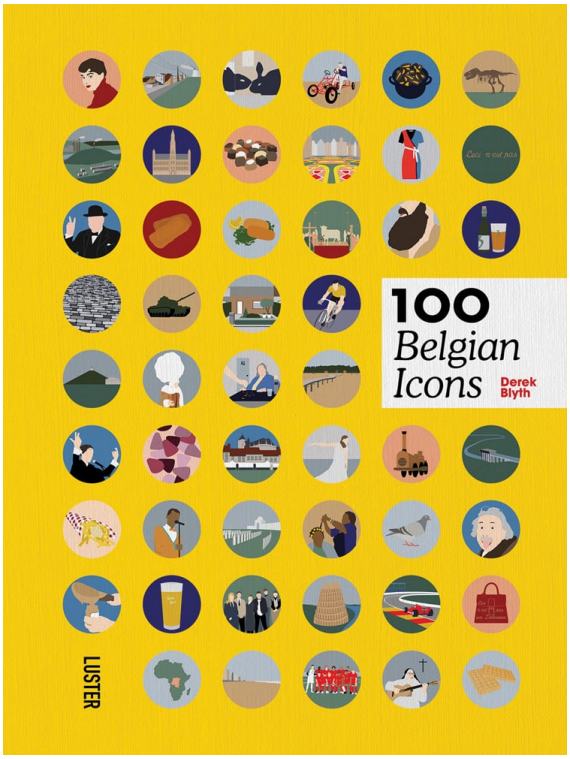
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100 Belgian Icons

Derek Blyth

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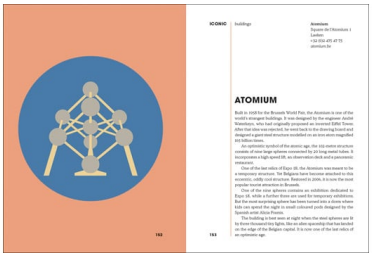
- 100 insightful and fun-to-read texts by Belgium connoisseur and fan Derek Blyth about iconic Belgian traditions, places, artists, oddities, buildings, sayings, and more

This affectionate cultural guide celebrates 100 icons that make Belgium different from any other country. In 100 short, informative texts, the author talks about food, people, places, traditions, inventions, buildings, and even expressions, that have shaped what he calls ‘the strangest country in the world’. The author examines themes that are famously Belgian, like comic books, mussels served with fries, cycle racing, art nouveau architecture and rain. But he also looks at some of the off surprises of Belgian life, including vertical archery, grandmothers’ cooking, pigeon racing and the everyday expression ‘non peut-être’ (no maybe). You will find out about the monks who brew the best beer in the world, the largest dinosaur collection ever found, the longest tram ride in the world, the curious charm of ugly Belgian houses, and how a country can survive without a government for more than 500 days. This book is not meant to be an exhaustive guide to Belgium, but a personal pick of the icons that make Belgium unique, along with a selection of useful addresses to visit. The texts are accompanied by 100 original illustrations by Antwerp illustrator Emma Verhagen that capture the unique sprit of Belgium.

Derek Blyth has lived in Belgium for 30 years. Long enough to know that Belgium is complicated. As a travel journalist, he has visited almost every corner of the country. He has tried rare beers, eaten in remote Ardennes restaurants, walked the Belgian coast. He has tried every possible way to understand the country.

A former editor of *The Bulletin magazine* and *Flanders Today* newspaper, he has written countless articles to explain Belgium, along with a bestselling travel guide to *The 500 Hidden Secrets of Brussels*, along with similar guides to Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges and Belgium. He also organizes walking tours of Belgian cities and blogs about odd details of life in Belgium and the Netherlands.







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