Paasfeesten Leuven
2027 Easter Festival
March 25 – 30
International Folk Dance and Folk Music Festival
Leuven, Belgium

INFORMATION GUIDE

1. Leuven

The lively mediaeval university town

Leuven Town Hall

Welcome to the cosy city of Leuven. Leuven is the capital of the province of Flemish Brabant, one of the 10 provinces of Belgium. Leuven counts ca 100.000 inhabitants and more than 30.000 university students, who study at one of the world's oldest Catholic Universities. The university hospital UZ Leuven is not only Belgium's largest, but also well renowned all over the world.

Inbev, the world's largest beer brewery, has its head office in Leuven. We are proud of our beers … and of our chocolate.

Leuven dates back to the early Middle Ages. Although both world wars left enormous scars on the city, many mediaeval and Renaissance buildings are still eminently present. They make your stay in Leuven an unforgettable experience.

2. Easter Festival – CIOFF quality label

The Easter Folk Dance and Folk Music Festival is the official opening of the tourist season in Leuven. It is organised by the **Paasfeesten Leuven VZW**, a non-profit organisation, and subsidised by the Town of Leuven [www.leuven.be]. You will find more information and photos on the official website: **www.paasfeestenleuven.be**.

The 3 Leuven folklore groups actively support the organisation of the festival:

- Reuzegom [www.reuzegomleuven.be]
- 't Havermeuleke [www.havermeuleke.be]
- Rozemarijntje [www.rozemarijntje.be]

The practical organisation is carried out by several **working groups**, each of them being responsible for a key aspect of the organisation:

- Executive committee (programming, performances & participating groups)
- Reception & Accommodation
- Catering
- Technical committee
- Sponsoring
- PR & Promotion

The first festival was organised in 1975. In **2027** we mark the **51st festival**.

CIOFF

In 2000 **CIOFF** recognised the Easter Festival of Leuven [www.cioff.org]. The CIOFF label guarantees your group a qualitative organisation.

CIOFF's general aim is the preservation and dissemination of folklore and traditions and the promotion of peace and friendship among people and their countries. We bring together folk art performers in a friendly atmosphere and organise fraternisation activities and performances.

Commitment
It is very important to us that all of your group members **actively participate** in **all activities**, both the performances and the fraternisation activities. For some of these activities we deliberately mix up groups to enhance intercultural exchange.

3. Practical organisation

Reception and accommodation
Arrival: the festival starts on Thursday before Easter. We expect the participating groups to arrive around 17h00 pm. The first meal we offer the participants will be an evening meal on Thursday.
Departure: all groups are requested to stay until Tuesday morning. Breakfast on Tuesday will be the last meal served at the cost of the festival.
Upon arrival, you will be welcomed and fully briefed by a member of the executive committee. Two or three guides will be appointed to your group. They will be your contact persons through the whole festival (24h/24h).

In principle (and if logistically possible) all participants will stay in **host families**. Most host families take 2 guests. If you have an odd number of men/women, you can make 1 set of 3 persons. The host families invite you to their homes, where you will receive bed and breakfast. Some families also offer meals at noon and in the evening. Participants who cannot be lodged in host families are lodged in group accommodation. The group leader will receive a complete list of addresses and telephone numbers of the group members' host parents upon arrival to the festival. We consider the element of host families a very important aspect of our festival. It will enable your group members to get to know the Flemish culture and way of living. We expect our visitors to keep an open mind and try to socialise as much as possible.

Meals
If your host family does not offer you lunch (12h00) and/or dinner (18h00), the meals will be provided by the organisation.

Provisional programme [text in blue **in traditional costume**]
Please note that this program might be subject to changes.

- **Thursday**

+/- 17h00	Arrival in Leuven
18h00 - …	Evening in host family

- **Friday**

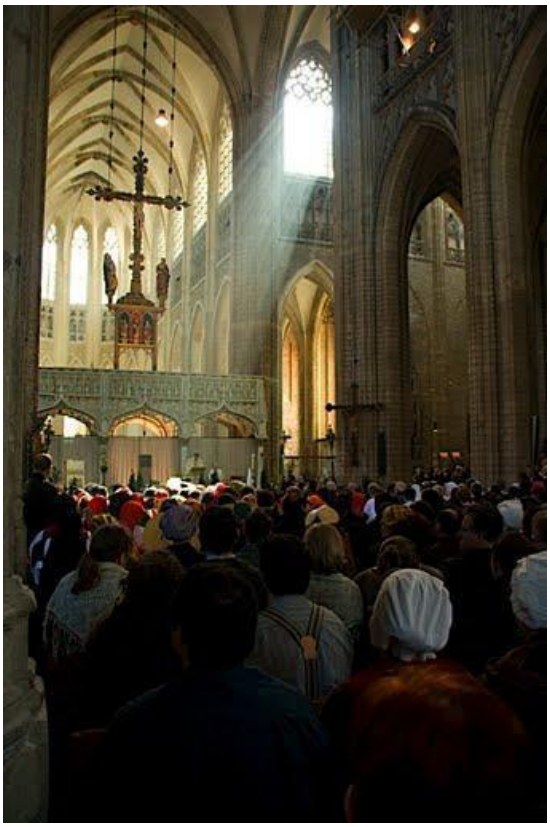
breakfast	
morning	Sound check for musicians and possibility of group rehearsal (40 minutes per group)
lunch	
afternoon	group activity
dinner	
20h00-??h00	All groups to **perform**

10 to 15 minutes on stage, 10 to 15 minutes dance together with audience (**total of max 25 minutes**)

- **Saturday**

breakfast	
morning	Free
lunch	
13h00-15h00	**Parade** in city centre and street performances (individual dances, no full programme) on different spots in the streets
15h00-16h00	All groups: short, spectacular **5' performance** in front of Leuven **Town Hall**
16h00-18h00	**Reception** by town magistrates & **Drink** at Leuven Town Hall and exchange of presents
18h00-20h00	Diner "**Buffet**"
20h00-01h00	**Folkdance party**: Flemish dances + Workshops: each group teaches the other participants some easy dances (45 minutes)

- **Sunday**



breakfast	
9h30-11h00	Catholic **Mass** at Saint Peter's Church (all groups are requested to play or sing about 3 minutes during the service)
11h00-12h00	Small procession from Church to Town Hall: all groups dance 1 Flemish dance together in mixed couples + Picture of all participants in front of Town Hall
lunch	
13h00-18h00	Time off. Possibility to visit Leuven or another city
dinner	Dinner at host families or in restaurant

- **Monday**

breakfast	
morning	free
lunch	
14h30-18h00	All groups **perform** maximum **20 minutes** on stage.
dinner	
Farewell Evening	

Participation rules

- **Travel**
  If you travel by **airplane**: your group pays the travel costs to Brussels National Airport (or Brussels South-Charleroi Airport). You will be picked up by the organisation and we will provide a bus whenever this would be necessary for the execution of the official programme. If you are interested in an excursion, we will provide a bus at the cost of the participation group.

  If you travel by **bus** or **car** to Leuven, you will receive an exact venue point (address of meeting place), some weeks before the festival. You might be asked to drive short distances (< 25 km) to bring your group to a place of performance. As most activities take place in the historical centre of Leuven, the festival cannot provide a car park for individual cars. Busses will be guided to free bus parks on the Leuven ringway. If you are interested in an excursion, you will do this with your own bus at your own expense.

- **Number of participants:**
  For adolescent and adult groups, we gladly welcome up to the agreed number of participants at our cost. For any person above this number, a participation fee of € 250 per person will have to be paid upon arrival in Leuven. They will be lodged and treated in the same way as the other participants. In addition, written confirmation from the festival organisation is necessary for the number of participants above the agreed number.
  The minimum age for participants in an adolescent/adult group is 16. However if you want to bring younger people to the festival please do not hesitate to contact us. We will make a decision on a case by case basis.

  For children groups (between 6 and 14 years old) we accept a maximum of 25 participants including accompanying adults. Unfortunately we cannot accept any person above 25.

- **Non performing participants**
  Adult groups may bring along an agreed number of non-performing participants at our costs (e.g. director, choreographer, translator, bus driver). For any person above this number, a participation fee of €250 per person will have to be paid upon arrival in Leuven. They will be lodged and treated in the same way as the other participants.

- **Bus drivers**
  Bus drivers are lodged and treated in the same way as the other participants. Please inform them beforehand that they **might** stay in a host family and not in a hotel.

- **Accompanying adults**
  Children or adolescent groups can bring along more non performing adults who accompany the youngsters, but you need prior written confirmation from the festival.

- **Insurance**
  Groups have to be insured against all normal risks of life: illnesses, hospitalisation, accidents, damages, third party risks, etc. The organiser 'Paasfeesten Leuven VZW' does not take responsibility for these risks and for their financial and/or other consequences.

  Participants from EU countries have to bring along an international social security document obtained from their Health Board before departure. They should also check whether repatriation is covered by their normal social security insurance. If not, they must arrange for extra insurance covering possible repatriation.

  Participants from countries, which have no bilateral agreement with the European Union on social security, must take travel illness insurance, that includes repatriation.

  The organisation of 'Paasfeesten Leuven VZW' will not pay for any medical or hospital costs incurred by festival participants during the festival or on their way to or from the festival. All costs must be paid for by the patient at the time medical services are rendered, who should then file a claim with his or her own insurance company.

- **Risks**
  Groups participate at their own risk. 'Paasfeesten Leuven VZW' will take all measures to avoid risks for participants, coworkers and audience. 'Paasfeesten Leuven VZW' is not responsible for any thefts or losses occurring while the group is travelling or during the activities organised during the festival.

- **Languages**
  The languages used during the festival are English, French, German and Dutch (our mother tongue). If no member is able to speak one of these languages fluently, you will be asked to bring along an interpreter.

- **Sightseeing**
  We offer you a guided tour through the mediaeval city of Leuven. You are free to organise an afternoon trip to Brussels or another city on Sunday at your own cost. If you are interested in visiting another city, we advise you to prolong your stay in Belgium (come earlier on Thursday or stay later on Tuesday).

- **Costumes**
  Your group will only perform (traditional) dances and music from your own region or country. For this purpose you will only use traditional costumes of your region/country.

Costume changes during a 20 minutes programme are discouraged. It is our experience that our public doesn't appreciate 3' instrumental intermezzos or singers.

- **Music**
  We have a policy that **only live music is used**, preferably on traditional instruments. No CD's or tape recorded music is allowed for performances.

- **Performances**
  Always in traditional costumes & with live music:
  - **Friday**: **maximum 25 minutes**. Entering and leaving the stage and the shifting between the dances are included in these 25 minutes. The lining up of the musicians is not included. We advise you to chose dances for a maximum of 23 minutes.
  - **Saturday**:
    - Parade: **45 minutes (approx. 2 km)** live music and dancing progressively forward (no stops)
    - in the streets: **20 minutes separate dances**, possibly repeated on different spots
    - in front of Town hall: **maximum 5 minutes** – please show a **spectacular dance with as many dancers as possible** (great square)!
  - **Monday**: **maximum 20 minutes**. Entering and leaving the stage and the shifting between the dances are included in these 20 minutes. The lining up of the musicians is not included. We advise you to choose dances for a maximum of 18 minutes. If you exceed the time limit, we will interrupt your performance.

- **Communication**
  We prefer to communicate via **e-mail**. Our mail address is paasfeesten@gmail.com

- **Information**
  In order to meet the quality standards of a good festival and to make your stay as comfortable as possible, we need detailed data from your group & your performances (for publicity reasons), the individual participants (lodging purposes) and the musicians (performances).

If your group has difficulties complying with all the above-mentioned rules, please contact us.

Interested in participation?
Please fill in the application form you will find on our website.

4. Timetable

September
Send us your application form.

October - November
Confirmation of participation by signing agreement between your group and the festival. You will receive additional documentation and your group's "**information file**" (google spreadsheet).

This document is to be filled out by you in order to give us all information necessary to make your stay at our festival as comfortable as possible. You will have to update the file at certain dates (deadlines). If you fail to provide us the requested information (either incomplete or too late), the festival organisation may decide to cancel your participation. Problems which might occur during the festival and which result from the lack of information cannot be shifted on to the festival organisation.

We are looking forward to meeting you in Leuven !