



The American Club of Brussels

News & Events

An International Club with an American Heart

March 2012

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Dine-Out at Ciao Bella

Thursday, March 22



Come along for an evening of fellowship, fun, and a great Italian meal on Thursday, March 22 at 7:00 p.m. at the Ciao Bella restaurant on Rue Veydt, a pleasant side street near Avenue Louise in the heart of Ixelles. Chef Luigi will prepare a special menu for us at a very good price. He will welcome us to his cozy restaurant which emphasizes simple and homemade Italian dishes.

MENU

Apéritif offered by the house

Starter

Antipasti di verdure
(assorted steamed or fried seasonal vegetables)

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Main dishes

Scaloppine con pasta
(veal scaloppine with pasta)
or
Pasta Norma
(pasta with eggplant, zucchini, and tomatoes)

* * *

Dessert

Macedonia di frutta fresca
(fresh fruit salad)

Ciao Bella

Rue Veydt 50
1050 Brussels (Ixelles)
Tel: 02/538.57.17

Event Details

Date: Thursday, March 22

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Ciao Bella, Rue Veydt 50, 1050 Brussels (Ixelles)

Price: €35 for ACB and AWCB members, and €40 for non-members, not including beverages. Please choose your main dish when you sign up.

Sign up: Reservations are due by noon on Tuesday, March 20 by email

(info@americanclubbrussels.org), online at www.americanclubbrussels.org, or by telephone to the ACB Office Manager (02/219.58.08). Payment to ACB at BE55 4279 1958 8144 (BIC/SWIFT: KREDBEBB) will confirm your reservation. Be sure to mention "dine-out" in the communications section of the virement. Cancellations are possible until noon on Tuesday, March 20. Participants canceling after this time, as well as no-shows, are charged the full cost of the event.

Final Friday Cocktails

Friday, March 30
6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Renaissance Brussels Hotel
(ground floor behind the restaurant)
Rue du Parnasse 19, 1050 Brussels (Ixelles)
(walking distance from Place du Luxembourg)

Cash bar open to all. Newcomers to Belgium and prospective ACB members are especially welcome. No reservation is required. Bring a guest or two.

Dates to Remember

- Wednesday, February 29: Deloitte Tax Seminar
 - Tuesday, March 6: Book launch of *Retiring in Belgium: A Guide for Expats*
 - Saturday, March 17: The Irish Club of Brussels' St. Patrick's Day Ball at the Conrad Hotel
 - Sunday, March 18: Jazz Brunch at the Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel
 - Thursday, March 22: Dine-Out at Ciao Bella restaurant
 - Thursday, March 22: Young Members' Happy Hour
 - Friday, March 30: Final Friday cocktails
 - Tuesday, April 3: Pioneers' Dinner at Château Ste.-Anne in Brussels
 - Saturday, April 14: Guided visit and optional free concert at the Museum of Musical Instruments in Brussels
 - Sunday, May 6: America Day at the Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp
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Deloitte Tax Seminar – Last Call

As an American citizen, you know it is your obligation to file a tax return on your worldwide income every year. But perhaps the U.S. Tax Code isn't clear enough when it comes to your situation? Or you're just plain confused by the new tax changes? So what do you do? Come along to Deloitte's annual ACB tax seminar, and ask the questions to get the answers for all your U.S. tax needs. A team of Deloitte experts is prepared to give you an update on the latest U.S. tax changes and planning strategies, and set you on the right path.

Topics covered during the seminar include:

- Income tax updates;
- Estate tax;
- New reporting requirements for foreign financial assets;
- Increased focus on Passive Foreign Investment Companies and Foreign Trusts.

Event Details

Date: Wednesday, February 29

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., followed by Q&A and cocktails

Place: Deloitte (Grand'Place Room), Berkenlaan 8A, 1831 Diegem

Price: €10 for ACB and AWCB members; €15 for non-members

Sign up: Reservations are due by noon on Friday, February 24 by email (info@americanclubbrussels.org), online at www.americanclubbrussels.org, or by telephone to the ACB Office Manager (02/219.58.08). Payment to ACB at BE55 4279 1958 8144 (BIC/SWIFT: KREDBEBB) will confirm your reservation. Specify "Tax Seminar" in the communications section of the virement. Note that cancellations are possible until noon on Friday, February 24. Participants canceling after this time, as well as no-shows, are charged the full cost of the event.

The World's Most Expensive Gold Coin to Visit Brussels



The world's most expensive gold coin will go on display in Brussels this month. The 1933 Double Eagle \$20 gold piece is a legend in coin collection circles, and is on show at the Belgian Royal Library on Friday and Saturday, March 9-10.

The coin is one of just two 1933 Double Eagles saved by the U.S. Mint and given to the Smithsonian Institution in 1933. Nearly half a million \$20 gold coins were originally minted in 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression, but only 13 are known today. The rest were melted down before they ever left the United States Mint, as part of a strategy to remove the United States from the gold standard and stabilize the American economy.

This is the first time that a 1933 Double Eagle will be exhibited in Europe. The European tour that takes in seven countries is arranged by the Samlerhuset Group, a parent company of Het Belgische Munthuis/La Maison de la Monnaie Belge, with a very special loan provided by the Smithsonian Institution. This is the first time that the Smithsonian has sent an object from its numismatic collection on tour in Europe.

The 1933 Double Eagle will be displayed alongside a collection of other notable U.S. coins, including the 1907 high relief \$20 gold coin; the Capped Bust \$5 gold coin (1807-1812), and the \$20 Liberty gold coin (1849-1866).

Event Details

Date: Friday, March 9 and Saturday, March 10

Time: Friday 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Place: Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Boulevard de l'Empereur 2, 1000 Brussels. Please enter the Royal Library by the Gutenberg entrance on Mont des Arts/Kunstberg

Price: Free

Jazz Brunch at the Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel

Here's the chance to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon enjoying fine food, sipping wine, and listening to live jazz played by top artists.

Come along to the Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel on Sunday, March 18 for the monthly Jazz Brunch. There will be an elaborate spread of freshly prepared hot and cold starters, fish, meat, and pasta dishes, soups, salads, and a variety of delicious homemade desserts. In addition to the buffet and entertainment, the all-in price includes an *apéritif*, wine, fruit juices, water, coffee, and on-site parking. There is no charge for children under 10.

This month's jazz entertainment features the Swingmasters, a home-grown musical combo that plays swing-style music from the '50s. You'll tap your toes to such all-time hits as *Sweet Sue*, *Take the "A" Train*, *It's Only a Paper Moon*, and *Mood Indigo*.

If you are looking for a real treat, this is a must-do event.

Event Details

Date: Sunday, March 18

Time: 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

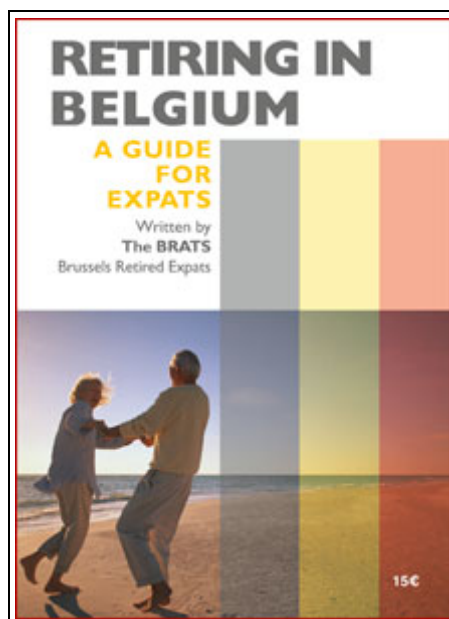
Place: Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel, The Atrium (first floor), Brussels National Airport, 1930 Zaventem

Price: €60 for ACB and AWCB members; €65 for non-members

Sign up: Reservations are due by noon on Wednesday, March 14 by email

(info@americanclubbrussels.org), online at www.americanclubbrussels.org, or by telephone to the ACB Office Manager (02/219.58.08). Payment to ACB at BE55 4279 1958 8144 (BIC/SWIFT: KREDBEBB) will confirm your reservation. Be sure to mention "Jazz" in the communications section of the virement. Note that cancellations are possible until noon on Wednesday, March 14. Participants canceling after this time, as well as no-shows, are charged the full cost of the event.

Retiring in Belgium: A Guide for Expats



Reviewed by Chuck Westpheling, 31 years (25 years retired) in Belgium

This handy guide for oldsters contemplating retiring in Belgium is authored by The BRATS (Brussels Retired Expats), four Brits and two Americans, all with different business careers and overseas experiences, with an average of over 23 years of retired life in Belgium. Their aim? To provide folks thinking of living their retirement dream here, particularly British and American readers, something to chew on before making that decision – something The BRATS wish had been available to them all those years ago – and still does not exist. Do they succeed? You bet. Their little 55-page book is invaluable to any Brit or American considering settling here for their retirement years.

The BRATS ask the reader in the opening chapters to carefully consider that retirement in general is embarking on a new and different lifestyle, particularly in a foreign land – even if it

is a familiar one. It involves determining how to spend those retirement years (what is one really going to do without a real job?) and if the reader really wants to live those years that way in a foreign country, particularly Belgium. These are important questions, but because only the reader can answer them, the authors discuss what's really involved in this literally life-changing matter.

In five of the succeeding chapters, of a total of 10 including a very brief summary, The BRATS address the nuts-and-bolts crucial to the decision to retire in Belgium: money, health care, and housing. Separate chapters address taxes, pensions, investments, medical care and (shrouded by an unclear title) housing, to include rest homes and palliative care. Each provides a succinct and matter-of-fact analysis of the situation in Belgium with regard to the subject at hand, and describes how it differs from that in the U.K. and the U.S. to show the reader clearly how the distinctions may impact the pending decision to stay. Pitfalls, as in the particular case of estate planning, are highlighted. This small guide cannot be comprehensive in explaining these matters, but the book is larded with references to agencies, activities, and websites in Brussels, Flanders, and Wallonia, where more detailed information can be obtained, often in English. Even a quick read, however, provides more useful information for someone contemplating retirement in Belgium than is available in any other single source I know. I sought in vain for such a guide when I was considering retiring here 25 years ago.

The book includes two checklists as appendices and an index. One checklist addresses factors to consider in the decision to retire in Belgium. The other is an outstandingly complete list of information that should be available to the surviving spouse, partner, or family member of a deceased person, particularly appropriate for a death overseas.

Is there room for improvement in a subsequent effort I hope is forthcoming? The chapter on the importance of becoming computer-literate late in life is very good, but it is not unique to retirement in Belgium. It would be better placed in the opening, more generic, section about retirement planning in general – and then note therein the inclusion of dozens of websites in the later chapters (with nary a postal address for those without computer access). How to find these critical independent advisors expert in both Belgian and home country taxation, pensions, and investments so wisely recommended would be extremely helpful. I'd like to see information on Belgian radio, TV, and libraries.

The current economic crisis is changing the financial landscape in Belgium, the U.K. and the U.S. with regard to pensions and taxes, and more changes are surely coming, so an update of this little book in a few years time will be very useful. In the meantime, it's not just the best thing of its kind available – it's the only thing. The guide is well worth its price, not least because all profits from its sale go to two worthy Belgian-based charities, the Community Help Service (www.chsbelgium.org) and the British Charitable Fund (www.bcfund.be). Buy one for any friend who is thinking about joining us in retirement here.

***Retiring in Belgium: A Guide for Expats* costs €15 and is available at the offices of the Community Help Service (Boulevard de la Cambre 33, 1000 Brussels) and at Waterstone's (Boulevard A. Max 71-75, 1000 Brussels), or you can order a copy (€15 + postage) directly from the CHS at 02/647.67.80.**

Sign up by Wednesday, February 29 to attend the book launch of *Retiring in Belgium: A Guide for Expats* to be held at Fulcra International [Avenue de Tervuren 168, 1150 Brussels (Woluwe St.-Pierre), www.fulcra_international.com] on Tuesday, March 6 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Saint Patrick's Day Ball

Fancy a five-star dinner, a spectacular *Riverdance*-style performance, and a whirl around the dance floor? Join the Irish Club of Belgium at their annual St.-Patrick's Day Ball, this year to be held at the Conrad Hotel on Saturday, March 17, St.-Patrick's Day itself.

Members of the American Club of Brussels are welcome to attend this elegant, black-tie event for the advantageous members' price of only €75. To get the reduced price, you must specify that you are a paid-up ACB member when you register on the Irish Club's website (www.irishclub.be). This popular event has sold out in previous years, so book early. A table will be reserved for the American Club of Brussels. Join your fellow ACB members for a delightful evening of fun and frolic. Remember, on St.-Patrick's Day, everyone is Irish!

Event Details

Date: Saturday, March 17

Time: 7:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.

Place: Conrad Hotel, Avenue Louise 71, 1050 Brussels (Ixelles)

Price: €75 for ACB members; €90 for non-members

Dress: Black-tie for men (a dark business suit is also acceptable). Formal evening gowns for women

Meal: Five-star dinner with a vegetarian option. Please mention preference when booking

Parking: Hotel parking is available at approximately €4 per hour

Contact: email ann.douglas@yahoo.ie for more information

Sign up: Online at www.irishclub.be

Young Members' Happy Hour

Are you a young (under 35) resident of Brussels with an interest in the U.S.A.? Are you a young American living/working/studying in Brussels? If you answered yes to either of these questions, join us at the Mantra Café-Bar to meet up with your peers. All nationalities are welcome. Hope to see you there.

Event Details

Date: Thursday, March 22

Time: 7:00 p.m. until ???

Place: Mantra Café-Bar, Chaussée de Boondael 8, 1050 Brussels (Ixelles); www.mantrabar.be

Price: None, aside from the cost of your drink(s)

Contact: If you have any questions, can't find the group, or would like to know more about the American Club of Brussels, contact Niev Gallagher at 0491/52.07.50

Pioneers' Dinner



The Pioneers' Club is pleased to welcome His Excellency Khazar Ibrahim as our guest speaker at the spring dinner on the evening of Tuesday, April 3 at Château Ste.-Anne in Auderghem.

Mr. Ibrahim is the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to NATO. Prior to his appointment to that position in 2011, he was an advisor to Azerbaijan's ambassador to the United States. During his time in Washington, D.C., Mr. Ibrahim obtained a Master's degree in security studies at Georgetown University.

Mr. Ibrahim has also served as the press secretary to the Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan, a high-visibility post in a country that is at the center of energy politics. In addition to his degree from Georgetown, he holds an MA in international relations from Baku State University.

Mr. Ibrahim will speak on the role of Azerbaijan in the worldwide energy economy and on other issues relating to Azerbaijan's role in global politics. He is an engaging speaker, personable and well versed in topical current issues.

We expect a large demand for this dinner, but space is limited and is by invitation only. Please reserve your places early. We look forward to seeing you there.

Event Details

Date: Tuesday, April 3

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Château Ste.-Anne, Rue du Vieux Moulin 103, 1160 Brussels (Auderghem)

Price: €75 for ACB members and their guests

Dress code: Black tie

Sign up: Reservations are due by noon on Tuesday, March 27 by email

(info@americanclubbrussels.org), online at www.americanclubbrussels.org, or by telephone to the ACB Office Manager (02/219.58.08). Payment to ACB at BE55 4279 1958 8144 (BIC/SWIFT: KREDBEBB) will confirm your reservation. Be sure to mention "Pioneers" in the communications section of the virement. Cancellations are possible until noon on Tuesday, March 27. Participants canceling after this time, as well as no-shows, are charged the full cost of the event.

Community News

The Real Estate Market in Belgium

*The Bulletin and ING Belgium invite you to
an information seminar on*

THE REAL ESTATE MARKET IN BELGIUM

- **The market: what's next**

by David Chicard, Managing Partner,
Property Hunter

- **The latest regulatory developments
on the property market**

by Alexis Lemmerling, notary, Berquin

- **A balanced view of mortgage and
property insurance in Belgium**

by Dave Deruytter, Head of Expat and
non-Residents, ING Belgium

March 12 2012 at 18.00

ING Auditorium

24 Avenue Marnix

1000 Brussels

(entrance via 1 Rue du Trône)

THE
Bulletin



Free entry. Register by March 8 at events@ackroyd.be.

Canadian Pub Night / Soirée au Pub



Join members of the Canadian Club of Belgium on Friday, March 2, from 7:00 p.m. at Brasserie Kwak [Avenue Emile Vandervelde 2, 1200 Brussels (Woluwe St.-Lambert)] for friendly conversation and a few beers. No reservation is required. This is an open event and everyone is welcome.

Interested in Fine Arts and Architecture?

If your answer is yes, then BRIDFAS may be for you. The goal of the British Decorative and Fine Arts Society of Brussels (BRIDFAS) is to stimulate an understanding and enjoyment of the arts through illustrated lectures and visits to exhibitions. All talks are delivered in English by experts in their field.

The next lecture, *When a Pipe is Not a Pipe – René Magritte*, will be held at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 14 at the Maison Communale, Avenue Paul Hymans 2, 1200 Brussels (Woluwe St.-Lambert). Welcome drinks will be offered starting at 7:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.bridfas.org.

The Brussels American Community Chorus

The Brussels American Community Chorus invites adults and children over 12 to sing. All nationalities are welcome. Men are especially needed. There is no audition, and no experience is required. Rehearsals are every Monday from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Kraainem. The chorus sings to enjoy music and to support the community. It performs several times a year at American and Belgian events. For details, contact Lamdm@attglobal.net.

A Walk on the Wild Side



Join other English-speakers for a guided tour of the Scheutbos, a 50-hectare nature reserve west of Brussels on Sunday morning, March 25, starting at 10:00 a.m. Two guides (one native English speaker and a French-accented one) will explain the methods by which the broad and often unexpected biodiversity of this wonderful reserve is encouraged and maintained. There is no charge, since the only goal of the Friends of the Scheutbos is to educate people in how to preserve nature. The tour is two kilometers long. Children and dogs (please bring pooper-scooper bags) are welcome. Boots or good walking shoes are advised, since parts of the trail can get quite muddy, and there will be some stops for explanations, so warm clothing is recommended.

We will meet at the end of Scheutbosstraat (the rue, not the avenue), which starts on Boulevard Mettwie just opposite the end of Boulevard Machtens, close to the #49 bus "Machtens" stop and the terminus of the #86 bus from De Brouckère. Parking is available at the meeting point. For more information, contact Jean Leveque at 0496/53.07.68.

Event Details

Date: Sunday, March 25

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Place: Scheutbos, Scheutbosstraat, 1080 Brussels (Sint-Jans-Molenbeek)

Price: Free

Sign up: No reservation is needed

News from the American Women's Club of Brussels

Upcoming Trips



The American Women's Club of Brussels welcomes ACB members to join them on their guided visits this spring. For information on Discover Belgium walking tours, see [AWCB Guided walks and trips.pdf](#).

For information on the Loire Valley tour scheduled for May 26-28, see [AWCB Loire Valley trip.pdf](#).

And for information on the guided visit to the south of England on June 15-17, see [AWCB South England trip.pdf](#).

Out & About in Belgium with Nancy Kapstein

A link to the March issue will be sent to you soon.

<p>The American Club of Brussels c/o Renaissance Brussels Hotel Rue du Parnasse 19 B-1050 Brussels Tel: 02/219.58.08 info@americanclubbrussels.org www.americanclubbrussels.org</p>	<p>The American Club of Brussels is one of the oldest American clubs in Europe, founded in 1921 to foster Belgian-American relations. Although our members comprise more than 20 other nationalities from all walks of life, the ACB retains its American flavor. Some of us are long-time residents in Belgium. Many of us are newcomers. We all enjoy ourselves and the club's wide variety of social and cultural activities.</p>
	<p>The ACB is a great way to expand your circle of friends and to discover more of the delights of Belgium. Try us.</p>