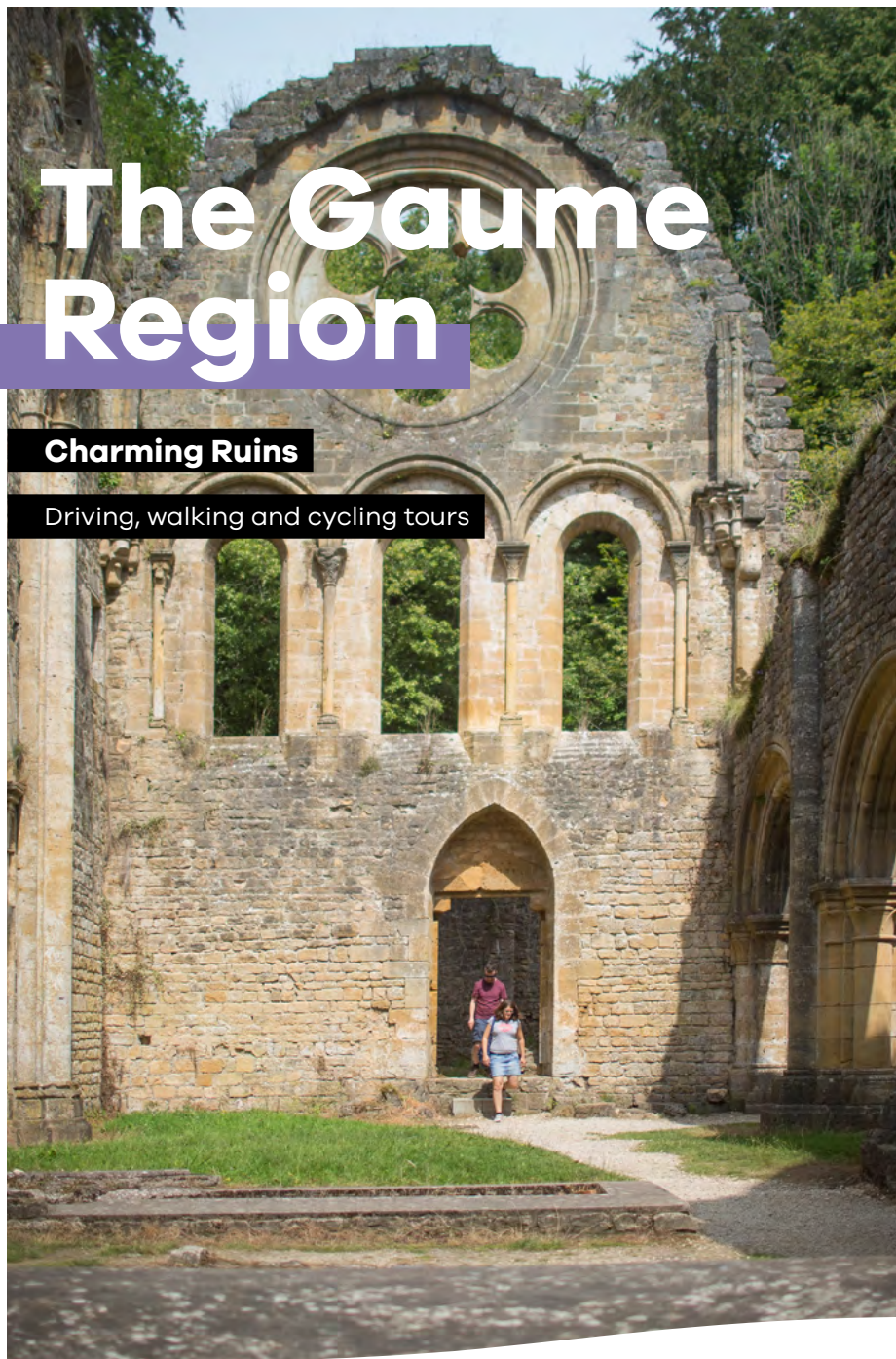


The Gaume Region

Charming Ruins

Driving, walking and cycling tours

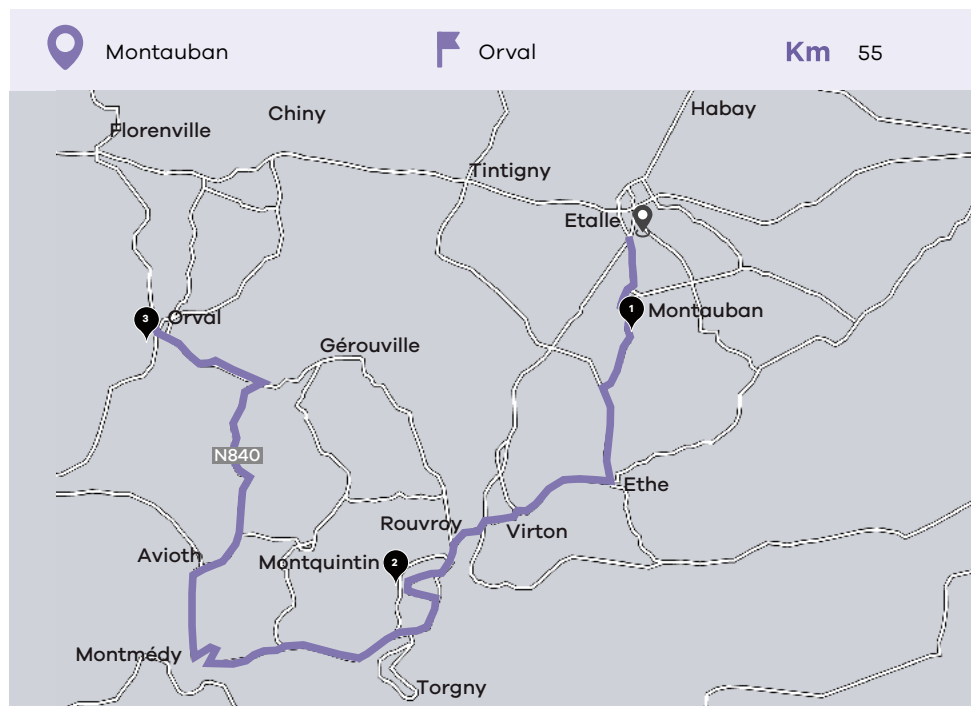


By car



The Gaume Region Charming Ruins

The Gaume region contrasts with its neighbour, the Ardennes! While the Ardennes is more rugged, the relief in the Belgian Lorraine region is gently undulating, illuminated by the Gaume region's generous sun. The lushness of its landscape, the joyful and charming villages echoes its mild climate.



Chiny

In Chiny, the River Semois lulls the landscape. In summer, flat-bottomed barges glide along, between Chiny and Lacuisine. The *"Passeurs Réunis"* will take you eight kilometres along the wild Semois where the lapping of the boat adds a peaceful lull. The locality has a rich history. In the Middle Ages, the Counts of Chiny were very powerful and ruled the whole region. From the castle dominating the Semois, its grooms would travel to the river to water the horses, via the underground passages.



© WBT - P. Pouchain

1

Montauban

Perched on a rocky outcrop and protected from the forest, the Cyclopean walls blend into the décor... The Montauban site has experienced three successive periods of occupation. Initially, it was a place of refuge from the Iron Age, then again during the Gallo-Roman period (in the 3rd century) and finally during the Middle Ages (in the 8th century). The site retains traces from these times. In particular, the ruins of a keep and medieval ramparts are still visible. Legend has it that this ancient castle is attributed to the Four Sons of Aymon, known for daring to rebel against the authority of Emperor Charlemagne. A contemporary building houses archaeological finds sits on-site. Educational signs are placed on the site. In the valley below, the calm of the beautiful avenues full of beech trees contrasts with the steel industry that animated the region from the 16th to the 18th century. The imposing ruin of the charcoal store testifies to a large amount of coal needed to fuel the forge. The site currently houses contemporary works of art.

Unguided tour.

Rue de Montauban
6743 Buzenol



© V. Mery



The Valley of Iron in Habay

Habay's heyday was in the 17th and 18th centuries thanks to the iron industry and the *forges de la Trapperie, Pont d'Oye, Châtelet and Bologne*. The abundant forest near Rulles provided the fuel for the forges (the charcoal) and the river supplied the waterpower. With the clearing of the forest, clusters of population were established in remote villages in the heart of the forest. This industrial heritage is still very much present in the landscape. The reservoirs created for the forges are what make the many stunning and peaceful lakes you'll come across on your travels today. They all emit a certain romanticism, just like the *Château du Pont d'Oye* (Castle), which you reach via its porch and inner courtyard.

2

The Ruins of *Château de Montquintin* (Castle)

The *Château de Montquintin* keeps watch at the top of a hill. The site is airy, isolated. The ruins of the castle bear witness to the many attacks suffered, despite its large sandstone walls. It was then destroyed and rebuilt several times, following invasions or attacks by revolutionaries. Originally there was only one watchtower. It was then completed to become a veritable castle and improve its defensive aspects (13th, 15th and 16th centuries) before being converted into a residential palace (18th and 19th centuries). Next to the imposing walls, a little museum recounts 18th-century peasant life. There is also a reconstructed traditional house, an old village classroom and ancient crafts which expand the picture of life back then...

Guided tour only by prior appointment

Rue du Château-Fort • 6767 Montquintin

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The Seigneurie of Vilmont in Tintigny

Despite it looking like a manor house, the *Château de Vilmont* was destroyed in 1914 during the Battle of the Frontiers. A few kilometres away, in the nearby *Château de Rossignol*, Countess Van der Straeten received the Red Cross: 200 wounded soldiers were rescued there during the battle in August 1914.

The Fortified Town of Virton

Who would imagine that this charming town was an important stronghold, surrounded by a fortified outer wall, lined with moats and garnished with towers! In the heart of the town, there were vines; squares that had a cattle market and a mill wheel that turned in the River Ton. Life was hectic there! A topo-guide available at the *Maison du Tourisme* (Tourist Office) brings the Middle Ages completely alive.



Southern Air

The magic of Torgny's microclimate is unique in Belgium. Protected from the north's winds by the Ardennes Massif and built on a limestone soil that captures the heat, the village enjoys more than its fair share of sunshine, much to the envy of the rest of. Nestled halfway up a hill, Torgny spreads out in terraces. The red-tiled roofs are inspired by the 'imbrex', a curved tile that overlapped. As in all the villages of the Gaume region, a small pace is left in front of the building: this was once occupied by the "usoir", which was used for storing firewood and manure.

3

Abbaye d'Orval (Abbey)

The site of Abbaye d'Orval, located in the heart of the forest, is a place of plenitude and recollection. In 1070, monks arrived in Orval after a long journey from Italy. They received part of the estate to build a monastery and a church from the local lord, Arnould de Chiny. 40 years after the site was founded, the first monks left the place and a small community of canons continued the construction. The task was colossal: they asked for help and attachment to the Cistercian Order, which was then in full expansion. The monks finished the abbey around 1200. Its foundation is also linked to a legend that Countess Mathilde of Tuscany, Duchess of Lower Lorraine, who when visiting lost her wedding ring in a fountain. A trout then appeared to return the ring to her. For five centuries, the abbey led a quiet existence and the story could have ended in 1789 when the revolutionary troops destroyed the abbey. However, 125 years later, the place rose from the ashes when the Belgian state decided to rebuild it in 1913, next to the remaining ruins. The new monastic complex was inaugurated in 1948 and has been thriving for 80 years with visitors coming from all over the world. It is probably best known for its famous beers.

Open daily from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., from November to February. 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m., from March to May and during the month of October. 9.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., from June to September.

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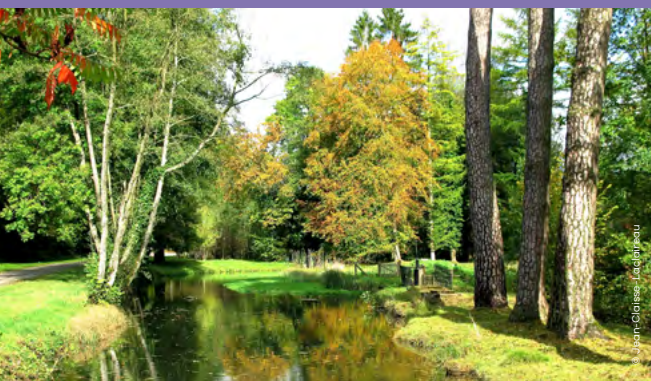
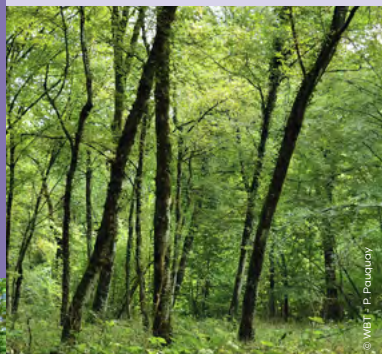
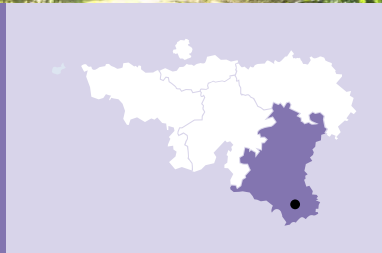


On foot



Around Montauban

At the beginning of the walk, you discover a series of **small waterfalls** hurtling down the hill. These "*crons*" in the Gaume refer to petrifying hard-water springs with tufa formations. The site is beautiful with a **multitude of streams** crisscrossing the valley with crystal-clear water. The flora and fauna include rare and threatened species are a joy for nature lovers. The biodiversity of the Gaume has no limits... Streams and ponds punctuate the green environment of the large beech forest with the colour blue. **The Laclaireau Valley Nature Reserve** then opens up to you. At the end of the hike, the **RAVeL** (greenway) guides you through the great forest.



Starting Point

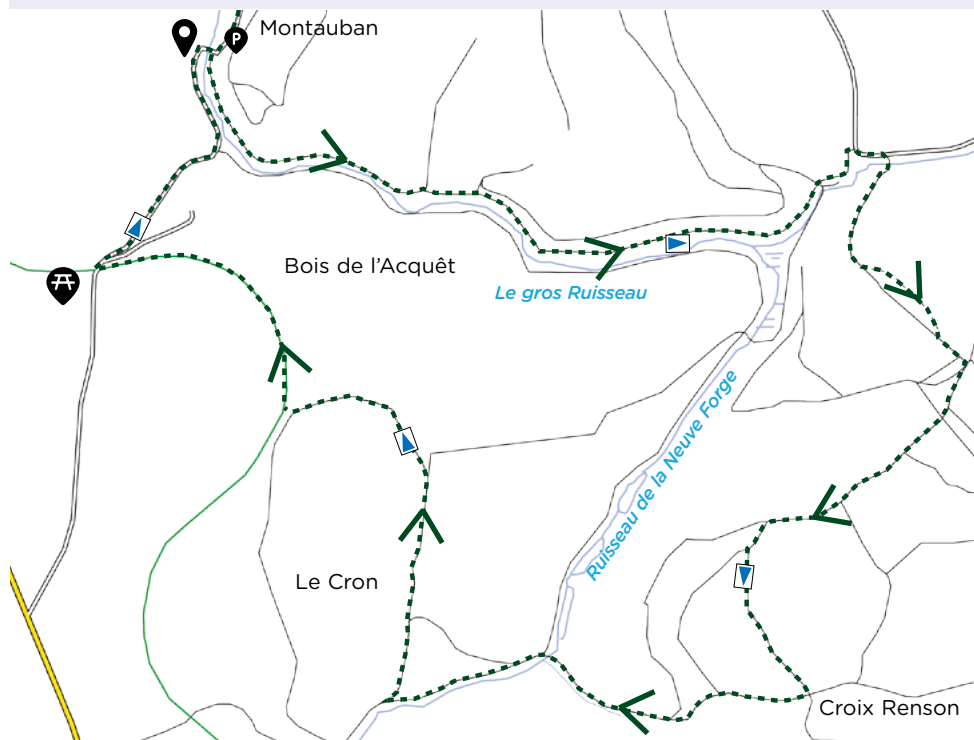
From the site of the old forges, walk along the path downstream, shortly before the turn of the road (Rue de Montauban, 6743).

Car Park

Along the forges.

Km**11****3H30****MARKINGS**

Blue triangle

**DIFFICULTY**

View and download the routes on [visitwallonia.be](https://www.visitwallonia.be)

Tip

Be sure to visit the Montauban site, located above the old forges.

Difficulty

A stony track to the Crons. The paths in the forest can later be very wet. Steep hill from the Gros Ruisseau (Big Stream).

Gradient gain

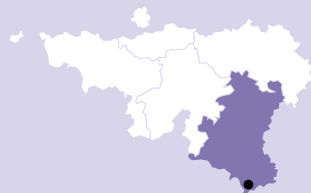


By bike



Around Torgny

In Torgny, the Roman tiled roofs and the microclimate of the Gaume plunge you into the **atmosphere of the South**. The route climbs to the south, where the hillsides extend all over the slope. A **wine-making tradition** originated in Roman times continues today with the production of a delicious white wine. Thanks to its sunshine, Torgny is home to a flora and fauna of a sub-Mediterranean character unique in Belgium. The **nature reserve**, above the village, consists of a chalk grassland where the New Forest cicada, the blue-winged grasshopper rubs shoulders with the most beautiful orchids – a magical place! In the wood, the silty, very rich soil encourages the emergence of a wide variety of trees. Soon after, the trail plunges towards Harnoncourt where the hill of **Montquintin** is revealed in front of it. A pretty shady road ends this lovely Southern walk.



Starting Point

From the village square head to the nature reserve, on the heights of Torgny.

Car park

At the entrance to the village.

Km

14

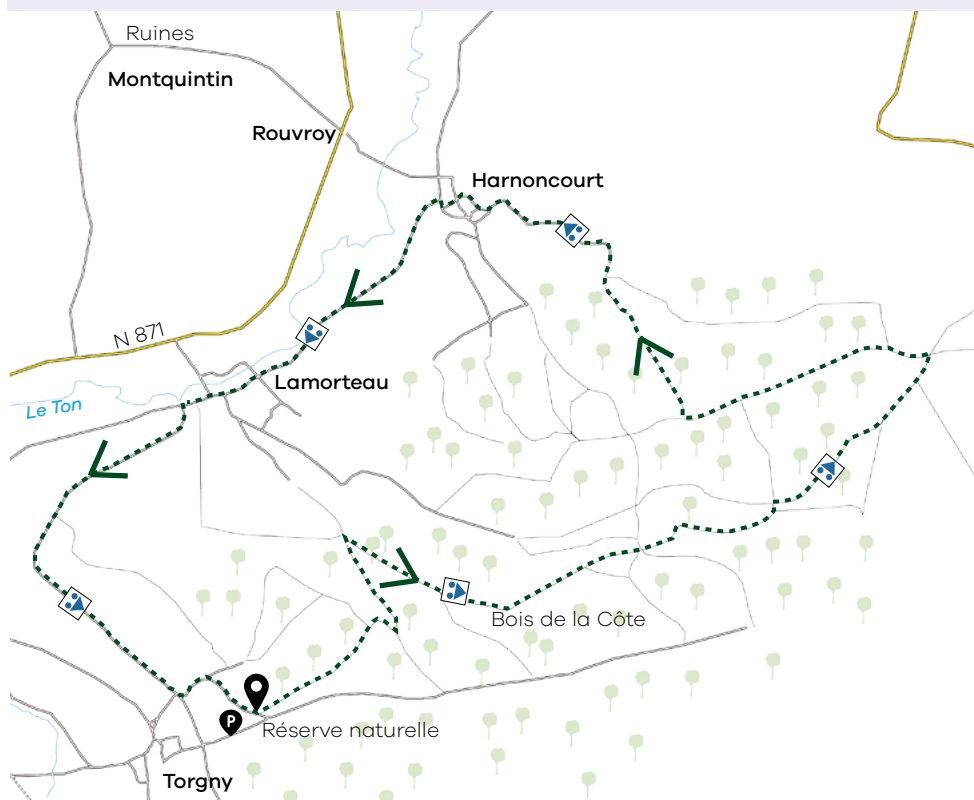


2H00



HYBRID BIKE

DIFFICULTY



View and download the routes on [visitwallonia.be](https://www.visitwallonia.be)

Type of Route

Country roads and sometimes muddy tracks.

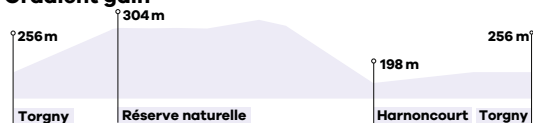
Markings

Follow the triangle markings and blue circles.

Difficulty

A mountain bike or trekking bike with good off-road tires will be necessary to complete this ride.

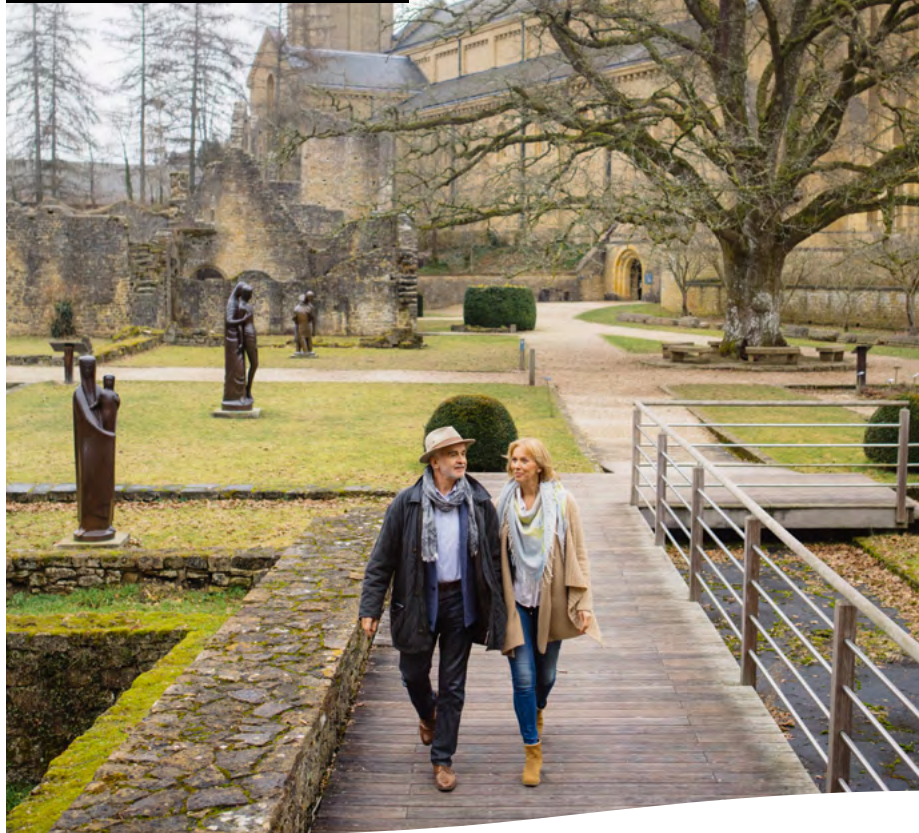
Gradient gain



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The Ultimate Belgian Getaway

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