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Family Fun In Wallonia

Green adventure, immersive history,
sporting escapades and so much more...

Scenic kayaking on the Ourthe river in Durbuy © Xavier Ethuin



The Ultimate Belgian Getaway

“THE UNSPOILED SOUTHERN REGION OF BELGIUM IS MADE UP OF CHARMING LITTLE TOWNS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND PICTURESQUE VILLAGES”



WELCOME

Your guide to a family-friendly holiday in southern Belgium

If you're looking to offer your kids a taste of a different culture and a change of scenery without having to wander too far from home, Wallonia is the place to go. The unspoiled southern region of Belgium is made up of charming little towns in the countryside and picturesque villages that you'll feel compelled to recommend to others, as well as unique attractions in unexpected spots and a stunning variety of natural landscapes. What's more, because of its proximity to the UK, Wallonia couldn't be easier to get to. Thanks to Eurotunnel le Shuttle, you can cross the channel in 35 minutes without having to step foot out of your car, and be in Belgium within an hour and a half of arriving in Calais. It only takes around three hours to get from one side of Wallonia

to the other, so you can see a lot of it and keep everyone entertained without spending most of your time driving. Wallonia is a destination that caters to all budgets, tastes and types of trip, from spontaneous mini-breaks to a fortnight away. Holiday home specialist **Ardennes-étape** has a fantastic selection of affordable and comfortable accommodation for groups of all ages and sizes dotted throughout the region. Whether you're a family of outdoor adventurers, tourist hot spot-lovers or thrill-seekers, in Wallonia you'll find everything you need for an unforgettable holiday that will have you planning your next visit before you're even home.

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PUTTING WALLONIA ON THE MAP

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A FORCE OF NATURE

In Wallonia, you're never far from natural wonders and animals of all kinds

Zoological park and botanical garden **Pairi Daiza** is one of Belgium's top attractions, welcoming nearly two million visitors a year – and it won't take you long to see why once you set foot inside. Before you even pass through the turnstiles into the main area of the park, you'll be greeted by roaming peacocks and birds looking down on you from majestic nests high in the trees.

Everything about Pairi Daiza is unique and magical, and it's clearly tended to with care, expertise and attention to detail by a dedicated and passionate team. Originally opened as a bird garden in 1993, the immense park was later transformed into a 'garden of the world' after the owner was inspired by a trip to Asia. Today it is split into different continents made up of magnificent, authentic architecture and more than 5,000 animals from all corners of the globe, including pandas, koalas, orang-outans and leopards.

Pairi Daiza has always been actively involved in the conservation of endangered species, from birds and mammals to fish and reptiles, and is a proud home to several rare species. The park is based on a 'wild and free' concept, so you'll see various animals wandering about as you explore – you may even end up with a lemur using you as a perch.

Complete with a train taking visitors around the park, a wide range of restaurants, cafes and kiosks, numerous relaxation areas and lots to play with, Pairi Daiza is the place to go for an awe-inspiring day that will leave you wanting to come back again and again.

A train also takes visitors around the park with plenty of restaurants and cafes for relaxing stop offs.

Bedime with the Bears

How would you like to fall asleep with wolves, eat porridge with nearby polar bears, daydream whilst brown bears frolic in the water or discover the impressive Walruses in your room with underwater vision. It's all possible with specially designed cabins bringing new life to the concept of immersive experience. In this environment you really are 'where the wild things are'.

For an equally enchanting experience, and to introduce your kids to the natural phenomenon of caves, head to **The first Belgian UNESCO Global Geopark**. Not only do you get to discover one of the most beautiful caves in Europe through a guided tour, crowned with a spectacular

underground sound and light show, but there's also a vast wildlife reserve next door. Within the 250 hectares of wilderness you'll find Europe's 'big five' – lynxes, wolverines, brown bears, European bison and wolves – among other mammals and birds, and can enjoy impressive views from the treetop walkways. After making your way round by foot, in the safari bus or a combination of the two, you can enjoy a refreshing drink by the cave's mouth at Le Pavilion while the children entertain themselves at the nearby playground.

Treetop Dreams You can also surprise the children but immersing the family further in wild nature by staying in a treetop wooden house. But the kids will undoubtedly plump for the thrill of a tree top tent midway. Hidden from the animals you have the best seat for your very own nature show. It's a magical experience looking down on deer, Przewalski's horses and mouflon rollicking on the grassland underneath.

WILD ABOUT WILDLIFE

Immerse yourself in the wonderful world of birds and wildlife at **Aquascope Virelles**. Centred around a remarkable 80-hectare pond dating back to the 15th century, it has an indoor centre where you'll learn about the pond's inhabitants and how it's taken care of throughout the seasons, a fun-filled nature trail along the water's edge, a playground, picnic areas and more.



Aquascope © WBT - Bruno D'Alimonte



Domaine des Grottes de Han © WBT - David Samyn



Pairi Daiza © WBT - David Samyn



Pandas © Pairi Daiza

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME WITH ARDENNES-ÉTAPE

Large charming house for 8 in Wellin

This house offers a huge fenced garden, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, children's games. Kick back and relax on the lovely terrace or get cosy inside in front of a wood-burning stove whilst the children take over the playroom. With the pretty village of Wellin and Han-sur-Lesse with its magnificent ancient caves on the doorstep, you'll have plenty to keep boredom at bay. Quirky rail biking in Molinee and kayaking in Dinant are also nearby options.





THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY

Discover a world of innovation in Wallonia

From ancient earth to futuristic space. Euro Space Center is a good one for the teenagers and adults with an eternal yearning to be an astronaut.

Your family can embark on a space mission for the whole weekend or you can just tailor your visit to different tasks. 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. Build your own rocket or operate a galactic mission and learn to live like an astronaut in space. Alternatively, try the Mars-walk XP, which involves a special chair and another virtual reality mask that transports you to the Red Planet. You can even climb aboard a full-size replica of the US Space Shuttle to inspect the cockpit and cargo bay. You'll emerge from the Euro Space Centre ordeal dazed, confused and with a deep appreciation of what the pioneering astronauts and cosmonauts achieved in the most uncomfortable conditions imaginable. N.B. Best for kids over 130 cm to avoid disappointment on some of the experiences.

Wallonia also has an impressive engineering feat to be proud of in the form of **Stréphy-**

Thieu – the second tallest boat lift in the world. Located on the Canal du Centre in the province of Hainaut, it was built to replace four smaller lifts, which date from 1888 to 1919 and are on the Unesco World Heritage list due to their architectural and historical value. You can marvel at these by walking or cycling along the canal, or hiring a small boat that's simple enough for anyone to have a go at steering.

Stréphy-Thieu took 20 years and 160 million euros to build, but was certainly a worthwhile investment as it now allows river traffic of up to the new 1350-tonne standard to pass between the waterways of the Meuse and l'Escaut rivers. You can experience this monumental construction for yourself via a boat cruise, which involves descending the 73m-tall drop and sailing along the canal. You can also enter the building that the lift forms a part of, inside which you'll find the astonishing machinery room, an exhibition and a superb panorama of the site and surrounding region. This innovative piece of engineering is truly unique to Wallonia – the only other boat lift that beats Stréphy-Thieu in size is in China – and is an eye-opening discovery for all who visit.

RIDE THE RAIL

For a slightly more old-school expedition, why not command a **rail bike** using your own pedalling power? A firm favourite among families and kids of all ages, these novel open-air vehicles are an entertaining way to explore Wallonia's stunning scenery via an old train route. Travelling on a railway track means you don't have to worry about steering and makes taking it in turns to pedal safe and easy, so everyone can have a go. There are two rail bike stations in Wallonia, one in the picturesque Molignée valley and another in the Hautes Fagnes, and each has routes of different lengths to choose from with pit stops along the way. Every vehicle can accommodate up to four passengers at a time.



MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME WITH ARDENNES-ÉTAPE

Great holiday home for 22 with wellness area in Malmedy

For a large family gathering, this is a dream location. A 4-star holiday home with a panoramic view which can accommodate up to 22 people (including those with reduced mobility). 9 bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, wood-burning stove, TV, DVD player and Wifi. In addition, you have the wellbeing benefits of a relaxation area with bubble bath and sauna. The family will love numerous attractions nearby including: quirky rail biking on dis-used railways lines or cross-country skiing in the wide-open plains of the Hautes Fagnes. A little wellbeing in the namesake town of nearby Spa may also be conducive to happy families with some relaxing treatments.



MAKE A SPLASH

Dive in to Wallonia's assortment of water sports and parks

There's nothing quite like water-based fun to keep the whole family happy for hours on end. Having access to a water source is especially important during the warmer months, and Wallonia's array of lakes and rivers makes it the ideal summer holiday destination. One place in particular that caters for all wants and needs are the **Eau d'Heure Lakes**, the largest nautical space in Belgium. This sustainable, preserved natural area is made up of five lakes in total, with each one offering something different, and there's not much you can't do here. The water sports on offer include stand-up paddle boarding, sailing, windsurfing, jet- and water-skiing, scuba diving and wakeboarding, and you can also try your hand at aqua golf or board the Red Crocodile Amphibious Bus, a unique contraption that takes passengers on a tour through the water.

The merriment doesn't stop there. Next to the lakes lies one of the complex's most popular attractions – an aqua centre featuring multiple pools, a jacuzzi, spray park, an 'infinity jump' slide, games and sun loungers. There are also two designated swimming areas within the lakes and pedalos available for hire. To explore the rich natural scenery surrounding the water, make the most of another of Wallonia's defining features, the RAVel network – 1,350km of disused railway lines and canal towpaths that have been converted into dedicated paths for cyclists and hikers. There are 42 different routes covering the whole region, one of which will take you round the Eau d'Heure Lakes.

Further north in Wallonia is another wet playground in the form **Aqualibi**, Belgium's most famous water park and a dream day out for kids. Think hot tubs, waves, pools and, of course, super slides. Complete with deckchairs and a restaurant, Aqualibi has everything covered, and there's something for all ages.

TAKE TO THE WATER

Wallonia's rivers Lesse and Ourthe can be found in the spectacular Ardennes, weaving through stunning landscapes decorated with medieval castles, prehistoric caves and dramatic rock formations. Head to the beautiful **city of Dinant** and hire a kayak or canoe for a leisurely cruise in this captivating setting.



Kyaking in Dinant © Xavier Ethuin



Aqualibi © Belpark



© Françoise Ribaut



Eau D'heure Lakes © WBT - Christophe Vandercam



Eau D'heure Lakes © WBT - Christophe Vandercam

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME WITH ARDENNES-ÉTAPE

Idyllic holiday home for 8 in Couvin

4 bedrooms (one for people with reduced mobility), 4 shower rooms, a cosy living room with open fire, a large terrace and a garden with a lovely view of the countryside. Take a short drive to enjoy walks, cycling and watersports at nearby Lake Virelles and 'Eau d'Heure' lakes. A charming steam railway trip or a little WW2 history lesson with a fascinating visit to Hitler's Bunker also add original elements to your Wallonian adventure.



A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Unearth Wallonia's rich and dramatic history

On the surface Wallonia may seem like a peaceful region full of quaint towns and splendid natural scenery, but dig a little deeper and you'll find that Belgium's southern half actually has a sensational past. Perhaps most notably, it's where Napoleon met his match and was finally defeated by the Allied troops of Wellington and Blucher in the Battle of Waterloo. The story behind this monumental event that changed the course of European history is told in truly fascinating fashion at **Waterloo 1815 Memorial Museum**, a multifaceted tribute to the notorious clash on the site of the battle itself.

Upon arrival at the battlefield, kids will immediately be drawn to the Lion's Mound and the 226 steps leading up to it. The spectacular 360° views from the top of the 40m-tall hill of the fields in which the action took place is well worth the climb. The museum, meanwhile, is packed with interactive exhibits and experiences, from life-size models of Wellington, Napoleon and their soldiers in full costume to an immersive 3D re-enactment of the conflict. You can even transport yourself to the battlefield by popping on a pair of virtual reality goggles and experiencing the action from the Duke of Wellington's perspective. If you're keen to prove to your children that learning about history is far from boring, Waterloo 1815 is the place to go.

"BELGIUM'S SOUTHERN HALF ACTUALLY HAS A SENSATIONAL PAST"

Over in scenic **Bouillon**, kids can get up close and personal with the knights and princesses of their favourite fairy tales at the town's famous **medieval castle**. Within the grounds of this popular multimedia attraction, you'll get to watch a thrilling falconry show, explore tunnels and turrets and learn about the life and times of former castle resident and acclaimed crusader Godfrey of Bouillon. Think King Arthur meets Robin Hood!



MAKE HISTORY

If you find yourselves near the village of Brûly-de-Pesche, **'Hitler's hideout'** is worth a visit – especially if your children are interested in or studying World War Two. Among the trees of this little known but historically significant spot, you can trace the footsteps of the Nazi leader himself and go inside the bunker built especially for him. The Cabins have been since rebuilt to host exhibitions of the local resistance and the forced evacuation of the local population in May 1940.



MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME WITH ARDENNES-ÉTAPE

Rustic holiday home for 8 in Rochehaut (Bouillon)

This beautiful lodge welcomes you with 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms, 1 games room and modern furniture. This option offers an authentic touch with rustic stone and a beautiful suspended terrace with an epic view of the surroundings. Cycling, horse riding, kayaking aside, one off tourist attractions like Eurospace where you can walk on the Moon or visit Mars add experiences to your holiday like no other.





Durbuy Labyrinth © MT-Ourthe et Aisne - C. Morlet

FUN AND GAMES

You'll find crowd-pleasing entertainment everywhere you go in Wallonia

If there's one thing this part of Belgium isn't short of, it's opportunities for having fun. "I'm bored" are the words every parent dreads hearing, especially when you're trying to find time for your own enjoyment and relaxation during a much-needed holiday. Luckily, in Wallonia you're never far from something to do – in fact, there are so many activities on offer that you'll have trouble choosing which ones to try. One attraction that's sure to turn the whole family's heads as soon as it comes into view is **La Petite Merveille**, Belgium's biggest adventure park situated in the popular town of Durbuy. Here you'll find everything you could possibly want for an action-packed day out, from a tubing slide, bike park and 3D labyrinth to climbing walls, zip lines and a treetop park. There are different wristbands available based on age, ability and interests to ensure everyone can make the most of their visit, an epic playground to keep young ones occupied, a restaurant – and not an ounce of boredom in sight.

A mere half hour away lies **Parc Chlorophylle**, a recreational nature park nestled in abundant forest and the epitome of embracing the great outdoors. It's a fantastic setting for adults and children alike to learn about their natural

"NOT AN OUNCE OF BOREDOM IN SIGHT"

surroundings while having hands-on fun, with some of the highlights including a forest-themed playground, a treetop walkway and 24 attractions made from wood, as well as lots of play areas and discovery trails. At Parc Chlorophylle, you can count on the kids roaming happily for hours as you sit back and soak up its peaceful beauty.

LOST TO THE WORLD

Another nature-inspired attraction can be found in the form of the **Durbuy Labyrinth**, a giant maze with a themed experience that changes every year (Pinocchio was the inspiration for 2022). There are a couple of options for tackling the maze, all involving tasks, games and interactions with the talented performers dressed up as characters that children will know and love.



© asbl Labytourisme



La Petite Merveille © Adventure Valley Durbuy



La Petite Merveille © Adventure Valley Durbuy



© Parc Chlorophylle

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME WITH ARDENNES-ÉTAPE

Luxury holiday villa for 14 near Durbuy in the Belgian Ardennes

Fabulous old farmhouse with a harmonious combination of wood, stone and contemporary furniture. Indoor swimming pool, infrared sauna, 6 bedrooms and 6 bathrooms, open fire, games room, billiards... Dogs allowed and wheelchair-friendly. Forest walks, kayaking, cycling and quirky attractions which embrace the great outdoors are close by, such as the giant maze in Durbuy or the giant recreational nature park 'Chlorophylle' set in abundant forest.





HOME FROM HOME

It's Where Ardennes-étape Heart is.

Where you stay is just as important as what you do on holiday especially with a family in tow. Having a comfortable and spacious base with good facilities makes all the difference between a comfortable and a memorable one that you want to come back to again and again..... The company offers an incredible selection of 2,000 high quality lodgings in Wallonia. From wooden chalets for a large family and friends in an enticing new region to a tried and tested favourite for

a more intimate family gathering. Ardennes-étape will guide you to the lodging best suited to your heart's desire
What do you hanker after? A cocooning festive break with chillout options and easy activities such as walking and cycling in the Ardennes? A renovated cottage in one of Wallonia's famous 'prettiest village with adventurous escapades? Or a large wooden chalet - Walton family style where epic landscape and wild nature are your neighbours.
Ardennes-étape and on we go to one of Europe's best kept secrets.....

On your Bike or on Foot?
Ardennes-étape will guide you
Crunchy gravel, fresh pine forests, misty peaty moorland. Wallonia's walking and cycling trails amidst wild nature offer a wonderful array of courses to tempt every palate. Avoid the headache of finding the perfect hike or your way back on the road and let Ardennes-étape guide you throughout your stay on the most beautiful walking and cycling routes. All you have to do is put on your walking shoes or get on your mountain bike.

It's a Deal - With Ardennes-étape, you get discounts and privileges at 250 major players
Ardennes-étape partners with the best service providers in the region to offer you these experiences complete with exclusive advantages to get the most out of them. Like deep forest bathing, kayaking, adventure parks, themed trails, treasure hunts, yoga workshops and much more...

Dog Friendly Holidays for your pooch with Ardennes-étape
You can't overlook a man's best friend so bringing your dog to our holiday homes is as important as bringing Granny. More than 900 of our holiday homes, chalets, villas, bungalows and castles welcome your companion for long walks in the woods and pure moments of happiness.



Rail bike in the Hautes Fagnes © venbahnneu



Eau d'Heure Lakes © WBT - Christophe Vandercam

CHOOSE YOUR GEM ON ARDENNES-ÉTAPE.BE AND START PLANNING YOUR DREAM HOLIDAY - WITH BENEFITS.

STRESS-FREE CROSSINGS WITH EUROTUNNEL



Make crossing the channel a breeze with Eurotunnel – the speediest, easiest, and greenest way to travel to and from the continent. With your ticket covering the whole car (up to nine people) and unlimited luggage, all that's left to do is load up the family (yes, even the four-legged ones) and perfect those packing skills. There are tonnes of great reasons to travel with Eurotunnel:

- The fastest way to travel from Folkestone to Calais (just 35 minutes)
- Purchase a ticket for your vehicle, not per person
- Travel today, tomorrow, or whenever you fancy, with flexible ticket options
- Your pets ride along with you, so no putting furbaby in the corner
- Motorway-to-motorway access

Let's get flexible

Still finalising plans? Or perhaps you want the VIP treatment? No problem, there's a ticket for that. For those wanting complete flexibility, the Eurotunnel Flexiplus ticket gives you the freedom to turn up and board whenever you want on your chosen day of travel. You'll also enjoy dedicated check-in lanes and free refreshments whilst you relax in the exclusive Flexiplus Lounge.

Mighty perks with My Eurotunnel

With regular time-limited ticket offers, first come, first serve deals and year-round promotions, it (literally) pays to keep an eye on the Eurotunnel website. And, if you open a My Eurotunnel account, you'll automatically unlock perks that aren't available to non-members, plus you'll be able to save your details for even speedier booking.

Tax-free please

The savings continue for UK residents, who can now shop tax free in the EU! You can make VAT savings on food and drink, cosmetics, jewellery and technology items to name a few. Just don't forget your shopping list.

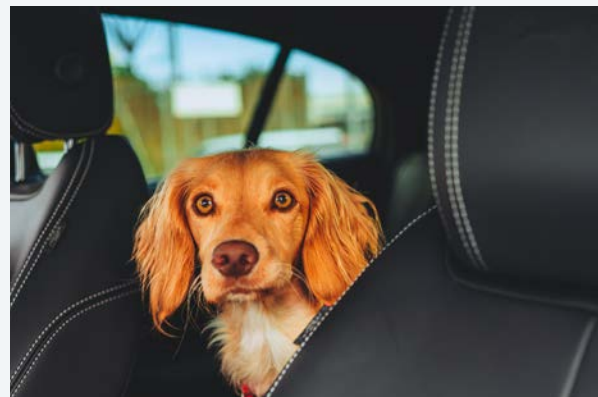


PAWESOME PASSENGERS

Ditch the dog sitters because with Eurotunnel, trips are for the whole family, even the furry ones. From them riding in the car with you, to the 24-hour pet check-in and dog exercise areas (poo bags included), Eurotunnel's crossings are designed with your pet's comfort in mind. To make sure your pet is ready for travel, visit: [Eurotunnel.com/pets](https://eurotunnel.com/pets).

We hope to see you on board soon – bon voyage.

For more information visit eurotunnel.com



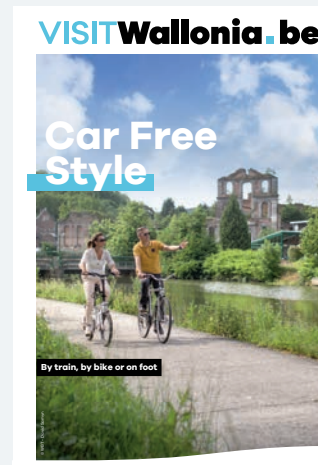
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DRIVING IN WALLONIA

Cruise along scenic roads amidst the epic Ardennes, hiding endless surprises: military memories, historical towns and impressive museums. Our in-depth guide introduces you to it all. visitwallonia.be/roadtrip



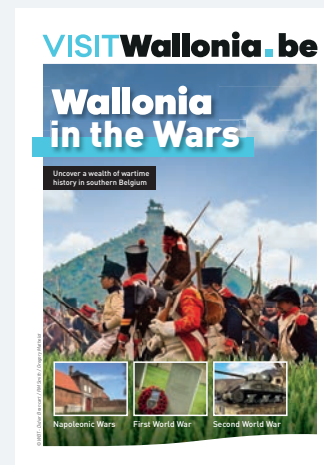
CAR FREE STYLE

Short break getaways 100% zen, 0% car... Each itinerary begins and ends at a station. Between the two stopover stations, you connect on foot or by bike. visitwallonia.be/carfree



23 CHARMING TOWNS & CITIES

Discover our towns and cities. Each has its own identity, treasures, charms, curiosities... and all have unexpected surprises in store. visitwallonia.be/destinations



WALLONIA IN THE WARS

Uncover a wealth of wartime history in Southern Belgium. Wallonia found itself in the firing line of Western Europe's three most significant conflicts in 19th & 20th century. visitwallonia.be/memorial



WALKING IN WALLONIA

Castles, quirky places, fascinating heritage, breathtaking landscapes in fresh air and wide open spaces... as many themes as itineraries visitwallonia.be/hiking



And many more on visitwallonia.be/our-brochures



Plan your visit:
visitwallonia.be/family

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