

VISITWallonia.be

Surprising Discoveries

Your guide to creating memorable group visits to southern Belgium

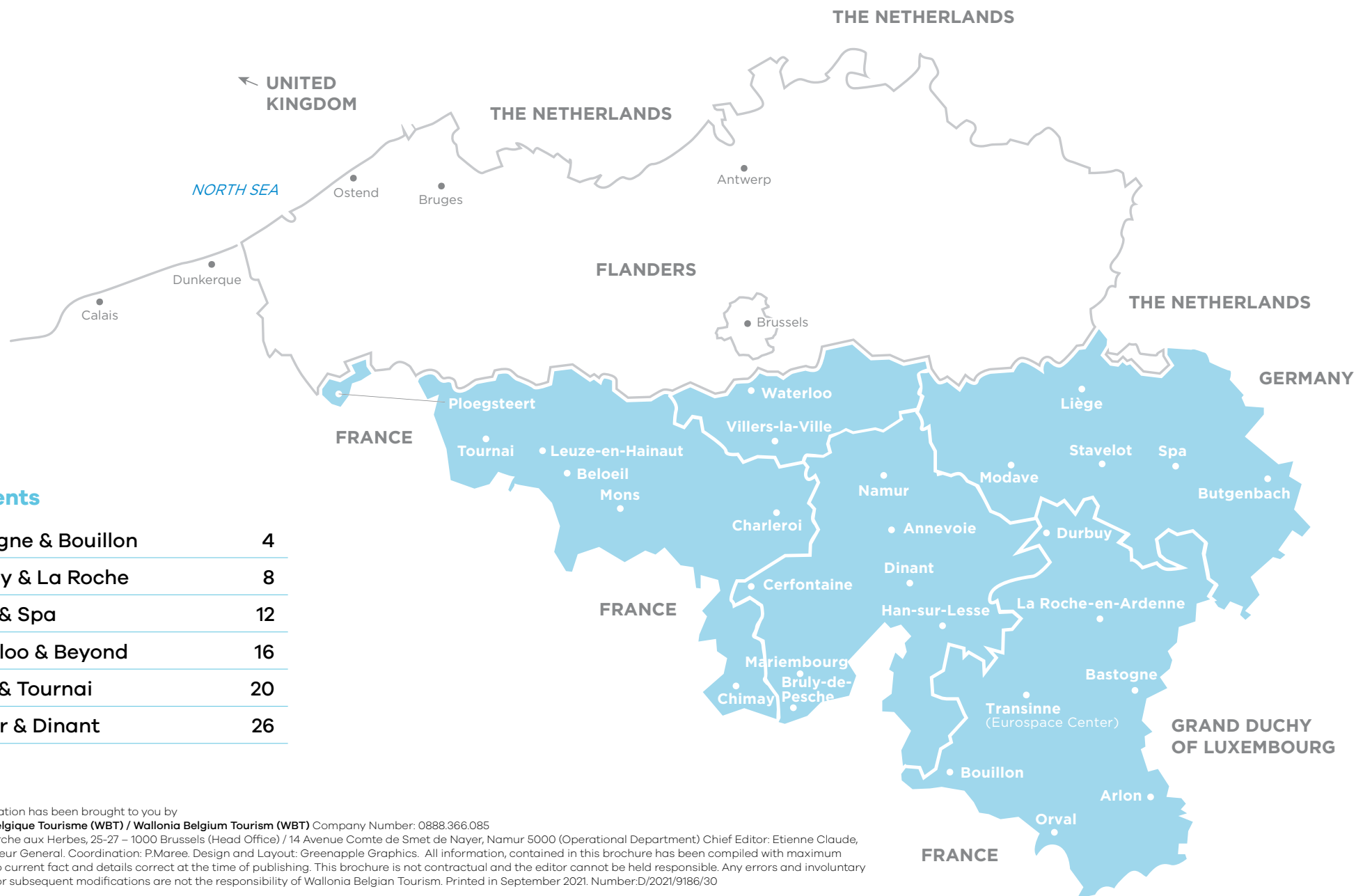
The Ultimate Belgian Getaway

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Welcome to Belgium. Welcome to Wallonia.

A region of fresh air, open spaces and surprises

Welcome back to this special guide full of inspiration and ideas to help you create a memorable group visit to southern Belgium.

Of course, we never really went away, but during what has been a difficult period for all of us I know that planning a group visit across the English Channel wasn't uppermost in your minds. But now, with travel opening up again, I'd like to reintroduce you to southern Belgium, or to give the region its correct name, Wallonia.

This small but fascinating region, and one of the UK's nearest neighbours, offers an attractive mix of open spaces and nature. Combine that with an unrivalled mix of heritage and history, food and festivals, and you have the opportunity to enjoy a holiday away from the masses.

Talking of nature, in the east of the region we have the beautiful Belgian Ardennes, one of nature's unspoilt areas, with vast forests, fast-flowing rivers and an abundance of space and fresh air. Picturesque villages, where traditions, folklore and local arts and crafts live on, seem to pop up around every corner.

Belgium wouldn't be Belgium of course without exceptional food and drink. Enjoy a visit and a tasting at an artisan chocolatier and a craft brewery, and don't forget to try our famous waffles.

Over the years, groups have come to love our programme of quirky festivals. These include the spectacular Venetian Costume Festival at Annevoie Gardens, the crazy Bathtub Regatta in Dinant, and the folkloric gaiety of the Doudou in Mons. And of course, we have many sites of World War remembrance, as well as the site of the Battle of Waterloo.

But whilst our countryside and villages are what many visitors come to see, many also want to discover our magnificent towns and cities, with their imposing citadels, spectacular castles and romantic palaces.

Accommodation for groups of all sizes is plentiful with many hotels able to offer rooms for single occupancy. Many of these group-friendly hotels are in the major cities, providing a useful base from which to explore the countryside.

Wallonia holds a special place in my heart and I'd love to be able to tell you more. Have a look through this brochure then get in touch and I can help you plan an itinerary that will deliver an enjoyable and truly memorable experience for your group.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Philippe Maree, Manager



Bastogne & Bouillon

What does this region offer?

- More open spaces, forests and fresh air.
- Re-visit the past with Feudal Castles and explore Mars with the Euro Space Center
- Opportunities to visit abbey breweries and learn more about processes that have remained largely unchanged for hundreds of years.
- Wartime remembrance including the 'Battle of the Bulge'.

Bastogne - This area close, to the Luxembourg border, was the final resting place for thousands of soldiers who died in the First and Second 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'.

Bouillon - Located within a tight loop of the Semois River, the historic town of Bouillon, with its famous castle, makes the most of its wonderful natural and historic setting, and deserving of the title of one of Belgium's prettiest towns.



1 Bastogne 101st Airborne Museum
This museum, located in the centre of Bastogne, houses a rich collection of objects from the Second World War, the Battle of the Bulge and the famous 101st Airborne Division. The many displays and remarkable life-like scenes give a feeling of the cold winter of 1944-1945 when the battle was in full force. Experience what the residents of Bastogne must have gone through as they took shelter. Hear, see and feel a frighteningly realistic bombardment whilst the bombers thunder overhead.

www.101airbornemuseumbastogne.com



2 Bastogne Barracks Museum
This museum, located within the original barracks, illustrates this Belgian town's defences 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 16th December 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 22nd December, 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 became 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.

www.bastogne-barracks.be

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© MT Bouillon Christel François

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© WBT D. Samyn

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© WBT J.L. Flenal

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© WBT Emmanuel Mathez

3 Bastogne War Museum

Located just a stone's throw from the imposing Mardasson Memorial to the American troops who died in the battle, 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

4 Bouillon Feudal Castle

A visit to Bouillon is likely to include a visit to its castle, then a walk around the historic town. Dating from 988AD the castle is Belgium's finest feudal castle-ruin associated with Crusader knight Godefroid de Bouillon, the first 'Belgian' ruler of Jerusalem. 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. But beware. It's not for the faint-hearted. In addition to visiting the castle, there is a falconry show every day (March-November).

www.bouilloninitiative.be

5 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 Basilica, 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 collection of 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.foretdesainthubert-tourisme.be

6 Euro Space Center

The Euro Space Center is a theme park where you experience the conquest of space first hand. The multi-media presentations, a 5D cinema and a 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

7 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



Durbuy & La Roche

What does this region offer?

- Outdoor activities, fresh air and greenery, stunning scenery and an abundance of historic attractions.
- Beer, Chocolate, Smoked ham and Jam
- Springtime in the Ardennes is the season for outdoor activities (walking, cycling, kayaking...)

📍 **Durbuy**, often described as 'the smallest town in the world' 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 viewpoint' 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 combined with a tasting the local products.

📍 **La Roche-en-Ardenne** is one of the most charming towns in this area and most visited in the Belgian Ardennes. 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. Visit its 9th century feudal castle where the towers, murder-holes and oubliettes portray an authentic medieval atmosphere. Its WW2 museum is also worth a visit. A 'petit train' tour is the perfect way to discover the town and the immediate surroundings. Pre-bookable for groups in request.

1 **Durbuy Topiary Park**

Ironically, Durbuy, the world's 'Smallest Town', is home to one of 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 often amusing and entertaining forms.

www.topiairesdurbuy.be

2 **Defroidmont Chocolates**

This chocolate company is located in Érezée in the heart of the Belgian 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



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© WBT D Ketz

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Durby © WBT - Jp Remy

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© TTA

3 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



4 Bataille des Ardennes museum

The town was not affected by WWI unlike in WWII. In December 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, La Roche was 90% destroyed and 114 civilians were killed.

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 more than 120 mannequins of American, English, Welsh, 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 a number of military vehicles.

www.batarden.be



5 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 Ardennes 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 River, 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

6 Hotton Military Cemetery & Monument

The British and Commonwealth Military Cemetery at Hotton commemorates 666 soldiers who lost their lives in the 'Battle of the Bulge', 527 of whom 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. A specific booklet on the subject is available, simply email info@walloniabelgiumtourism.co.uk



Liège & Spa

What does this region offer?

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

Liège - The provincial capital city of Liège draws its appeal predominantly from its architectural heritage, which includes the Price-Bishops' Palace, the Cathedral of Saint Paul and the famous baptismal fonts in St Barthélemy Church. In the region, you have a number of Châteaux like Jehay, Modave, Reinhardstein, Raeren to name a few. Its magnificent abbey of Stavelot or Val Dieu which 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 with underground tours led by former miners. The Owl Distillery is another surprise visit, have you ever tried Belgian Whisky?

www.visitezliege.be

Spa - 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. A short drive away is the town of Stavelot, with a stunning abbey and, in the crypt, an extensive collection of racing cars, motorbikes 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

1 Christmas Village

Running for four weeks in December, Liège 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.



© FTPL P.Fagnoul

2 Fort Loncin

This exceptional remembrance site, preserved in the same condition after its destruction during WW1, is considered to be the symbol of the Battle of Liège and Belgium's heroism against the German attack in 1914. After 11 days of resistance against the Germans, the Fort, located close to Liège, 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. Pre-booked guided tours are available.

www.fortdeloncin.be

3 Fort Eben-Ebael

After WW1, 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. 17 separate bunkers were connected by a complex network of galleries resembling 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



© WBT J.P.Remy



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© WBT O.Legardien



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© WBT P.Maree



Spa © WBT Ricardo de la Riva



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© WBT D.Ketz



© Val Dieu Abbey



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© WBT D.Samyn

4 Baugez 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.

Its restaurant **"Five Points"** can offer seating for 75 people. With its terrace accommodating a further 60 people, this is ideal for a group meal venue, true to its brasserie style.

www.baugez44.be www.fivepoints.be

5 Chateau Reinhardstein

The castle has been through the mill since it was first built in 1354. Sitting on a rocky outcrop in the deep gorge of the Warche Valley, it now stands today in a perfectly restored state thanks to the Professor Overloop. He saved its patrimony in the 1970's by using old 14th century documents to successfully reconstruct towers and parapet walks with stunning results. A guided tour in English (on request) allows you to admire the castle's fabulous tapestry and weapons collection. Treat yourself to the castle's very own Reinhardstein amber beer or soft cheese. All collectively reflecting the tastes and passions of the last masters of the land.

www.reinhardstein.net



© WBT E.Mathez

6 La Gleize Historical Museum

Located in the heart of the northern part of the Belgian Ardennes, this museum tells the story of the 'Ardennes Offensive' in the Second World War. An impressive amount of historical artefacts that have been collected primarily from the local area, preserved and exhibited, depict 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.

www.december44.com

7 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

8 Chateau Jehay

This imposing castle is surrounded by moats which appear as if by magic as you approach. Recognisable because of its famous chequered walls, the castle 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.

www.chateaujehay.be

9 Stavelot Abbey

The Abbey of the Prince-Bishops of Stavelot is one of the oldest monastic foundation in Belgium. It hosts three different museums:

- The museum of the Principality of Stavelot-Malmédy takes you back in time through the astonishing history of the State of the Old Regime (before 1789). Iconographies and music of a bygone age, artefacts and works of art are skilfully orchestrated using state-of-the-art multimedia technologies.
- A collection of F1 motor racing cars and bikes, plus memorabilia from the nearby Spa Francorchamps motor racing circuit.
- A museum dedicated to the famous poet Guillaume Apollinaire. Guided visits in English are available.

www.abbayedestavelot.be

10 Darcis Chocolate Factory, Verviers

Philippe Darcis is one of Wallonia's best known and most-loved chocolatiers. His main shop in Verviers is a popular attraction that tells the story of chocolate. An audio guide 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 of 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.

www.darcis.com

11 Tin Box Museum

The largest collection of tin boxes in the world listed by the Guinness Book... is in Wallonia. This impressive gathering features no less than 60,000 items. No matter how you try, it is impossible to imagine how vast the selection is. The guide will tell how this passion was born and the stories behind these tin boxes. By appointment only.



Waterloo & Beyond

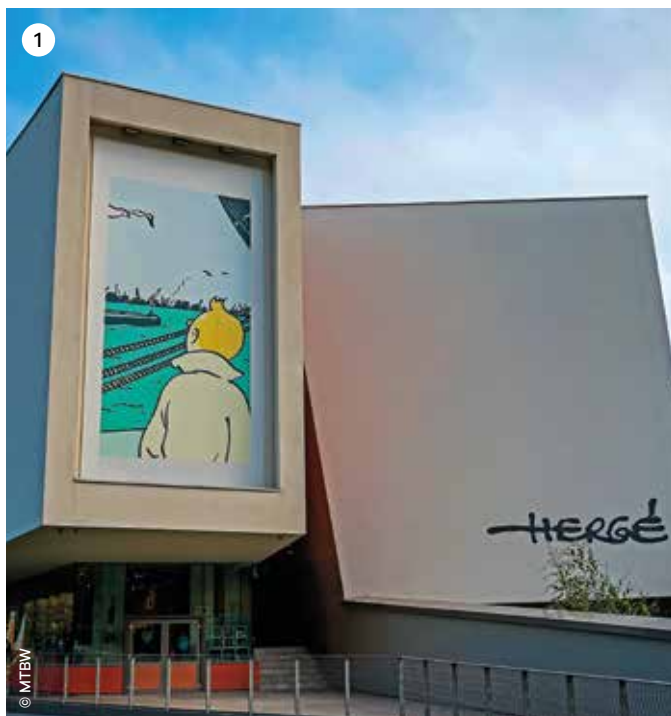


Highlights of this region include

- The site of the Battle of Waterloo, including:
- Memorial 1815, The Lion's Mound, Hougoumont Farm, Panorama
- The Wellington Museum
- Napoleon's Last HQ
- Hergé Museum
- Villers Abbey
- Mont Saint-Jean Micro Brewery

Located just a two-hour drive from the Channel ports is Waterloo. The very name conjures up images of the famous battle, and the reality is equally memorable. 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, a remarkable visitor centre and a collection of group-friendly attractions tell the story of the famous battle where Napoleon was finally vanquished by the Duke of Wellington and his allies.

www.waterlooandbeyond.be



1 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



2 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.

www.rail-rebecq-rognon.eu

3 Villers Abbey

Founded in the 12th century under the aegis of Saint Bernard, and sitting in more than 36 hectares of grounds, Villers Abbey has a history dating back more than 850 years. Today, the majestic ruins give an impression of the life of the monks.

www.villers.be





© Villiers Abbey



© WBT P. Macree



© WBT B. Balinmonte



© WBT D. Erroyoux

4 Memorial 1815

'Memorial 1815' is on the site of the Battle of Waterloo and the heart of a visit. The site has grown up around the Lion's Mound, the monument that marks the front line of the battle between French and Allied troops. There are four attractions: the Memorial 1815 itself; the Lion's Mound; the Waterloo Panorama; and the Barn of Hougomont. It brings to life one of the most turbulent periods in 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

5 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.

6 The Waterloo Panorama

Located next to the Visitor Centre, this huge circular building holds the canvases 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 has been restored and today, is an important piece of historical heritage as it is one of the few panoramas that still exist.

7 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, a truly impressive multi-media show and exhibition rooms tell a fascinating story.

8 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 18 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 17 and 18 June 1815.

www.museewellington.be



9 Napoleon's Final Headquarters

Emperor Napoleon and his staff spent the night of 17 June 1815 at the Caillou Farm in Vieux-Genappe. Here, Napoleon devised his strategy and battle plans. This former farm, 4km from the main battle site and 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.

www.dernier-qg-napoleon.be

10 Mont-Saint-Jean Farm's Micro Brewery

Located close to the site of the battle, this historical location served as a surgical hospital for the British and Allied troops during the famous battle. Built in 1719 the building was renovated in 2019, respecting the original blueprints. Beer and gin tastings are available and there's a restaurant and shop selling local products.

www.fermedemontsaintjean.be



11 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

12 Nivelles'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 for groups that visit the crypt, the archaeological basement and the cloister can be pre-booked.

www.tourisme-nivelles.be



Mons & Tournai

Highlights of this region include

- Mahymobiles – A unique world of automobiles
- Château de Beloeil and the Amaryllis Festival (April/May)
- Hôpital Notre-Dame à la Rose
- Pairi Daiza
- Historic Canal du Centre boat lifts
- Plugstreet – WWI Battlefields
- Biercée Distillery
- Château and Gardens of Seneffe
- Château of Chimay
- Eau d'Heure Lakes



📍 **Mons**, a small town with a big history. Step back in time in the baroque belfry, relax whilst enjoying a coffee in the Grand-Place, then explore the winding cobbled alleyways that hint at bygone times. Mons has developed something of a reputation for the quality of its museums, with some attracting attention from far beyond Belgium's borders for the quality of their exhibitions. Just outside the town, in Saint Symphorien Cemetery (CWGC), rest the first and last British soldiers who died on the Western Front during the First World War. Consider a half day guided tour ending at the Mons Memorial Museum.

www.visitmons.co.uk

📍 Half an hour from Mons, closer to the French border is the vibrant and historic city of **Tournai**. Renowned for its art and history, it is not only the oldest city in Belgium but also the only city ever ruled by Britain, in this instance under Henry VIII. Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Notre-Dame Cathedral, the city's many museums, or climb the oldest belfry in Belgium. Explore the picturesque streets of the city by tourist train, always a relaxing way to see the 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



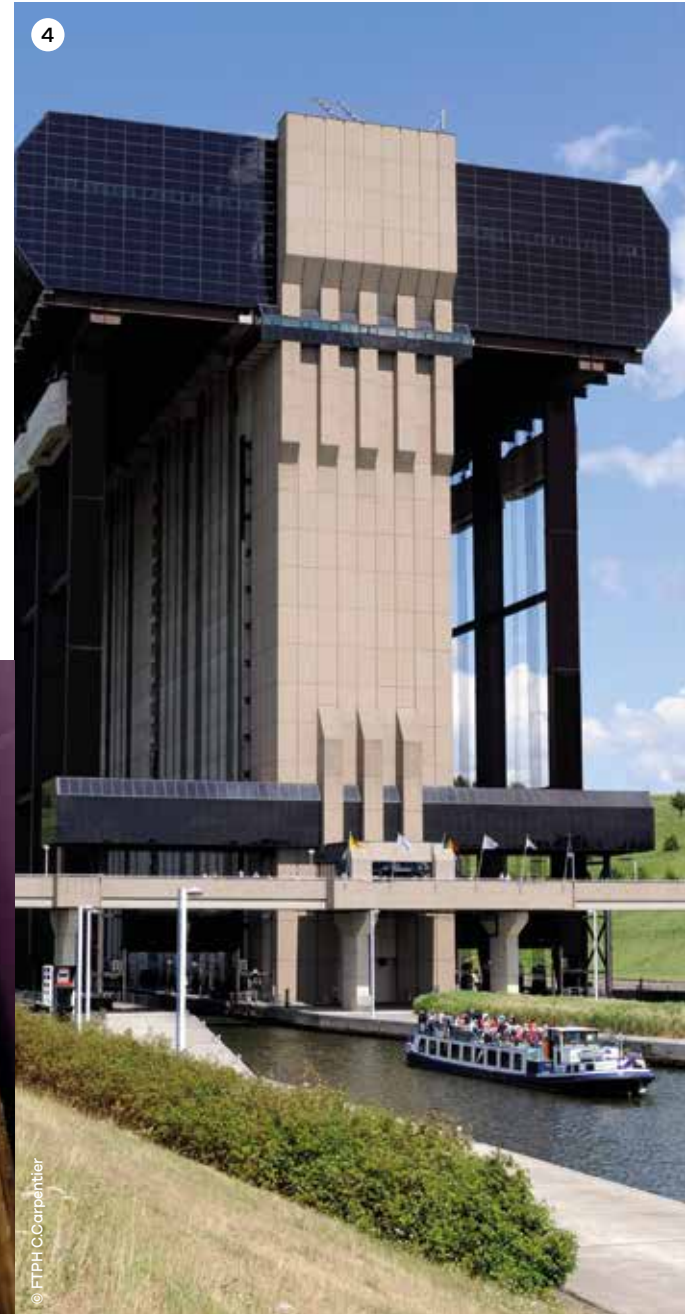
1 Mons

- **Mons Memorial Museum** Perhaps the most celebrated of all of Mons' museums, the 'MMM' is 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.
- **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.
- **Museum of Fine Art (BAM)** The BAM hosts two major exhibitions every year. With an exhibition space covering nearly 2,000m², it offers the visitors the chance to find out about an artist, an artistic movement or a theme connected with the museum's collections, which boasts more than 15,000 works of art.
- **François Duesberg Museum** has an amazing decorative art collection featuring not only a prestigious collection of clocks unique in the world, but also majestic French gilt bronzes, superb porcelain and sumptuous gold and silver items.
- **Doudou Museum** Discover the story of Mons' famous Doudou festival. Reality and imagination are combined 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.



2 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.
- **Museum of Fine Arts** Designed by Belgian architect and designer, Victor Horta, one of the founders of the Art Nouveau movement, the turtles-shaped Museum of Fine Arts is likely to surprise your group. This is his only building in Wallonia and his only museum.



3 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

4 The Historic Canal du Centre Boat Lifts

The famous **Boat Lifts of the Historic Canal du Centre** located between La Louvière and Thieu are four hydraulic boat lifts that have been operating for over 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.

www.canalducentre.be

5 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 the whole of 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 each year the castle plays host to the stunning Amaryllis Festival when Dutch florists create unique floral displays, designed with more than 5,000 flowers.

www.chateaudebeloeil.com



6 Château de Seneffe

Described as a masterpiece of classical architecture, the Château de Seneffe is a remarkable building. 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.

www.chateaudeseneffe.be

7 Mahymobiles (Motor Museum)

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

9 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. *"A most enchanting place where cares of soul and body were combined."*

www.notredamealarose.be



8 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, a graceful circular structure, opened in 1931, and devoted to those who lost their lives in action between Warneton and the Estines, but whose bodies have never been recovered.

www.pluginstreet1418.be



Beer and Cheese

A visit to southern Belgium would not be complete without tasting the local products. These include beers and cheese of course.

• **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** – Visit Espace Chimay and take an interactive journey to discover the 150-year-old history, secrets and treasures of the world-famous Chimay Trappist beers and cheeses. Enjoy a tasting and perhaps take lunch in the on-site 'Poteaupré Brasserie'. 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-feuillien.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



© WBT J.L.Flemaal

10 Pairi Daiza

On the 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. There are special rates for groups of 20 or more and you can hire your own personal tour guide. Meal packages are also available. www.pairidaiza.eu

11 Château de Chimay

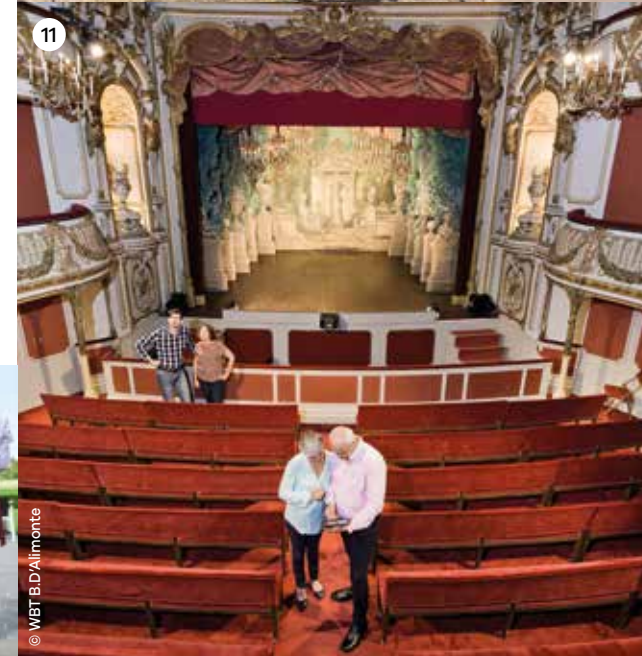
Home to the 'Princes of Chimay' for many generations, it is an ancient stronghold. Built in the 11th century, with some documents suggesting it was built in the year 1000, the medieval bastion became a fortress. It became an Imperial château in the 1480s. Over the centuries, many wars, looters and pillagers damaged the castle. In 1935, a fire destroyed much of what was left, including many irreplaceable works of art. Despite the damage, the princely family decided to rebuild the structure, and repairs have continued since that time. www.chateaudchimay.be



© Espace Chimay

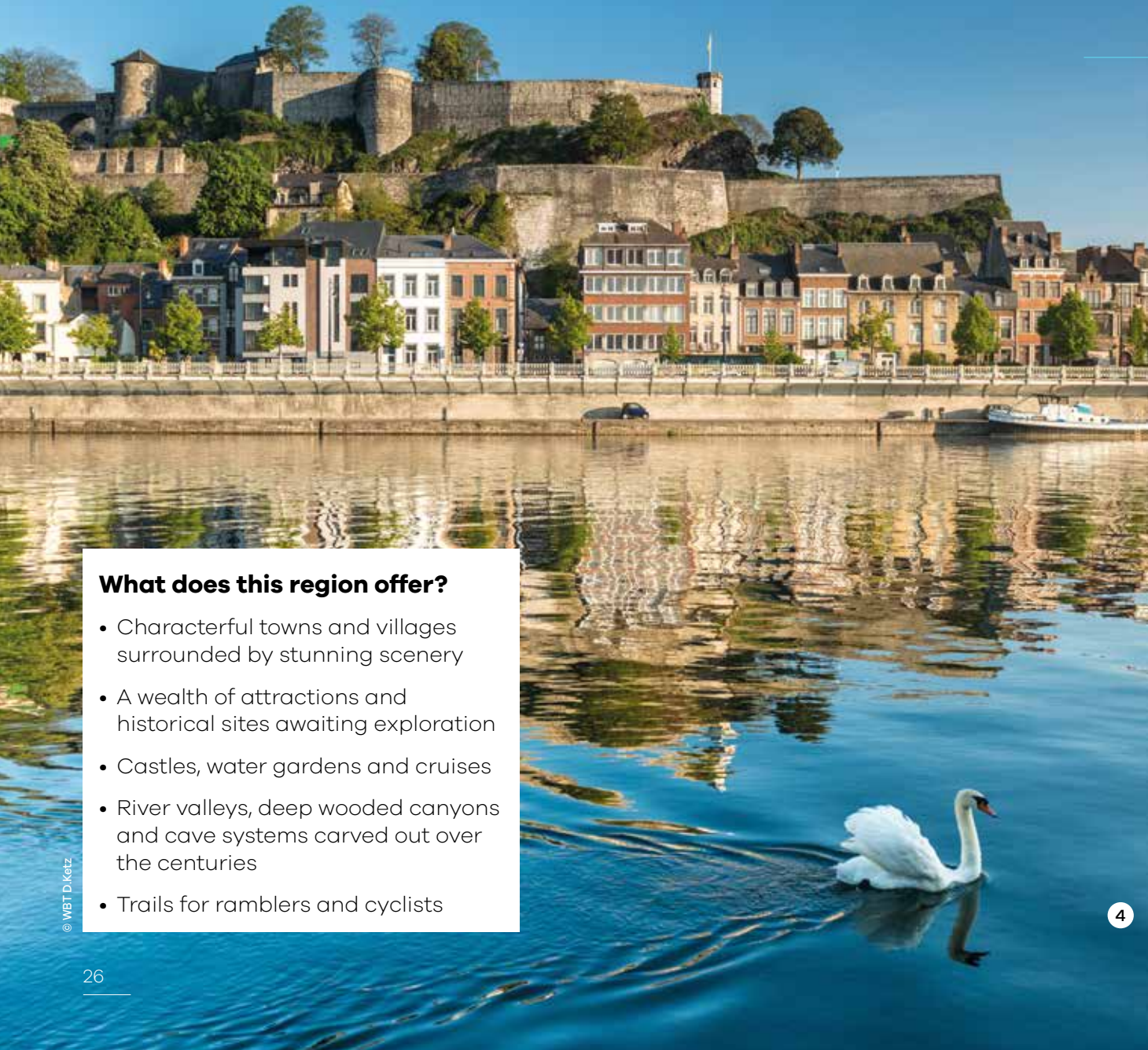


© WBT D.Samyn



© WBT B.D'Almonte

Namur & Dinant



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
- Trails for ramblers and cyclists

© WBT DKetz

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

📍 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. You will be reminded of it by the giant saxophones that line the Charles De Gaulle Bridge in the centre. From Dinant, routes lead east into the heart of the Ardennes, with spectacular scenery, including caves, to explore.



© WBT A Trejo

1 Water 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 in Belgium. 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. The garden's own brasserie Bocow has set menus available for pre-booked groups and guided garden tours in English can also be pre-booked for groups

www.annevoie.be



© Annevoie Water Gardens

2 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



© Stuart Render

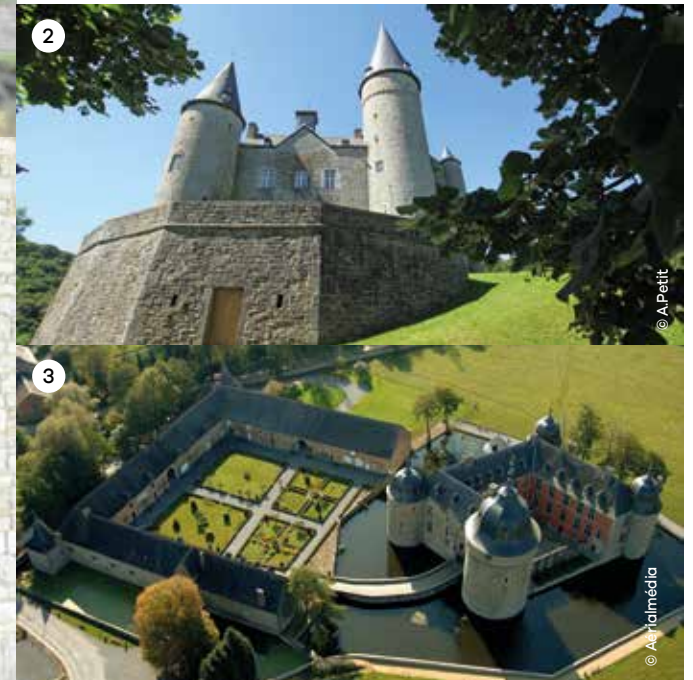
3 Chateau Lavaux Sainte Anne

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

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



© A. Petit

© A. P. Média



5

© B. Caronneux



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© tpm Bossiroy



4

© Téléphonique Citadelle de Namur

4 Citadelle of Namur

Namur's citadel was one of the greatest strongholds in Europe, the fortifications revealing several centuries of occupation and military architecture.

- **The Terra Nova Visitor Centre** located in the former barracks 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



7

© Leffe.com Maison de la Leffe



4

© WBT V. Ferroz

5 Three Valleys Steam Railway

Enjoy a journey of discovery through the Valleys of Viroin and the Upper Meuse behind a preserved steam locomotive. 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 houses various rolling-stock and is constantly evolving. There's a small cafe and shop.

<http://site.cfv3v.eu/site/>

6 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.

www.grotte-de-han.be

7 Maison Leffe

Set in a former convent in the heart of Dinant, Maison Leffe tells the fascinating story of one of Belgium's most famous beers, first brewed in the Abbaye de Leffe back in 1240. The visit around the museum is interactive and free-flow, and ends with a beer tasting. The site also gives impressive views over the Meuse valley.

<https://leffe.com/en/maison-leffe>



8 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 much photographed cable car from the town. Both lead to a spectacular view over Dinant and the river. Group meals are possible at two of the Citadel's restaurants: the brasserie 'Les Canons', at the top, or the restaurant 'La Citadelle' at the foot of the cable car.

www.citadellededinant.be

9 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 6 June 1940.

From there, Hitler oversaw the second part of 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

10



10 Chateau Freyr and Gardens

This magnificent Renaissance-style mansion and 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 'André 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

13



11

11 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.

www.ligny1815.be

12

12 Fagnes Brewery & Brasserie

This micro-brewery is home to another of Wallonia's popular beer brands, the 'Fagnes' beer. 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. You can also arrange meals or refreshments in the large part-timbered bar café that sits alongside the working brewery equipment.

www.brasseriesdefagnes.be

12



13 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.

www.museespitfire-florennes.be

14 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 (12 to 15 May 1940), is in the village of Haut-le-Wastia, on a wooded bluff high above the Meuse and Molinee rivers and close to Dinant.

www.museedusouvenirmai40.be



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.

Amaryllis Festival at Beloeil Castle

Each year the Princes de Ligne open the doors of Beloeil Castle to host the Amaryllis exhibition. Artists take more than 5,000 flowers and create beautiful designs and sumptuous bouquets that are displayed throughout the halls, dining rooms, ceremonial rooms and in the library. A real spectacle for the eyes and all within the spectacular setting of the castle.

Ciney market and antiques fair

Taking place twice a year, around March and October, this is one of the largest events of its kind in Belgium, welcoming more than 700 exhibitors from across Europe, and some 15,000 visitors.

Christmas markets in Mons and Liège

For four weeks Liège holds the biggest and oldest Christmas market in Belgium. The streets of the old town are filled with 200 traditional wooden chalets offering regional produce and hand-made crafts. In Mons, the Christmas market known locally as 'Coeur de Neige' features decorated food stalls or chalets, gift stalls, and all kinds of fun attractions.



Dinant Bathtub Regatta

The International Regatta of Bathtubs is a fun, quirky and semi-sporty event held in mid-August on the River Meuse. 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 festival takes place at the Three Valleys Steam Railway. The railway's collection of around 10 steam locomotives and historic carriages operate regularly between Mariembourg and Treignes.

Mons 'Tanks in Town'

Each year, to commemorate the liberation of the town 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.

Soup Festival, La Roche en Ardennes

Over a weekend each September La Roche hosts the 'Festival de la Soupe'. Contestants battle it out to produce the best soup. Five euros buys you a souvenir cup that you can fill to your heart's content from the contestants' kettles.

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 for the truly remarkable Venetian costumes that are paraded through the gardens over three days (Over Whit Monday).

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.

For more information on all these events, www.visitwallonia.be

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