

800-YEAR-OLD CASTLE TRANSFORMS TO LEADING CITTASLOW ESCAPE

NEW OPENING VAN OYS MAASTRICHT RETREAT A MASTERPIECE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Maastricht, the Netherlands – A masterpiece opens its doors: Van Oys Maastricht Retreat, the first 5-star superior hotel in the south of the Netherlands. Discreet by nature, luxurious by design, Van Oys introduces a new era of luxury sustainability in hospitality – a place where time slows, elegance reigns and every detail whispers perfection. Set in the lush, tranquil landscape of Eijsden-Margraten in the province of Limburg, the destination embraces the Cittaslow philosophy in terms of sustainable tourism development and forward-thinking hospitality. As a proud member of the Leading Hotels of the World association, Van Oys Maastricht Retreat embodies the HeART of Slow. From its thoughtful farm-to-table philosophy to its deep respect for place, it defines quiet luxury appreciating the subtle elegance of quality and craftsmanship.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Occupying a beautifully restored castle with roots in the 13th century, the retreat seamlessly blends history and modernity. Named after the noble Van Oys family, the castle changed hands several times over the centuries, most recently in 2005. Behind the transformation are local entrepreneurs Michel and Leon Maes, who envisioned a place that honours the region's cultural richness while redefining contemporary luxury. Their vision has been brought to life under the leadership of Managing Director Marc Alofs, a highly respected figure in the Benelux hospitality industry, known for his dedication to quality and guest-centric design. Van Oys Maastricht Retreat joined the prestigious *Leading Hotels of the World*, a network of 400 luxury hotels in over 80 countries.

A UNIQUE SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

From the outset, Van Oys has aligned itself with the international Cittaslow movement, which promotes quality of life, sustainability and community values. Every decision – from architectural detailing to the farm-to-table dining concept – has been made with purpose and care.

'We want to give back to the region where we were born, raised and do business. This is our home – and we want our guests and neighbours to feel that same sense of belonging.' Michel and Leon Maes

This commitment to excellence and environmental stewardship has earned the retreat the prestigious Green Key Gold certification.

NEW ARCHITECTURAL BENCHMARKS

Van Oys is composed of three distinct buildings – Château, Carré and Remise – each with its own architectural identity. The renovation and expansion were led by Antwerp-based studio VERBRAEKEN x BISET, renowned for their thoughtful treatment of historical sites.

Their approach to Van Oys was guided by the idea of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* – a total work of art – in which architecture, interior design and the surrounding natural landscape are all part of a single, harmonious vision.

‘We love revitalising historic structures in an elegant way. Van Oys deserved to be restored to glory while respecting its refined architecture. We created spaces that are both functional and narratively rich. Balancing the distinct identities of the three buildings while ensuring harmony was a major challenge – but the result is a seamless blend of old and new.’ Catherine Verbraeken

Local marlstone, authentic detailing and a palette of natural materials all help to preserve the authenticity of the original estate while elevating it into a luxurious destination.

Van Oys features 81 individually designed rooms and suites, ranging from elegant Cosy Rooms to a spectacular Wellness Loft with private whirlpool and infrared sauna. Each space offers a refined aesthetic rooted in simplicity and comfort, drawing guests into a world where modern amenities exist in quiet dialogue with heritage elements. The rooms not only offer a sensory experience of peace and privacy but also reflect the hotel’s core philosophy: that true luxury is inseparable from sustainability.

CULINARY EXCELLENCE

The estate is home to two signature restaurants. At *Restaurant Maes*, Culinary Director Pascal Jalhay presents a cuisine du terroir that honours seasonal produce and the surrounding area. Meanwhile, *Create by Guido Braeken* – led by the acclaimed chef himself – offers a more experimental fine-dining journey rooted in top-quality ingredients and delicious flavours.

Dining at Van Oys extends beyond the restaurants. A curated wine bar, *César*, serves organic and biodynamic wines in an elegant yet relaxed setting, while the *Atelier du Terroir* cookery studio, hosted by retired Michelin-starred chefs, offers interactive experiences that explore slow cooking and local traditions. *Table d’hôte* invites guests to enjoy a thoughtfully composed evening menu that honours regional flavours, seasonal ingredients and the joy of shared dining. For a more intimate experience, *Atelier du Vin* is perfect for wine tastings and private dining, where rare vintages, refined interiors and a dedicated tasting table create a truly immersive experience. Every Sunday, Van Oys hosts an indulgent Grand Brunch – an elegant yet relaxed celebration of seasonal cuisine, curated by Pascal Jalhay and served in a refined, welcoming atmosphere.

A range of flexible indoor and open-air spaces are ideal locations for private celebrations, weddings and intimate business events. The historic estate offers an unmatched setting for meaningful gatherings with sweeping views, refined interiors and an unwavering commitment to high-touch service.

OYSANA SPA

For those seeking holistic wellness, the Oysana Spa and gym will be opening in autumn 2025. The spa integrates advanced therapies with the natural environment, using locally sourced ingredients and energy-efficient technology. Designed to restore body and mind, it includes indoor and outdoor relaxation areas, a fully equipped gym and bespoke wellness rituals developed around the principles of balance and renewal.

A DESTINATION WITH A HEART OF SLOW

Van Oys Maastricht Retreat stands as a beacon for what 21st-century hospitality can be – deeply rooted in place, authentically luxurious and unwaveringly sustainable.

‘We employ refugees from Ukraine, offer a stage to young local artists and provide meaningful activities for people with disabilities. Our strong bond with the local village and its way of life ensures we stand out – not only as a luxury destination but as a hotel with a big heart.’ Marc Alofs, Managing Director

A CITY OF HISTORY AND INNOVATION

Maastricht is a place of medieval charm, vibrant culture and refined craftsmanship. With its winding cobblestone streets, striking architecture, boutique shops and renowned culinary scene, Maastricht exudes a timeless European elegance. As the birthplace of the European Union and home to world-famous cultural events like TEFAF, the city continues to shape its reputation as a hub of art, design and heritage. Set within the lush landscape of the surrounding Eijsden-Margraten region, Maastricht offers a unique blend of tradition and progress, making it one of Europe’s most captivating cultural destinations.



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