

VISITWallonia.be

The Botte du Hainaut Region

Castles and Fortifications

Driving, walking and cycling routes



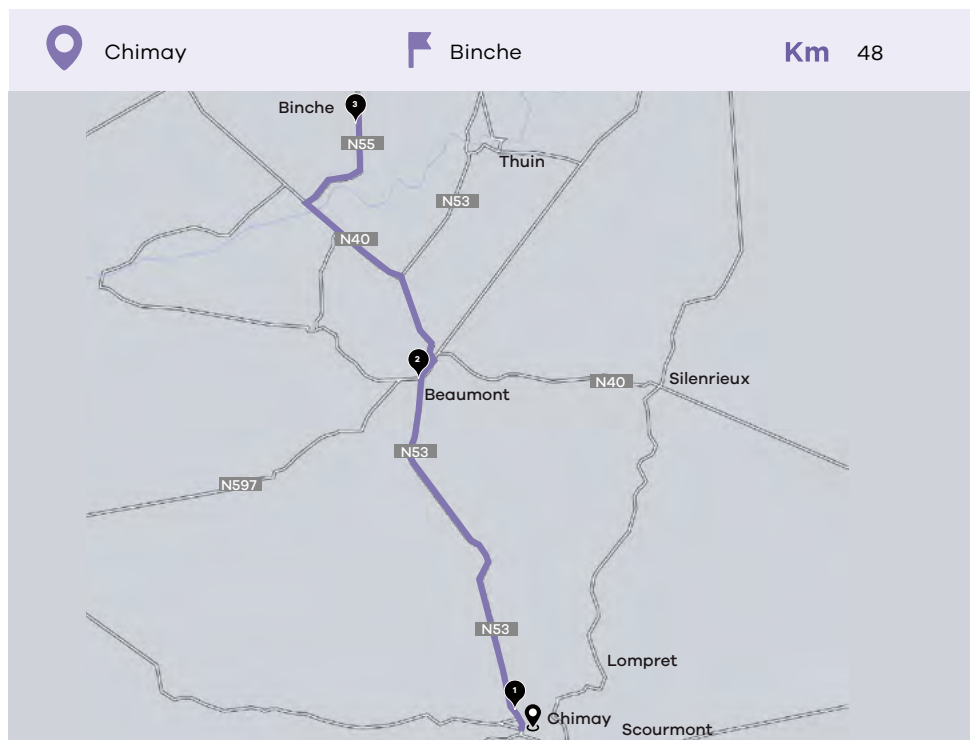
By car



© WBT - J.L. Pienol

The Botte du Hainaut Region Castles and Fortifications

Discover a land ruled by the mighty Counts of Hainaut. They marked the landscape through the construction of castles and fortified towns.





Abbaye de Scourmont (Abbey)

In 1850, seventeen monks came from Flanders, from the Abbey of Westvleteren, to found a Cistercian abbey in the heart of a remote, swampy and inhospitable region. Despite this, in 12 years, they built a monastery and a brewery from which emerges a divine nectar: Trappist Chimay beer, known all over the world. While it is possible to wander through the gardens of the Abbey of Scourmont, the brewery is not open to the public. However, at 300 m, the *Auberge de Poteaupré* offers cheese and Chimay beer tastings including the special 'Poteaupré', a pure malt draught beer, brewed exclusively for the inn. A delicious combination!

1

Château de Chimay (Castle)

The castle is built on a rocky outcrop overlooking the River Eau Blanche with history intimately linked the town. Since 1486, it has been inhabited by the line of princes and princesses originating from Chimay – families who braved wars, fought battles and faced fires. A castle which has undergone several reconstructions. Discover the charm of the place through an interactive tour and let yourself be carried away by the audiovisual show broadcast in the Theatre. The latter, built in the 19th century, was inspired by the theatre made for Louis XV in Fontainebleau. In the garden, a remarkable tree was planted on the occasion of the birth of Charles V in 1500 which still exists today.

Open from Tuesday to Friday, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Open daily in July and August, 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Rue du Château, 14
6460 Chimay
+32 (0) 60 21 45 31
chateaudechimay.be



The Medieval Town of Chimay

A walk in the town of Chimay is like plunging into remnants of 1,000 years old history. The town was first a seigneurie, a county and then became a principality, erected by Maximilian of Austria in 1486. Walking through the alleys of terraced houses, the old flight of steps leading to washhouses and ramparts is like plunging into the Middle Ages. The original plans of the town have barely changed. In Chimay, the spirit of medieval Belgium is all alive and kicking.



2

Beaumont

Originally built on a strategic site overlooking the area, there is little left of the Beaumont Fortress. Only the *Tour Salamandre* (Tower), still standing and restored in 1945, testifies to its troubled history in the 11th century, when the city had to protect itself with its reinforced ramparts and walls. The tower currently houses a small local history museum. A little further, just a few kilometres from Beaumont, you'll find the village of Barbençon, one of the most beautiful villages in Wallonia and home to a private castle which is a remnant of a medieval fortifications.

Open in May, June and September, daily from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. In July and August: daily from 10 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Sundays in October from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Closed Wednesdays.

Office du Tourisme
Grand'Place 10 • 6500 Beaumont
+32 (0) 71 58 81 91
www.beaumont.be





3

The Walled Town of Binche

The town of Binche was founded in 1147. From the beginning, it was surrounded by a principal outer wall protecting its inhabitants. It quickly became a stronghold and housed a garrison. The fortifications that surround it were enlarged and reinforced over the centuries. However, they were not redesigned by Vauban as was the case in many other towns. In 1548, Mary of Burgundy, ruler of the Netherlands and sister of Charles V, had a palace built in Binche on the foundations of a 13th-century castle. For this, she enlisted the

help of the Mons architect Jacques Dubreucq, one of the great names of Renaissance architecture in Hainaut. Unfortunately, it was destroyed in two successive attacks a few years later. Today, over 2 km of the outer wall dating from the 12th and 14th centuries remains, as well as the 27 restored towers, though the castle is in ruins. Now you can download a mobile app to allow you to virtually visit the town, its outer wall and castle just as it was in the Middle Ages.



Lompret

Lompret is nestled and stretches along a single street in a loop of the Eau Blanche Valley. The heart of the village, houses the remains of the castle and the church, and is dominated by the limestone cliff of the Franc Bois. The homogeneity of the village, one of the most beautiful villages in Wallonia, a blend of limestone and the dark tones of the slates, is in keeping with the landscape harmony of the Calestienne. Village activity had to adapt to this crop-poor region. There are grasslands down the valley, areas reserved for logging on the slopes of the valley, while agricultural activity is displaced on the ridge.

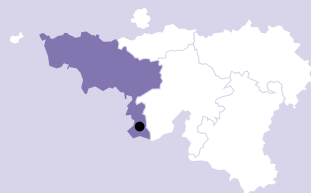
On foot



© M.B. - Bruno D'Aimone

Around Lompret

This walk takes you to the place called “*La Filature*” where a forge was located in the 19th century. The **vegetation** along the **River Eau Blanche** is lush and Calestienne is a region bursting with wildlife. There is such a **beautiful diversity** here between the forests, oak groves and other combinations of varieties such as alder and ash groves. This is due in part to the richness of the limestone soil and the low-acid running water of the River Eau Blanche. Shortly after leaving the valley, you come up to **the ridges and its fields**. Further on, the trail crisscrosses through a magnificent undergrowth, announcing the return to the village. In the centre, you pass through the old courtyard of the **feudal castle** that has become the main road: the high house on the left is a testament to Lompret’s medieval past.



© Marie Rossignol-Lompret - The most beautiful villages in Wallonia



© Marie Rossignol

Starting Point

Lompret village centre.

Car Park

In the village.

Km 6,6



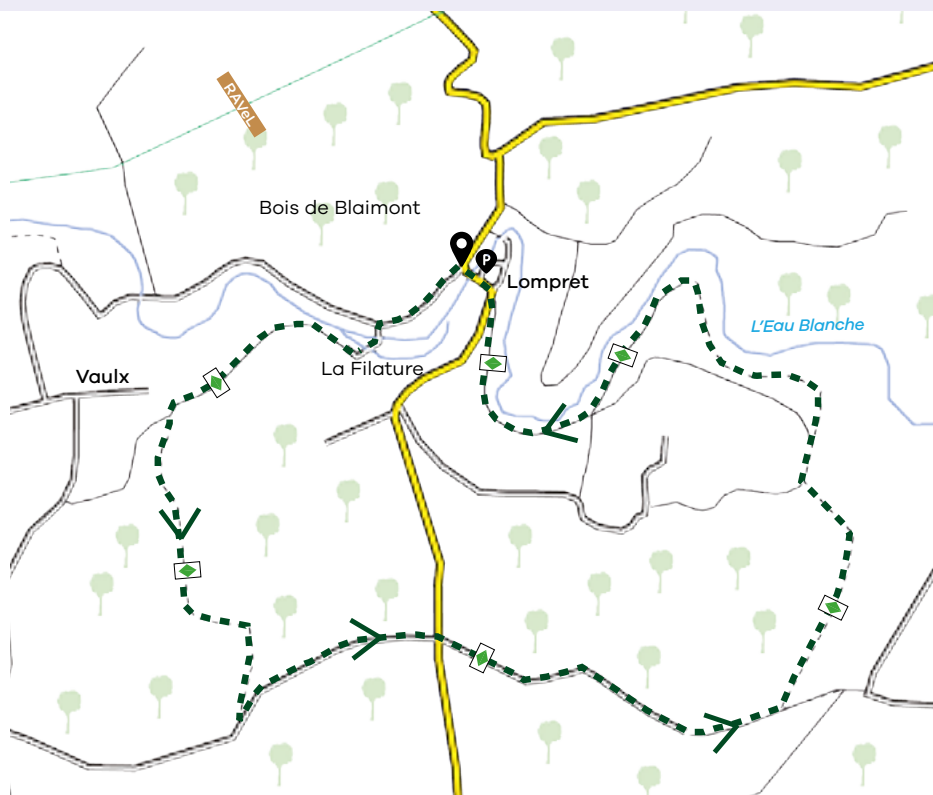
1H40

MARKINGS



Green Diamond n°8

DIFFICULTY



View and download the routes on visitwallonia.be

Tip

In spring, the undergrowth is covered with thousands of flowers.

Difficulty

Paths in the undergrowth and on a hill to reach a country road.

Gradient gain



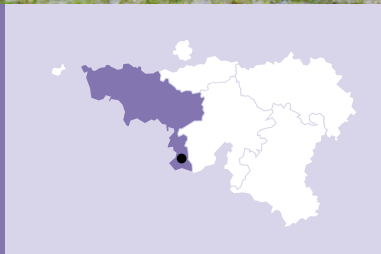
By bike



© WBT - P. Pauquay

In the Beautiful Countryside of the Thiérache

Chimay has a magnificent **RAVeL** (cycling and walking trail) the town from one end to the other. This old railway line was conceived from the desire of the Count of Chimay who wanted to open up his region and get closer, at full steam, to Brussels. Follow this path through the beautiful Chimay Forest before emerging in the cross-border region of the Thiérache. In **Momignies**, you leave the RAVeL to enter an undiscovered land. The road resembles those peaceful roadways of the French countryside, unrolling its ribboned pathways according to the undulations of the terrain. With each turn, you'll discover a new panorama, an epic landscape. Then as you head back to Momignies you'll find a local bistro awaiting. The tavern is located at the roundabout, at the point-noeud (intersecting route) 58. From the village, back to Chimay via **Villers-la-Tour** the journey brings together the typical characteristics of the region's hamlets. Long-house farms and **magnificent wooden barn doors** are all elements that contribute to the charm of this walk, steeped in an atmosphere of yesteryear...



© WBT - P. Pauquay

Starting Point

From the Place Léopold (point-noeud 78), follow the *point-noeud* 77.

Parking

Spaces at the former Chimay train station (*Gare de Chimay*).



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Km 47,4

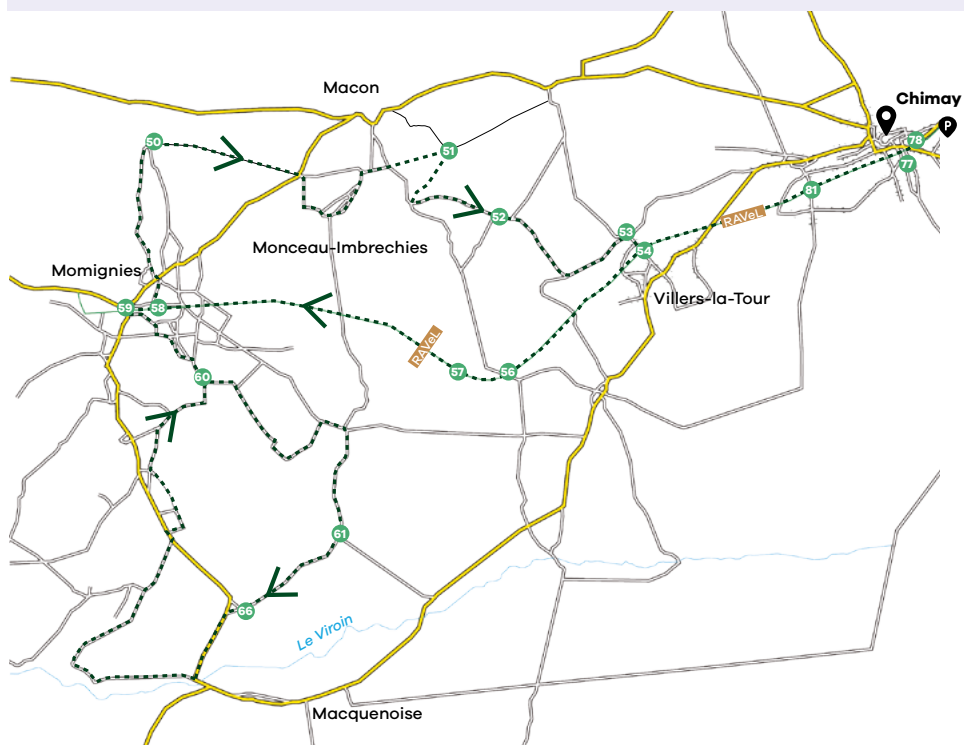


4H00



HYBRID BIKE

DIFFICULTY



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

Type of Route

RAVeL and country roads. Short passages on stony tracks.

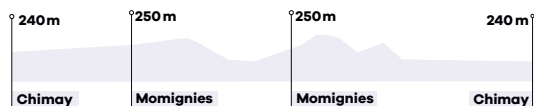
Markings

Follow the *point-noeuds* (intersecting routes): 78, 77, 81, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 66, 60, 59, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 81, 77 et 78.

Difficulty

No difficulty on the start track. Small hill to reach Momignies.

Gradient gain



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The Ultimate Belgian Getaway

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