

# Spirit of DUNKERQUE

TRAVEL TRADE MANUAL 2026



spirit of  
**Dunkerque**  
TOURISME & CONGRÈS



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# DUNKIRK, A PLACE OF WORLD WAR II REMEMBRANCE

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In 1940, as the world was engulfed in an unprecedented conflict, a key event became a symbol of courage and solidarity. Operation Dynamo, carried out from May 26 to June 4, 1940, enabled the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and tens of thousands of French soldiers to be evacuated. With 338,226 Allied combatants able to reach Great Britain, it was the largest naval evacuation operation in military history.

A “miracle” that undoubtedly turned the tide of the war.

Discover the places that bear witness to this event, which marked history and our territory and inspired many works, the most recent of which is Christopher Nolan's film *Dunkirk* (2017).

# DUNKIRK DYNAMO BATTLEFIELD TOURS

Follow your guide in the footsteps of the Allied soldiers on the beaches and in the streets of Dunkerque. This is without a doubt the best way to discover the Operation Dynamo sites and learn how this brilliant evacuation was planned and carried out.

Your guide will take you to the key locations of Operation Dynamo. We can also show you the shooting sites of Christopher Nolan's movie *Dunkirk*, released in July 2017.

During the tour, we will stop at the beach, the port, the town center and the British Memorial.

[www.dunkirk-tourism.com](http://www.dunkirk-tourism.com)

**A bespoke tour can also be arranged if you wish to add more sites!**



**Duration: 2 hours**

## **2026 Rates:**

- In your own car or coach: € 160 (€200 on Sundays and bank holidays)
- In our company car: € 200 (€230 on Sundays and bank holidays)

## DUNKERQUE 1940 OPERATION DYNAMO MUSEUM

Located near the evacuation sites, the Dunkerque 1940 Museum is housed in Bastion 32, a military fortification built in 1874. It served as the command headquarters for the defence of the fortified Flanders sector during the Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo.

The museum tells the extraordinary story of this battle and evacuation through a rich collection of archives, maps, vehicles, and period military artefacts.

[www.dynamo-dunkerque.com](http://www.dynamo-dunkerque.com)

## FORT DES DUNES

Built in 1878, this historic site is a remarkable example of the period French military architecture. Originally intended to defend Dunkerque, it mainly served as barracks.

During Operation Dynamo, it played a central role and suffered heavy bombings, causing nearly 100 deaths, including Division General Janssen. In 1944, eight resistance fighters were executed there.

Inside, an exhibition recounts the history of Flanders, a region of major strategic importance.

[www.fort-des-dunes.fr](http://www.fort-des-dunes.fr)



## PRINCESS ELIZABETH

Step aboard a living piece of history where heritage meets art de vivre.

Now moored in the city center and converted into a restaurant, this magnificent paddle steamer saved 1,673 soldiers during the evacuation of May–June 1940, before appearing in Nolan's film *Dunkirk* (2017). Complete your visit by enjoying refined cuisine made from fresh, seasonal ingredients on board.

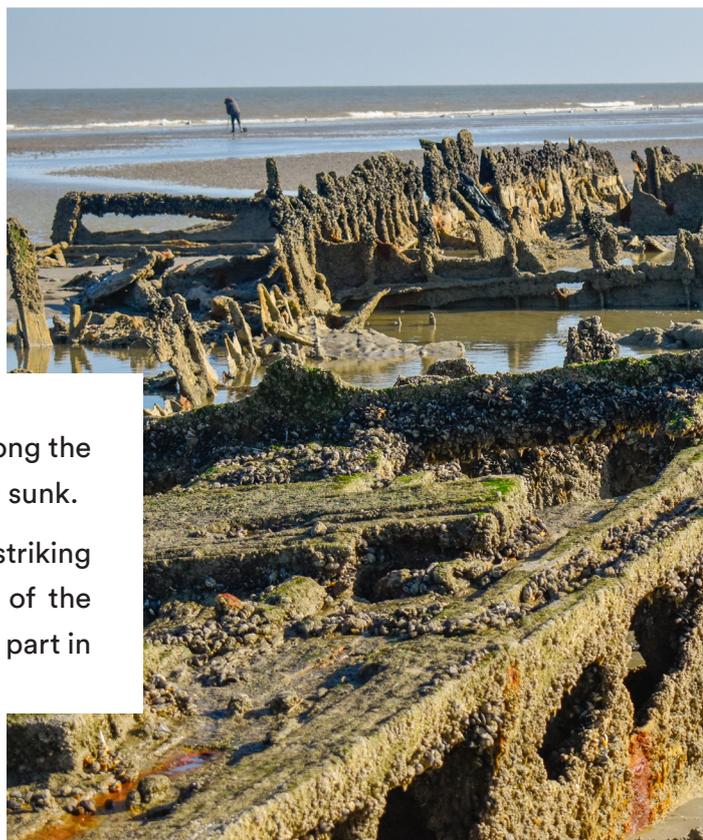
## THE BRITISH MEMORIAL

Located in a necropolis containing 810 World War II graves, this memorial honors the soldiers of the British Expeditionary Force who died during the 1940 campaign and have no known grave.

## THE SHIPWRECKS

Discover the remnants of Operation Dynamo scattered along the coast. During the evacuation, more than 200 vessels were sunk.

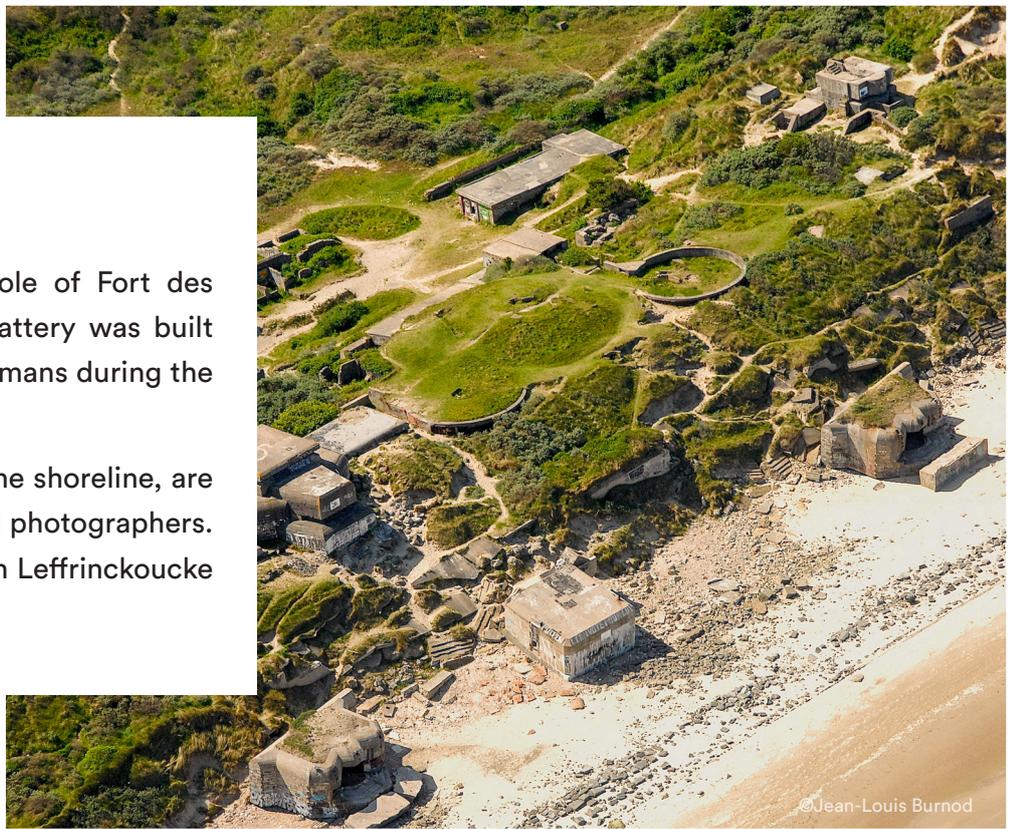
At low tide, some wrecks emerge: on Zuydcoote beach, a striking page of World War II history unfolds, with the remains of the *Crested Eagle* and the *Devonia*, two British ships that took part in the operation.



## THE ZUYDCOOTE BATTERY

Complementing the defensive role of Fort des Dunes, the Zuydcoote coastal battery was built in 1879 and reinforced by the Germans during the Occupation.

These bunkers, scattered along the shoreline, are a favorite subject for walkers and photographers. They can mainly be seen between Leffrinckoucke and Zuydcoote.



## LA PLAINE AU BOIS

Located 12 miles from Dunkerque, La Plaine au Bois in Esquelbecq is a discreet yet deeply moving memorial site.

On May 28, 1940, 96 British soldiers were captured, locked in a barn, and most were brutally executed by the SS.

## LA COUPOLE

Located 3 miles from Saint-Omer, and 30 miles from Dunkerque, La Coupole is one of Europe's most impressive World War II vestiges.

Originally built as Germany's first V2 rocket launch base, it became a Centre for History and Remembrance in 1997.



## THE EPERLECQUES BLOCKHAUS

21 miles from Dunkerque, you can find the largest bunker in northern France, a major witness to the 1939–1945 conflict.

Open to the public since 1973 and listed as a Historic Monument since 1985, it offers a 1.5-hour visit to learn about the bunker's history and the technology behind the secret V1 and V2 weapons, all set within a wooded park.

# OUR SUGGESTIONS FOR CUSTOMIZABLE DAY TRIPS AND STAYS

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## IF YOU HAVE 2 HOURS

### BOOK A PRIVATE DUNKIRK DYNAMO BATTLEFIELD TOUR

Let our guide take you to the main evacuation sites. If you choose a tour in our car, you may request pickup at the train station or your hotel.

OR

### COMBINE THE DUNKERQUE 1940 MUSEUM & THE EAST MOLE

Visit the museum, then take a 10-minute walk to the East Mole, a favorite spot for locals and fishermen. The panoramic view of Malo-les-Bains beach is well worth the visit.

OR

### COMBINE THE FORT DES DUNES AND THE NATURE RESERVE

Explore Fort des Dunes, then head to the North Sea through the nature reserve of the Grand Site des Dunes de Flandre.

Half-buried under the sand, the Zuydcoote battery and Atlantic Wall bunkers are impressive relics of the past.

## IF YOU HAVE A FULL DAY

Start your morning with a private Dynamo Battlefield Tour. Afterwards, spend an hour at the Dunkerque 1940 Museum.

Enjoy lunch on the seafront or aboard the Princess Elizabeth, then walk along Zuydcoote beach at low tide to see the Crested Eagle wreck.

⚠ *Be sure to check tide times before heading out.*



## IF YOU HAVE 2 DAYS

# DAY 1

Begin with a private Dynamo Battlefield Tour for an introduction to the events of 1940.

Have lunch on the seafront or on the Princess Elizabeth.

Visit the Dunkerque 1940 Museum.

Discover the rebuilt city center.

Spend the night in a 2- to 4-star hotel downtown or by the sea.



©MarieDK



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# DAY 2

Check the tide tables and explore the Zuydcoote shipwrecks in the morning. If the tide is too high, replace this visit with a trip to La Plaine au Bois, a discreet but significant memorial 12 miles from Dunkerque.

After lunch, visit Fort des Dunes and continue your discovery in the Dunes de Flandre nature reserve along the Atlantikwall.

A guide can be booked to accompany you throughout your stay.

# EXPLORE DUNKERQUE AND BEYOND

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From a small fishing village to France's third-largest port, from fortified towns to seaside resorts, the sea has always been at the heart of Dunkerque identity.

## MARITIME AND HARBOUR MUSEUM

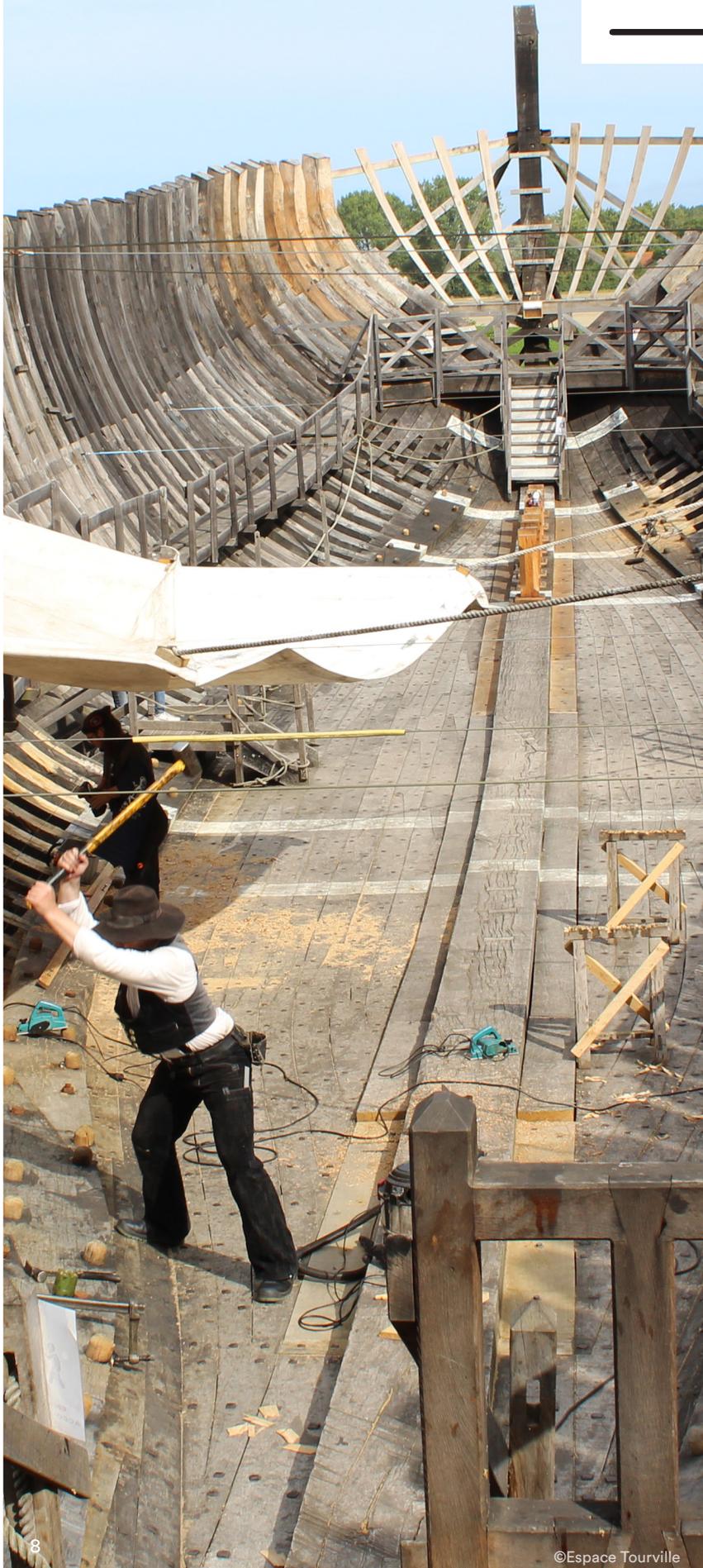
More than just models and paintings: discover **1 museum, 4 ships, and 1 lighthouse**, featuring 7 different exhibitions.

Learn about the port's history from the 17th century to today. A visit to the Risban Lighthouse offers a spectacular 360° view of the North Sea and Maritime Flanders.

## THE JEAN BART CONSTRUCTION SITE

Located near the port of Gravelines, halfway between Dunkerque and Calais, at the foot of Vauban's fortifications, the Jean Bart craft village allows you to discover the construction of a 17th century warship.

This "maritime cathedral", emblematic of Louis XIV's navy and armed with 84 cannons, is being rebuilt using traditional shipbuilding techniques by carpenters and blacksmiths working before your eyes.

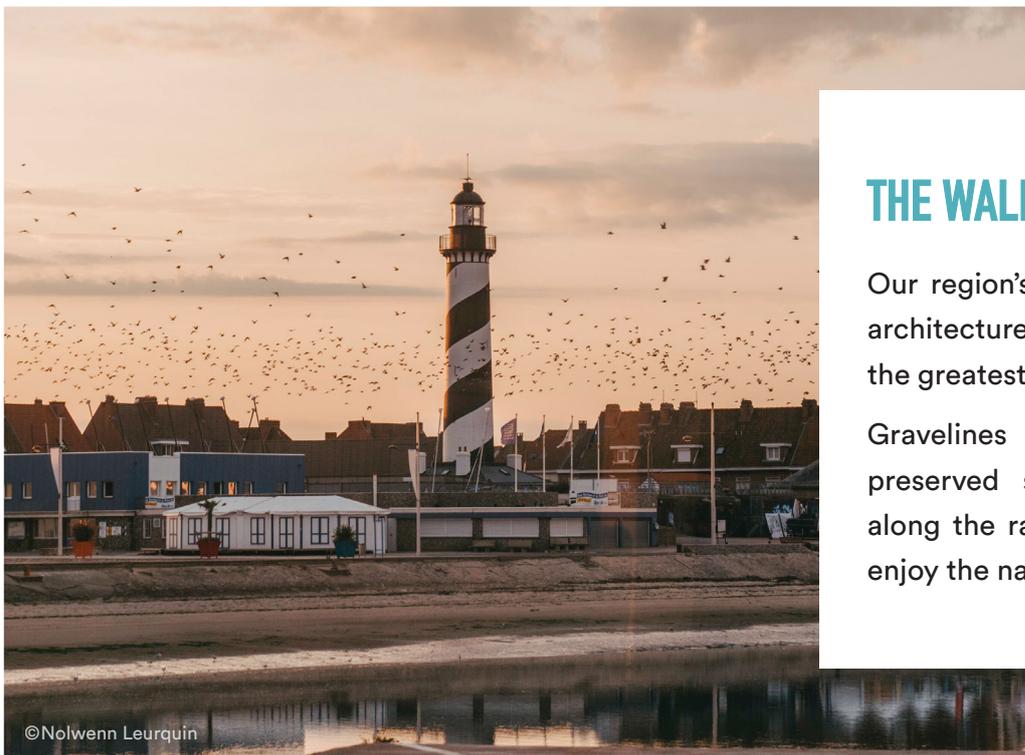
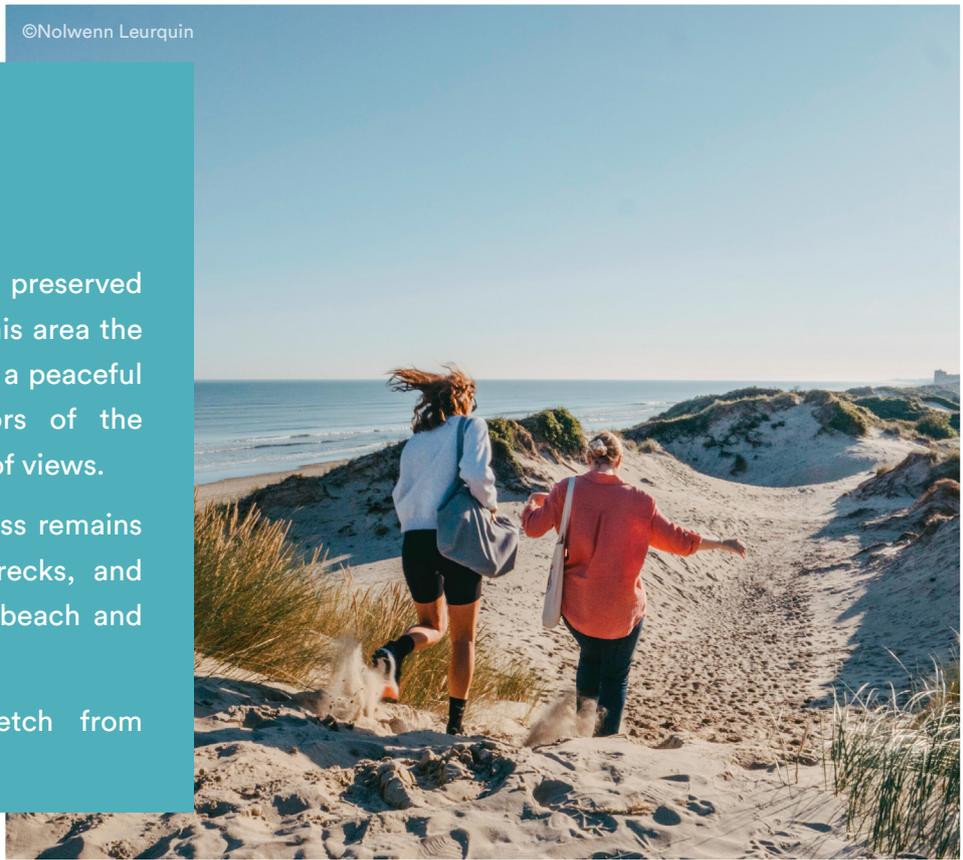


## THE GRAND SITE DES DUNES DE FLANDRE

Along the coast, discover the preserved maritime landscapes that earned this area the “Grand Site de France” label. Enjoy a peaceful walk, admire the changing colors of the landscape, and explore the variety of views.

Along the way, you will come across remains of World War II: bunkers, shipwrecks, and fortifications scattered across the beach and dunes.

These unspoiled landscapes stretch from Dunkerque to the Belgian border.



## THE WALLED TOWN OF GRAVELINES

Our region’s history is marked by the iconic architecture of Marquis de Vauban, considered the greatest military engineer of his time.

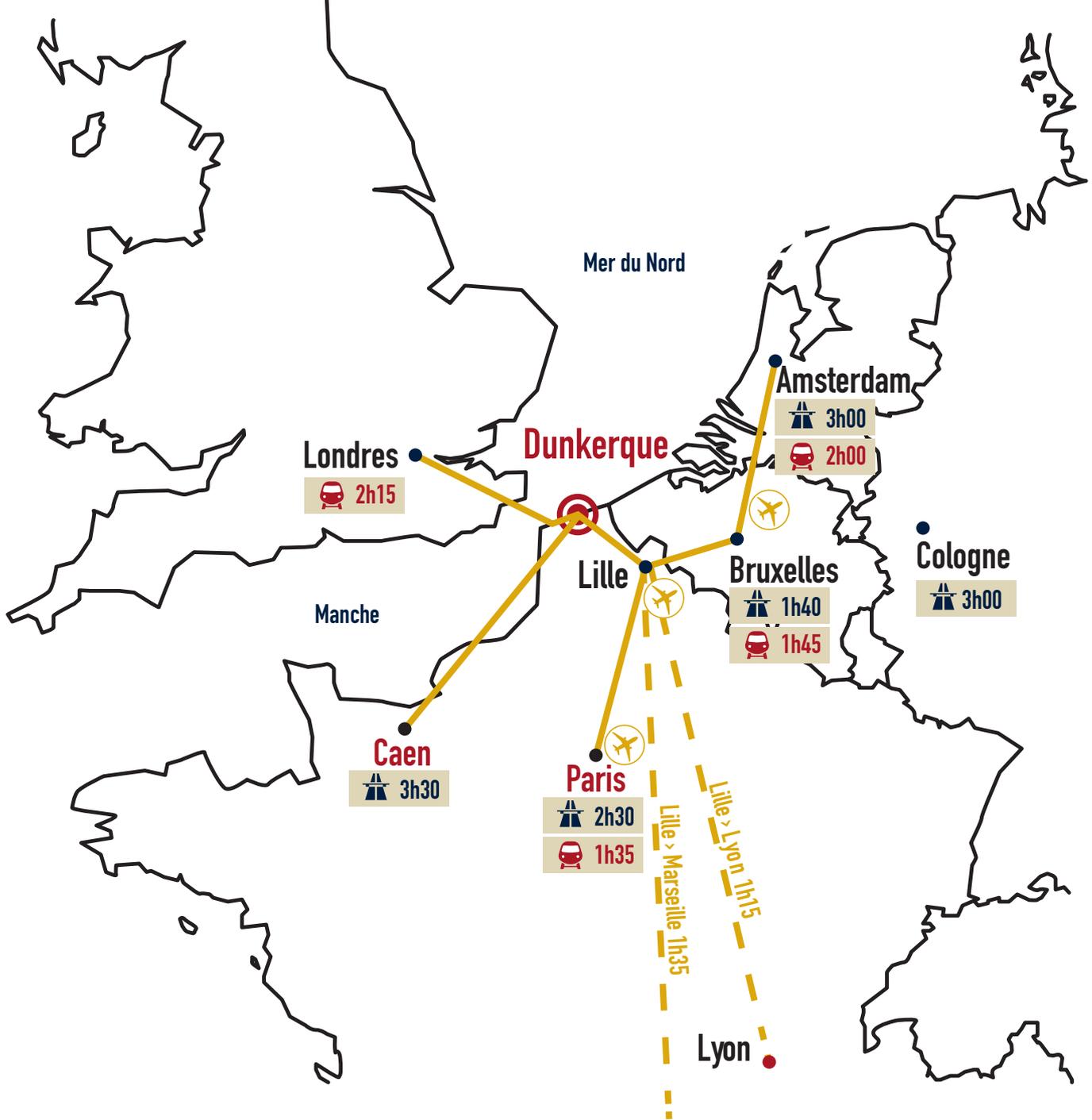
Gravelines is surrounded by perfectly preserved star-shaped fortifications. Walk along the ramparts, vaults and bastions and enjoy the natural surroundings.

## BELGIUM

**Cross the border — just 12 miles north of Dunkerque !**

Discover major World War I and II battlefields.

Only 30 miles away, Ypres was the scene of major battles during WWI. Alternatively, explore the magnificent city of Bruges: stroll through cobbled streets, cruise its canals by boat, or admire the view from the top of its belfry.



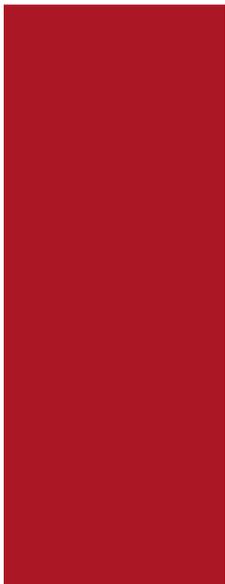
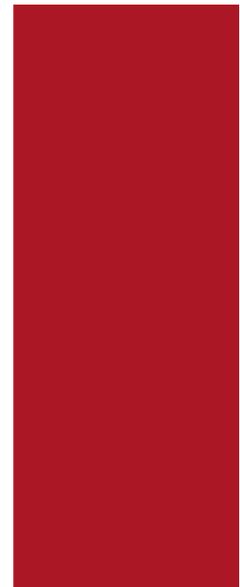
## REASONS TO COME TO DUNKERQUE

Dunkerque is one of the easiest destinations to reach in northern France, thanks to its exceptional location and well-connected transport network. Situated just a short drive from the Belgian border and close to major European hubs, the city functions as a natural gateway between France, Belgium, the UK, and the broader North Sea region.

Getting to Dunkerque is remarkably convenient whether you're traveling by car, train, bus, or ferry. The A16 and A25 highways link the city directly to Lille, Calais, Bruges,

and Brussels, making road travel fast and straightforward. Excellent rail connections provide regular service from Lille—one of France's major transport crossroads—where high-speed TGV and international Eurostar trains converge. For travelers coming from the UK, Dunkerque's nearby ferry port offers a smooth and efficient crossing from Dover, placing you just minutes from the city center upon arrival.

Once you're in Dunkerque, you'll find an impressive range of accommodations suited for every style and



budget. Well-known international hotel chains offer familiarity and comfort, while locally run guesthouses provide an inviting and authentic touch.

Food lovers will feel right at home: Dunkerque's culinary scene is lively, diverse, and delicious. Fresh seafood restaurants line the waterfront, brasseries serve hearty Flemish-inspired specialties, and trendy cafés and bistros offer modern twists on regional classics. Whether you're in the mood for fine dining or casual, family-friendly meals, the city has something for every taste.

Easy to reach, comfortable to stay in, and full of great places to eat, Dunkerque combines accessibility with charm, making it an ideal destination for a seamless getaway.

**DUNKIRK TOURISM**  
[www.dunkirk-tourism.com](http://www.dunkirk-tourism.com)



# CONTACT US

Please feel free to contact the specialists in our group department for a proposal for a guided tour, a day trip or a tailor-made stay!

## DUNKIRK TOURISM

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