

Castles, Manors & Gardens

Brussels and French-Speaking Belgium



Brussels - Wallonia



Belgian Tourist Office
Wallonia • Brussels

Belgium



Beautiful castles, formal gardens in which to get lost and peaceful abbeys. These are the treasures of Belgium. We would like to suggest a few special sites for your journey through Brussels and French-speaking Belgium.



Brussels



Royal Palace and Brussels Park

Each summer, the Royal Palace opens its doors to the public. Visitors can admire the priceless collections and decorative art originating from every continent. The shows and fountains in the Park of Brussels, which stands in front of the palace, is an idyllic setting for children and music lovers.

Palace: open July to September

Park: open year-round

www.monarchie.be

Petit Sablon Square

Originally a horse market, in 1890 the square was converted into an elegant and charming flower garden with lavish fountains, surrounded by wrought-iron fences decorated with stone statuettes. Each figure represents a medieval trade or craft that brought prosperity to Brussels.

Gardens of Van Buuren's House

As an extension of Van Buuren's House, the gardens are made up of three parts: "The Picturesque Garden," "The Labyrinth," and "The Garden of Love." The vast art deco-inspired greenery complements the house and creates a calm, private atmosphere.

Open year-round except Tuesdays

www.museumvanbuuren.com

Bois de la Cambre/Forest of Soignes

The Bois de la Cambre, with its large maze of trails, is the largest public, city park in the world and certainly one of the most beautiful. On Saturdays and Sundays, some routes are closed to cars, thus leaving the roads free for cyclists, joggers, roller-skating enthusiasts and pedestrians. Connected to the park is the "Forest of Soignes," which provides a welcome breath of fresh air to the city with its rows of tree-lined trails for walking, horseback riding and bird watching.

Gardens of the Abbey of La Cambre

Dating back to the 18th century, this garden consists of five successive terraces, beginning with a Louis XIV-style entrance. The park's romantic atmosphere makes it the perfect place to take a break with your loved one.

<http://www.sustainablecity.be/open-spaces/gardens-abbey-la-cambre>

Flower Carpet

The exceptional *Tapis de Fleurs*, or "Flower Carpet," covers almost 20,000 square feet right in the center of the Grand-Place. Landscape designers specializing in begonias, for their wide range of bright and vibrant colors, create a new design based on a chosen theme for each edition.

Every even numbered year in August on Brussels' Grand-Place

www.visitbrussels.be

Park of the Cinquantenaire

The Cinquantenaire is one of the largest architectural and cultural complexes in Europe dating back to the 19th century. The park follows classical designs with a symmetrical layout of flowerbeds, lawns and rows of trees. It serves as a peaceful haven in the city surrounded by the Museums of Art and History, Aviation, Army and Military History as well as Autoworld Brussels.

<http://www.brussels.be/artdet.cfm/5458>

Villa Empain

Considered a remarkable testimony to Art Déco architecture, the Villa Empain was built in the early 30's. This villa boasts four façades in polished granite, a swimming pool surrounded by a garden ornamented with a pergola and a caretaker's lodge. Since its reopening in 2010, the villa has served as a cultural center.

Open year-round

www.villaempain.com





Leopold Park

Surrounded by the buildings of the European Parliament and the International Conference Centre in the heart of the "European District," Leopold Park has preserved its character as an English landscaped park. The history of the park can still be seen today when you stroll along its winding paths.

www.brussels.be/artdet.cfm/5459

Botanical Garden

The garden is home to 18,000 different species of plants and various exhibitions throughout the year. The Plant Palace houses 13 interconnecting glasshouses, 11 of which are designed to imitate specific regional climates and the remaining two are constructed according to their own themes. The plant life on display varies from medicinal to herbaceous, as well as succulent and carnivorous varieties.

Open year-round

www.botanicgarden.be

Royal Greenhouses at the Palace of Laeken

The site took on its current form under King Leopold II with the creation of the domed Winter Garden, the botanical area and the decorative rock gardens. The spectacular 19th century Winter Garden, an art nouveau jewel considered among the greatest greenhouses in the world, is worth visiting as much for its architectural merits as for the astonishing collections of tropical and subtropical plants housed within.

Open three weeks each year from April to May

www.monarchie.be

Chateau de la Hulpe and Solvay Park

Once owned by the Count of Solvay, the Castle of Hulpe was built in 1842 in a style inspired by French castles. Covering 560 acres, the estate features the beautiful Solvay Park with its wild nature, orchards, vegetable gardens, wide walking lanes, a mysterious forest and lakes. The Folon Foundation, located in a farmhouse next to the castle, is home to more than forty years of artwork by Jean Michel Folon, the internationally renowned Belgian artist, illustrator, painter and sculptor.

The Chateau is not open to the public

The Folon Museum is open every day except Mondays

<http://www.fondationfolon.be>

<http://www.jardins.tourismewallonie.be>

Abbey of Villers-la-Ville

Founded in the 12th century, under the aegis of Saint Bernard, the majestic ruins of the abbey give a marvelous insight into the monastic life of the Cistercian Order. The ruins can be explored through an array of activities to suit all ages: guided visits, family discovery walks, activity days, open air concerts and theater, exhibitions, walks around the abbey and more.

Open year-round

www.villers.be

Mons-Tournai Area



Chateau and Gardens of Beloeil

The Chateau of Beloeil has been the residence of the Princes de Ligne since the 14th century. The chateau has the **largest French-style gardens** in Belgium, offering a harmonious balance of water and green, of shadow and light. It houses an art collection, with paintings from the 15th to the 19th centuries and an outstanding library with 20,000 books. Beloeil hosts the largest classical music event in Belgium each August: Les Musicales. About 15,000 people stroll around the park to enjoy the performances on numerous stages during this huge music festival.

Open from April to September

www.chateaudebeloeil.com

Chateau of Seneffe

This chateau was built during the 18th century in the classical style. The residence is at the center of a group of buildings that include an orangery, a small neo-classic theater, an icehouse and a French garden set in a park of 54 acres. It houses the Silversmith Museum and a famous **European Silver collection** of objects.

Open year-round

www.chateaudeseneffe.be

Mariemont Park

Created in the 16th century, the Mariemont Park is laid out in the English style, with lawns, lakes, foliage, age-old trees and exotic flora species, and fine sculptures side by side with the ruins of Charles of Lorraine's palace. World-class **exhibitions** take place all year round.

Open year-round

www.musee-mariemont.be

Chateau of Attre

Built in 1752, this is the only chateau in Belgium that has preserved the original decoration and furniture of that period. Visit the romantic gardens with mysterious rocks and other formations from the 18th century.

Open on Sundays from April to September

Open on Saturdays in July and August

www.visithainaut.be

Chateau of Chimay

Built in 1607, the Chateau of Chimay is located near the famous Trappist brewery. Every year, the Prince and Princess of Chimay host an International Baroque Singing Competition and a Baroque Music Festival in the chateau's beautiful theater.

Open from April to October every day

Open from November to March by appointment

www.chimaypromotion.be

Fortified Castle of Ecaussinnes

The ground floor of this castle houses a dungeon, a gothic chapel, an ancient kitchen and a collection of weapons. The first floor calls to mind the 17th century with a variety of collections making the fortress an interesting and unexpected museum.

Open from April to October on Sundays and Public Holidays

Open every day in July and August except Fridays

www.chateaufort-ecaussinnes.be

Enghien Park and Chateau

The chateau, designed in the style of Louis XVI, is located in a magnificent park, characterized by its themed gardens and water features. With its flower garden, Baroque garden and dahlia garden, Enghien Park takes visitors back through **400 years of history**.

Castle not open to the public

Park open year-round

www.chateauxduhainaut.be

Chateau of Havré

Set just outside the town of Mons, the Chateau of Havré consists of a large courtyard, four angle towers and a gothic chapel. The chateau, surrounded by a moat, is home to 15,000 rosebushes planted in their original design.

Chateau and museum open by appointment

Rose Garden open from April to September on weekdays and from October to March by appointment

www.mons.be

Namur



Chateau and Gardens of Freyr © WBT - JL Flémal

Citadel of Namur

The citadel-fortress of the city of Namur stands in a prestigious setting, stretching out across 80 acres of greenery and offers magnificent views across the Meuse Valley. It has been classified as a major heritage site in Wallonia and is one of the most impressive fortified towns in Europe.

www.citadelle.namur.be

Citadel of Dinant

Built in the early 1800s overlooking the town of Dinant, the citadel is the site of an earlier fortification dating back to 1051. The citadel offers activities for both children and adults: cable cars, a museum, playgrounds, historical reconstructions and much more.

www.citadellededinant.be

Castle of Vêves

If Cinderella ever hosted a ball, it would certainly have been here. This stunning, feudal castle dates back to 1410. Perched dramatically on a rocky outcrop overlooking the picturesque village of Celles, it continues to be a fully furnished home to the original family. The castle illustrates what life was like from the Middle Ages through the 18th century.

Open from April to November

www.chateau-de-veves.be

Chateau and Gardens of Annevoie

Designed and laid out between 1758 and 1776 by Charles-Alexis de Montpellier, the chateau and gardens are an authentic historical record and, above all, a living work of art. Graceful fountains and waterfalls fill the garden and the arbors with music. Children can enjoy an entirely wooden playground, as well as a mini-zoo.

Open year-round

www.annevoie.be

Chevetogne Estate

The Chevetogne Estate is the perfect destination to spend a day devoted to relaxation and leisure activities with your family. This vast estate has everything a family could want, all in one place: leisure areas, nature paths, athletic fields, caravan park and fabulous playgrounds.

Open year-round

www.domainedechevetogne.be

Chateau and Gardens of Freyr

Named after the Scandinavian goddess of beauty, Freyr Castle was built in 1554 along the River Meuse. Most of the orange trees originate from the court of Lorraine and are 350 years old. The gardens are in the style of Le Nôtre and are surrounded by mazes made of hornbeam hedges. The chateau and gardens are listed as a major Walloon Heritage Site.

Open year-round

www.freyr.be

Abbey of Maredsous

Built in 1872 by Benedictine monks in a neo-Gothic style, this monastery offers pilgrims and tourists a beautiful architectural ensemble. Take a guided tour of the church and grounds including the gardens, library, cemetery, school and workshops. This site is most famous for its cheese and beer, making it a great place for lunch.

Open year-round

www.maredsous.com

Chateau of Lavaux-Ste-Anne

This chateau portrays noble life in the 17th and 18th centuries. It is composed of a collection of domes encircled by a moat with an impressive wetland made up of a pond, a marsh and a prairie. The property houses three museums: a museum of daily life in the 17th and 18th centuries, a museum of rural life in Famenne in the 19th and 20th centuries and a natural history museum.

Open year-round

www.chateau-lavaux.com

Plant Festival of the Chateau and Gardens of Beez

The English garden offers a gorgeous atmosphere bordered by many beautiful bicentennial beeches. Each May, specialized plant breeders from Belgium and abroad, as well as exclusive garden decorators, provide advice and will help you discover fascinating plant species.

www.festivaldesplantes.be



The Citadel and The Collegiate Church of Our Lady in Dinant © Ottsworld 2013



Liège



Chateau of Modave © FTPL

Botanical Gardens of the city of Liège

The Botanical Gardens and Victorian style greenhouses are a rare example of glass and iron construction. The house holds nearly **5,000 plants**, including numerous begonias, orchids, carnivorous, Mediterranean and tropical plants.

Open year-round

www.jardinbotaniqueleiege.be

Chateau of Jehay

This sophisticated Renaissance-style chateau dates back to the **16th century** and houses splendid collections of furniture, silver, lace, china, tapestries, paintings and sculptures. The bridge crossing the moat takes you into the gardens, with paths, arbors, fountains, waterfalls and nymphs.

The Chateau is closed for renovation but the exhibitions and gardens are open to the public by appointment

www.chateaujehay.be

Chateau of Modave

Built in **1658**, the Chateau of Modave incorporates medieval-style towers and Renaissance features that were completely new at the time. Inside the chateau, twenty richly decorated and furnished rooms are open to the public. One may admire remarkable ceilings, beautiful sculptures, paintings, Brussels tapestries and furniture dating back to the **18th century**.

Open from April to October except Mondays

www.modave-castle.be

Chateau of Waroux

Classified as Exceptional Heritage in Wallonia, the chateau features stunning and rare architectural details. Many activities such as concerts, exhibitions, tastings, and meals are organized throughout the year.

Chateau open by appointment

www.chateaudewaroux.be

Healing Garden, Hautes Fagnes

At the heart of the Hautes Fagnes, the “Herba Sana” opens its doors to the world of herbal medicine. More than **200 medicinal plants** are grouped by theme or by use. Each plant has a small label listing its use, the part of the plant that is used in herbal medicine and its toxicity.

Open from June to September

www.herba-sana.be

Castle of Reinhardstein

Built in **1354**, the castle was once the residence of noble families. The castle, demolished after the French Revolution, was then completely rebuilt in its original style in **1969**. The halls of the castle house an impressive collection of armor and tapestries, making it one of the most important **medieval castles** in Belgium.

Open year-round on weekends and during Belgian school holidays on Tuesdays, Thursdays and weekends

www.reinhardstein.net

Park of the Sept Heures, Town of Spa

Laid out in the **mid-18th century**, the “seven o’clock” public park was one of the main places in the town of Spa to see and be seen during the **19th century**. The park also has a number of 19th century buildings which demonstrate the eclectic tastes of the period: the iron and glass Galerie Léopold II and Petits-Jeux pavilions.

Open year-round

www.spa-info.be

Visit private gardens in Pays de Liège

Jardin en Pays de Liège is an association of more than **70 private gardens**. Every weekend from April to December, one or two gardens are open to the public. The gardens belonging to the Jardins en Pays de Liège are diverse, with different sizes and styles that are sure to please everyone. The owners have a passion for gardens and are always eager to share it with visitors. Once a year, the association organizes a garden festival with exhibitions, activities for kids and much more.

www.jardinsenpaysdeliege.be

Province of Luxembourg



Topiary Gardens in Durbuy © WBT – J.P. Remy

Castle of Bouillon

Still standing with its original fortifications from the 8th century, this castle-fortress is the oldest and most interesting remnant of feudalism in Belgium. Built on three rocky outcrops, it is characterized by a labyrinth of corridors and huge vaulted halls. Not only is the castle of historical significance, as the birthplace of Godefroid, the leader of the first Crusade (1096), but also educational with a live falconry exhibition all year round.

Open year-round

www.bouillon-initiative.be

Castle of La Roche

Overhanging the city and the River Ourthe, nestled in the middle of nature, this site truly makes La Roche “The pearl of the Ardennes”. It started as a Neolithic residence and then housed the Kings of the Franks. Despite all the changes the castle has endured over the years, the actual ruins of the towers, arrow slits and “oubliettes,” have retained the feel of feudal times.

Open year-round

www.chateaudelaroch.be

Chateau of Deulin

Construction of the chateau was completed in 1770 by the Harlez family who still resides there. The property spans 60 acres and is made up of the chateau, French – style gardens, and expansive lakes and woods. Inside, there is an impressive antique furniture collection that can be visited. The Harlez family, who continue to reside in here to this day, completed construction on the chateau 1770. This site is recognized as a part of the exceptional Walloon Heritage.

Open year-round

www.espacedeulin.be

Rose Garden of Pierre Joseph Redouté

Located at the Museum of Pierre Joseph Redouté in the village of Saint-Hubert, this garden is dedicated to the painter who was famous for his intricate and detailed flower paintings. The roses of the garden are of all different varieties and colors and serving as a great complement to the artwork of the artist known throughout the world as the “Raphaël of Roses”.

Open from July to August from 2 - 6 pm

Open from September to June by appointment

www.musee-pierre-redoute.be

Abbey of Orval

Built in the 12th century, the Abbey of Notre-Dame d’Orval welcomes visitors around the Cistercian ruins, the museum which was constructed at the beginning of the 18th century, as well as the medicinal herb-garden. Beer and cheese are made at the abbey.

Open year-round

www.orval.be

Topiary Gardens of Durbuy

With a unique collection of sculpted box trees, this is the largest topiary garden in Belgium opened to the public. This wonderful garden possesses more than 250 figures, some of which are more than 120 years old. Topiary art embellishes gardens and gives a living shape to evergreen plants using pruning and braiding.

Open year-round

www.topiairesdurbuy.be



Chateau Dhavre © WBT – J.L. Fiemal

Practical information



Many chateaux are private property and can be visited upon request. Each year, in September, the Heritage Days (Journées du Patrimoine) offer opportunities to visit historical venues, monuments and sites, many of which are not normally accessible to the public. More information on: www.journeesdupatrimoine.be

Visit Private Gardens in Wallonia and Brussels

The “Open Gardens of Belgium” association offers a peek at more than 200 private gardens and parks. The owners invite you to discover quality gardens with architectural, botanical and historical interests. www.jardinsouverts.be

Events

April – May: Amaryllis and Orchid Exhibition – Castle of Beloeil

April – May: Royal Greenhouses opened to the public for a short period of time – Brussels

May – June: Gardens and Hobbies Festival – Chevetogne

Good Friday: Flower Market – Tournai

July – August: The Phantom of La Roche – Castle of La Roche

August: Flower Carpet – Brussels (every 2 years on even numbered years)

August: Les Musicales – Castle of Beloeil

September: Mobility week and car free Sunday – Brussels

October: Festival of the Apple – Castle of Modave

December: Christmas at the Modave Castle – Castle of Modave

Green guided tours in Brussels

Arkadia: Walking and bus tours: www.asbl-arkadia.be
Tournay-Solvay

Itinéraires ASBL: On the Paths of History: www.itineraires.be
Parc of Brussels, Soignes, Bois de la Cambre

Pro Velo ASBL: Bike tours: www.provelo.org
Uccle, Woluwe, Bois de la Cambre, Soignes

Guided tours in Wallonia

Qualiguides: Private driver-guide services: www.qualiguides.be

Get-to-Belgium: Private tour packages: www.get-to-belgium.be

Scenic Tours: Private guided tours: www.scenic-tours.be

Rent a car

Auto Europe: www.autoeurope.com

Avis: www.avis.com

Hertz: www.hertz.be

Europcar: www.europcar.be

Modern Car: Limousine service with chauffeur: www.moderncar.com

Stay in a castle

Belgium is a country where “joie de vivre” is a way of life and even the smallest villages are bursting with cultural gems. Discover the good life in Belgium during a stay in one of our stunning castle-hotels, where heritage and delight form a perfect synergy.

Mannor of Lébioles:
www.manoirdelebioles.com

Chateau of Hassonville:
www.hassonville.be

Chateau of La Poste:
www.chateaudelaposte.be

Chateau of Harzé:
www.chateau-harze.be

Chateau des Thermes in Chaudfontaine:
www.chateaudesthermes.be

Chateau du lac in Genval:
www.martins-hotels.com/en/hotel/chateau-du-lac

Chateau of Jemeppe:
www.chateaujemeppe.eu

Chateau of Namur:
www.chateaudenamur.com

Abbey of La Ramée:
www.ramee.be



Chateau of Jemeppe © Tijs Blom

Chateau d'Hassonville © WBT – J.P. Remy



Manor of Lebioles © WBT



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Parc Du Chateau De La Hulpe © WBT – J.P. Remy

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