You start your tour in the north, near the Dutch border, in the beautiful town of Kleve. Here you can visit the "Forstgarten" and amphitheatre. Prince Johann Moritz von Nassau-Siegen transformed the countryside around his residential town into a park landscape. This was unique in the 17th century and has remained so until the present day. It basically consists of two large baroque parks, the old and the new "Tiergarten", with parallel and star-shaped avenues, and an amphitheatre. If you are visiting these beautiful gardens, you will find that the museum in the Kleve "Kurhaus" is also worth a visit. Opened in April 1997, it contains art works from the Middle Ages to the present day; from baroque paintings by Rembrandt's pupil, Govert Flinck, to objects created by Joseph Beuys. One of the main sections of the museum is devoted to the famous classical modern German sculptor, Ewald Mataré (1887-1965). The museum also presents contemporary exhibitions. It is also worth taking a look at the Schwanenburg – the symbol of Kleve – and the many other historic buildings in the town centre. You should therefore plan some time here.

Info: Kleve Marketing GmbH & Co. KG. Tel +49 (0) 2821 89509-0, www.kleve.de

From Kleve you might like to make a short detour over the Dutch border to visit the "Rhulenhof". This is a paradise for lovers. There are landscape gardens and more formal gardens laid out with ornamental hedges, colourful flowerbeds and an extraordinary collection of orangery plants. Info: Tel. +31 (0) 485 518039, www.rhulenhof.nl

Alternatively you can travel directly from Kleve to the Schloss Moyland Museum in Bedburg-Hau. Renovation work on the castle was completed in 1997; since then the museum has housed around 60,000 works from the private collection of the van der Grinten brothers and an international research centre, the Joseph Beuys Archive. The spacious castle site is a remarkable blend of both old and new buildings, garden art, 20th century sculptures and the surrounding landscape. The early shape of today’s park dates back to the second half of the 17th century, when avenues of oak and linden trees stretched from the castle out into the landscape. At the start of the 19th century the grounds were extended southwards, and designed in an English style between 1830 and 1840. After the baroque castle was rebuilt in a neo-Gothic style (1854 onwards) the aristocratic owners transformed the northern part of the grounds into a landscape garden. Between 1995 and 1997 the castle grounds were extended with a design based on historic sources. The gardens are a part of the museum, for which there is an admission charge. Group guided tours can be booked in advance. Nederkom’s Museum Gastronomy is an ideal spot for a break and refreshments.

Info: Stiftung Schloß Moyland. Tel. +49 (0) 2824 9510-60, www.moyland.de Closed Mondays.

In Xanten – provided you book in advance by phone – you can view the Krautwig garden, one of the finest private gardens in the Lower Rhine area. Alternatively it is open on four weekends in the year. Garden lovers will find an inner courtyard of myrtles and box trees on the 130 year estate, not to speak of a herb garden and a garden of herbaceous perennials. An avenue of chestnut trees, a pond and countless roses enrich the 1.5 hectare gently cultivated wilderness.

Info: Tourist-Info Xanten. Tel. +49 (0) 28 01 98300, www.xanten.de

If you’ve enough time, you should make a detour to the Kamp Monastery in Kamp-Lintfort. The attractive baroque terrace garden was reconstructed in accordance with 18th century baroque topography designs. It is open to the general public.

Info: Stadtinformation Kamp-Lintfort, Tel. +49 (0) 2842 912444, www.kamp-lintfort.de
Tip
The Lower Rhine is a paradise for cyclists. Depending on the time at your disposal and your level of fitness, it provides a good opportunity to undertake a part - or even all the tour - by bike.

The best time of the year is between April and October, between Tuesdays and Sundays.

For further information and overnight accommodation:
Niederrhein Tourismus GmH,
Tel. +49-2162-817903;
www.niederrhein-tourismus.de

The Classical Garden Route
between the Rhine and Maas
The complete map can be had at:
info@strasse-der-gartenkunst.de
www.strasse-der-gartenkunst.de

Museum Kurhaus Kleve
Opened in April 1997 the museum contains art works from the Middle Ages to the present day; from Baroque paintings by Rembrandt's pupil, Govert Flinck, to objects by Joseph Beuys.

Kleine, Amphitheatre
Kleine, Forstgarten
Bedburg-Hau, Schloss Moyland
NL Ottersum, De Rhulenhof
Xanten, the Krautwig private garden
Kamp-Lintfort, Kamp monastery

The Schwanenburg, the symbol of Kleve.

The archeological park, Xanten.
A fascinating journey into the living past.

Contact:
Straße der Gartenkunst zwischen Rhein und Maas e.V.
c/o Stiftung Schloss Dyck
41363 Jüchen
Tel.: +49 (0) 1805 743465 (0,14 Euro/Min)
info@strasse-der-gartenkunst.de

This map is an excerpt from the general map "The Classical Garden Route"