

2018-2019

Belgium
Wallonia

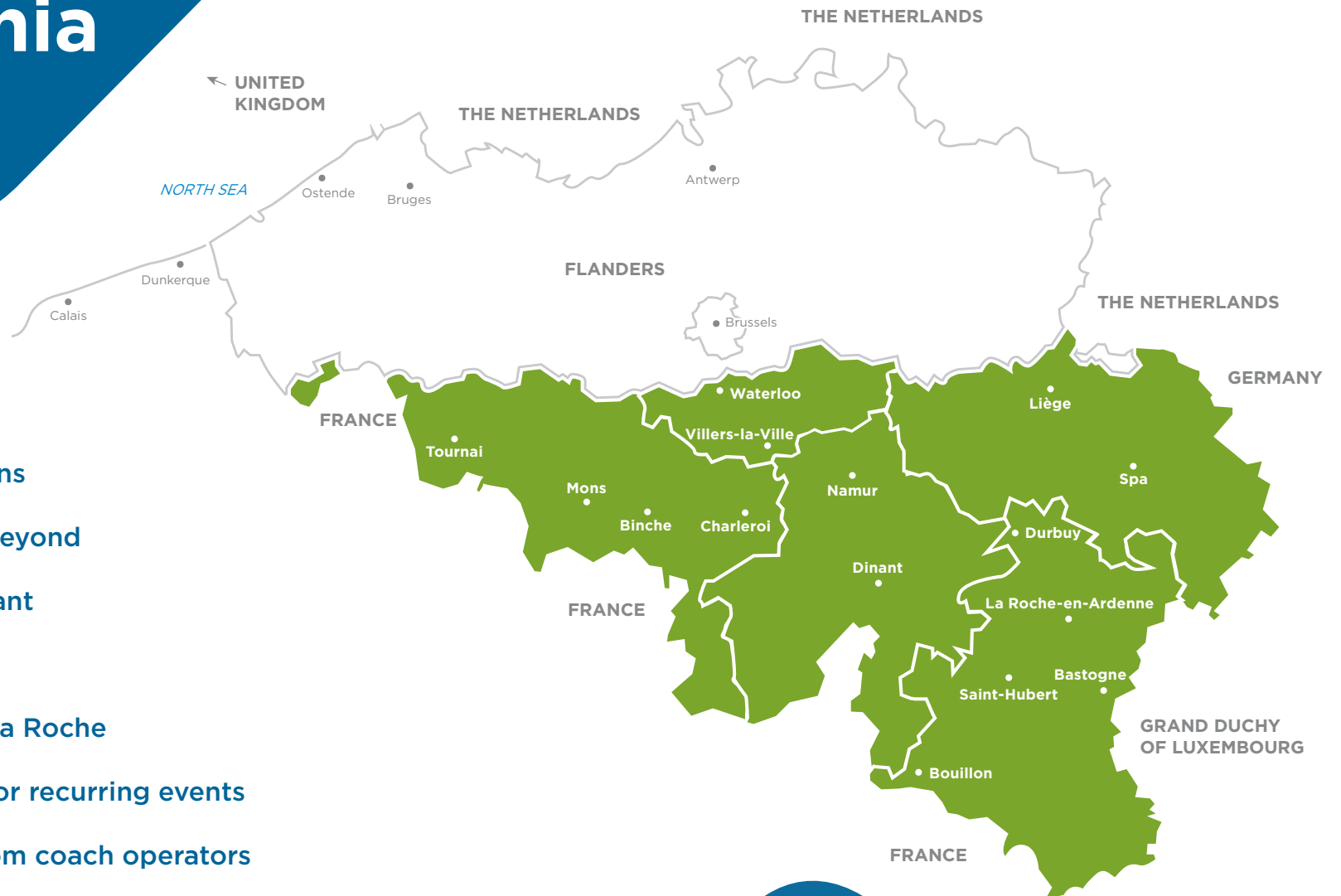
Surprising Discoveries

Your guide to creating memorable group visits to southern Belgium



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Location Map

Welcome to Belgium. Welcome to Wallonia.

Memorable experiences in southern Belgium start here!

It gives me very great pleasure to welcome you to this special guide that I know will inspire you to create memorable group visits to southern Belgium.

Wallonia, to give the region its correct name, is a small but fascinating region featuring spectacular castles, medieval towns and captivating cities. UNESCO World Heritage Sites sit side by side with steam railways, motor museums and some remarkable boat lifts.

History has left its mark too, from the Napoleonic Wars and Waterloo, to WWI and WWII. Across the region, the countryside is dotted with memorials and sites of remembrance.

Wallonia is also quirky and fun. Throughout the year there are many colourful festivals including the spectacular Venetian Costume Festival at Annevoie Gardens, the crazy Bathtub Regatta in Dinant, and the folkloric gaiety of the Doudou in Mons.

For those looking for a relaxing holiday, or to get closer to nature, the beautiful Belgian Ardennes offers a mostly unspoilt area of extensive forests, rolling hills, hidden caves and meandering rivers.

But it's not just the sights and scenery that your groups will enjoy. From artisan breweries to whisky

distilleries, from vineyards to cheese producers, and from waffles to chocolate, Wallonia's gastronomic pedigree is second to none. A group visit without a tasting, or two, is simply unthinkable!

Accommodation for groups of all sizes is plentiful, with many hotels able to offer rooms for single occupancy. French is the main spoken language, with a Germanic influence becoming more apparent in the east of the region.

So, I'd like to invite you to find a comfy seat, and take a moment or two to turn the pages of this guide. If you've not been to Wallonia before, I know that you're going to be very pleasantly surprised.

With such a wide choice of group-friendly attractions and things to see and do, we're here to help. Let us help you to plan a successful group visit full of many memorable experiences.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Philippe Maree

Trade Manager

Belgian Tourist Office - Wallonia



Tournai & Mons



HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS REGION INCLUDE

- Château de Beloeil and the Amaryllis Festival (April/May)
- The Historic Canal du Centre Boatlifts
- Plugstreet - WWI Battlefields
- The Biercée Distillery
- Mahymobiles - A unique world of automobiles
- Château and Gardens of Seneffe
- The Musée Royal de Mariemont
- The Binche Carnival (February)
- Hôpital Notre-Dame à la Rose
- The Eau d'Heure Lakes
- Pairi Daiza

Close to the French border is the vibrant and historic city of *Tournai*. Renowned for its art and history, Tournai is the oldest city in Belgium and the only ever ruled by Britain under Henry VIII.

Discover fascinating museums, visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Notre-Dame Cathedral, or climb the oldest belfry in Belgium. Explore the picturesque streets of the city by tourist train, a relaxing way to see its highlights. Enjoy a leisurely stroll along the banks of the River Scheldt, with the impressive '*Pont des Trous*', one of the most prestigious remnants of medieval military architecture in the country.

www.visittournai.be

Half an hour from Tournai is Mons, a small town with a big history. Mons was given a new lease of life when it became European Capital of Culture 2015. Step back in time in the baroque belfry, relax in the breath-taking Grand-Place and explore the winding cobbled alleyways that hint at bygone times. Mons has a compendium of museums, some renowned far beyond Belgium's borders for the quality of their exhibitions. This is also where, during WWI, the first and last British soldiers died on the Western Front battlefields.

www.visitmons.co.uk



Tournai Cathedral and Belfry

Notre-Dame Cathedral is a gem of medieval architecture and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its impressive dimensions, the harmonious blend of Romanesque and Gothic styles, and its daring architecture, make this building a benchmark for religious monuments of the West. Nearby is the Belfry. Climb to the top for a breath-taking views over the old town.

Henry VIII's Tower

Sitting on the edge of the city, this wonderful piece of defensive architecture was built on the instructions of the Tudor King.

The Mons Memorial Museum — A place of unique history

A museum dedicated to reflection, investigation and interaction and where the complex realities of the phenomena of war can be questioned. Through the fates of the men and women who witnessed events, visitors are immersed in the day-to-day lives of soldiers and civilians in times of peace, of war and of occupation.

www.monsmemorialmuseum.mons.be

The Angels of Mons

In August 1914, 4,000 Commonwealth soldiers taking part in the Battle of Mons found themselves heavily outnumbered by German soldiers. Against the odds they were able to retreat. A rumour then began circulating that angels in the form of archers had been seen, stopping the Germans in their tracks. Fiction or Reality? Either way, the story is now part of Mons' folklore.

www.visitmons.co.uk

Other Museums in Mons

- **St. Symphorien Military Cemetery.** This cemetery, established by the German army in 1914 as the final resting place for British and German soldiers who were killed at the Battle of Mons, has a sad claim to fame. It is the place of burial for Private John Parr of the Middlesex Regiment, the first British soldier to be killed in action on the Western Front. It is also the place of burial for George Ellison of the Royal Irish Lancers and George Price of the Canadian Infantry. They were killed not long before 11am on 11 November 1918 and are believed to be the last Commonwealth casualties of WWI.
- The **BAM** (Museum of Fine Art) focuses on the 20th century and boasts 15,000 works of art.
- The **François Duesberg Museum** has an amazing decorative arts collection. It also has two stars in the Michelin guide.
- **Tanks in Town** (see page 30) Annually for one weekend (End of August/Beginning Sept.) the **'Royal Mons Club Auto'** organises a major gathering of WWII tanks and other historical military vehicles. This is the only commemoration of its kind in the world, remembering the liberation of the city of Mons, with a parade of WWII vehicles. It is a true 'living' museum with vintage tanks.
- The **Doudou Museum** combines both reality and the imaginary as visitors are taken to the very heart of the 'Ducasse de Mons'. Each year during the 'Trinity' weekend, the people of Mons come together to pay tribute to Saint Waudru and witness the legendary battle, known as Lumeçon, pitting Saint George against the Dragon.



'Tanks in Town', Mons



The Doudou

The Distillery of Biercée

Originating in 1946, the Biercée Distillery distils brandies and high quality liqueurs, including the famous Eau de Villée, Black Ivory and Poire Williams N ° 1. From fruit to eau-de-vie, this process is carried out strictly according to tradition. Take a guided tour and discover the 'know-how' of the master distillers whose motto is "Quality without Compromise".

The Ferme de la Cour is a sympathetically renovated 16th century building within the distillery grounds that houses an excellent Brasserie-Restaurant. Catering for groups, it serves a varied selection of traditional Belgian meals and snacks.

www.distilleriedebiercee.com



© WBT - Bernard Boccara



The Distillery of Biercée
© WBT - D. Vasilov



Amaryllis Festival
© Fonds Château de Beloeil



The Château of Beloeil
© WBT - JL Flemal

The Château of Beloeil

This has been the residence of the Princes of Ligne since the 14th century. Surrounded by a 25-hectare park, this is one of the most beautiful curiosities in Belgium. Each of the castle's rooms is adorned with antique furniture and unique collections, and are testimony to its glorious history.

In April/May, this castle plays host annually to a stunning **Amaryllis Festival** when Dutch florists create stunning and unique floral displays, designed with more than 5000 flowers.

www.chateaudebeloeil.com

The Historic Canal du Centre Boat Lifts

The **Hydraulic Boat Lifts of the Historic Canal du Centre** located between La Louvière and Thieu are four hydraulic boat lifts that have been operating for a century. Built between 1882 and 1917, each lift, compensating for a difference in water level of around 17m, is powered entirely by water. This unique collection of boat lifts was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998.

The **Strépy-Thieu Boat lift** - An upgrade to Belgium's inland waterways resulted in the construction of a new section of the Canal du Centre. To compensate for a difference in the levels of the old and new canals of some 73m, the remarkable Strépy-Thieu Boat Lift was opened in 2002. At 150m, it is the second largest of its kind in the world. Groups can experience the lift on a boat trip.

<http://voiesdeau.hainaut.be>



Strépy Thieu Boat Lift
© WBT - S. Wittenbol



Domaine de Seneffe
© A. Breyer

Château de Seneffe

Described as a masterpiece of classical architecture, the Château de Seneffe is a remarkable building and a must-see attraction. This grey-stone castle features fine examples of 18th century parquet, wooden skirting, moulding and furniture. The castle also houses one of Belgium's most important silver collections, displayed among what can only be described as a setting of splendour and intimacy. This sensory exhibition makes its visitors feel like they're entering a painting from the period through a secret door.

www.chateaudeseneffe.be

Eau d'Heure Lakes

These are a complex of five artificial lakes, which form the largest lake area in Belgium, a flagship of the 'Walloon Tourist Heritage'. Artificially created in the 1970s, these lakes soon became a popular tourist attraction and an area recognised for watersports and outdoor activities.

www.lacsdeleaudheure.be



Eau d'Heure Lakes
© Les Lacs de l'Eau d'Heure



Mahymobiles
© J. D'Hondt

Mahymobiles

Unique in the world! This remarkable attraction is one man's private collection of veteran, vintage and classic cars, movie stars' cars, trucks, buses, miniatures, pedal cars, bicycles, steam machines, carriages and more. Basically it has everything relating to road transport since 1895, with in excess of 300 vehicles on display. Each has a fascinating story or a special place in motoring history, thanks to the passion of the owner Ghislain Mahy.

www.mahymobiles.be



Plugstreet - Memorial to the Missing

© WBT - P. Marée

Plugstreet

Ploegsteert Wood, known by those who served here as 'Plugstreet', was a sector of the Western Front in World War I, part of the Ypres Salient.

- **Plugstreet 14-18 Experience** is a pyramid-shaped museum with a cinema showing the background to the Great War, a three-dimensional map of the western front and a special presentation on the battle of Messines Ridge in June 1917. This splendid semi-underground structure, located in the heart of the Ploegsteert Wood, boasts a 400sqm high-tech filled scenic space.
- **Plugstreet Memorial to the Missing** - Located next to the Plugstreet 14-18 Experience, this memorial is guarded by two majestic stone lions, one expressing calm whilst the other expresses aggression. This is the Royal Berkshire Cemetery which contains the Memorial to the Missing. This graceful circular structure, opened in 1931, is devoted to those who lost their lives in action between Warneton and the Estines, but whose bodies have never been recovered.

www.plugstreet1418.be



Hospital Notre-Dame à la Rose

© Hospital Notre Dame à la Rose



Hospital Notre-Dame à la Rose

© Hospital Notre Dame à la Rose

Hospital Notre-Dame à la Rose

This ancient hospital, founded in the 13th century, reveals the advancement of medicine, surgery and pharmacy from the Middle Ages onwards. Its remarkable architecture, medicinal herb gardens and rich artistic and scientific collections, make it an absolute 'must see' in this region. This venue can also cater for pre-booked group meals.

www.notredamealarose.com

Beer & Cheese

A visit to southern Belgium wouldn't be complete without tasting the local products. These include beers and cheeses, most produced respecting local traditions.

- **Brewery La Binchoise** – Traditional beers have been produced here almost non-stop since the 14th century. Groups are accepted for **pre-booked meals** and **brewery visits and tastings**. www.labinchoise.be
- **Chimay** – These beers and cheeses are recognised as authentic Trappist products. The flavour of the beer derives from the unique yeast and the purity of the Abbey well water. www.chimay.com
- **Dubuisson** – Bush beers rank amongst the strongest in alcohol in Belgium, at around 12%. **Guided group tours** are available, which finish with a tasting in the Troll & Bush brewery pub. www.dubuisson.com
- **Saint Feuillen** – This is a top-fermenting beer brewed with the best malts and hops. The spring water comes from directly beneath the brewery. **Group visits** by appointment. www.st-feuillen.com
- **Silly Brewery** – This is an award-winning artisanal brewery founded in 1850. Partnerships have been formed with local cheese makers, resulting in a hard cheese rinsed in Double Enghien. Other cheeses are available made with various beers from the brewery. www.silly-beer.com



Carnival of Binche

The Carnival of Binche is a living heritage event steeped in folklore. Recognised by UNESCO as a 'Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity', it is held annually in either February or March on the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent). The numerous preparations required for this Carnival bring together every member of the local community as they prepare themselves for the main event on Shrove Tuesday when the town is filled with 1,000 Gilles. The Gille's costume can only be worn on this particular day and it is forbidden to take it outside the city limits, which is where the saying 'a Gille never leaves', comes from. This costume can only be worn by men who come from a Binche family or a man who has lived in Binche for at least five years.



Pairi Daiza

In the expansive grounds of a ruined Cistercian abbey north of Mons, this 'zoo of the future' is one of the most ambitious tourist projects in northern Europe. It is home to exotic animals, an array of birdlife with the largest aviary in Europe, and an aquarium. In the giant greenhouse, tropical flora and fauna are showcased and there are two ornamental gardens from south-east Asia. The Chinese garden is the largest in Europe and the Indonesian garden includes authentically designed temples. There are plans to develop part of the site as a jungle, rainforest and savannah. There's also a breeding programme for a number of endangered species.

www.pairidaiza.eu

Waterloo & Beyond



HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS REGION INCLUDE

- Memorial 1815 and The Lion's Mound
- The Wellington Museum
- The Solvay Estate
- Hergé Museum
- Religious Heritage (Villers Abbey)
- Hougoumont Farm
- Marked Walking and Cycling Trails

Located a stone's throw away south of Brussels is *Waterloo*. Here, the way was paved for a new Europe on the 18th June 1815. The sense of heritage, which filled Victor Hugo with wonder, still lives on. The history of the region is depicted throughout the numerous attractions, parks, castles and abbeys. At Waterloo, history comes to life with a detailed portrayal of the famous battle where Napoleon was finally vanquished by the Duke of Wellington and his allies.

www.waterlooandbeyond.be

Hergé Museum and 'Tintin'

A visit to the Hergé Museum takes you on a journey through the life of one of the greatest artists of the twentieth century. It offers a comprehensive perspective on the work of Hergé, best known in the UK for his cartoon character Tintin. More than 80 original plates and 800 photographs, documents and objects have been brought together under one roof. Hergé was not only Tintin but also a graphic designer, caricaturist, cartoonist, illustrator, storyteller and a multi-talented artist.

www.museeherge.com



Steam Train Rebecq

Make an unusual journey with the 'Petit Train du Bonheur', a unique tourist steam train, which is powered and driven by a steam engine from the 'Belle Epoque'. This 75-minute journey follows the River Senne and travels through the Valley of Birds, during which you will see the Viaduct of Five Bridges. The actual route takes you from Rebecq to Rognon. Snacks or even a BBQ meal can be pre-arranged for groups.



Villers Abbey

Situated in the commune of Villers-la-Ville in more than 36 hectares of grounds, this abbey has 850 years of history surrounding it. Founded in the 12th century under the aegis of Saint Bernard, today these majestic ruins give an impression of the life of the monks.

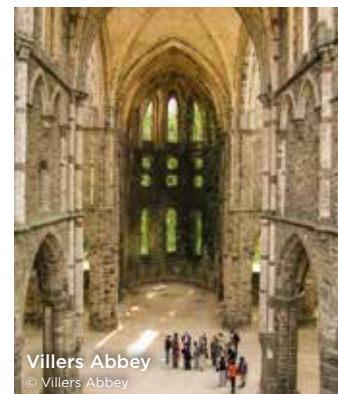
Le Moulin de Villers

Across the road from the entrance of the abbey is the picturesque Watermill Restaurant. The completely renovated 'Cave du Moulin' welcomes groups for lunches and dinners and has a seating capacity for up to 80 people.

www.villers.be



Villers Abbey
© Villers Abbey



Villers Abbey
© Villers Abbey



Villers Abbey
© Villers Abbey

Napoleon's Final Headquarters

Emperor Napoleon and his staff spent the night of 17th June 1815 at the Caillou Farm in Vieux-Genappe. Here, Napoleon devised his strategy and battle plans. This former farm, 4km from the Lion's Mound, has been transformed into a museum housing a variety of items, mainly from the French army, including the Emperor's cot. Annually, an encampment of several hundred soldiers is hosted in the beautiful orchard. In the garden, there is an ossuary where the bones, which were found randomly scattered across the battlefield, were gathered together.



Memorial 1815

'Memorial 1815' is on the site of the Battle of Waterloo. The site has grown up around the Lion's Mound, the monument that marks the front line of the battle between French and English troops. There are four attractions: the Memorial 1815 itself; the Lion's Mound; the Waterloo Panorama; and the Barn of Hougoumont.

The 'Memorial 1815' brings to life one of the most turbulent periods in Belgian history with a narrative scenography. Your visit, guided is a multi-sensory experience complete with special effects. A 15-minute 4D film is shown on a unique 180° screen.

www.waterloo1815.be



The Lion's Mound

This monument was erected in 1826 on the spot where the Prince of Orange was wounded on 18 June 1815 and offers an exceptional panoramic view of the battlefield. At the top of the mound's 226 steps at a height of 40m, stands a cast iron lion astride a globe, a symbol of the Allied victory. It subsequently became a symbol of the peace obtained by Europe on the fields of Waterloo.

The Waterloo Panorama

Located next to the Visitor Centre, this huge circular building holds the canvas painted by Louis Dumoulin in 1912, marking the first centenary of the battle. The dimensions of this huge fresco are awesome and worthy of its dramatic subject matter. Measuring 110m around and 12m high, this Panorama is a unique visual theatre. It was restored in 2008 and today, is an important piece of historical heritage as it is one of the few panoramas that still exist.

Folon Foundation

Discover the world and poetry of the Belgian artist **Folon situated at the Hulpe Chateau Farm**. Created and designed by Jean-Michel Folon, the Foundation represents more than 40 years of creativity, in a lively and original setting, designed by the artist himself. Here, with surprises around every corner, Folon opens the book of his life, where across its pages can be discovered the many facets of his art and universe amongst the 300 exhibited works. These include watercolours, serigraphs, etchings, posters, misappropriated objects, stained glass and sculptures.

www.fondationfolon.be



Folon Foundation
© WBT - J-P Remy

Wellington Museum

The fascinating Wellington Museum brings together a range of artifacts and memorabilia that tells the story of the events leading up to and including the 18th June 1815, the **Battle of Waterloo**. Housed in a building originally dating from 1705, this museum, which in 1815 was originally an inn, was chosen by the British military as their HQ. The Duke of Wellington, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies, stayed here on the nights of 17th and 18th June 1815.

www.museewellington.be



Musée Wellington
© WBT - J-P Remy

Hougoumont Farm

In 1815, this fortified farmhouse was in the hands of 1,500 coalition soldiers, and the scene of heavy fighting. Although the main building was razed to the ground, the former home of the gardener survived. Today, exhibition rooms and an impressive multi-media show tell a fascinating story.

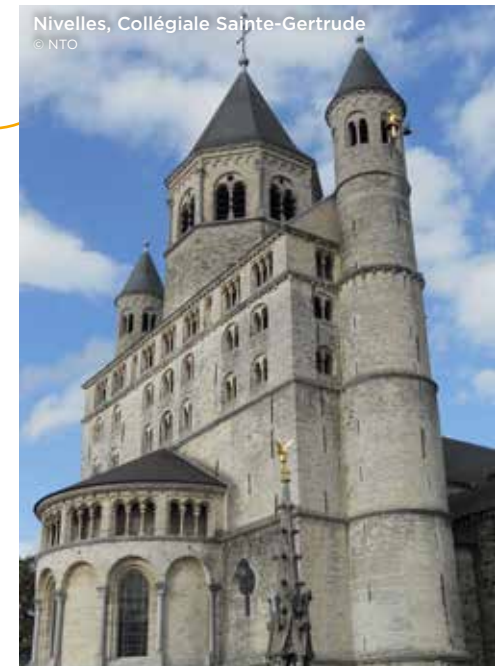


Hougoumont Farm
© E. Furnire

Nivelle's Collegiate Church

Consecrated in 1046 by the Bishop of Liège in the presence of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry III, this building is an example of Mosan art and Ottonian architecture. The central nave is 102m long, making it one of the largest Roman churches in the world. **Guided tours** can be pre-booked, visiting the crypt, the archaeological basement and the cloister.

www.tourisme-nivelles.be



Nivelles, Collégiale Sainte-Gertrude
© NTO

Namur & Dinant

From Namur, follow the River Meuse to *Dinant*, a popular riverside town with an opportunity for a spot of river cruising. The town has an imposing citadel all of its own, as well as a rather famous past resident, Adolphe Sax, who invented the saxophone. The Adolphe Sax museum is worth a visit, and don't miss the giant saxophones that line the Charles De Gaulle bridge in the town centre. From Dinant, routes lead east into the heart of the Ardennes, with spectacular scenery, including caves, to explore.

The city of *Namur*, the capital of Wallonia, is one of the most impressive fortified towns in Europe, strategically sited at the confluence of the Meuse and Sambre Rivers. The picturesque old town is worth discovering, but it's the vast former military citadel, once one of the mightiest fortresses in Europe, that's the city's pride and joy.



WHAT DOES THIS REGION OFFER?

- Characterful towns and villages surrounded by stunning scenery
- A wealth of attractions and historical sites awaiting exploration
- Castles, water gardens and cruises
- River valleys, deep wooded canyons and cave systems carved out over the centuries
- Activity holidays and a wide range of accommodation
- Trails for ramblers and cyclists

Gardens of Annevoie

Featuring over 20 ornamental ponds and lakes, fed by approximately 50 water jets and waterfalls, these gardens are widely regarded as some of the best, not only in Belgium but also in Europe. The castle, which unfortunately cannot be visited, was constructed in the 1620s and was heavily modified in 1775 when the spectacular water gardens were established. **Guided Garden Tours** in English can be pre-booked for groups

The Venetian Carnival Festival — Held annually in spring (April / May), this is a stunning three-day event featuring around 100 people dressed in full Venetian Carnival costumes (see cover). Twice a day, all the costumes come together for a grand parade through the gardens (see page 30).

Brasserie Bocow is a delightful gastronomic experience within the gardens. It is perfect for enjoying a delicious local dish or trying the special varieties of local beer and wine. Set menus are available for **pre-booked groups**.

www.annevoie.be



Chateau Lavaux Sainte Anne

Listed as an 'Exceptional Heritage' attraction, this is one of Wallonia's most famous buildings, which houses museums depicting the everyday way of life in this region from the 17th century.

The Castle, formerly the sumptuous residence of the Lords of Lavaux-Saint-Anne, consists of a dining room, music room, hunting room, writing room, ladies bedroom and boudoir, bathroom and chapel. The ground floor is decorated with period furniture.

Rural Life in the Famenne — In the cellars of the castle, many objects and documents testify to the harshness of peasant life in the 19th century. Basketry is also featured as rush and wicker were gathered from the nearby wetlands of the Famenne region.

www.chateau-lavaux.com

Chateau Vêves

Perched dramatically on a rocky outcrop overlooking the pretty village of Celles, this medieval 'fairy-tale' style castle has had a tumultuous history and is a remarkable example of 15th century military architecture.

Pre-booked guided tours in English are available.

www.chateau-de-veves.be



The Citadelle of Namur

The Citadel of Namur was one of the greatest strongholds in Europe, the fortifications revealing several centuries of occupation and military architecture.

- **'A la santé de Blanche de Namur'** — This beer-tasting tour takes place in Europe's largest network of underground passages and caverns of any citadel.
- **The Terra Nova Visitor Centre** is located in the former barracks and traces 2,000 years of European urban and military history through the story of Namur and its citadel.
- **A 'Little Train' Tour** — A relaxing way to discover the eventful military past of the site. Travel alongside the fortifications of this splendid stronghold whilst discovering the unique panorama of the valley, the town and its numerous churches.
- **The Guy Delforge Perfumery** — This centre of creativity, unique in northern Europe, shows the flair of this perfume maker and his use of an orchestra of rich fragrances for producing fine perfume. A one-hour guided tour including a 12-minute film describing the building's history and a presentation of the raw materials used in making perfume is available.

www.namurtourisme.be • www.citadelle.namur.be • www.delforge.com



Three Valleys Steam Railway

A journey of discovery through the Valleys of Viroin and the Upper Meuse with the magic of steam. This steam railway connects the stations of Mariembourg and Treignes, via the villages of Nismes, Olloy-sur-Viroin and Vierves, the latter also being one of 'The Most Beautiful Villages' in Wallonia. Groups can pre-book a train for a private journey and a meal or a snack can also be arranged whilst on board. This unique experience is not to be missed.

The Railway Museum in Treignes was founded in 1994 and houses various rolling-stock and is constantly evolving. There 's a small cafe and shop.

www.cfv3v.in-site-out.com



© CFV3V



Wildlife Reserve
© Marc Steichen



Caves of Han
© WBT - David Samyn

The Caves of Han, Tram Ride, and Wildlife Reserve

The small village of Han-sur-Lesse is home to one of the most famous caves in Europe. Shaped by the River Lesse which traverses the cave system, the Caves of Han are outstanding both because of the beauty of the rock formations and the enormity of the caverns. A visit here begins by taking a 100-year-old tram on a 4km journey from the visitor centre in the village to the entrance of the caves. The guided cave tour takes around 100 minutes and takes you through approximately 2km of this underground world. Admire the reflection of the fascinating draped rock formations in the mirror of the waters of the Lesse. One of the highlights of this visit is the sound and light show, which vibrates the vault in the Salle d'Armes. The adjoining **Wildlife Reserve** covers an area of 250 hectares and is a haven of peace and quiet. Moreover, it is a feast for your eyes with its stunning panorama of the old Lesse valley.

Discover the mysterious Belvaux Chasm where the river embarks on its underground course. Completing this setting, there is a wide range of animal species to be seen, including stags, deer and wild boar in addition to rarer and protected animals. A safari bus tour is a relaxing way of exploring this expansive Reserve.

www.grotte-de-han.be



© WBT - J.-P. Remy



Brasserie du Bocq
© Du Bocq Brewery

Brasserie du Bocq

This is one of the few breweries still committed to traditional production techniques. All beers are top-fermented with a second fermentation in the bottle. This method safeguards the characteristics of the raw materials and guarantees the natural character of the beers, which are produced without any chemical additives or preservatives. **Guided tours** are conducted by professional guides and followed by tastings of their products

www.bocq.be

Dinant River Cruises

Sitting on the banks of the River Meuse is the picture-postcard town of Dinant, the birthplace of musician Adolphe Sax, the inventor of the saxophone. A popular favorite for groups is taking a relaxing cruise on the river. Dinner cruises are also possible as is a private hire or party boat. This is an ideal way to enjoy an hour or more exploring this stretch of the river and the town of Dinant.

www.dinantcroisieres.be



Dinant
© FTPN Christian Genard

The Citadel of Dinant

This fortress has been a weapon and history museum for over a century. In order to 'storm' the citadel, visitors can choose between the stairs with 408 steps, or take the cable car from the town. Both lead to a staggering view over Dinant and the river. Group meals are possible at the Cannons Restaurant next to the citadel and at the Citadels Restaurant located at the foot of the cable car.

www.citadellededinant.be



Hitler's Bunker
© M. Lanckmans



Hitler's Bunker
© M. Lanckmans

Chateau Freyr & Gardens

This former summerhouse of the Dukes of Beaufort-Spontin located on the banks of the River Meuse, has an air of Versailles in a spectacular setting. From the 14th century until today, 20 generations of direct descendants have developed an enchanting atmosphere. During your visit you will be introduced to the family and their royal guests and learn about the famous 'coffee treaty'. This is a magnificent Renaissance-style mansion. Inside, the castle is refined and cosmopolitan.

The Gardens - The walled terraced gardens in the style of Le Nôtre, are both splendid and intimate. Tranquillity and relaxation abound with only the whisper of the fountains and the perfume of the 300-year-old orange trees. There are also 6km of hedged mazes guaranteed to appeal to adventurers of all ages.

The Chateau has its own mooring point on the river. Groups can book a private cruise with a selection of boat companies in Dinant. Visits here are usually self-guided, although regional guides can be arranged to accompany groups around this attraction.

www.freyr.be



Chateau Freyr
© FTPN - Bossroy

Hitler's Bunker

Lost in the middle of a sprawling forest, Brûly-de-Pesche could have forever remained just another spot on the map. However, the events of World War II decided otherwise when Hitler and his High Command came to Brûly-de-Pesche on June 6th 1940.

From here, Hitler oversaw the Battle of France, and prepared the final details of the French armistice. The site is home to vestiges of Hitler's time here with two wooden lodges similar to the Bavarian type of 1940. One has a small media presentation depicting the lives of the local population when the order of evacuation came in May 1940. The other one commemorates the resistance efforts of the Hotton Service Group D, which chose the same forest to hide in 1943 to organise their sabotage activities. An exhibition of materials they used and models, gives a glimpse of the tough day-to-day life of the resistance fighters.

www.bunkerhitler.be



Ligny Re-enactment
© Pascal Degée

Battle of Ligny Museum

Step back in time to June 1815 and discover the story of the Battle of Ligny, Napoleon's final victory before his defeat, two days later, at the Battle of Waterloo. The museum is housed in the original farm that was used as a hospital on the eve of the battle. Seven rooms across two floors explain how life was in the rural village of Ligny before the battle, and what happened on the day. The collection of old photographs, engravings, dioramas, mannequins, period documents, weapons and maps will be of interest to any group interested in the history of Napoleon and Wellington. Special Napoleon-themed events take place over the weekend of the first Sunday in June.



Battle of Ligny Museum © WBT - D. Vasilov



Brasserie des Fagnes
© Fagnes Brewery

Super des Fagnes Brewery and Brasserie

This micro-brewery and café near Mariembourg is home to another of Wallonia's famous beer brands, Super des Fagnes. There's an opportunity to visit the 'old' brewery dating from 1858 that ended production in 1977. There's free entry to see the modern brewery. However, group packages are available that include a guided tour of the old and new breweries, an opportunity to sample the product, and a Fagnes glass to take home as a gift. An English-speaking guide can be arranged. You can also arrange meals or refreshments in the large part-timbered bar café that sits alongside the working brewery equipment.

www.brasserieedesfagnes.be

Florennes Spitfire Memorial

For aviation-lovers here's a gem of a museum, all based around a fully restored Spitfire Mk XIV. The museum, opened in 1992, sits in a corner of the Florennes air base, a site that has a rich aviation history and is a key base of the Belgian Air Force. The base was actually built by the Luftwaffe in 1942, to provide a new advanced facility for its night fighter units. It was captured by the Americans in 1944, and the Allies made extensive use of it in the closing months of the war. The Spitfire Museum, beautifully illustrates this history through its unique collection of each of the major Belgian fighter aircraft. The restoration of the Spitfire began in 1986 and took around 12,000 working hours to complete. The museum also features an example of an F-16 Fighting Falcon of the Belgian Air Force. From 1984 to 1989, the 458th Tactical Missile Wing of the U.S. Air Force was based at Florennes, and the museum collection includes a launcher and a nuclear cruise missile.

www.museespitfire-florennes.be



Spitfire Museum Florennes
© Ph Maree



May 1940 Remembrance Museum
© O. Voets

Battle of the Meuse May 1940 Museum

The German surge through the Ardennes and eastern Belgium in May 1940 was truly astonishing. The museum commemorating the Battle of the Meuse near Dinant (12 till 15 May 1940), is in the village of Haut-le-Wastia, on a wooded bluff high above the Meuse and Molignée rivers.



Dinant Panoramic - Meuse Battle May 1940
© Ph Maree



WHAT DOES THIS REGION OFFER?

- Relaxing cruises on the River Meuse
- Châteaux, abbeys and seven collegiate churches
- Festivals and Christmas Markets
- Spa Francorchamps track museum
- UNESCO World Heritage Site
- The origin of 'Spa' with Thermal baths and wellness
- Nature and the outdoors in the National Park of the High Fens
- Cycling and walking trails

The location for several natural water sources and hot springs, the town of *Spa* is one of the oldest spa towns in Europe, giving its name to spas in general. Visitors have been drawn to this romantic town and the healing properties of its water since the 16th century. Nearby is the classic motor racing circuit of Spa Francorchamps, home to the Belgian F1 Grand Prix. At certain times of the year there are opportunities to take a coach and group around the circuit. A short drive away is the town of Stavelot, with a magnificent abbey and, in the crypt, an extensive collection of F1 racing cars and memorabilia from the Spa Francorchamps circuit. Walking groups will find much to explore in the surrounding countryside and up into the Hautes Fagnes (High Fens).

www.spatourisme.be

Liège & Spa

The Province of *Liège* draws its appeal predominantly from its architectural heritage, which includes the Price-Bishops' Palace in Liège, the Cathedral of Saint Paul and the famous baptismal fonts in St Barthélemy Church. Added to these are the Chateaux of Jehay, Modave, Harzé, Reinhardstein, Burg-Reuland and Raeren, which also has a Pottery Museum. Stavelot Abbey is home to three museums and the Val-Dieu Abbey offers tours combined with tastings of authentic beers brewed on site. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Blegny-Mine is an authentic former coal mine that closed in 1980. Underground tours are led by former miners, while above ground there's a fascinating industrial museum. Nature is one of the most precious assets in the Liège Province, of which there are plenty! There are 5,000km of sign-posted walking paths, 13 RAVeL cycle tracks including the internationally known and award-winning Vennbahn, a former railway line converted into a cycle path. There are also the well-known lakes of La Gileppe, Eupen, Robertville and Bütgenbach with their impressive flood barriers, which can be explored by boat, on foot or by bike.

www.visitezliege.be

City of Liège

This provincial capital city of Liege offers a mix of characterful districts, the River Meuse and the surrounding hills and woodlands. Together, they give Liege an exceptional charm. Liege is a modern city but at the same time it has ancient roots. Known as the '**City of 100 Spires**', it has innumerable riches to discover.

Take a stroll along the Coteaux de la Citadelle where there are walks full of surprises, courtyards, steps and orchards, as you journey back in time. Crisscross the elegant bridges that traverse the River Meuse which divides the city from north to south. Spend Sunday like a Liégeois visiting La Batte Market, the largest and oldest market in Belgium and a veritable institution, stretching over a mile with hundreds of colourful stalls.

Admire the stunning architectural masterpiece of the **Liège-Guillemins Railway Station** designed by the world famous Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava.

Among the stars of the regional specialities are the unmissable **boulets à la Liégeoise**, quail, rabbit, salad Liégeoise, Visé style goose, real Liège coffee, the Liège waffle, Peket, Galler chocolate, Herve cheeses and local beers! Quite a choice!

Christmas Village

Running for four weeks in November and December, Liege Christmas market has grown to be one of the largest, oldest and longest markets in Belgium. Proclaimed the Latin Capital of Christmas Festivities, this **Christmas Village** has a subtle difference in atmosphere to its Germanic and Alsatian neighbours. Numerous wooden chalets sell a wide variety of wares including Christmas village ornaments, gastronomic delights, local handicrafts and regional souvenirs.



Christmas Village



Fort Loncin

This is considered to be the symbol of the **Battle of Liège** and Belgium's heroism against the German attack in 1914. Located close to Liège, this is an exceptional remembrance site, preserved in the same condition after its destruction during WWI. After 11 days of resistance against the Germans, the Fort exploded on 15 August 1914 following a hit from the '**Big Bertha**' canon. A 42cm shell weighing 800kg hit one of the gunpowder magazines and obliterated the fort, burying 350 people. A visit to the fort presents numerous pieces that bear witness to the daily lives of the young soldiers stationed there. As well as visiting the quarters, showers, cells, officers' mess, and General Leman's quarters, you are plunged into the events of August 1914 at the heart of the bombings. Discover the workings of the fort's turrets with the aid of visual aids, relive the explosion through a realistic re-enactment and pay your respects at the memorial to the soldiers who lost their lives here. The fort also has a museum which brings together a beautiful collection of rare, curious and stunning objects including period weapons, uniforms and personal effects found on the site. Pre-booked **guided tours** are available.

www.fortdeloncin.be



Fort Eben-Ebael

After WWI, Belgium prepared for future German aggression by constructing a new generation of four 'modern' forts, carved out by miners in the 1930s. The last of these constructions was Fort Eben-Ebael, north-east of Liège near the German border. Hailed as the most formidable defensive fortress in the world, Eben-Emael's statistics make extraordinary reading. This complex, sprawled over 75 hectares, is roughly the size of 150 football pitches. Seventeen separate bunkers were connected by a complex network of galleries resembling the London Underground tunnels and measuring more than three miles. The fort commander needed four hours - on a bicycle - to inspect every section, and at full strength this extraordinary, mainly subterranean, garrison numbered nearly 1,200 men. This museum represents the **Battle of the Albert Canal** on the 10th and 11th May 1940, during which more than 700 Belgian soldiers died. For enthusiasts or military groups there is also an extensive tour available.

www.fort-eben-emael.be

Baugnez 44 Historical Centre

In order to perpetuate the memory of the Battle of the Bulge, this centre takes its visitors through the final great operations and battles which took place during the counter offensive 'Operation Wacht Am Rhein'. This museum is also a tribute to the 84 American soldiers made prisoners after fierce fighting with a German Panzer Regiment and murdered nearby. The museum is visited by way of an **audio guide** and there is also an informative 25-minute film.

The Five Points **Brasserie Restaurant** provides an ideal opportunity to combine a gourmet experience with the discovery of an event that will live forever in the collective memory. With seating for 75 people and a magnificent terrace accommodating a further 60 people, this is ideal for a **group meal venue**, true to its brasserie style.

www.baugnez44.be

www.fivepoints.be



La Gleize Historical Museum

Located in the heart of the northern part of the Belgian Ardennes, this museum houses historical artefacts that have been collected, preserved and exhibited, telling the story of the 'Ardennes Offensive'. It depicts a chronological and themed journey into the history of the German offensive in the surrounding area of La Gleize and the failure of Kampfgruppe Peiper to succeed in his mission in December 1944. This is one of the most important collections in Europe and an impressive quantity of material was found, for the most part, in the surroundings of La Gleize.

www.december44.com

The Nature Centre of Botrange

Situated in the High Fens region, this was the first Natural Park in Belgium and also the largest. Throughout the year, during weekends and holidays, there are a selection of activities on offer including hiking, bike rides and even cross-country skiing.

Eco-friendly guided walks are also bookable for groups (March-November), which cross the moors and delve deep in to the forest.

www.botrange.be



Chateau Modave

This castle was first mentioned in 1233 as a fortified post protecting the nearby town of Huy, with the current building dating from the late 17th century. An audio-guided visit explores more than 25 richly decorated and furnished rooms, adorned with astonishing stucco and 17th century tapestries. Located on a rocky outcrop overlooking the Hoyoux Valley 60m below, views from the castle of the surrounding nature reserve are spectacular. There are occasional music evenings and events. At Christmas, the decorations are truly magical.

www.modave-castle.be



Château de Modave
© Château de Modave

Chateau Jehay

This imposing 16th-century building is surrounded by moats which appear as if by magic as you approach. Recognisable because of its **famous chequered walls**, it is a rare and beautiful example of 16th-century architecture in the Renaissance style. It is listed as a **'Site of Exceptional Heritage in Wallonia'**. Its woodlands and flower gardens span over 22 hectares. It also has one of the richest English public art collections in Belgium.

www.chateaujehay.be



Château de Modave
© WBT - J-P Remy



Château de Jehay
© WBT - David Samyn

Stavelot Abbey

Visit Stavelot Abbey, the Abbey of the Prince-Bishops of Stavelot, one of the oldest monastic foundations in Belgium. Then, venture into the crypt for a surprise. A collection of F1 motor racing cars and memorabilia from the nearby Spa Francorchamps motor racing circuit. There's also a museum dedicated to the poet Guillaume Apollinaire. Guided visits in English are available.

www.abbayedestavelot.be



Stavelot Abbey
© WBT - David Samyn



Stavelot Abbey
© WBT - S. Wittenbol



Darcis Chocolate
© WBT - Olivier Legrand

Darcis Chocolate Factory, Verviers

Darcis is one of Wallonia's best known and most-loved chocolatiers with 12 shops across the region and in Brussels. In July 2016, owner Jean-Philippe Darcis opened 'La Chocolatrie', a new and already popular attraction that tells the story of chocolate. An audio guide, in English, takes you on a journey of exploration to discover the origins of chocolate. You'll sneak through the corridors of a Mayan temple, embark aboard the 'Caravelle de Cortez', and across the oceans to Europe. You'll arrive in the middle of the French Revolution in a bourgeois salon where you can immerse yourself in the ambience of the first chocolate shops in the early 20th century. After the fascinating history lesson, there's an opportunity to see the craftsmen at work in the chocolate-making workshop and, of course, sample the product. This is an impressive new visitor attraction and worth considering in any group itinerary.

www.darcis.com

Jacques Chocolaterie and Musuem, Eupen (Ostbelgien)

Established in 1896, Jacques is a well-known brand of Belgian chocolate. In Eupen, close to the German border and Aachen, is the Jacques Chocolaterie and Museum. Described modestly as a 'Kingdom of Chocolate', this popular visitor attraction gives groups the opportunity to find more about the history of the confection in the Chocolate Museum. There are video animations, collections of ancient objects including moulds, packaging and vending, and a display of brand advertising. Groups can then visit the factory, using a purpose-built walkway that overlooks the production hall and the chocolatiers at work. At the end of the visit, the Gourmet Space offers many tempting items to buy.

www.chocojacques.be

Bastogne & La Roche

La Roche-en-Ardenne is one of the most charming towns in this area. Situated alongside the River Ourthe beneath wooded hills it is renowned for its smoked ham and game. With its charming spires and medieval castle ruins, it's no wonder that La Roche-en-Ardenne is one of the most visited towns in the Belgian Ardennes.

WHAT DOES THIS REGION OFFER?

- Outdoor activities, fresh air and greenery, stunning scenery and an abundance of historic attractions- the south east of Belgium has it all.
- Meandering rivers, areas rich in fauna and flora, and vast forests.
- Explore the many picturesque villages that nestle in the valleys where traditions and folklore still live on, and where the region's arts and crafts can be enjoyed.
- Springtime in the Ardennes is the season for outdoor activities (walking, cycling, kayaking...)
- Belgium's southern reaches are a striking contrast to the crowded north, as cities give way to the rugged wilderness landscapes of the Ardennes.



Bastogne - During World Wars I and II, this area close to the Luxembourg border was the final resting place for thousands of soldiers who died in both World Wars. This was a battleground and a scene of bitter fighting and in 1944 it was the centre of the last major German offensive on the Western Front, the 'Battle of the Bulge'.

Bastogne 101st Airborne Museum

This museum houses a rich collection of objects from WWII and the Battle of the Bulge and the famous 101st Airborne Division. All located under one roof in the centre of Bastogne, it is also close to Place McAuliffe and the famous Sherman Tank. The many displays with amazing life-like scenes will take you back to the cold winter of 1944-1945 when the battle was in full force. Learn about what both the soldiers and the locals did during this terrible time and see the gory diorama of a battlefield hospital scene. Experience a shelter whilst the bombers thunder overhead as you hear, see and feel what this must have been like, amidst a frighteningly realistic bombardment, as the residents of Bastogne did over 73 years ago.

www.101airbornemuseumbastogne.com



Mardasson Memorial
© Bastogne War Museum

Bastogne Barracks (Museum)

This museum, located within the original barracks, illustrates this Belgian town's defenses during the Battle of the Bulge, when in December 1944, Bastogne was at the centre of a massive assault. The Germans launched their attack on December 16th and four days later surrounded the US troops in Bastogne, a critical road junction. The US divisions established their headquarters in the Belgian 'Heintz' Barracks and on December 22nd Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe wrote history, as he answered "NUTS" to the German troops who were demanding an immediate surrender. His short but powerful statement becomes a turning point in the Battle of the Bulge. Today, the barracks are still owned by the Belgian Military and are an interpretation centre for WWII. There is also the 'Vehicle Restoration Centre' which gives the Royal Military Museum armoured vehicles a new lease of life. Guided tours are provided by soldiers.

www.bastogne-barracks.be

Hotton Military Cemetery

The British and Commonwealth Military Cemetery at Hotton commemorates 667 soldiers who lost their lives in the 'Battle of the Bulge', 527 of which are British. Nearby in Hotton is the Sherman 'Firefly' turret, a memorial to the soldiers of the 53rd Welsh Infantry Division and to their supporting armoured regiments. The cemetery is one of the many memorials to the battle in the area.



Hotton CWGC
© Olivier Lefevre



Hotton CWGC
© WBT - Ph. Maree

Bastogne War Museum

Located just a stone's throw from the imposing memorial to the American troops who died in the battle (Mardasson), this museum represents a new way to remember the past. Specifically devoted to WWII in Belgium, this modern interactive memorial centre, highlights the causes, events and consequences of the war, through the lens of the 'Battle of the Bulge'.

www.bastognewarmuseum.be



Bastogne War Museum
© Bastogne War Museum



Bastogne War Museum
© Bastogne War Museum

Guided Tours

Personalised group guided tours offer a more in-depth insight in to the towns and villages that were affected and caught up in the 'Battle of the Bulge'. With an expert guide, visits to memorial stones, monuments, alternative war museums and military cemeteries can be arranged. This is an opportunity to travel 'down memory lane' reliving a little of the local history, whilst also visiting a selection of present day attractions. Themed tours include:

- **The British in the 'Battle of the Bulge'**
- **Bastogne**
- **The Breakthrough of the German 6th Panzer Army**
- **Patton and the 4th Armoured Division**



La Roche-en-Ardenne WW2 Museum
© WBT - JP. Remy

Defroidmont Chocolates

This chocolate company is located in Érezée in the heart of Belgium's Ardennes, surrounded by forests and green fields. Philippe Defroidmont is passionate about the quality of his product including the taste, the raw materials and how they are produced, using only the purest tradition of chocolate making. Visit the adjoining small museum and discover the history of Defroidmont.

www.chocolatier-defroidmont.be

The Achouffe Brewery

Specialising in brewing quality special beers, the story begins in the late 1970s when two brothers-in-law decided to create their own beer in their own brewery. Using the little money they had, they embarked upon what fans of the brewery call a "Chouffe story". The first La Chouffe mash tub (49 litres) was produced on 27 August 1982. Although first seen as a hobby, it is today an award-winning successful brewery venture and is sold in over 40 countries. Group tours with tastings are available.

www.achouffe.be



La Chouffe
© WBT - E. Mathez

La Roche-en-Ardenne

Nestled in a leafy setting on the banks of the River Ourthe, La Roche, 'Jewel of the Ardennes', has a fascinating past, a wealth of history, legends, and even a ghost. The town was not affected by WWI unlike in WWII when 114 civilians were killed, 350 buildings were destroyed and 327 damaged.

Visit the 9th century feudal castle where the towers, murder-holes and oubliettes portray an authentic medieval atmosphere.

The Battle of the Ardennes Museum is the only 'Battle of the Bulge' museum to present a British section along with American and German sections. Spread over three floors, there are over 120 mannequins of American, English, German and even Scottish soldiers with their equipment and armaments as well as uniforms donated by veterans of the 'Battle of the Bulge'. Discover an important collection of light and heavy arms, photographic documents, personal objects and equipment found on the battlefield, in addition to some 20 military vehicles.

A 'petit train' tour is the perfect way to discover the town and the immediate surroundings. Pre-bookable for groups in request.

www.la-roche-tourisme.com



Tramway Touristique de l'Aisne
© Aisne Tourist tram

Tramway Touristique de l'Aisne

This is one of the oldest tourist railways, which operates on a section of a disused rural line surrounded by nature in the heart of the Province of Luxembourg between Érezée and Dochamps. From the modern station in which there is a cafeteria and a museum, old trams, some of which are more than a hundred years old, travel through the local countryside and hilly landscapes untouched by time. Along the Aisne, you will see from the tram, fauna and flora typical of the Ardennes.

Groups can pre-book a tram for private use.

www.tta.be

Chateau Fort de Bouillon

Bouillon castle is one of the oldest feudal remnants of Belgium, the entrance of which is by way of three drawbridges. The main courtyard leads to the Ducal Palace with its 13th century Salle Godefroid de Bouillon. Climb to the top of the 16th century Tour d'Autriche, where the reward is a breathtaking panoramic view of the town and river. Whilst here, visit the torture chamber and dungeons. It's not for the faint-hearted. In addition to visiting the castle, there is a falconry show every day (March-November).

www.bouillon-initiative.be



Bouillon - Château Fort
© MT Bouillon - Christel François

Orval Abbey

A visit to the Cistercian ruins includes a 20-minute audio-visual presentation of the history of the monastery and of the present-day life of the community. There is a pharmaceutical museum housed in the foundations of the 18th century buildings and a medicinal herb-garden - Pre-booked guided tours are available.

The Orval Brewery located within the confines of the abbey was created in 1931 to finance the enormous reconstruction works. It has always hired lay workers, including the master brewer Pappenheimer, who invented Orval's 'Trappist' beer recipe.

Orval cheese has been made on the premises since 1928, using an 1816 recipe from the Trappist monks of the Port du Salut Abbey. This cow's milk cheese has a natural washed crust and is distinguished by its creaminess.

www.orval.be



Orval
© WBT - David Samyn

St Hubert

Located in the heart of the sprawling forests of the Ardennes, this is a centre of green tourism and hiking. A highlight is the Basilic, which surprises visitors with its elegance and majesty, and is the centre of the pilgrim cult of St Hubert, the patron saint of hunters and butchers. The band of the 'Royal Forêt Saint-Hubert' with their unique musical instruments is one of the best hunting horn bands in Belgium. Nearby is the Domaine St Michel Furnace, an open-air museum, which is home to a unique collection of relocated traditional rural houses of Southern Wallonia.

www.saint-hubert-tourisme.be

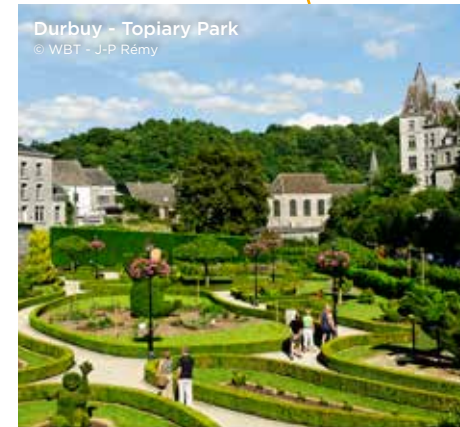


Saint Hubert Basilica
© WBT JL Fiemal

The Topiary Park

Ironically, Durbuy the world's 'Smallest Town' boasts the largest topiary park in the world! In an area of 10,000 sqm, 250 clipped box trees have been created in a variety of forms.

www.topiairesdurbuy.be



Durbuy - Topiary Park
© WBT - J-P Rémy

Adventure Valley

This region has the largest natural outdoor adventure park in Belgium. There are over 20 outdoor activities that can be enjoyed as a group activity, including quad bikes, kayaks, canoeing, rafting, golf, karting, climbing and abseiling.

www.adventure-valley.be

Eurospace Center

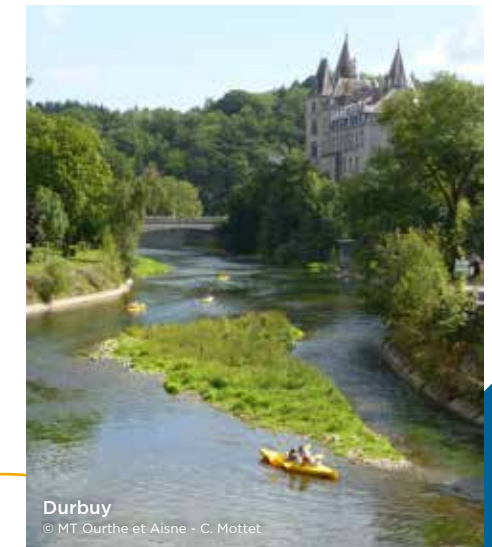
This space discovery and leisure centre in Transinne invites groups to explore the mysteries of the universe and touch-and-feel mankind's conquest of space. The multi-media presentations, 5D cinema and Planetarium are impressive enough, but it's the physical activities that leave the most lasting impression. Follow in Neil Armstrong's footsteps by donning a virtual reality mask and doing a Moonwalk, where you 'weigh' six times less than on earth.

www.eurospacecenter.be

Durbuy

Durbuy, often described as 'the smallest town on earth' is also one of the prettiest with narrow flowered and cobbled streets, lined by old stone houses, and full of shops, cafes and eating places. There's a lovely 9th-century castle, and a land train that takes you to the top of the Belvedere where you can enjoy the view or visit the local jam factory. Durbuy is also a well-known centre for gastronomy. Guided walking tours for groups can be pre-arranged for groups either with an historic theme or combined with tasting the local products.

www.durbuy.be



Durbuy
© MT Ourthe et Aisne - C. Mottet



© Eurospace Center



Wallonia's annual events

Across the year, Wallonia has a number of festivals, carnivals and events that bring their respective cities, towns and villages to life. Time your visit to coincide with one of these and you're set for a truly memorable experience.

• Binche Carnival

The 'Carnival of Binche' is one of the most famous folkloric celebrations in Belgium. Taking place over three days each February, nearly 1,000 'Gilles', traditionally male and of all ages, appear in a heavy overstuffed, vibrant costume consisting of clogs and bells. In the morning they wield sticks to ward off evil while wearing a wax mask with green glasses, later swapped for hats decorated with towering white ostrich plumes. The traditional march through the town's streets is spectacular.

www.carnavaldebinche.be

• Dinant Bathtub Regatta

The International Regatta of Bathtubs is a fun, quirky and semi-sporty event held in mid-August on the River Meuse in Dinant. Contestants must ride a floating bathtub and steer it upstream for one kilometre. The winner is the first bathtub over the line, but marks are also awarded for the originality of the bathtub design. Dinant's famous citadel and church provide the spectacular backdrop.

• Mariembourg Steam Festival

Taking place over the last weekend in September, the steam festival takes place at the Three Valleys Steam Railway. The railway's collection of around 10 steam locomotives and historic carriages operate at frequent intervals between Mariembourg and Treignes.

www.cfv3v.in-site-out.com

• Mons Doudou

The 'Doudou' is to the city of Mons what the carnival is to Rio. Every year, over Trinity weekend at the end of May or the beginning of June, visitors and locals flock in their thousands to the festivities, the oldest of which dates back to the 14th century. There are two main events. First the Descent of the Châsse de Sainte-Waudru; the procession; and the ascent of the Car d'Or, and then 'Lumeçon', a battle between St George and the dragon.

• Mons 'Tanks in Town'

Each year, to commemorate the liberation of the city on 2 September 1944 by US forces, a large gathering of armoured vehicles peacefully invade the historic centre. The event, which takes place over the weekend nearest to the anniversary, includes a historical parade, military camp and flea market.

www.tanksintown.be

• Spa Francorchamps F1 Grand Prix

One of the greatest circuits on the Formula 1 calendar, Spa hosts the annual Belgian Grand Prix at the end of August. Whether you're a petrolhead or not, the sights and sounds of what is always a spectacular event, will leave a truly memorable experience.

www.spagrandprix.com

• Venetian Costume Festival, Annevoie Gardens

Set in a magnificent haven of forests and rivers, the Gardens of Annevoie blend French-style splendour, English romanticism and Italian refinement. A suitable location then for the truly remarkable of Venetian costumes that are paraded through the gardens, in both a big parade and freely, over three days over Whit Monday.

www.annevoie.be

• Waterloo Commemoration

Each year, in the middle of June, the Battle of Waterloo is celebrated as French and allied re-enactors come together for a busy historical weekend. Activities and entertainment take place at each of the sites of the battle.

Special event for 2018

Mons - Anniversary of the Armistice 1918

Mons is the location of St-Symphorien Cemetery, the resting place of the first and the last soldiers to be killed in World War 1. On 10 November 2018, a programme of events will take place both at the cemetery and across the Mons region, celebrating the liberation of the city. On 11 November, in the centre of Mons, a memorial ceremony, parades and concerts will provide a fitting celebration of the armistice.

www.visitmons.co.uk

For more information on all these events, go to www.walloniabelgiumtourism.co.uk



Pairi Daiza
© WBT - David Samyn

“ Belgium is crammed with undiscovered visitor destinations. There’s so much it’s a challenge to design tour programmes, not in finding the right content but in agonising over what to leave out. The Pairi Daiza park is becoming a Buzzlines favourite, with day trips now selling well because of repeat visitors and word-of-mouth recommendation ”

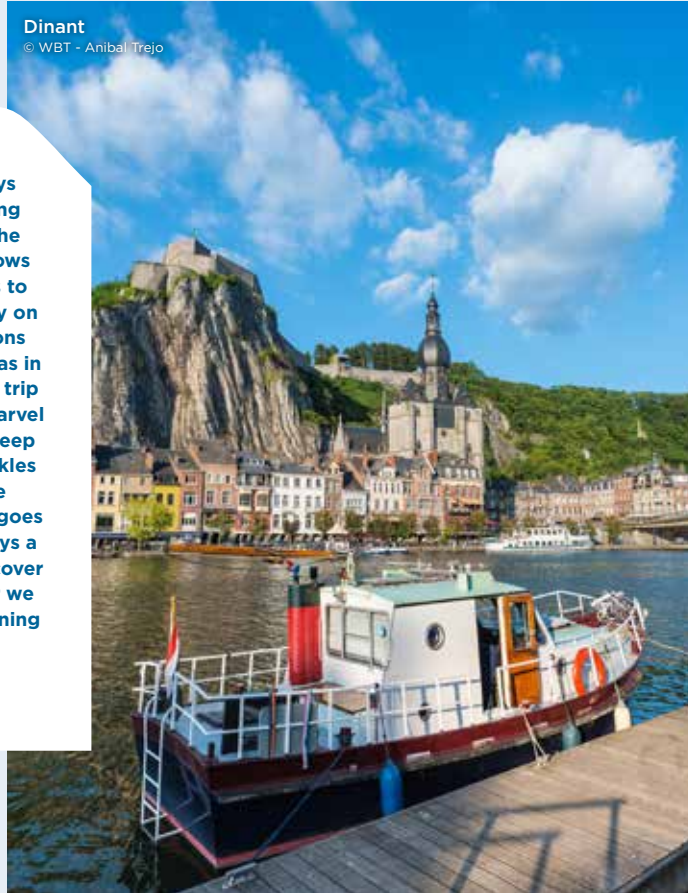
Lynn Woods
Chief Executive, Buzzlines
Folkestone



© Paul Reed - Leger Holidays

“ The battlefields in Wallonia offer some of the most iconic sites in military history; travel the 99 years from Waterloo to Mons, see the graves of the first and last casualties of WW1 or sit in the foxholes of the Battle of the Bulge. This is history coming alive! ”

Paul Reed
Head Battlefields Guide
Leger Holidays
Rotherham



Dinant
© WBT - Anibal Trejo

“ Southern Belgium is always a favourite destination among our continental travellers. The short journey from Calais allows for more time for our groups to explore the wonderful scenery on offer compared to destinations further afield. Our 4* ‘Christmas in Belgium’ excursion includes a trip to Dinant where our groups marvel in this fantastic and unique steep rock face location which sparkles along the River Meuse. The delicious local cuisine always goes down a treat and there’s always a new, undiscovered gem to uncover along the way. It’s no wonder we have the same travellers returning year after year. ”

Nigel Skill
Managing Director, Skills Holidays
Nottingham

“ Great cuisine, great beer, great cities and fascinating history! There are so many reasons to visit southern Belgium. ”

Robert Shaw
Director, Harry Shaw,
Coventry



Namur Citadel
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