

{ long weekend }

You won't be on for beers after the feast – when you're in hefty Trappist country, it's a question of food or drink. So head to **Het Dreupelhuisje**, near legendary beer bar **'t Brugs Beertje**, for a shot of genever (Dutch gin) in any number of flavours (Kemelstraat 9).

Sunday morning

A pre-lunch dip into Bruges' wealth of art is a good way to ease into Sunday. The most famous works, including early Flemish masters, are at the **Groeninge Museum** (Dijver 12). Although this city is thoroughly child-friendly with its cycle paths, boat rides, chocolate shops and waffle kiosks, parents may want to think twice before unleashing the Groeninge on impressionable minds. At every turn, hapless saints and sinners are getting flayed, bisected and boiled alive, in what, incidentally, looks like a 16th-century version of *waterzooi*.

Ten minutes' walk away in the St-Janshospitaal on Mariastraat, see the small but exquisite Hans Memling collection, where translucent-skinned ladies and wealthy patrons have been

recorded in minute detail down to every hair, though perhaps not every wrinkle.

Sunday afternoon

Take a light bistro lunch at **Kok au Vin** (Ezelstraat 19, tel: +32 (0)50 339 521) for local ingredients cooked French style, and a drinks list that focuses on wine for a change. Tiny, flavoursome grey prawns baked in a potato with crème fraîche and herring caviar, and there's spanking fresh, raw herring chased with genever if you're feeling brave, or good steaks with chips. More upmarket is **Den Dyver** where everything is cooked in more beer, glorious beer.

William Wordsworth passed through Bruges and commented that he observed "a deeper peace than in deserts found". This is hardly true in central Bruges today. Fellow tourists are out in force all day along the Wollenstraat and Steenstraat, jostling in lace and chocolate shops, packing into Markt's cafés, but if you're seeking Wordsworthian tranquility, you don't have to stray far. Amble away from the main drag, down narrow backstreets where the monastic

KOK au VIN

