

# GHENT

## IT IS A REAL DISCOVERY

THE PCO SEMICO IN GHENT HAS ALREADY ORGANISED MORE THAN 100 CONFERENCES IN GHENT SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED 13 YEARS AGO. DURING THE "WEEK OF THE NOSE" IN 1996, SEMICO WAS THE FIRST PCO TO USE THE FULL CAPACITY AT THE ICC GHENT. SINCE THEN, THERE HAS BEEN A GROWING TENDENCY FOR CONFERENCES WITH LARGER PARTICIPANT NUMBERS (>1000 PERSONS) TO FIND THEIR WAY TO GHENT.

We asked Lieve Ectors, managing director of Semico, a few questions about the qualities of this conference city.

### HQ Why do clients choose Ghent?

The saying "you can't love what you don't know" is particularly suited to Ghent. All the clients who we could persuade into carrying out a site inspection in Ghent, selected Ghent as their destination.

It has been said on numerous occasions that Ghent's historical backdrop, combined with a lively, modern, safe and clean city, is something unique in the world. A UNESCO official once said: "I've been everywhere, but I have never seen a city with so many historic buildings and interesting places in such a small area; and all this combined with modern living. Ghent is a real discovery!"

### FOR LARGE AND SMALL

For conferences with a larger number of participants, Ghent is able to offer the **ICC**; a modern conference building that is located in a unique and calm setting, with 2 museums in the immediate vicinity, within walking distance of the historic city centre and easily accessible by car or train.

Conferences with a lower number of participants can take advantage of a wide range of conference facilities in the historic city centre, within very short walking distance of hotels in a variety of categories.

### WIDE SELECTION OF SOCIAL PROGRAMMES

In the historic city centre, as well as in the outskirts of the city, one will find a variety of locations for social activities, such as receptions, dinners etc. Further, as a result of its rich history, Ghent possesses a number of **historic attractions** and a **broad array of culture**. There is also a wide choice of **special venues**.

### DIVERSITY

Ghent offers great deal of diversity in its **hotels** (chains and independent hotels); in various categories and price brackets and with a wide choice of restaurants, bars and pubs. Ghent is also home to the renowned **Universiteit Ghent** and various **high schools**.

Ghent is **easily accessible** by car and public transport and has a wide range of conference facilities (from modern to medieval settings).

It is a city for the people; where everyone will find something they like - at an affordable price.

**HQ** To what extent has Gent Congres been helpful to you in the planning of your conferences?

Gent Congres promotes Ghent as a **MICE destination**. For us, as a PCO, that is very important. This helps to create a certain level of curiosity in potential conference organisers (society or chairperson) about the available possibilities, and leads to quicker decisions about making an inspection visit.

In addition, bids are composed in partnership with **Gent Congres** and site inspection visits take place in consultation and in partnership with them.

The level of accessibility to, and close cooperation with, the board of directors and administration staff at Stad Ghent is often surprising to many conference committees.

Ghent is a bubbling conference city which offers an ideal blend of history and contemporary city life: lively, young and dynamic. The 50.000 students, who study at University and high schools, clearly support this and give the city a welcoming character.

The city offers a range of possibilities to learn more about Universiteit Ghent and to discover the reasons behind its **international reputation**.

**In Ghent it is refreshing to stay in the various large and small hotels. This hotel capacity continues to grow and update itself. Here is an overview of recent renovations.**



### MARRIOTT GHENT OPENS EARLY 2007

The Ghent Marriott is set to become the place to meet. The hotel is situated on the Korenlei Canal, overlooking some of the most famous historic sites, and is close to elegant shopping facilities and the university. This leading city centre hotel offers 150 luxury bedrooms and suites, 450m<sup>2</sup> of state-of-the-art conference rooms and excellent reception rooms. The bright Atrium always has a relaxing atmosphere where you can 'wind-down' after a busy day. The staff at the Ghent Marriott Hotel will welcome you upon arrival.



### HOTEL HARMONY

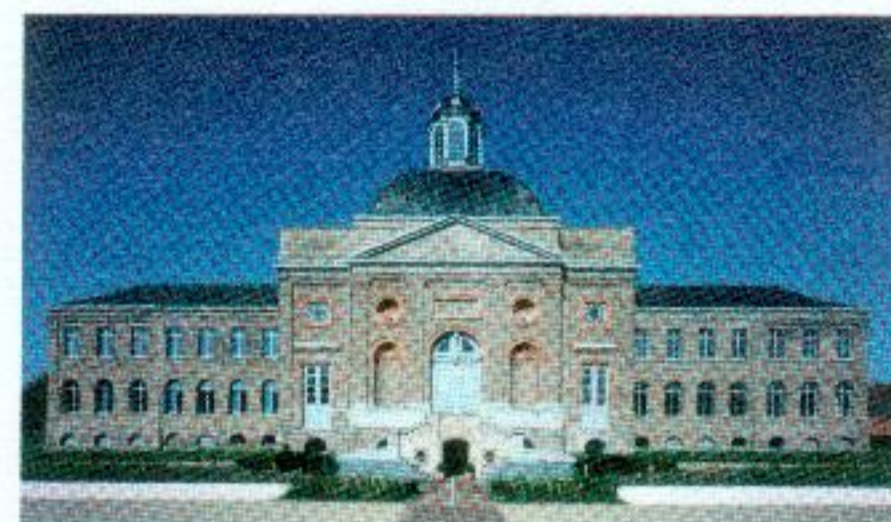
The family-run hotel Harmony, situated in the heart of Ghent, possesses 24 luxurious and spacious rooms. All are equipped with the latest technology, including broadband and wireless internet. Hotel Harmony has two modern meeting rooms that can seat up to 12 people and one which seats up to 24 people. For larger groups, meeting rooms are available in close proximity to the hotel.

### HOLIDAY INN GHENT EXPO

Holiday Inn Ghent Expo offers 170 recently refurbished bedrooms. High speed internet is available in all meeting rooms and public areas. In the hotel you can organise your seminars, parties and reception for up to 600 persons. Furthermore, the hotel offers a renovated Atrium restaurant and a new lounge bar.

### EXPRESS BY HOLIDAY INN GHENT

Express by Holiday Inn Ghent suits both business and leisure travellers. All meeting rooms have just been completely renovated. Bathing in daylight, this 'Gent Meeting Center' has several assets. It offers 3 conference rooms of 100 m<sup>2</sup> (or 1 room of 300 m<sup>2</sup>), 3 meeting rooms of 60 m<sup>2</sup> and 4 meeting rooms of 30m<sup>2</sup>. Trained meeting experts and technical assistance are at your service to make your event a success.



### HET GODSHUIS

If you are looking for a really great location for your party or seminar, then 'Het Godshuis' has many assets that you will appreciate. 'Het Godshuis' is an impressive old 19th century monastery with a monumental entrance, impressive cellars, high hall-ceilings, two enclosed gardens as well as galleries. There are 5 halls where you organise receptions for 50 to 1500 persons, parties for 20 to 850 persons and seminars or meetings for 20 to 700 persons.



### THE ZEBRASTRAAT

The Zebrastraat in Ghent combines accommodation, culture and economic activities in one renovated building, which boasts a unique oval-shaped inner courtyard. Since being renovated, the site offers the most up-to-date facilities for even the most extensive business events. The Zebrastraat has 5 conference halls which are all equipped with the latest multimedia equipment. Further, there is also a stylish lounge room, a fully-equipped kitchen, a multivalent exhibitions wing and a stunning 316m<sup>2</sup> oval water feature that can be moved within 24 hours to make way for a delightful tent construction.

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