

VISITWallonia.be

Picardy Wallonia

Castles Across the Ages

Driving, walking and cycling routes

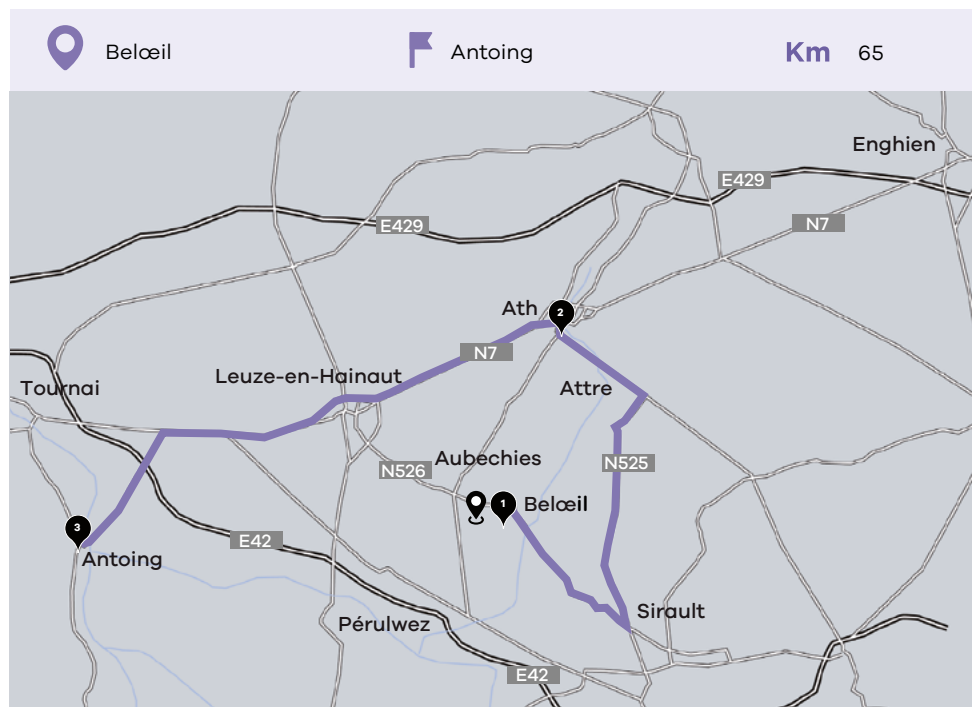


By car



Picardy Wallonia Castles Across the Ages

This route leads to exceptional historical sites of Picardy Wallonia. Its heritage will take you through the centuries and styles with a flourish, from the Middle Ages to the 19th century...



Château de Belœil (Castle)

Surrounded by a 25-hectare park, the *Château de Belœil* is an ode to Classicism and is often nicknamed the little Belgian Versailles for this reason. Inside, there are richly decorated and furnished rooms. The furniture, which remains in its original setting, was made by the greatest French cabinet makers of the 17th and 18th centuries. The library, which contains 20,000 books, is particularly remarkable. The gardens are the result of the work of ten generations of gardeners and landscapers who have respected the original design of 1664. A charming little train will take you on a ride through this alternation of water and greenery, shade and light. The garden has been recognised as one of exceptional and remarkable heritage in Europe.

In April, May, June: weekends and public holidays from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. In July, August and September: daily from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Rue du Château, 11
7970 Belœil
+32 (0) 69 68 94 26
www.chateaudebloeil.com



Archéosite d'Aubechies

This park and museum present a series of archaeological reconstructions. Every house in this village represents a particular era. The route begins in the ancient Neolithic period (5000 BC) and ends in Roman times (with a superb villa) in the 3rd century AD.



2

Ath and the *Tour Burbant* (Tower)

The *Tour Burbant* is the only remaining evidence of the Castle of Ath. Dating back to the 12th century, the castle was built to face the eternal enemy, the Count of Flanders. This keep, recognised as major heritage of Wallonia, impresses with its mass (20-metres high and walls 4-metres thick). Inside, in the guard room, Baudouin IV, Count of Hainaut, and his squire tell you the history of this medieval military fortification through an audiovisual presentation entitled 'Town Builders'. Make sure to take advantage of your visit to explore the beautifully renovated town and sample a Gouyasse, the delicious local beer.

Daily by appointment

Rue du Gouvernement - 7800 Ath
+32 (0) 68 68 13 00
www.visitwapi.be



Château d'Attre

One of the most romantic castles in Picardy Wallonia *Château d'Attre's* construction in the 18th century in a Louis XV style has been maintained in terms of its original décor and furniture. Behind the castle a 17-hectare landscaped park welcomes visitors. Set in an English-style garden, it has some fabulous architectural surprises in store with its pavilions, its false ruins and even an artificial rock that would have served as a hunting observatory for the Archduchess Marie-Christine of Austria, sister of Marie Antoinette. The garden is listed as exceptional heritage.

Parc d'Enghien

No wonder it was considered one of the most beautiful gardens in Europe in the 17th century. The charm and tranquillity of *Parc d'Enghien* make it a true haven of peace in the heart of the city with its landscape architecture, playing on both the geometry and perspective of spaces, floral art and hydraulic engineering. Enghien Park also boasts a mosaic of lakes, woods and gardens and is, without doubt, a remarkable site for its ecological and botanical aspect! The secluded tower, amidst a grove of trees, is the only remnant of the old castle built in the mid-12th century by the lords of Enghien. This is the Tower of the Castle Chapel. The current castle is in a Louis XVI style and dates from 1930. Leaving the park, walk along the narrow streets with beautiful 17th- and 18th-century façades.





Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Tournai

This UNESCO World Heritage jewel is undoubtedly the most beautiful cathedral in Belgium. *Cathédrale Notre-Dame* de Tournai was built in the 12th century, most of the building is Romanesque in style. Unusual in dimensions the cathedral is 134-metres long and 67-metres wide. The columns of the imposing nave are topped with capitals often featuring vegetal decoration and are all different. The five bell towers are a strong visual signal of the omnipotence of the Church of the time and face the belfry, representation of civil power.

3

Château d'Antoing

Although the *Château d'Antoing* is in a neo-Gothic style, it originally dates back to the Middle Ages. The fortified walls and its strongholds bear witness to this. This private residence of the Princes of Ligne boasts a 72-hectare estate. The main building was rebuilt in the 19th century by Clément Parent, a disciple of the famous architect Viollet-le-Duc. While the mansion is private, there are fascinating areas to explore which are steeped in history including bulwark (bastion), the lapidary museum, the eerie dungeons and the grand knights' room are accessible to the public.

Guided tour by appointment every Thursday, Sunday and public holidays from mid-May to the end of September at 3 p.m., from the Tourist Office, next door.

Place Bara 18 - 7640 Antoing

+ 32 69 44 17 29

www.visitwapi.be



Belfroi de Tournai

In Tournai, Belgium's oldest belfry (12th-century) is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It testifies to the affirmation of civil power and is the very symbol of municipal liberties. At an impressive 72 metres high, it still proudly dominates the city. Dating back to the 12th century it underwent numerous architectural transformations in the late 14th and 19th centuries.



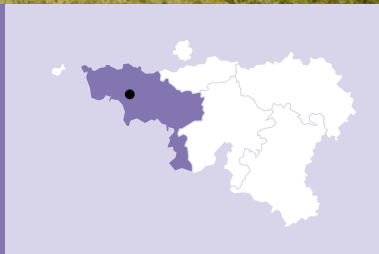
On foot



© G. Collet

Around Belœil

From the centre of Belœil, the walk takes you to the banks of the **Blaton-Ath** Canal, which connected the River Dendre to the Pommeroeul-Antoing Canal in the 19th century. This waterway offers serene landscapes which are enjoyable to follow on foot. In Huissignies, you'll discover alternative heritage opening up to you. The **Museum of Rural Life** presents the activities that punctuated life in the fields. And why not **have a drink** in 'Barbechin', the museum's old-style tavern? The road continues through the countryside to reach, after seven kilometres, **Aubechies and Archéosite** (an archaeological site). Via small country roads, you reach the estate of the **Château de Belœil**. From the avenue, you walk along the beautiful French formal gardens, a natural extension of this heritage gem.



© Archéosite Aubechies-ARCHÉOSITE DAUBECHIES-BELŒIL



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Starting Point

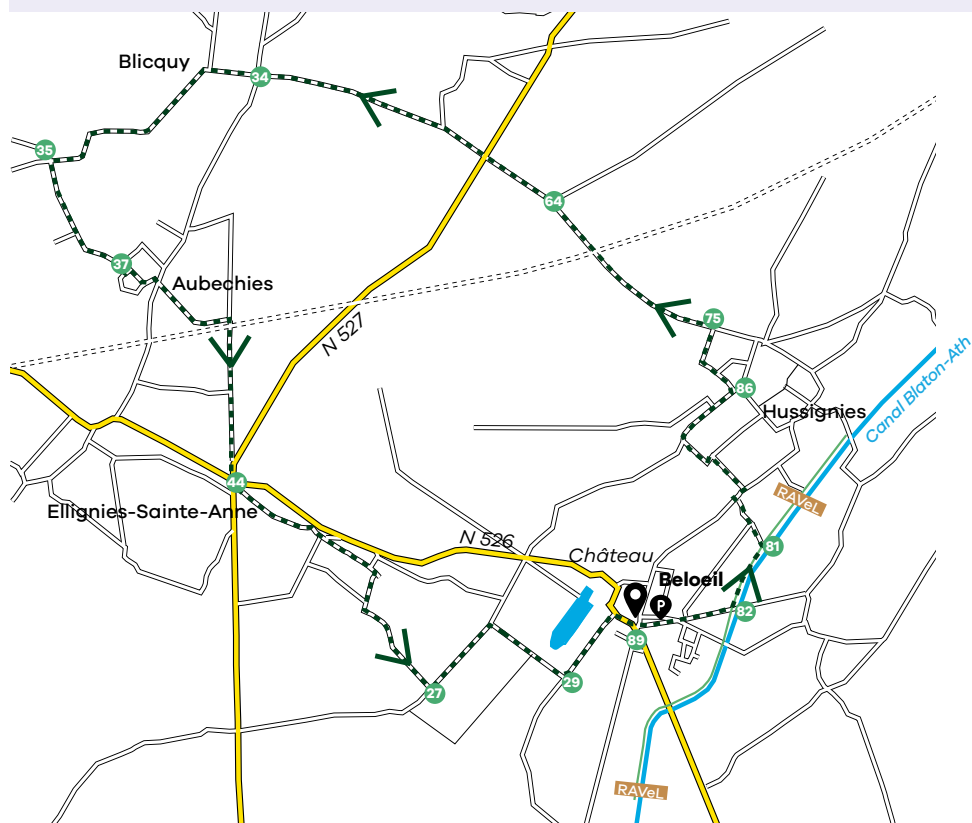
From the Tourist Office, make your way to the canal.

Car Park

On the Place de Belœil.

Km**18****5H****MARKINGS**

Follow the point-nœuds

DIFFICULTYView and download the routes on visitwallonia.be**Tip**

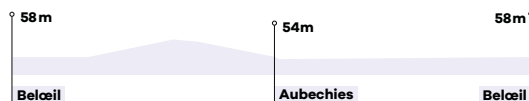
Be sure to visit the castle.

Markings

Follow the point-nœuds (intersecting routes) 89, 82, 81, 86, 75, 64, 34, 35, 37, 42, 41, 40, 44, 27, 28, 29, 89.

Difficulty

A route on RAVeL (greenway) and minor roads.

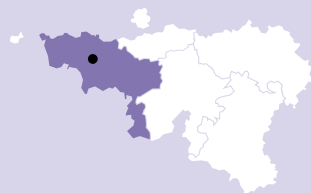
Gradient gain

By bike



Around Ath

This scenic walk takes you along the canal, away from the hustle and bustle of big cities. After seven kilometres, you arrive in **Moulbaix** which still has a wooden mill in operation. The walk continues in **Irchonwelz**, where you'll discover the **Brasserie des Légendes**, a brewery which produces top-fermented beers, 100% natural and additive-free. Shortly after the village, the walk reaches the outskirts of Ath. Around the town, the textile, timber and stone industries have fostered its industrial development. However, they have not altered its landscape and the roads that run through it remain rural. You then return to the **pretty town of Ath** which has an **exceptional heritage**. The *point-noeuds* allow you to reach the Grand Place and have a relaxing stop and drink in one of the many brasseries. In the centre, the gabled houses, the **Tour Burbant (Tower)** and the tower of St. Julian's Church bring a medieval atmosphere and have seen giants roam the streets of the town since the 15th century: a strong folkloric tradition taking place in August that is the pride of the town. The ride ends by following the **RAVeL 4** along the pretty **Blaton-Ath Canal**.



Starting Point

From the Grand'Place de Chièvres.

Car park

On the Grand'Place de Chièvres.

Km

24

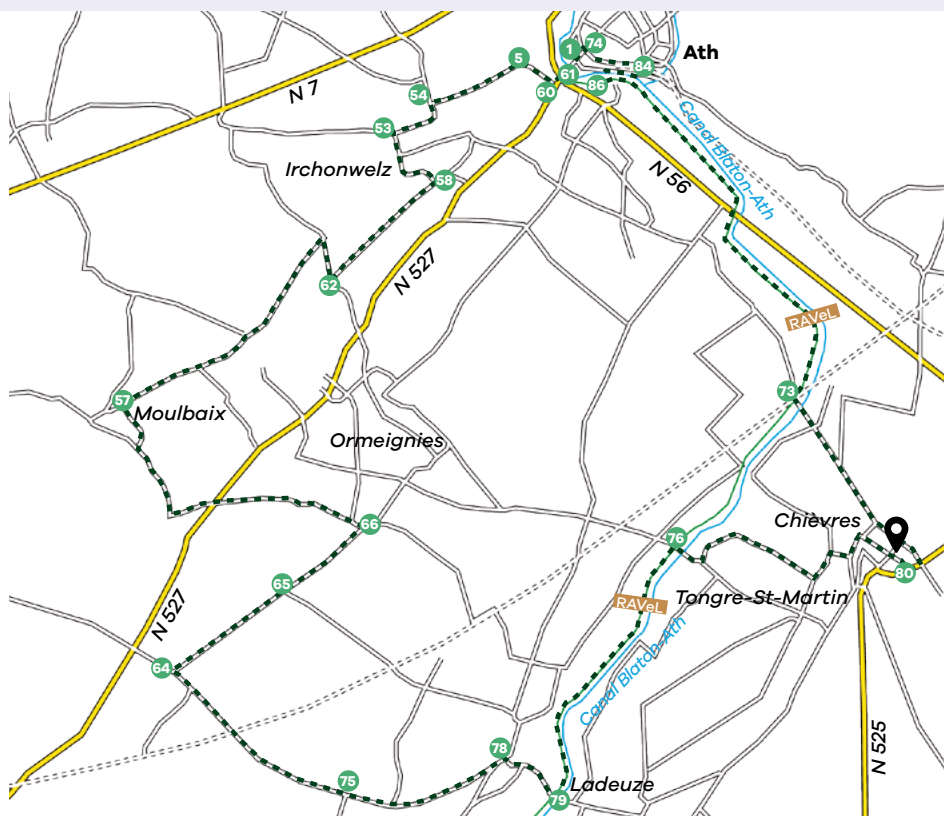


2H20



HYBRID BIKE

DIFFICULTY



View and download the routes on visitwallonia.be

Type of Route

RAVeL and country roads.

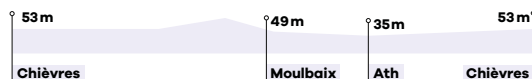
Markings

Follow the *point-nœuds* (intersecting routes) 80, 76, 79, 78, 75, 64, 65, 66, 57, 62, 58, 53, 54, 60, 61, 1, 74, 84, 86, 73 and 80.

Difficulty

A ride without much difficulty.

Gradient gain



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The Ultimate Belgian Getaway

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