywhere but the ones we are interested in are used in situations where reliability, robustness and efficiency are crucial. When used in aerospace, they need to be extremely resistant to very high (or low) temperatures, enormous vibrations and radiation. They are used in the most challenging of conditions. These are also very smart actuators that can be used in situations where you need to have the highest level of service. There would be potential in using them for critical

applications like nuclear power stations, autopilot systems, or even performing surgical operations at distance.

### HOW DO YOU OPERATE TESTING?

Mathieu: I manage the test office and we have advanced testing facilities on our site. They include thermal chambers for extreme heat and cold, climatic chambers with humidity levels of up to 100% and vacuum chambers to remove air pressure. Then we have a lot of tests on electronics for fault tolerance. We also collaborate with laboratories for other tests such as pyrotechnics, to see how equipment reacts in the face of explosions.

**AFTER CELEBRATING YOUR 100TH ANNIVERSARY,  
HOW IS SABCA LOOKING TO THE FUTURE?**

Thibault - Our strategy is to keep the heart of our innovations in Belgium and develop our expertise internationally. High added-value work like engineering and R&D will continue here in Belgium, while more labour intensive work can also be carried out in our facilities in Morocco. This will make us more globally competitive. Belgium is known for its academic environment and high quality

of engineering. We aim to be a super integrator, with competitive products. We are also looking at the conquest of space and in the future actuators will be needed for building projects in Mars.

The history of SABCA over the last 100 years has been intense and unique. But we still want to remain 'human sized' in the way we remain close to our customers and listen to them.





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# MORE THAN EVER THE EXTENSION OF OUR HOME

The garden as an extension to the living room has been a trend for some years now, but it's now reaching a peak in the aftermath of the corona crisis. In 2021, too, we'll be spending more time than ever in our own surrounds. Garden architects, garden contractors, and swimming pool constructors all have their hands full just now in shaping our gardens into stylish extensions to our houses.





### BACK TO NATURE

Our gardens have long been a sort of haven of rest where it's pleasant to relax in the company of family and friends. Covid 19 has only served to speed up that general trend. Although minimalist gardens are still much coveted, we are seeing a growing demand for a return to 'real nature'. For instance, plants which form a haven of rest for birds and bees occupy a prominent place on the agenda. This fits in with a trend called 'rewilding', whereby the garden is converted partially into a natural environment to offer water, food, and shelter to all creatures great and small. More green instead of hard paving is becoming more important, together with a softer and more natural character. The array of outdoor materials strives for somewhat neutral tones which soothe the senses and form the ideal framework to build up the plantation. We see that particularly in urban environments where gardens are often overshadowed by other buildings. Many people have a clear preference for a wide range of fresh green shades combined with light grey shades, grey-brown colours, and creams for the paving. In that respect we like to use brick to create paths, especially clay cobbles in a herringbone pattern. The stones can also help to create certain highlights, and although they always use the same array of materials, they can create a sense of motion in a garden. That is certainly an attractive feature for urban gardens with a limited surface where 'tedium' can quickly set in.

### GREEN WAVE

Next summer, Mother Earth will take centre stage in our outdoor experience. With this 'primeval word' we can encapsulate the various outdoor trends for 2021. 2021 is colouring green, a shade which gives hope and revival. After the corona waves, it's time for

the green wave. The colour stands for holistic positivity and reflects our longing for nature, outdoor life, freedom, and oxygen. The grass under our feet gets greener and we dream of the happy outdoor life next summer surrounded by the trendy colour green. Neutral and honest are the new trends in 2021. Our world is in disarray and we're looking for grounding and connection. Neutral shades and natural materials give us stability and the peace and quiet of the earth becomes our safe haven, the foothold which we need to follow the wind of change.

The emergence of round shapes in our interiors has also put paid to corners outdoors. Round, oval, squircle, and organic shapes are dominating our terraces. These light and embracing shapes bring us closer to each other and reflect the need to be together again. Here, too, we once again see a wink at nature where only light and irregular shapes dominate and right angles are nowhere to be seen.

In 2021, we're letting the materials of our outdoor interior speak for themselves. The preference is for sustainable and natural materials with a long life span such as ceramics with expressive designs, stylistic concrete, or a combination of both. Even when our taste changes from time to time, we opt for a garden design which can take on a new guise with just a few minor adjustments. The border between in and outdoors is becoming blurred and materials such as leather are making their entry outdoors.

### TERRACES AND DIFFERENCES IN LEVEL

A garden with different levels can yield so much more than a level flat surface. Different levels help to subdivide the garden into zones and offer designers an excellent opportunity to experiment with materials. Stairs which lead to terraces or a pond create



benchmarks and generate a sense of travel and discovery. Plants, too, lend themselves to so called split levels. Borders at different heights ensure that a plantation can be designed to fill every line of view. Terraces are certainly the best way to handle differences in level. Indeed, with terraces you can make serviceable flat spaces instead of an impracticable slope. It is perfectly possible to convert one of those terraces into an office. Recently, inventive subcontractors have created mobile offices to enable occupants to work more from home, albeit as a result of the corona crisis. Yet also, and in particular, the garden is still an outdoor space to engage with nature and receive friends and family. For those who have the space, swimming pools are much coveted for the forthcoming summer, likewise fully equipped garden structures. On average, 3,000 swimming pools and ponds are built in Belgium each year and reliable sources expect that figure to rise to no fewer than 4,000 projects in 2021.

### **BELGIAN STYLE**

There is a trend which is proving to be a hit internationally and which foreign garden designers often call the Belgian style. That style is synonymous with luxurious simplicity. The philosophy of less is more is becoming increasingly prominent in simple design schemes with a lot of attention to detail and finish. Simplicity doesn't

mean we embrace cold minimalism. Those days are gone. Patterns and lush textures are coming back into our gardens by creating various plant zones. The line between pavings and soft plant areas is blurred by using gravel plantation to create a peaceful transition between the two. Ceramic tiles for outdoors are laid as garden carpets or as design elements to create contrast and texture changes.

After decades of symmetrically ordered urban gardens, we're now opting for organic garden designs which look wilder and more curvilinear. Those shapes look more natural and once again connect us with the flow of natural shapes in the landscape. It is a distinctive step to move away from the style of sharp and linear raised borders against horizontal wooden planks with which we've become so familiar.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

In modern gardens, too, the creation of a sustainable and ecological setting takes centre stage in all that we do, regardless of the size or location of the gardens. The materials and plants which we use, where we get them from, and how re-use certain elements in the garden is gaining more and more ground. People nowadays are much more interested in making gardens which are good for animals in the wild. Awareness of the climate crisis and the loss of



biodiversity have increased enormously, especially last year. We all take our gardens much more seriously as regards the important role which they can play in interaction with nature. This shows itself in the planting of 'wild' plants which form a natural biotope for bees and birds, yet without losing any glamour or impact. A few roses, plants, seeds, and grasses, for instance, can make a highly valuable contribution, but also a meadow-like zone, wild flowers, indigenous hedges, holes in fences for hedgehog motion, and nectar-filled plants help to create sustainability. Ponds also form an integral part of ecological spaces.

### SOFAS TO CHEER THE HEART

Spending more time in the garden and on the terrace will be the major item of 2021. King George identified three trends in sofas:

- Neutral and fuzzy: the new 'sofa neutrals' for 2021. Classic shades of grey are making way for warm neutral tints such as pink, cream, and beige. These light powder tones suit any interior or exterior and subtly provide more colour for your design or are neutral enough to be combined with brighter highlights. We're opting resolutely for warmth, not only with colour, but also with materials.



Exquisite fabrics such as velvet and boucle set the tone. A sofa in these materials becomes a statement piece.

- Glorious waves: in an age when we're living ever more closely with nature, this trend also colours the design of our living room or outdoor space. In 2021, we prefer to sit on gracefully shaped sofa with light curves and sloping lines, shapes which are also found in nature. This embracing design often also allows you to experiment with the various parts of your furnishing and to put it together as required or for the occasion.

- Green bliss and sky blue: Spending more time at home has only served to increase our yearning for freedom and connection with nature. Borders between indoors and outdoors are becoming blurred and we're bringing as much natural beauty inside as possible, with colour for instance. We're opting for green and blue, two colours which bring peace and harmony, but also give energy. Both colours exude nature and give us dreams of exotic trips, tropical jungles, blue skies, and adventures at sea.

### BELGIAN TRADEMARKS

15 years ago, Rechts van de Kerk started with the idea of furnishing your garden, terrace, patio, or other outdoor space with better quality outdoor furniture and accessories. Rechts van de Kerk has worked with the best top class trademarks within the sector since the beginning. When it comes to quality and top class design, Belgian trademarks lead the way. For instance, Rechts van de Kerk is a dealer for Extremis (West Flanders), sunshade manufacturer Umbrosa, hand-made pots from Atelier Vierkant, and the furniture company Tribù from Limburg. All of them are top class Belgian trademarks. Yet it's not just Belgian trademarks which are in the picture; there's also room for major international top class companies. They include Dedon and Gloster from Germany, the Italian trademark Fast, and Gandia Blasco from Spain. In addition, Rechts van de Kerk is also a dealer for Piet Boon, Bas Talpe, Oasiq, West14, Heat Sail, Domani, Tuuci, and Fermob.

### ECOLOGICAL GARDEN FENCING

In terms of garden fencing, the green sector offers scores of solutions. Wood is the dominant element here with both minimalist

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9  
4  
1859 m<sup>2</sup>  
476 m<sup>2</sup>

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REF. 2212649 ADRES OP AANVRAAG



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- Prachtig aangelegde tuin
- Groot zwembad
- Verscheidene vijvers
- Zuidelijkgerichte oriëntatie

EPC: 205 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>; UC: 2119938-1. Wgk (woning), Lwag (weide), Gvkr (woning), Vkr (weide), Vg

3  
1  
13342 m<sup>2</sup>  
233 m<sup>2</sup>

**SINT-MARTENS-LATEM**

REF. 2212318 ADRES OP AANVRAAG



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6  
2  
467 m<sup>2</sup>

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- Uiterst ruim perceel met weide
- Zonovergoten tuin met natuurlijke vijver
- Zeer rustige ligging

EPC: 447 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>; UC: 1745986-1. Wgk + Ng, Gvkr, Gvv, Vg. Mogelijk overstromingsgevoelig

4  
1  
8487 m<sup>2</sup>  
189 m<sup>2</sup>

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**VIEW THE ORGANIX COLLECTION!**





designs and natural-looking enclosures such as braided screens. In that area, Forest Avenue offers two top class trademarks. The braided garden fences from Ecowood offer the solution for every DIY enthusiast. They can be fitted quickly and are low maintenance and ecological. The wood look ensures that your fence blends in completely with the rest of your garden. You add a natural dimension to your garden. Relaxed enjoyment is guaranteed without nosy glances or any view. Ecowood nature stands for woven panels with real hazel branches. Ecowood panels are woven panels with synthetic branches in imitation wood. They make for an aesthetic masterpiece and well considered technical design, with a garden fence to match. With Woodscape you opt deliberately for low maintenance and a sustainable design. Braided fences adapt to meet your preference. This Belgian production blends in smoothly with the surrounding natural beauty and gives your garden a certain allure. Their own fitters come to your home to measure the space and install your fence. Moreover, tailored gates or doors in the same style are perfectly possible.

### VANDELLA TUINMEUBELEN

As a specialist in exclusive European furniture with a strong price/quality ratio, Vandella Tuinmeubelen aims to offer the most appropriate garden set, garden table, garden stool, garden sofa, or lounge set for every situation. That ranges from small urban garden to modern/rural garden, from pool house to pent house, from veranda to apartment terrace. An essential element is the wide variety of colours, material combinations, and sizes. A spokesperson says: 'We always consider the user convenience, functionality, ro-

bustness, comfort, and maintenance friendliness of the assortment which we select. But also the decorative content of the garden furniture so that you can integrate them perfectly and harmoniously into your living environment so that they can give added value to your garden, terrace, swimming pool, balcony, or veranda.' Apart from a wide range of exclusive and quality design garden furniture, spending time comfortably outdoors also requires good protection from harmful sun rays. That's why Vandella has also built up a sound knowledge in the field of parasols and hanging parasols. Eye-catchers in the new 2021 collection are the lounge & dining SUTRA collection from the manufacturer EGO Paris, the Dotty poufs from Roof Living (Made in Belgium), and the design fire baskets from Glowbus. The extensive collection of garden furniture from Royal Botania also forms a prominent part of the Vandella range.

### UNIQUE COLLECTION

For the creation of a special outdoor experience, Abitare Mooi Wonen offers a unique collection of garden furniture and accessories in a range of materials, styles, and finishes. Here are some striking novelties:

- 'Enclose' is a design by the Belgian interior architect Vera Borghgraef. This timeless and finite work of art can be installed both indoors and outdoors and will always make an impression thanks to its pure shapes and colours.
- Making a terrace cosy is often a matter of a nice plant. One condition is that this plant is in a pot which radiates that same luxury as the rest of the home. Choose a natural look for a pot in terra cotta or go for a gold-coloured version for an even more Luxurious look.
- For outdoors, too, a refined carpet made from recycled vinyl threads gives a natural charm in size. The classic braiding and the simple graphic pattern give each modern home a natural look both indoors and outdoors. This is UV resistant and extremely easy to maintain.
- The successful Captain Flint from Flos is now also available in an outdoor version for outdoor use in a garden or on a terrace. The floor lamp is adapted so that it can withstand weather and wind with no problem at all.
- Decorative cushions can brighten up both your interior and your terrace. At Abitare you can put together your own cushions and combine a mix of different sizes, diverse indoor and outdoor fabrics, and structures.



### HEATING AND SWIMMING POOL IN ONE PROJECT

Fik is a family business which has emerged from gas specialist Multigas, which has over 50 years of experience in home heating. Fik stands for top quality products, professional installation by their own installation teams, and personal guidance with correct agreements. Fik installs not only hearths indoors, but also garden heating outdoors. Customers can approach Fik for items such as Faber outdoor hearths. Gas garden hearths provide not only atmosphere, but also warmth so that you can stay outdoors longer. Moreover, thanks to the stylish design, Faber outdoor hearths really are an asset for your garden or terrace. Fik can also supply the exclusive garden hearths from Dru and the gas and charcoal barbecues and outdoor kitchens from Boretti Outdoor. Do you really want something striking in the garden? If so, choose a product in weathering steel from Azezz. A good example of one is the outdoor hearth with pizza oven, warm and delicious, you can't go wrong.

In 2020, Fik by Multigas also started installing swimming pools. After all, the technicians possess the skills to install swimming pools as well as hearths, so Fik wishes to give customers the opportunity to opt for an all-in-one project indoors and outdoors.

### NEW: EXTERIOO CONCEPT STORE

2020 taught us that outdoor life has plenty to offer, but we prefer to enjoy those moments of intense happiness together with friends and family. This need finds expression in the latest trends in the field of terrace design at Overstock Garden. Nature offers peace and quiet and counter-pressure to the digital overload and so we prefer to surround ourselves with natural materials such as wood and ceramics. A fully ceramic table top makes a style statement, and not only in your interior. In 2021, we're also seeing in outdoor living the appearance of more expressive prints which relate closely to natural stone and marble, but with the rugged quality of ceramics. With the new collections in teak wood and braided work, you furnish your exterior with the most sensual garden and terrace trends and simply bring that carefree holiday atmosphere to your home. Wood made a comeback in 2020 and this trend will continue in 2021. The solid and strong teak wood has its roots in the primeval forests of this world, but makes its way to your terrace via the Overstock Garden collections. Wicker, too, is making its way to your tropical paradise and, together with teak, forms a perfect synergy. These two natural materials seem to be the perfect match as regards outdoor furniture.

18 December 2020 witnessed the very first opening in Belgium of the Exterioo concept store in Knokke-Heist. Exterioo Tuinmeubelen is the completely new concept store from Overstock Garden, which plays the card of personal service and perception. With the motto of 'Outdoors is the best interior' as the baseline, the ultimate focus is on perception and service geared to every customer.

### NATURE AND ARCHITECTURE HAND IN HAND

Renson Outdoor is the global pioneer and trendsetter in outdoor living concepts. All terrace covers, car ports, frontages, and garden elements suit the same look-and-feel and are characterised by sustainability, comfort, and high quality. With Renson Outdoor you opt for top quality design which you can apply throughout the home. With a terrace cover or pergola from Renson, you create an extra



living room outdoors. The terrace cover is adapted to your lifestyle so that you can enjoy many happy hours there year in, year out. Freestanding or attached to the wall, an aluminium frame is the basis of every terrace cover. With the countless options, you can tailor them to suit your wishes. An automatic sun blind, LED lights for even more atmosphere, or even audio and heating elements, you decide for yourself. Linarte garden elements give you a uniform look-and-feel around your home and in the garden. Do you want to combine a freestanding wall along the drive with a frontage in the same design? Or do you want an aluminium sofa or plant box with matching lights in the garden? Thanks to the total range of garden elements, you decide for yourself the extent to which you apply the Linarte design. Even the (parcel) letter box fits nicely into the design plate. The vertical lines of the Linarte garden elements give your home a minimalist look. You can opt for two different profiles in 20 RAL colours which you can combine to your heart's content for a unique structure.

### NOBEL POOL

Swimming pools, pool houses, garden landscaping, fountains, terraces, drives, and much more; in short, a total package with no worries. That's what Nobel Pool stands for. Solid and sustainable solutions of top quality ensure that everything integrates seamlessly into your exterior. Nobel Pool builds traditional swimming pools in reinforced concrete and produces your swimming pool as required in accordance with high-quality standards and with professional expertise. One of the specialities are swimming pools in Briare enamel and mosaic. Thanks to professional work, we can offer you a 10-year guarantee on the basin and the interior furnishing. Furthermore, there is also an extensive range of covering sheets in various colours or sun blinds. Nobel Pool also assists you with the area around your swimming pool with terraces, ponds, and bubble baths. They offer a wide choice of natural stone and reconstructed stone in various sizes. Yet there's much more. Do you want to convert your existing garden into a fairytale garden? Or are you thinking of asking a professional and creative expert to construct a garden for you? With an eye for detail, the professionals from Nobel Garden will take care of your entire garden. Ground works, decorative paving, plantations, ponds, waterfalls, terraces, garden lights, or greenhouses: Nobel Garden guarantees to construct your garden professionally.

### FRAME PICE

You need suitable garden furniture, too.

Our summers are getting longer, warmer, and drier. Moreover, the recent lockdown has made a lot of people realise how important it is to be able to enjoy your own cosy garden or terrace. Michel van Weehaeghe, manager of Meubili says: 'This has shown that generally speaking people are prepared to invest more in the layout of their garden or terrace. Moreover, people now buy items throughout the year and, in particular, with a lot of forethought and planning. They attach great importance to a speedy delivery, flexible service, and good after-sales service. In terms of collections, models, and designs, there's still a lot of development going on. By contrast, as regards materials, for a good ten years now, powdered aluminium

is used for most garden furniture because it's highly sustainable and low maintenance. Moreover, teak wood has made some strong advances over the last five years. Braided work is still popular as well. In terms of cushions, there's been plenty of development with regard to UV and weather resistance.

Professional advice is still an important part of the final purchase. 'Increasingly, people have already gathered some extensive information online before they come to the showroom. Nevertheless, they still consider it extremely important to get some advice from a professional. Indeed, professionals can help with the choice of materials, colour combinations, and matching all that to the style of the home and garden. That might not be necessary for an extra sun lounger or side table, but to make the whole structure attractive



and complete people want professional advice and to be able to see and feel everything. The total package has to be right. Colours are important as well. Imagine, for instance, there are some orange highlights inside the home, then it's nice to reflect that to some extent outdoors as well. We go even further. We can even draft a full study file with 3D drawings of what a total project would look like in the customer's garden.'

Meubili guarantees an all-round quality service, including in after sales. 'From the telephone appointment and the order checks in the central warehouse to the final delivery at the customer's home, each link in the chain is performed by a friendly and motivated team of workers. Within the Benelux your garden set is delivered correctly by our own delivery service, unpacked, and even fully assembled on your terrace or taken to your garden. Do you live at the

Côte d'Azur, do you have a holiday home in Spain, or do you even have a second home down under in exotic Australia? No worries. Meubili ensures a smooth delivery even to the other side of the world. And so, you can even enjoy our immaculate service from a distant destination.'

Meubili was officially appointed as a royal supplier on Wednesday 20 November 2019. The garden furniture company has supplied the Royal palace since 2015 and has achieved its due recognition. 'An absolute honour,' Michel Van Weehaeghe concludes. 'Obviously, we're absolutely delighted. But whether you're looking for a quality private label or a top quality garden furniture designer, at Meubili everyone can count on quality, sustainability, a personal approach, and good service. We give a high priority to these values and, in the final analysis, every customer takes first place at Meubili.'



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# ROYAL BOTANIA

PRESENTS NEW COLLECTIONS



Stylish and sustainable furniture in the garden

In March 2020, when it became clear that the corona virus was going to be serious, Royal Botania was convinced that 2020 would be one of the worst years ever. However, it proved to be a year of vast growth, certainly in Belgium and the Netherlands. However, this luxury outdoor collections specialist is certainly not resting on its laurels. 'Looking to the future keeps us strong in these dark days,' says Kris Van Puyvelde, designer/CEO of the family business which is also turning out several new and supplementary products in 2021.

### BELGIAN OUTDOOR LUXURY

Royal Botania was formed in 1992. Since then, the company has built up an outstanding reputation with the creation of a refined and highly extensive range of luxury outdoor collections. This Belgian family business has grown into a leading player in the top class of the outdoor market. For almost three decades, Royal Botania has been designing luxury garden furniture for demanding customers. The silver thread through all collections is the nifty combination of top quality materials and outstanding skill. Royal Botania produces sleek and striking outdoor furniture collections which are both stylish and sustainable.

### OWN PLANTATION

To guarantee sustainability, the family business has consciously opted for teak wood which is not only universally praised for its great stability and strong resistance to the elements, but also shines in tint and structure. Royal Botania selects only mature teak wood from its own plantation, which was laid in 2011 and numbers over 250,000 teak trees on a surface area of about 200 hectares. 'Our mission is to ensure that future generations can also harvest and value this natural treasure. By creating a sustainable corporate model on the basis of regenerative forest growth, Royal Botania can produce garden furniture with less impact on the environment. For us, too, "People, Planet, Profit" lays the foundation for socially responsible enterprise. We regard it as our duty to give to the planet more than we consume. Our dedicated team constantly monitors the full traceability of each piece of wood used for our production to guarantee a sustainable operational management.'

### OWN PRODUCTION

To guarantee immaculate products year after year, Royal Botania ensures that workers pay attention to even the smallest details at every stage of the production process. The undiminished focus is on creating high-quality and luxury furniture items. Moreover, and mainly for that reason, since 2002, we've had our own production factory just outside Bangkok in Thailand. We employ over 400 people who commit themselves day after day to making high-quality furniture items worthy of the Royal Botania trademark.'

### OWN COMMUNITY

Thanks to its own production facility, Royal Botania retains full control over the labour conditions. 'We're convinced of the need

to value people for their work to keep them motivated and focused on their task. Love always has to come from both sides. Besides, we offer more than just a safe and healthy working environment. We also provide free meals and free accommodation for many of our welders, weavers, grinders, technicians, quality control officers, and mechanics. We also offer free medical care, free English lessons, sports activities, and even a nursery school for young children. And so, Royal Botania isn't just a top class furniture maker. Together, we all form a community committed to sustainability.'

### DESIGN

Each design from Royal Botania is based on three elements: aesthetics, ergonomics, and technology. 'Together, those elements determine the DNA of our trendsetting designs. The combining and careful balancing of these three pillars is the basic recipe for giving each collection the best in terms of garden furniture design.' For that matter, it's also a successful recipe. The in-house design team gathers international admiration and has already won several design prizes on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. There can be no doubt that in 2021, too, the new collections and supplements will further underline the outstanding reputation of Royal Botania. Here's a summary.

### STRAPPY

The elegant Strappy 55 has a coated stainless steel structure, which is available in the four well known colours. The frame, which comprises a continuous line, is functional and can be stacked. The padded seat straps and arm rests hanging between the frame give exceptional comfort. However, it is an optical illusion that the front and back are bound only by soft elements. In fact, the connectors are aluminium straps which are neatly eliminated by the unique upholstery. Together with the concealed arm rests, they form the backbone of the Strappy. That optical 'trick' not only gives a minimalist impression, but also yields a major asset.





The upholstery can be removed quickly and easily for cleaning or winter storage. With an extra set of straps, you can even express your mood swing instantly. As if the choice of about 70 colours and textures weren't enough, Royal Botania has added a choice of three highly resistant synthetic leathers to the list. As a supplement to the Strappy 55, there's also the Strappy 195, a lounge chair with a footrest. This has adopted all the nifty functions and assets of the Strappy 55, apart from an extra belt and a somewhat thicker frame.

### CALYPSO AND CALYPSO LOUNGE

Last year, the launch of the Calypso 55 stool proved an instant success. Since the Calypso consists of just a stool, you could hardly call it a collection, so this year this top class piece has been extended to include a bar stool, a low lounge chair, and a compact two and three-seat sofa. With the base in teak and the stainless steel back with accompanying padded cover, the Calypso collection is a real revelation which will make scores of terraces stand out.

All Calypso models can be ordered with a woven or textile back. There's something to everyone's taste and ideal for urban terraces, small gardens, or cosy corners.

The designers were so enthusiastic about everything that the Calypso has to offer that they're going a step further with a completely new Calypso Lounge. The series comprises teak wooden frames in three sizes: a square of 72 x 72cm, a double, and another one which is three times longer. L or U-shaped back supports can be mounted to each of these elements. The back supports are also available in three sizes and with a choice of an upholstered or a woven version.

### BLOOM

Five years ago, the Palma parasol was the eye-catcher par excellence at the Salone del Mobile in Milan and even captured the prestigious Red Dot Award 'Best of Best'. Now, the new Bloom parasol has seen the light of day. It has the same bright appearance and organic shape as its predecessor Palma, but is technically a completely new masterpiece. To make bigger dimensions possible, the pneumatic system of Palma has been replaced by a mechanism with a cranking operation. If you operate the crank, the upper section of the crown is pulled towards the lower section so that all parts join to form an organic whole. The view from below gives the parasol the elegant look of a flower in bloom, hence the name.



### CONIX

As well as the current round table (1.6m diameter) and the elliptic variant (3.2m), the Conix collection has been extended to include a smaller round table (1.2m diameter), an elliptic table (2.5 x 1.3m) and a square table with rounded corners (1.5 x 1.5m). A new central leg follows the geometry of the top surface. All tables have an extremely charismatic look and, moreover, are very easy to maintain. All stools from the Royal Botania collection fit perfectly with each Conix table.

### EXES

The launch of Exes 55 last year proved a great success, hence the extension to include the Exes 77. This is a lower and wider model to help you enjoy any outdoor moment with maximum comfort. This model has a sophisticated look and is available in the same colours as the 55. Moreover, just as with the 55, you can attach the cushions to the 77 with the stylish crosses in teak. After the success of the original round tripod table (1.6m diameter), they have added the Exes 120 to provide a smaller version (1.2m diameter).

### ORGANIX

The equally highly successful Organix series now also includes a round element 1.8m in diameter. By installing the four back supports on one side, you create a very comfortable double day bed. Do you prefer to sit face to face, as in a love seat? If so, you

simply move two back supports to the other side. There is an opening in the middle for you to install a Palma, an Oazz, or the new Bloom parasol. With an extensive selection of fabrics in 70 colours and textures, you can set up the Organix entirely as you wish. Furthermore, they have also added a small side table which fits onto any Organix element perfectly.

### U-NITE

The current U-nite collection comprises six models (round or rectangular), which are available in four colours of coated aluminium or teak and can be combined with ten sorts of ceramic or teak table tops. And so, you might think that there's a U-nite table for all tastes. Nevertheless, Royal Botania has extended the collection with an extra model, namely the U-nite 150V. This is a square version (1.5 x 1.5m) where you can sit down together perfectly well with eight companions.

### BACE

Finally, Bace is a discreet and minimalist table frame with straight rounded legs which you can combine with your favourite table. The dimensions vary between 2.2 and 3.2m. The frame is available in aluminium (black, white, sand, and bronze) and fits nicely under all the different ceramic table tops.

[www.royalbotania.com](http://www.royalbotania.com).



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Seven years ago, Rob Bormans started selling grass robots after buying one himself from Robomow. Not only was he satisfied with the mowing itself, but also he noticed that the robot gave him more free time. This now well established company is called Grasrobotplus, with the PLUS standing for service, professional support, and personal approach with its own repair and maintenance service.

Text: Wim Vander Haegen - Photographs: MTD / Grasrobotplus





### AN IDEA COMES TO FRUITION.

Rob's grass robot yielded so many benefits that it set him thinking. 'Every day, I enjoyed the neatly cut grass, basically without having to do anything myself. I also had more free time, because keeping a lawn in perfect condition with a classic mower takes up lots of time. Nevertheless, there were some things which he felt could be improved. 'When we needed to ask questions, we didn't know whom to ask. That gave us the idea of setting up a business selling grass robots and providing the necessary service. Personally, I felt that everyone with any grass should benefit from a robot, but supported by a company with the necessary expertise and able to provide correct service and maintenance. You can easily buy a grass robot online or in a DIY store, but that's as far as it goes. Sometimes, the installation proves difficult and you don't know exactly where and how to set the perimeter wire. Other people don't know how and when to maintain such a machine, and things like that. The idea of doing something about that so that people could be 100% satisfied and enjoy their gardens to the full finally led to the establishment of Grasrobotplus. 'We not only sell grass robots, but also we provide essential service to relieve owners of all their concerns.'

### ON THE BIKE

Initially, Rob did this as a second job. He cycled around in order to see or hear people who were cutting their grass. 'I then stopped and asked the people whether they were happy with their mower or whether they thought it was too much like hard work. I offered my help, if they wanted it, and advised them on the basis of my experience. That often resulted in them buying a robot mower. My conviction has always been that satisfied customers will tell their relatives, neighbours, and friends. That generates even more new customers who, in turn, tell others. My conviction proved right because two years later I was able to make this my main job and, two years ago, Tamara joined the company. Nowadays, I've long since stopped doing cycle tours, but the philosophy is still the same: Deliver a good product, provide the right service, and the ball will start rolling. Our activities are based in and around the province of Limburg in Belgium. Sometimes, we attract customers outside Limburg, but that's not our initial aim. We're still convinced that anyone with a problem should receive proper help quickly. Our business is located in Heusden-Zolder near the junction of Lummen. Our location in Central Limburg means we can reach the various corners of the province quickly. Service is one thing, but you also need to provide it quickly and adequately.'

### PROFESSIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT

'How do we work exactly? Firstly, you have to realise that each garden is unique. We visit each garden to ensure that customers will be satisfied with their new 'garden slave'. If it's an existing garden, we consider its precise layout. How is it divided up, how big is it, and how can a robot mower offer the right solution here? If the garden hasn't been constructed yet, we consider the future plans for the garden together and discuss the options of a grass robot with the garden architect or landscape gardener during the development phase. We always listen completely voluntarily to customers to hear what they think is important. Then, we give suitable advice on the basis of the garden and, as seasoned grass robot specialists, we answer any potential questions during the free garden advice session. Obviously, a good robot make is absolutely vital, hence our close co-operation with MTD, which took over the activities of Robomow some time ago. Yet professional installation and sound support are equally important. If customers want to make a purchase, we draw up a clear proposal based on the garden with an all-in price and, obviously, we fulfil our agreements. We offer professional installation so that, from then on, customers can enjoy the benefits of more free time and neatly cut grass every day. It doesn't end there either. Our personal service also means that Tamara and I are only too happy to answer any question which people may have about their mower.'

### PERSONAL AND CUSTOMISED SERVICE

Grasrobotplus offers various service options so that customers can continue to enjoy their neatly cut lawns with no worries at all. 'From DIY service with professional assistance to the option of fully comprehensive care with service at home within three working days. That's how we ensure your grass stays short and neat and you don't have to wait several weeks for a repair. Companies, too, call upon our services. We provide an à la carte service for them so that their company garden premises always look neat and tidy and they save on gardening costs. We have consciously chosen not to have a physical store. This means we can respond in a highly flexible manner to customer enquiries at a time to suit them, both during and after office hours. During the winter months, we also provide maintenance to keep the grass robot in top condition. We collect the grass robot by appointment and bring it back as good as new. We also keep a note of the

machine's history, obviously subject to consent in line with the GDPR rules. As I said at the beginning, we want people to enjoy their gardens with no worries at all. Everything has to work perfectly and that's the aim of our personal service.'

### ROBOMOW

Grasrobotplus is an officially certified dealer for Robomow and an authorised service centre. Our next question is why this make exactly. Rob explains: 'For over 25 years, Robomow has been a pioneer on the grass robot market. They were one of the inventors and, as pioneer and forerunner, they have all the right experience and know-how. Thanks to this expertise and their constant innovation, garden lovers can now enjoy more free time and nicely cut lawns. That is achieved with high-quality grass robots because Robomow appliances have proved themselves the best all over Europe time and again in tests carried out by reputable consumer





organisations. We wanted to work with a reputable A-make, hence the choice for Robomow. One of the many benefits is that Robomow mows the edges better than other makes. We've also tested the latest RK series. The user-friendly display and new mowing system are certainly big assets. These machines also run silently. Moreover, the make offers solutions for all gardens, from small and compact city gardens to large villa gardens.'

**100% CERTAINTY**

'Robomow is part of MTD Products, a global enterprise which follows all the technological developments closely and takes

them on board only if they are 100% sure that they are good machines. They have lots of know-how and experience and are themselves a fine example of the renowned German efficiency ('Deutsche Gründlichkeit'). Also important is the highly extensive guarantee of up to four years, whereas most makes offer only two years. On our part, we have the necessary knowledge, expertise, and enthusiasm to install and maintain each Robomow grass robot professionally.'

[www.robomow.com](http://www.robomow.com) – [www.grasrobotplus.be](http://www.grasrobotplus.be)  
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Photographs © Tuinen Verhaeghen





### FROM ORPHAN TO SELF-EMPLOYED OPERATOR

Tuinen Verhaeghen was formed in 2003 when foreman Daan Verhaeghen took over in full the gardening company for which he was working. Prior to that, the gardening expert had already lived an eventful life. Indeed, Daan has his roots in Rwanda. At the tender age of six, he lost his father and, barely two years later, his mother passed away. Both parents were victims of the Rwandese genocide. Daan ended up in a Rwandese orphanage and in 1991, when he was nine years old, he, together with his youngest sister, was adopted by the Bruges judge Johan Verhaeghen and his wife. Daan did a training course at Oedelem Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture, took a further course as a tree surgeon, and obtained the European Tree Worker (ETA) certificate. He also took another course in garden design and landscape architecture, but by that time he had to start work in order to finance his studies. 'Although I always intended to work as a self-employed person, I worked first of all at Marcel Morsa, which had a vacancy for a foreman. There I was able to put my theoretical knowledge into practice and I was given the job of supervising all garden construction and maintenance works. Marcel became my trainer and taught me the tricks of the trade. The time came when he wanted to close down the business and he asked me if I would be interested in taking over a number of his customers. It was an excellent opportunity for a twenty-year-old to take on and set up a career in self-employment, but it all sounds a lot simpler than it actually was. Due to the colour of my skin, I've always had the feeling that I had to do twice as well in order to prove myself, hence the reason why I took all those training courses. Banks, too, treated me with disdain when I needed some start-up capital and almost laughed at me. Thanks to Marcel, I did eventually manage to succeed and I could start work with one employee. I had recruited two more employees within a year.'

### COMPLETE RANGE

Initially, the activities were limited to maintenance. 'I had several major customers with big gardens and plenty of work, but I wanted more. Design and landscaping are my passion, but you can only do those things if you have a sufficiently large company with people in service. That was finally the case ten years ago and since then we've offered a complete range: garden design and landscaping, fish pond installation, swimming ponds and pools, laying drives and terraces, and the installation of blockades and wooden outbuildings such as pool houses, garden houses, and carports. Obviously, expert maintenance is still one of the priorities of Tuinen Verhaeghen. That includes not only lawns, shrubs, plants, borders, and hedges, but also trees since I'm also a tree expert as a result of the ETA quality certificate and the prior lengthy training courses. Today, I have four permanent employees, two in the maintenance team and two in landscaping. Depending on the assignment, they are supplemented by seasonal workers or subcontractors with specific experience and know-how in certain technical areas. If we can't do the job ourselves, we engage professionals because we provide the best possible service at all times and everywhere and we work for our customers as if we were working in our own gardens. And so, we're not satisfied until the customer is also satisfied. Moreover, a satisfied customer is always good publicity.'

### A GOOD GARDEN DESIGN

'A quality garden design always begins with the owner's needs and wishes,' says Daan. 'And so, a good discussion about his or her wishes is the best start.' Yet what does Daan think is "a good garden design"? 'Firstly, we can hardly separate the garden from the architecture of the adjoining house. For instance, minimalist architecture is hard to combine with a wild garden or an English

cottage garden; it requires a more structured approach. Obviously, owners' wishes and expectations play a big part. What do they want from their gardens? In a garden you first of all have to feel at home. After all, the garden is the natural extension of the living room. Many people hardly ever go beyond their terrace, but with my design I aim to immerse them in the splendid nature of a beautiful garden. I like people to think with me, so I like to challenge them subtly. A third element is maintenance. If owners themselves have green fingers and like working in the garden, the intensity of the maintenance probably isn't a big issue to consider. If that's not the case, we aim for a low-maintenance garden with more paving between shrubs and plants which grow slowly. In this phase, we also consider any bigger structural work which needs to be done in the garden. This can include laying a path or drive or building a carport, terrace, garden house, outbuildings, or a sauna. Will there be a garden pond or swimming pond and what about garden lights? Obviously, it's best to finish all those jobs before you start planting or laying a lawn.'

### MUTUAL TRUST

In his garden designs Daan also pays a lot of attention to harmony. 'It's important for the house and garden to form a nicely connecting whole. Equally, a good garden plan should consider the implantation of the property and the house. After all, that determines the entrance of the sunlight and the place which outsources the most wind. That's also important if you need to construct natural windshields. Finally, the quality and structure of the ground also determines the choice of trees and bushes which we can plant. Once that's all been discussed, we proceed to the garden design itself. That's always linked to a planting scheme which gives clear details of which plants will be planted and where. This relates not only to the shape, but also to the different colours of the leaves. Attractive colour shades in combination with a splendid pond surely look much more attractive and natural than an even green wall? One of our specialities is laying pavings. Do you want natural stone or cobblestones or do you prefer wood? It's all possible in both minimalist designs and organic shapes. For instance, round shapes





are an attractive option around a swimming pond. It goes without saying that we have to show due regard for the customer's budget which he or she can and wants to spend on the garden. Our customer service also includes thinking along with the customer. The customer's wishes always come first, since it's his or her dreams which we're bringing to pass. Therefore, we strive time and again for a good and hearty relationship in an atmosphere of trust on both sides.'

### **GOOD MAINTENANCE**

Once the garden is laid, adequate maintenance is essential. 'Within our teams we have various areas of "speciality". One of them is shearing in all sorts of diverse shapes from extremely rigid to organic. We also take lawn maintenance extremely seriously. We take soil samples and on the basis of the results we determine the best conditions for the grass to grow to create an attractive green mat with no differences in colour. We also follow the boxwood issue closely. In recent years, a lot of people have removed their box trees due to the box tree moth. We're not amongst them and we care for the plants until they are healthy again. After all, it's not the moth's fault that things turned out badly, but people are to blame. Cutting and caring for trees is also one of our 'in-house' specialities. Trees make an essential contribution to the garden and

ensure a 'wow' effect. I personally have a soft spot for old castle gardens. Those are gardens which have already enjoyed a long life. Maintaining them constitutes a real challenge for my knowledge as a tree expert. Moreover, you always unravel ideas; those gardens are often sober, yet they radiate sheer strength.'

### **RESPECT**

Anyone who maintains gardens enters the customer's private life almost automatically. That's why we attach great importance to that strong and mutual trust. That applies not only to me, but also to my employees. We make very clear agreements, and we insist on respect for customers and their property. For instance, some people have valuable works of art in their garden. We've even been allowed to fit some of them ourselves with our own hands. It's also important to answer questions quickly, and that's really a matter of honour for us. Even if we're very busy with work, we're ready to take action and make time for people. At Tuinen Verhaeghen we never stand still either in summer or winter. Actually, it's quite simple. If a customer has a request, we provide the right solution as soon as possible.'

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# ATELIER NOTERMAN

When you enter a warm bakery, you sometimes get a warm feeling inside from the smell of fresh bread. Atelier Noterman from Kluisbergen, Belgium, aims to give you that same feeling with its production of good trousers.

To feel flushed with pride from the elegant end products, but equally for the way in which those products are made. A fair deal for everyone to 'Walk to happiness'. The mission of Wouter Noterman could not be clearer.



### HOW DID ATELIER NOTERMAN START?

My grandfather Etienne started making trousers in 1946 at a difficult time just after the war. There were already several clothing firms in and around the Flemish Ardennes in those days, yet he firmly believed in his chances. In the mid 1960s, my father and his two brothers entered the business. When Noël, the eldest brother, passed away, my father and his brother René took over the management. I myself started in 1990. Eleven years later, I became the manager at a time when my three brothers were also working in the company. In 2012, my brother Lieven opted for a career change and opened a bicycle business, Reymundo, a real gem! Willem and Frank, my two other brothers, are still in the business. I form a very good team with Willem, whilst Frank makes sure that all customers receive each pair of trousers in tip top condition. This year, we changed the name of the business from its original Novavo to Noterman Fashion.

### IT'S NOTICEABLE THAT YOU STILL ALWAYS PRODUCE YOUR OWN BRAND.

We've always produced our own brand and private labels. In 2012, we started producing the Atelier Noterman brand in collaboration with Luc De Maeght. We wanted to establish a better market position. Apart from our own company brands, which we sell in the boutiques, we also have private labels such as E5 mode. This interaction between the two has always worked well for us.

### HOW DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE THAT DREAM?

We're in a very international market. When I started, Belgium was all that mattered. You could operate perfectly well on a small scale. We produced goods in our town and sold them in our regions. Shortly after I entered the company, we delocalised to Portugal because our operation wasn't sustainable in Belgium in terms of prices. It was the day of reckoning for salary costs. We're now thirty years further and we still have our salaried workshops in Portugal. There are scores of big players on the market in all price categories, from dirt cheap to very expensive. Nevertheless, I do believe that we still have a future as a local player. People claim that multinationals will take over the market completely in the future, but I believe in our strength as an SME. The story of Atelier Noterman, a story of sustainability close to home where the human factor is important, where you still connect to both retailers and end consumers, is more topical these days than ever before. I believe that with all my heart. The scale will probably be more limited, so we mainly have to develop our own style. That is still my ultimate dream.

### YOU WANT TO RAISE AWARENESS AMONGST CUSTOMERS.

Exactly. Obviously, we want to tell the story in order to offer good pairs of trousers at an affordable price. The collection consists of Denim, Chino's, and City Wear. An excellent fit, in high-quality fabrics, in the right colours, and covered with a delightful sauce of nice buttons. Accents here and there make these trousers just that bit different. The idea behind them is very simple; making a good

pair of trousers isn't rocket science, but it involves a dose of good taste, plenty of passion for the craft, and plenty of common sense. Definitely just as important is that our customers make a switch and consider the background of what they buy: Who has made the trousers, with what material, how are they washed, in which country, etc? We believe transparency is important for a certain public. And so, a good end product is absolutely essential, but we also want to appreciate the people who work hard in the family workshops. In Portugal, a country with fantastic people, I always savour that great drive and passion amongst the employees. Whenever I step into the workshop, I savour fabrics and the aroma of trouser production. That thrills me hugely.



### HOW IS IT THAT MORE AND MORE PEOPLE HAVE MADE THAT SWITCH?

If you look at what's happening in society, I'm not surprised. We live in a hectic world, always wanting more and wanting it faster. You can't count the burnouts any more. There are lots of problems in society because there's too much pressure. It all revolves mainly around making a profit, preferably as quickly as possible. People know that things should be different, but how? A company with a different philosophy of work is nice, but who dares to put that philosophy into practice?

Socially responsible enterprise, sustainable enterprise, we've always done that, from grandfather Etienne and father Johan to myself now. In the past, we made a Bermuda from every piece of fabric which was left over, and that was durability in its very essence, whatever Greta may say about the previous generations. Yet I'm all for idealists, we need them to wake the world up, because things have to change. I've done judo, which literally means 'the gentle

way'. I plead for evolution, not revolution. We'll still need a few generations to bring our manner of producing back into balance with nature. And so, we don't need to go back to living in caves. On the contrary, a beautiful and sustainable world can go hand in hand with beautiful and luxurious articles.

### TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOU YOURSELF AN IDEALIST?

I dare to say that I'm striving for a better world. If you consider the economic reality, then that idealism does sometimes get dented. Everything should be pure, but as soon as the profit margins are considered, you get a rude awakening. It's always about the dollars. Nevertheless, we're ready for change. Everyone can and may make that switch at their own pace and everyone can contribute. People shouldn't feel guilty about the past, it's the here and now which counts. We as individuals and as a company can make a difference. An example of that is our DETOX Denim, launched in summer 2016. The jeans are washed almost without chemical substances and almost without water. We use ozone technology via our laundry; This is the simulation of sunlight to give a pair of jeans their unique 'washed' look.



**'IF IT'S WORTH DOING, IT'S WORTH DOING WELL' IS ONE OF YOUR LIFE MOTTOES. IT'S EVEN ON YOUR SITE.**

It's a quotation which I've cherished for a long time, one which I've taken over from 'Bond Zonder Naam'. For me, that's the basis for everything.

What's important in your life and in the world? If you consider something to be important, you must throw yourself into it in word and deed. Do something specific with it, that's my view.

**'DIRT CHEAP AND SUSTAINABLE DON'T GO TOGETHER' IS ANOTHER QUOTATION WHICH SUPPORTS YOUR PHILOSOPHY. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO YOU?**

The two can't be reconciled. I understand sustainability to be the care for the environment, but also for the person behind the product. If something is dirt cheap, there's always someone somewhere in the entire (production) process who's underpaid. That's not the way to create a good world in the long term. A world where everyone on our planet has a good life, that's the aim and also the means of making the world sustainable.

**HOW HARD IS IT AS A FAMILY BUSINESS TO KEEP UP IN THE HARD WORLD OF BUSINESS?**

I believe strongly in the passion, tradition, and even a touch of romance of a family business, but it is double work: Emotions and

commerce meet each other in the wider family, in the close family, and that famous work-life balance isn't so easy. The corona crisis has made that extra clear. We, too, have had to dismiss people. During the first lockdown, we had our backs to the wall. The banks played a tough game to get the financing arranged, yet the eventual breakthrough in our case was based on emotion and humanity. Winners are losers who don't give up is a saying which has been even more applicable here.

Yet it has been an eye-opener in my 'old age'. However nice the ideals are, the figures have to add up. If a company ceases to exist, it no longer has any impact whatsoever.

**WHAT DREAMS AND AMBITIONS DO YOU STILL HAVE AS AN ENTREPRENEUR?**

Due to the events of recent months, I, like so many others I suppose, have thought long and hard about the future. I've realised that we have a splendid company of which I can rightly be proud and where I, together with the family, draw a lot of energy. And to expose fully the romantic in me; written in a very turbulent period, but our reason for existence more than ever before: I hope that with Atelier Noterman we can make the world just that little bit better. A glistening snowflake on an infinite snow plain.

[www.ateliernoterman.com](http://www.ateliernoterman.com)



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# RENEWED TESLA MODEL S AND X

## WITH FUTURISTIC STEERING WHEEL AND UNPRECEDENTED ACCELERATION

Where BMW and Mercedes usually don't manage to keep their novelties to themselves until the planned release date, Tesla surprised friend and enemy with an update for the two oldest models in the range, the Model S and Model X. The exterior of these models has been changed, but they stand out because of a futuristic interior with a very special steering wheel and the arrival of unprecedentedly powerful Plaid variants...

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The Model S, which is now almost ten years old, received no real exterior updates apart from a new nose a few years ago, and even the interior remained unchanged - apart from better supporting seats in a previous upgrade. For the Model X, the current update is the first major one that, apart from software updates, also changes the physical appearance of the model.

### THAT STEERING WHEEL!

The exterior updates to both models were modest, with less chrome and different rims, making the already attractive Model S look even more handsome, while the Model X became less bulky and appears lower.

The real revolution takes place on the inside, however, where the interior of both models is more similar to that of the new Model 3. Most striking, however, is the ultra-modern half steering wheel that immediately reminds one of prototypes at car shows, of which you never hear anything again in reality but which is now actually going into production.

So Tesla does it again. After being the first to get rid of the classic buttons by centralising just about all functions on a large central touch screen, in which it is increasingly followed by others, the Americans are now doing something even more daring... The traditional round steering wheel is going overboard and is being replaced by a half wheel that is flattened at the bottom.

Strangely enough, Tesla itself does not say a word about this in the short press release that accompanies the facelift, but that too is



probably typical of the different way of communicating of the brand that, under the leadership of the flamboyant Elon Musk, has grown into the most valuable car manufacturer in the world if we look at the stock market value.

### PACKED WITH NOVELTIES

The interior innovations in both cars are not limited to the new steering wheel. There are now also three display screens. The 17-inch centre display has a resolution of 2200 x 1300 pixels and can be tilted from left to right. It is now horizontal instead of vertical and, unlike the Model 3, is still complemented by a second driver's display that shows critical driving information.

Also completely new is the third rear display between the front seats that provides entertainment and controls for rear seat passengers. On that screen, gaming can be done via Tesla Arcade. The

manufacturer states that the system has up to 10 teraflops of processing power, making it comparable to the latest consoles on the market. We're willing to believe them, but we don't have a clue, so we'll leave that to the experts. Because the system is compatible with a wireless controller, all occupants in the back can play along.

Alongside a new three-zone climate control system with no physical ventilation openings, there is a 22-speaker, 960-watt audio system for a remarkable hi-fi experience. New microphones in conjunction with the audio system also enable active noise reduction.

### GLASS EVERYWHERE

On the Model S, the all-glass roof creates a spacious impression and, of course, provides an abundance of light. Infrared and UV light are blocked to reduce glare and heat, and Cabin Overheat Protection (like the Model X) keeps the interior always cool.





The Model X, of course, retains its remarkable giga windshield, the largest on the market, for a perfect view of the road and sky.

Model S Long Range, Plaid and Plaid+: For Unprecedented Electric Performance

True to its reputation, Tesla is introducing ever faster and more powerful versions of the Model S. The latest offering is called Plaid, and it's even bettered by the Plaid+.

The base model of the Model S is the Long Range. It is powered by two engines on all four wheels and is available from € 89,990. It can achieve 250 km/h and sprint to 100 km/h in just 3.2 seconds.

The range is estimated by Tesla at 663 km. The Americans give no information about the power.

The even faster Model S Plaid has three electric motors, is also four-wheel drive and leaves all competitors behind with a sprint from 0 to 100 km/h in 2.1 seconds. With 1,020 American horsepower (the unpublished European figure differs slightly), it breaks the magic boundary. Tesla has announced a top speed of 320 km/h and a maximum autonomy of 628 kilometres for this version. It will cost you € 119,990.

But it can be even more impressive, because with the "more than 1,100 hp" Model S Plaid+, Tesla claims to have the fastest 0-100 km/h acceleration and the fastest quarter-mile ever on the market. The Plaid+ sprints to 100 km/h in less than 2.1 seconds and can reach 320 km/h as well. The quarter mile is covered in less than 9





seconds. According to the brand, the driving range is “more than 840 kilometres”.

These are staggering figures that beg to be checked against the chronometer and should make the competition turn pale...

### **MODEL X LONG RANGE OR PLAID**

In the renewed Model X, there is the four-wheel-drive Long Range with two electric motors priced at €99,990, which is said to achieve 580 kilometres of driving range, accelerates to 250 km/h and re-

quires 3.9 seconds for the 0 to 100 sprint. There is also a Plaid version with three engines and four-wheel drive that is offered for €119,990 and would accelerate in 2.6 seconds, has 1020 hp, a top speed of 262 km/h and a range of 547 kilometres.

The first new Long Range and Plaid models of both the Model S and Model X are expected in September. The Model S Plaid+ will have to wait until the end of the year.





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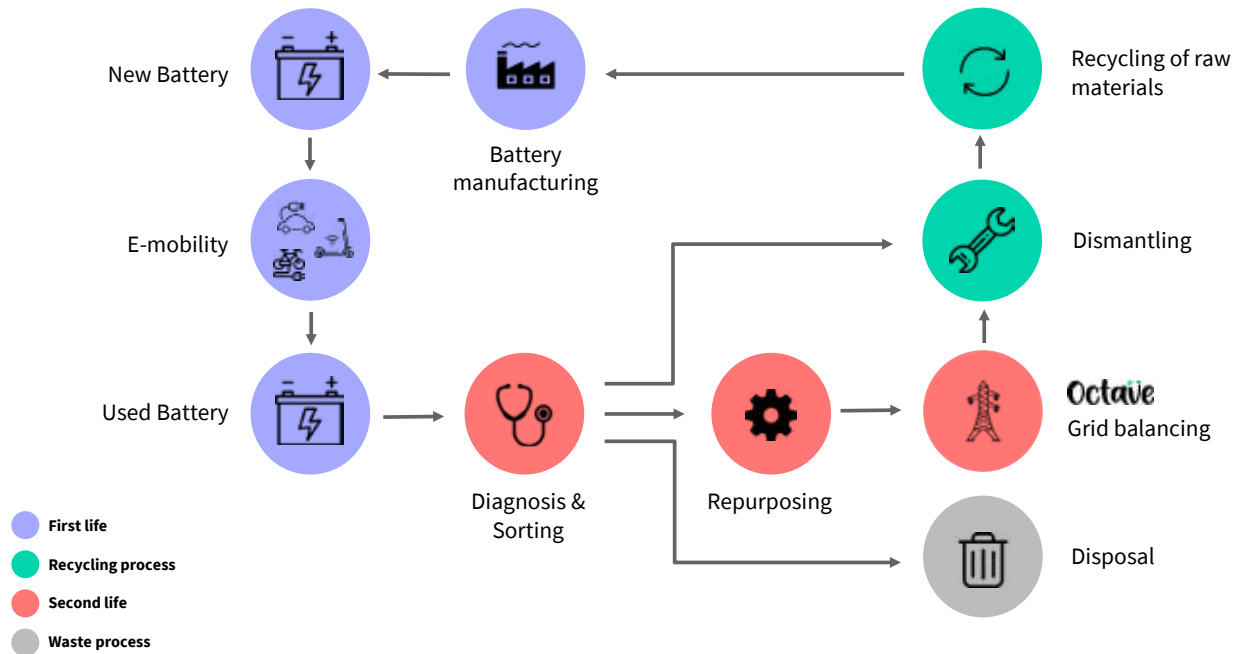


# OCTAVE REUSES EV BATTERIES FOR ENERGY STORAGE

TEXT JOANNA PAYS, MARTIN GILLET - PHOTOS OCTAVE



## The battery lifecycle



The potential waste of used batteries is one of the criticisms often heard about electric vehicles. Not anymore! Belgian start-up Octave has a new life for these batteries. What's even better is that these batteries will be used to optimise storage of renewably-produced energy on the grid. Maxime Snick, co-founder of Octave told us more.

### ENERGY STORAGE AS A SERVICE

Octave focusses on offering energy storage as a service, using second-life batteries from EVs. We target industrial sites that consume or produce large amounts of electricity. We are helping them to optimize their electricity bill.

After two years of preparation, research and development, we began business at the beginning of 2020. There are currently three of us working in the business and all of us are engineers with a background in the energy sector. Between the three of us we have expert experience in project management, energy trading, battery management and optimization of battery control.

The trigger for creating this business began with looking at the number of electric scooters in Paris. I started thinking "What is going to happen to all of those batteries?" We did look at scooter batteries at the beginning, but they are too small. Batteries from electric cars are more than 100 times more powerful.

Right now we are a fully independent company. We are self-funded and we also have a grant from Innoviris, the Brussels-backed institute which supports scientific research and innovation.

### MANAGING THE VARIABILITY OF RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION

A challenge with the production of renewable energy – for example from solar or wind farms – is that this energy production is highly variable. The problem is that you need flexibility in your energy systems to cope with peaks in demand. Sometimes there is more demand than energy being produced. On the other hand, sometimes so much energy is being produced that there is not enough space on the grid. The price that industrials pay at any one time is also linked to this supply and demand ratio.

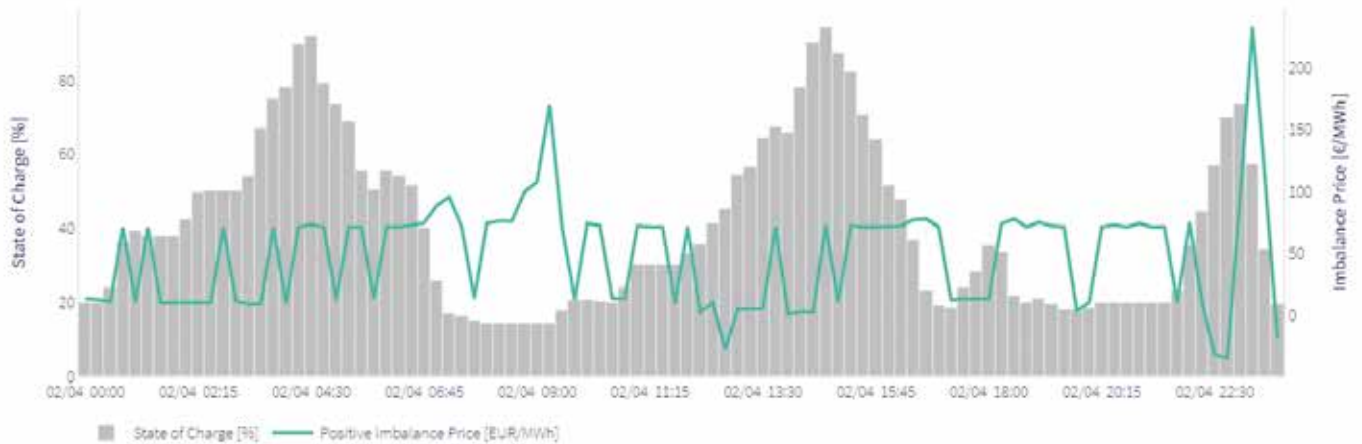
That means at certain times, they can be paying a lot more. It also means that sometimes there is no more space on the grid, so windfarms for example are temporarily shut down. This is wasteful. The solution is clearly energy storage systems that can give more flexibility.

We need to continue to decarbonise the electricity grid. To increase the percentage of renewable energy in the grid, we need flexibility. There is huge potential for storage using batteries and giving these batteries a second life reduces the carbon footprint of EVs.

### RECYCLING WHOLE BATTERIES OR MODULES

There are two main schools of thought for recycling batteries for energy storage.

One solution is to keep the entire battery pack together. This way you benefit from the casing and battery management systems. The disadvantage with this is that some modules in the battery will be lower quality.



Alternatively, you can dismantle each battery and only reuse the healthy modules. The disadvantage with that is that you lose the management control system. But it does mean that you can modify the management system and make it more suitable for stationary energy storage (rather than mobile energy).

The way we are looking at this at the moment, is that both solutions have their merits, so we are exploring the different applications.

Batteries for electric vehicles are considered end of life when they decline to approximately 89% efficiency, because you need high energy density for mobile applications. Cold weather also has a negative impact on their efficiency. When these batteries are used for stationary energy storage, you can stack up as many batteries as you want together - and you can control the temperature. That's where the real value comes in. Even if the battery is no longer suitable for an EV, we can exploit its capacity.

## PROJECTS

At the moment, one of our projects is developing a second-life prototype with Renault, using modules from 6 kWh Renault batteries. We are also working on other, larger capacity projects. Some of these are based on recycling complete batteries, others on reusing battery module.

A project that we just completed was to install a 67 kWh storage system, which groups several batteries together, to optimise the electricity costs of Ipalle, an innovative waste incineration company in the South of Belgium. This solution includes a 24/7 management control system, using algorithms we have developed to forecast whether the grid will be short or long on electricity supply. The batteries are then programmed to charge or discharge electricity accordingly. Electricity suppliers are actually giving financial rewards to companies who can help stabilise the grid like this. This waste incineration company also generates electricity itself, from the heat it produces.

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In the longer term, we will look at addressing residential markets, so that people can optimise their energy consumption. For this market to become attractive, smart meters in combination with so called 'time of use tariffs' are prerequisites. We are also thinking about providing a mobile storage service to EV owners who need an emergency recharge. It would be interesting to hear from readers of Supercharged if they think there could be a big market interest for this. There are many other interesting possibilities. One example is on temporary sites, such as construction sites, where diesel generators are normally used.

#### **RENEWABLE, ECONOMICAL, CIRCULAR AND DIGITAL**

Octave's strategy is based on four key pillars – 'Renewable' because we are helping to pave the way for more variable renewable energy. 'Economical' because we lower the electric bills of our clients. 'Circular' because we give the batteries a second life and 'Digital' because we control the batteries from the cloud. The algorithms we have developed run in the cloud, with no need for human intervention.



At the moment, access to second life batteries is quite constrained due to the young age of many EVs on the road. Car manufacturers are not eager to share them either and transfer of ownership of batteries can be complex, due to legal and regulatory frameworks. The good news is that the European Commission is planning to open up the market for second-life batteries.

We are sitting downstream from the EV community. If they triumph by expanding EV ownership, that will be good news for all of us.

To find out more visit <https://www.octave.brussels/>

# LUXEMBOURG EXPANDS CHARGING NETWORK WITH SUPERCHARGY ULTRA-FAST CHARGING STATIONS

Text Joanna Pays, Martin Gillet





*@Powerdale in Luxembourg*

Luxembourg is deploying a new network of super-fast EV charging stations. By 2024, you will be able to charge up at 88 of these new fast SuperChargy points, in 19 new locations all over the country. The SuperChargy stations come in addition to the existing 'Chargy' AC terminals already in place. Jacques Piroux, Luxembourg Country Manager of Pluxx, the company that develops the supervision systems for Chargy and SuperChargy, explained more...

The Chargy and SuperChargy networks are a government-backed initiative, supported by Creos, the Luxembourg electricity and natural gas provider. The Luxembourg state aims to ramp up its park of charging stations with up to 1600 AC 22kW points throughout the 102 districts. By this summer we hope to see the first SuperChargy stations on highways.

### **FAST CHARGING AND PAYMENT**

The 88 SuperChargy stations are all DC. 29 of them will allow loads up to 160 kW (compared to 22 kW for Chargy stations), and the other 55 will deliver up to 320 kW per socket, depending on the site configuration and the capabilities of each vehicle. That gives the potential to charge enough energy for a 400km trip within 30 minutes. In the future, as the power of EV batteries increases from 400 volts to 800 volts, this will enable faster charging.

Just like the existing Chargy stations, you can access with Chargy card, or a badge obtainable through your electricity provider (if you live in Luxembourg). Payment at SuperChargy points will also be possible with a credit card, Payment tariffs per kWh will clearly be higher at the ultra-high speed SuperChargy stations than at the AC Chargy points. During the test period, the tariffs applied are the same on both Chargy and SuperChargy networks.

### **LIVING AND PROMOTING THE EV LIFE**

I have been driving an EV for 5 years. When I made the change, I bought a second-hand Tesla from a friend. It was a dream I had been wanting to achieve, as I had already been convinced about the environmental importance of driving electric for some time. Now, with Pluxx, I am not only driving an EV, I'm also working for a company that is helping to encourage EV driving. Pluxx has other solutions besides the charging stations. We also provide smart cables that allow you to recharge anywhere, at home or while out driving, and then get repaid by your employer.

### **LUXEMBOURG OFFERS THE FIRST NATIONAL CHARGING NETWORK IN EUROPE**

With Chargy and SuperChargy, Luxembourg is the first country in Europe to have a national EV charging network. The AC network already gives coverage to the whole country and in three years' time, Luxembourg will also have a national network of high speed chargers. It is, in fact, the Luxembourg government that is implementing this infrastructure and all of the electricity used will be from renewable sources.

Looking outside of Luxembourg, we are already working with Q8 in Belgium developing an AC network and have plans to support the implementation of high speed charging stations there too. We are also starting to discuss solutions with other neighbouring countries, like France.

### **NEW CHARGING TRENDS**

The number of charging points is growing and it's going to become easier to find them everywhere. The low speed charge remains the golden rule. In addition to charging at home and at the office, I believe we will see a change in the way EV drivers charge their cars. They will start making 'top-ups' to their charging during the day, whenever they are parked for a short time, rather than always doing one full charge. That is a practical solution that works well for short around-town journeys, going to work and such like.

For longer journeys where you need to get a full charge, we should see some improvements. As we transition to sustainable mobility, gas/petrol stations are going to change and offer more services to their customers. Many of them will become places where getting your 'fuel' will become a more pleasant experience, with better restaurants and recreational facilities within a greener environment. That will definitely enhance the journey for long distance drivers.

You can check out your nearest SuperChargy or Chargy station in Luxembourg on their website at

<https://superchary.lu/en/>

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# INTRIGUING SPECTACLE COLLECTION

## WITH A MESSAGE

With WOLFIN, Inge De Muynck has created a unique and especially an intriguing collection of spectacles inspired by 'strong and independent women'. 'Women tend to forget that there is a force within them which allows them to conquer everything,' says the creative designer. 'When I look around me, I see strong and resilient women, women with a story of their own, women who stand their ground. With WOLFIN, I want to remind all women how strong they really are.'





### PERMANENT FIXTURE IN THE OPTICS WORLD

Inge De Muynck is now the joint owner and managing director of Technop NV. The foundation for the company from Destelbergen was laid in 1965 by Inge's father Jozef. 'Initially, under the name De Muynck Optics, he concentrated on the manufacture of spectacle lenses, but fairly soon he added spectacles to the range. In 1981, the company Technop was also formed and our family business developed into the wholesale business which it still is today. That means a permanent fixture in the optics world which opts for quality and strong brands such as Serengeti. For many years, we've been able to rely on a team of capable workers and we're well known for our crystal clear service. Even in today's world, we stay loyal to our traditional values, and that makes us a stable and leading company with a sense for business and an eye for the optical future. Apart from glass, frames, lenses, and fluids, we also distribute specialist optical instruments to opticians and hospitals.'

### CREATIVE HUNGER

2020 was the year in which Technop took another step forwards. 'With our own collection which is sold under the WOLFIN trademark. As a distributor, we depend largely on the activities of our suppliers. In that respect, in the future, we'd like a little more autonomy to plot our own course. Moreover, for some time I'd had the feeling that my creative talents were not really coming to fruition within the limits of wholesale. Designing my own creation satisfied my creative hunger and fitted in with my dream of creating things myself. Actually, I've always exercised my creative talent, for instance by designing my own jewellery. The name WOLFIN was actually self-explanatory, since my children are called Wolf and Finn. On the other hand, it also refers to all those powerful women who provided inspiration for the trademark. It's about women who are strongly independent

and an animal such as the she-wolf obviously fits in perfectly with that.'

### EVERYONE A SHE-WOLF

The first WOLFIN collection is called 'Rise' and is named after the poem 'Still I Rise' by Maya Angelou, which is about falling down and getting back up again time and time again. 'I've developed the campaign around women whom I know and admire. Women who chose at a certain time to go their own way and found the strength to take control of their own lives. I hope that via their stories women will realise that we are all she-wolves with unprecedented power.'

### 35 MODELS

Inge did not develop her collection Overnight, but she pulled out all the stops. After all, this is an extensive collection with 35 models which are also available in various colours. 'We offer both optical spectacles and sunglasses; each model bears the name of a woman who has achieved something in her own way. They don't necessarily have to be famous persons, and I've named one pair after my mother.'

### CAMPAIGN

To make the first WOLFIN collection known to a wide public, Inge created an accompanying campaign with attractive and highly intriguing pictures. 'I asked some of my female friends if they supported the concept and they all responded favourably. The collection is supported partly by these six ambassadors. Together, we want to challenge women to come out of their shells by telling them that it is possible for every woman to shine. Women should be aware that they can rise above themselves by what they do themselves. We want to inspire other women to try to achieve something unique in their lives.'

[www.wolfin-eyewear.be](http://www.wolfin-eyewear.be)



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Tesla has moved up to the next level in the deployment of its European Supercharger network, with 6,039 Superchargers now located across 601 stations.

When the first Model S arrived in Europe in 2013, the first Supercharger was installed in Norway. By the time the Model X was launched in 2016, that number had increased to 1,267. European deliveries of the Model 3 began in 2019 with a total of 3,711 Superchargers available in Europe.

Over the past two years, the network's growth has accelerated to reach a new milestone of over 6,000 Superchargers in Europe, allowing more than 2.4 billion kilometres of driving thanks to the Supercharger network.

Since the European launch of the Model 3, Tesla owners have made the equivalent of more than 3,000 return trips to the Moon, or 22 round trips to Mars, using the European Supercharger network. Today, Superchargers are accessible in 27 European countries, including the recent opening in Athens. Belgium now has 173 Superchargers in 14 stations across the country.

### **MORE CHARGING POINTS, MORE POWER**

When Tesla opened the European network in 2013, Supercharger stations offered an average of seven charging points. In recent years, this has increased to keep pace with the growing

size of Teslas on the road. Today, the largest site in Europe is in Nebbenes, with 44 Superchargers, closely followed by Rygge, with 42 Superchargers. Both sites are located in Norway. Next are Liertoppen, also in Norway, and Oberhonnefeld, in Germany, each with 40 Superchargers.

Over time, Superchargers have become faster and more efficient, in tune with Teslas. The maximum power of V2 Superchargers has increased to 150 kW and on-the-road battery pre-heating has been introduced into the Model S, Model X and Model 3. This ensures arrival at the recharge site at optimum temperature, so reducing the average charge time by 25%. And with the introduction of V3 Superchargers in Europe, charging speeds of up to 1600 km per hour are now possible.

The Supercharger user experience is often praised for its simplicity and reliability. Owners can view the available Superchargers through their on-board navigation systems, which also choose the optimal route and suggest the best charging options to minimize journey times.

Thanks to the Supercharger network, Tesla owners can travel serenely throughout Europe, without emissions. To find out more about Superchargers and the nearest one available, visit <https://www.tesla.com/supercharger> and <https://www.tesla.com/findus>



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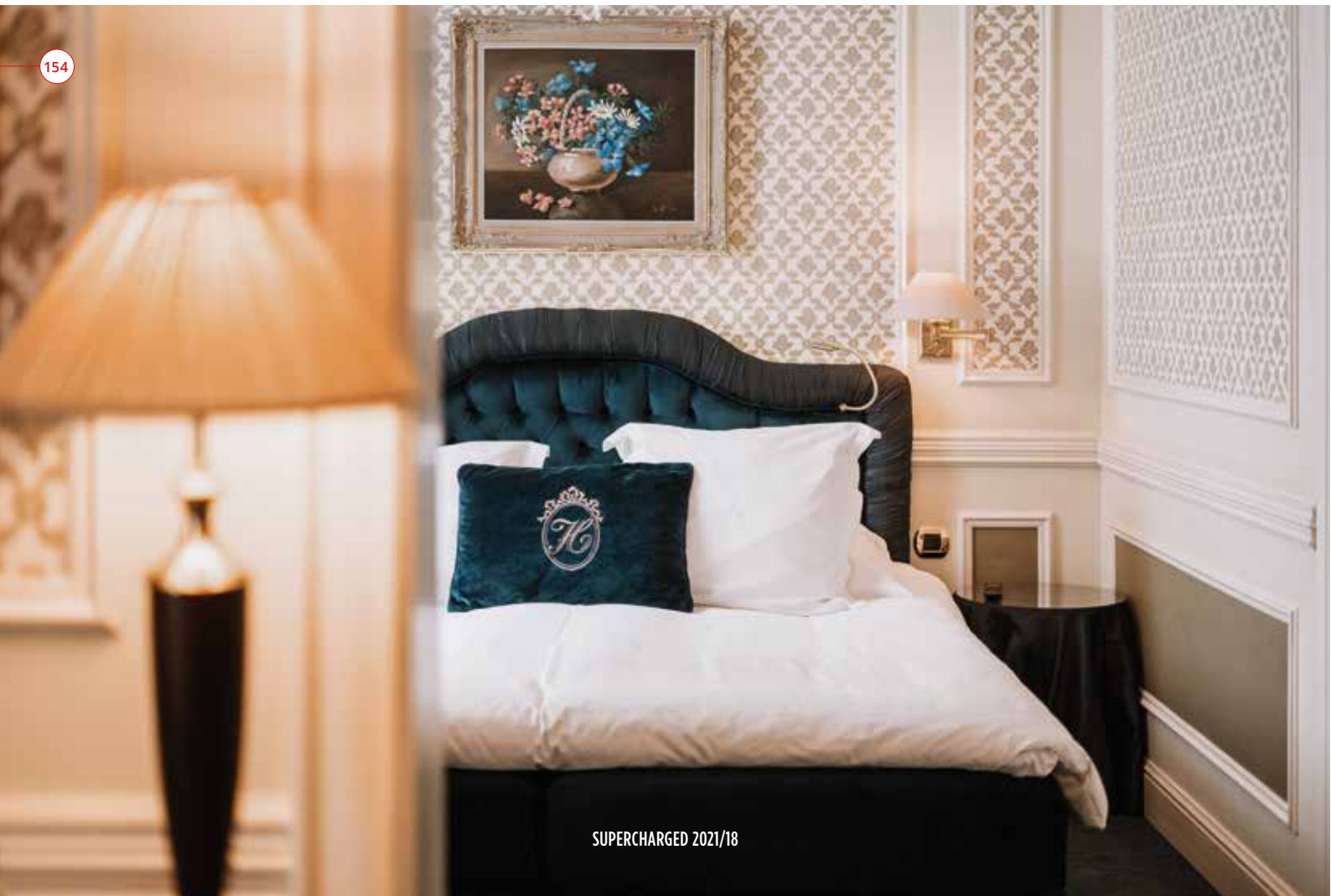
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# RELAIS & CHATEAUX **HOTEL HERITAGE BRUGGE**

154



## A FIFTH STAR IS THE ULTIMATE CROWN AFTER THREE DECADES OF HARD WORK

Are you looking for an unforgettable stay in peaceful surrounds which exude refined luxury and history? Relais & Chateaux Hotel Heritage is an elegant and luxurious five-star hotel (only the third one in Flanders) in a 19th century mansion in the historic centre of Bruges. Johan and Isabelle Creytens – Declercq and their team make every effort to meet all the personal needs of guests.

Text: Wim Vander Haegen – Photographs: Hotel Heritage

### IDEAL BASE

Johan Creytens welcomes us in the cosy lobby of the splendid hotel in Niklaas Desparsstraat in historic Bruges. The five-star hotel lies between the Market Square and the city theatre at a stone's throw from the Market Square. He says: 'Lovers of luxury hotels and guests who love ultimate refinement swarm to our luxury boutique hotel. The location near the canals makes the hotel an ideal base for sightseeing and trips to the various museums in Bruges and other heritage sites which are here in abundance. Visitors are also in the right place here for a trip to the shopping centre with its trendy 'haute couture' boutiques and confectionery stores, the theatre, and romantic trips. Moreover, the hotel is easily accessible by car or public transport. If you're staying longer, you can also explore the woods and marshes of Bruges or enjoy the coast in nearby Knokke-Heist.'

### CHALLENGING START

The monumental building which houses the 22 rooms, suites, and the gastronomic restaurant of Hotel Heritage has a rich history. The earliest written mention of the house dates from 1390. Down the centuries, various prominent Bruges families have owned the mansion. In the 19th century, the section above the ground was demolished as a result of the new urbanisation around the city theatre. The building as we know it today was designed by architect Louis Delacenserie in 1869. Some of the underground sections such as the cellar, which houses the gymnasium, do still date from the early period. In the 20th century, the building did lengthy services as a bank, but by the early 1990s it was in such poor condition that the bank felt it should be given another purpose. That's where we came

into the picture. Although my wife and I didn't have any training or experience in the catering sector, we did have some knowledge of the hotel sector. For many years, I myself worked in construction and, as project manager, supervised various hotel projects in both new buildings and renovations in Belgium and abroad. When this building was put up for sale, there was hardly any interest at all and certainly not for converting it into a hotel. The fact is that most hotels have over fifty rooms, but here there was only space for about twenty. The time came when the bank asked us if we'd like to do it ourselves. After giving it a lot of thought and considering the various options, I applied for planning permission to convert the building into a hotel and the bank approved the project. It was a huge challenge. The project involved huge financial investment in any case, certainly for a young couple from outside the hotel sector. However, we took the bull by the horns. The works started in January 1993 and in August of that year we opened the doors of the hotel which we then gave the name Hansa Hotel, Hansa being a reference to Bruges as a city of trade ('Hanzestad').

### CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT

Johan and Isabelle recall the first year as if it were yesterday. 'It was a fierce struggle to put our hotel on the map. We worked seven days a week and found it hard in the early days to get ourselves known. After all, we're talking here about the pre-Internet era. There were no such things as web sites and social media in those days, so we only had travel agents and tour operators to help us attract visitors. But the hard work didn't cripple our ambition. We wanted (and still want) to make progress and improve. Initially, we had three stars, but we invested constantly to earn our fourth star. In 1999, we renovated the cellar and converted it into a gymnasium. In 2000, we converted the top floor, which had been designed as a private dwelling, into four spacious suites. When we earned our fourth star, another problem emerged. The name Hansa Hotel no longer served our project. We've always had lots of guests from abroad, including a good number from Germany. As it happened, Hansa was the name of a chain of three-star business hotels in Germany, so our German customers had the mistaken idea that we were part of that chain. By then, we'd been in business for ten years and it was time for a new renovation. We stripped and redesigned the rooms and in 2003 changed the name to Heritage.'





### LE MYSTIQUE

Although the business continued to prosper, Johan and Isabelle still had the renowned 'fifth star' in the backs of their minds. 'In 2013, we took the radical step of restarting from scratch. After all, we knew that radical and far-reaching alterations would be necessary to earn a fifth star. A hotel also needed to have a restaurant in order to be part of Relais & Chateaux. In 2009, we achieved that with the opening of Le Mystique.'

The gastronomic restaurant is now widely known for its modern Belgian-French cuisine and is listed in the Michelin guide. 'Head chef Gregory Slembrouck makes a priority of local and seasonal ingredients. In his own typical style, he sometimes combines unfamiliar ingredients with amazing results. The gastronomic restaurant once again gave our boutique hotel added value and was the next step towards a fifth star. Yet one of the conditions for actually obtaining that fifth star was that the restaurant should open seven days a week and operate both with a menu and à la carte. That meant a huge adjustment for our chef and our staff and not everyone saw that as viable.'

### WINSTON CHURCHILL

In the meantime, another crisis has emerged, this time in the shape of the infamous corona virus. 'With Winston Churchill's saying "never waste a good crisis" in our minds, from the time of the first lockdown in March 2020, we started, together with our staff, to think about how we could emerge stronger from the crisis. In the summer of 2020, the kitchen staff co-operated fully to help us survive. At the end of August 2020, we then asked our team to continue working seven days a week and, thankfully, they supported us to the hilt. To run a successful hotel, you need good owners and managers and also fully committed staff. And that is the case with us. We have a top class team with a sound knowledge of the ABC of Hospitality.'

### ULTIMATE FOCUS ON QUALITY

In September 2020, Hotel Heritage applied for a reclassification with the Flemish Tourist Board so that it could meet all the criteria for a fifth star. 'It would take me too long to mention all those demands, but you can summarise it as the ultimate focus on quality and personal service. Our application was accepted. Finally, we had our fifth star, but, just as we obtained it, the government decided to

impose a second lockdown. The restaurant had to close again, but, thankfully, the hotel remained open. We quickly switched to gastronomic menus served in the rooms and we took the opportunity to reinvent ourselves. For instance, we've added spa and wellness facilities such as body massage and facial care. Obtaining the fifth star gave us considerable publicity to help us through the winter of 2020-21 quite well. That was due to Belgian visitors, I certainly want to stress that. We now hope to be able to switch quickly to normal hotel life because obviously we're looking forward to welcoming both Belgian and foreign visitors back in our five-star accommodation. We're ready to surpass everyone's expectations and give visitors an unforgettable stay.'

### FOR THE VISITOR LOOKING FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL

Most of the visitors to Hotel Heritage are tourists who are looking for a stay with something extra special. 'In the past, we also had a number of business guests, but over the years their numbers have gradually diminished. That's not down to us, but Bruges City Council which has implemented a shift over the last 25 years so that now there aren't any really big companies left in Bruges, let alone multinationals. Bruges is an art history city and is now fully committed to leisure. Times have changed, but obviously we've adapted and we target visitors looking for something special in terms of overnight stays, service, and top class gastronomy. A new congress centre is opening here shortly, so that could regenerate business tourism. But in the meantime we're fully committed to our hotel tourism, both short and long-stay. It's not easy because over the past decade we've weathered one crisis situation after another. There was 9/11, the economic crisis, and the Mexican flu in 2009. Then there were extra problems which were widely reported in the foreign press, such as the dioxin crisis and the terrorist attacks in Paris and Zaventem. In just 24 hours, a full hotel here witnessed a complete exodus. However, we know that such things are typical of our sector and we're used to anticipating things quickly. Moreover, it's still a sector which is subject to serious investments. Standing still here really means going backwards. And so, it's certainly a hard trade, but a highly satisfying one. We always want to improve and we never stand still. We're not satisfied until our visitors are happy. And that's why we do what we do at Hotel Heritage!'

### YOUR STAY IN HOTEL HERITAGE

The 22 rooms in Hotel Heritage combine comfort and classic elegance with discreet technology. All rooms and suites are equipped with free WIFI, i-Pad, tea & Nespresso. Guests enjoy the hand-made biological Nilson beds and high-quality sheets. Fresh seasonal fruit and mineral water are always available. Standard equipment also includes flat-screen TV, mini-bar, ecological beauty products from Sothys, hair dryer, bathrobes and slippers, make-up mirror, trouser press, steam iron and ironing board, safe with integrated socket, and evening cleaning service.

- Classic rooms (20m<sup>2</sup> - two adults - Queen size bed) are compact and elegantly designed in classic Louis XVI style, plus modern technology and high-quality facilities to guarantee a comfortable stay. The marble bathroom is fitted with a wash basin, shower-bath (two in one), and toilet.

- Deluxe rooms (25-30m<sup>2</sup> - two adults + one child - King size bed) are extra equipped with a cosy lounge, ideal for guests who want to enjoys some extra space. The marble bathroom is here fitted with a bath, shower, and toilet.

- The 40m<sup>2</sup> Junior Suites with a view of the Bruges skyline and the theatre ('stadsschouwburg'), or the monumental Belfry also have a cosy lounge. The original wooden beams reflect the natural structure of the historic building. They are situated on the top floor with easy access to the cosy roof terrace. The marble bathroom is fitted with a bubble bath, shower, double wash basin, and toilet.

### THE SUMMER OF 2021

Although the government has announced some relaxation of the corona measures for the summer of 2021, for the time being it doesn't look like we can return to 'normal'. And so, Hotel Heritage has compiled some special offers to make a stay in Bruges even more attractive. The plans include detailed cycling, hiking, and golf offers, Vespa tours, luxurious picnic baskets, and private dining in a hotel room. And so, this is an ideal opportunity to enjoy a refined staycation in your own country.

#### More information:

Hotel Heritage  
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# WAT DOET COVID-19 MET DE VASTGOEDMARKT?

Blijf in uw kot: het was zonder twijfel dé uitspraak van 2020. Maar al dat thuisblijven heeft ook een invloed op onze huizen. Tijdens de lockdown viel alles stil en erna kwam er een rush op vastgoed met een oververhitte markt tot gevolg. What's next? Dat is de centrale vraag tijdens ons gesprek met Filip Dewaele, CEO van Dewaele vastgoedgroep, Véronique Goossens, Head of Research bij de economische studiedienst Belfi us, en Davy Demuyne, CEO van ION.



**De prijzen van vastgoed zijn na de lockdown gestegen. Een huis in Vlaanderen kostte in het 3<sup>de</sup> kwartaal gemiddeld 5,5% meer dan vorig jaar. Voor een appartement was dat zelfs 6%. Voelen jullie dat de prijzen zo fors stijgen?**

**Filip:** “Tegen onze verwachtingen in, was er na de lockdown heel wat interesse in vastgoed. Mensen hebben tijd gehad om na te denken, te overleggen en zich voor te bereiden. En als er veel kopers zijn, stijgen de prijzen.”

**Davy:** “Kort na de lockdown kenden sommige van onze projecten een daling in de verkoopcijfers, terwijl we bij andere projecten sterk stijgende cijfers zagen. Vooral naar tweede verblijven aan de kust en naar investeringsvastgoed in een beperkte prijs categorie was er een grote vraag. Vooral de verkoop van nieuwbouwprojecten op plan is vertraagd.

**Maar als bedrijf kan je de markt niet veranderen. Wij denken vooral na over de toekomst: welk type product moeten wij ontwikkelen om aan de vraag tegemoet te komen?”**

**Véronique:** “Het is duidelijk dat er een rush is geweest. Wij verwachtten dat vastgoed in het najaar van 2020 aan een afkoelingsperiode is begonnen, maar wij denken niet dat de huizenprijzen fors zullen beginnen te dalen. Mensen krijgen meer angst. Angst voor het virus, angst om hun job te verliezen

...

Daarom verwachten we in 2021 en 2022 een lichte afkoeling van de markt. We verwachten geen grote daling omdat de markt zeer goed ondersteund wordt door allerlei factoren. Enerzijds de enorm lage rente, het is spotgoedkoop om te lenen. Anderzijds is er een grote woningnood: de babyboomgeneratie wil langer in hun eigen huis blijven wonen en er is een toenemend aantal éénoudergezinnen.”



**Sinds mei 2020 werden er meer panden in de iets hogere prijsklasse verkocht. Mensen hechten meer belang aan een tuin en hebben misschien meer bureau ruimte nodig. Merken jullie dat in de vraag naar nieuwe ontwikkelingen? Of in de verkoop?**

**Davy:** "Ik denk dat die impact beperkt is, want fi naal komt het terug op betaalbaarheid. Het is je portemonnee die bepaalt wat je kan kopen. Een kwalitatieve huisvesting met een ruim terras is iets waar wij al jaren op inzetten. Een beperkte private buitenruimte maakt het appartement betaalbaar. De laatste jaren zetten wij enorm hard in op publieke ruimte. Bij onze grootschalige projecten voorzien wij een aangenaam kader met een groene omgeving. Ik benadruk wel nog even de betaalbaarheid. Mensen konden de stijgende prijzen van de afgelopen jaren betalen dankzij de goedkope fi nanciering. De intrestvoeten zijn alleen maar gezakt. Ik deel de visie van de mensen hier rondom de tafel dat er een relatieve shift zal gebeuren van verkoop naar huur."

België is traditioneel een kopersmarkt, maar we komen in een situatie waarin 30% moet huren. Ik denk dat dit de komende jaren verder zal evolueren naar 50%. Wij zien er de voordelen van in om vooral op huurwoningen in te zetten, waar er nog altijd vraag naar zal zijn. Er zijn nog investeerders die vertrouwen hebben in vastgoed, zolang je hen kunt ontzorgen.

Veel mensen hebben slechte ervaringen met verhuur, omdat ze zelf de problemen moeten oplossen. Ik zie dat verschillende spelers daarop inspelen door investeerders te ontzorgen.

De huurmarkt groeit. Door het budgettaire aspect, maar ook de overheid speelt een rol."

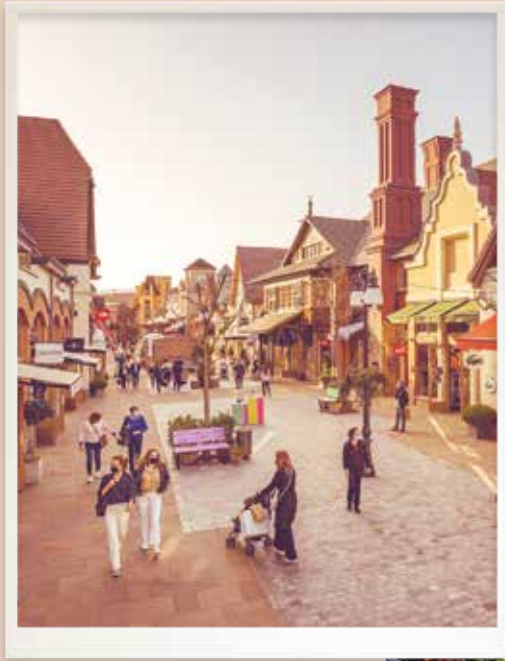
**Filip, voel je als vastgoedmakelaar ook de stijgende vraag naar huurpanden?**

**Filip:** "Er is inderdaad een groei van de huurmarkt. Dat komt enerzijds door het budgettaire, maar ook de overheid speelt hier een rol. Vroeger zette de overheid in op eigen woningen om het pensioenvraagstuk op te lossen. Maar om de werkmobiliteit te verhogen heb je meer huurders nodig. Zo kan het fi leprobleem opgelost worden, want huurders gaan dichterbij hun werk wonen. Politiek is die switch volledig gemaakt. Onder andere daarom werd vorig jaar de woonbonus afgeschaft."

**Véronique:** "De verhuurmarkt zal levendig blijven, maar een stijging naar 50%, dat lijkt mij wel heel enthousiast. Zo fel zie ik het niet evolueren, maar het is een feit dat heel wat jonge mensen het moeilijk hebben om een woning te kopen.

Daarnaast is de jeugd veel fl exibeler. Ze hoppen vaker van het ene naar het andere: soorten jobs, soorten activiteiten, het onderbreken van een carrière ..."

**Filip:** "We zien inderdaad dat de jeugd fl exibel huurt in grote steden. Maar vanaf dat ze gezinnen beginnen te stichten worden ze toch weer echte Vlamingen en is het concept 'huisje tuintje' niet ver weg. Een switch naar 50% huurders is niet voor morgen. Maar de tendens dat we minder huurders hebben en meer eigenaars is totaal gekeerd."



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# BELEEF TERHILLS

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**AFFINIMMO**

# THE GOMMAIRE BRAND

Gommaire is a Belgian brand that was established in January 2015 and is a reflection of the combined ideas and years of experience of Gommaire Cleybergh, Bert Verelst, and Laurent De Greef. Gommaire represents a timeless collection of indoor and outdoor furniture, complemented by an extensive collection of decorative pieces. Each item is instilled with an organic accent that is reflected throughout the brand as a whole. Nearly the entire collection is the outcome of Cleybergh, Verelst, and De Greef's creative and design talent.



Gommaire – Organic Living is expanding its current collection with new indoor, outdoor, and home decor products. The brand remains true to its methods and high-quality materials in opting for new variations on existing forms. For example, new glassware, woven accessories, and a new shade – authentic grey patine – are being added to the collection, all of which subtly allude to the current collection. New furniture and fabrics will also be making their début in the outdoor collection.







Gommaire doesn't follow the traditional pattern where new collections are concerned. The brand represents timeless, contemporary classics that transcend trends. "Sustainability is important to us, which is why we've decided not to follow the traditional seasons, collections, and trends. We're staying true to our own path and our own way of working. That means that this isn't a spring collection, but rather an impeccably matched addition of new products to the current range," says Bert, one of Gommaire's three founders.

### A NEW SHOWROOM FOR PROFESSIONALS

Last spring, when the news arrived that 2020's major interior design fairs were all being cancelled, Gommaire stepped up and took advantage of the circumstances by giving its Belgian showroom a complete makeover and setting up a brand-new virtual showroom.



The ground floor, for example, is now exclusively dedicated to the Decoration collection. One of the three inspirational dynamos behind the brand, Gommaire, personally finished each of the round pedestals by hand to ensure that the showroom items would be showcased to their full advantage. The entire top floor was cleared

out to make room for the indoor and outdoor collections currently on display. Professional customers, interior designers, and project developers can make an appointment to visit and discover the full collection by themselves or accompanied by their clients. Explore the virtual showroom on [www.gommaire.com/showroom](http://www.gommaire.com/showroom)

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