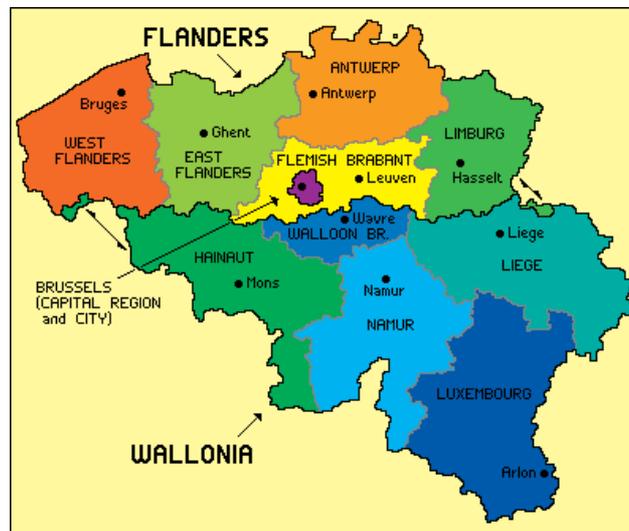


## Belgium

Belgium covers an area of 30,000km<sup>2</sup>, and it's a crossroads in Western Europe, bounded by the North Sea to the north-west, the Netherlands to the north, Germany to the east, Luxembourg to the south-east and France to the south and west.

Since 1962, the territory is officially divided in three regions, according to the language spoken: the Flemish Region is Dutch speaking, the Walloon region French speaking and Brussels is bilingual. The German-speaking Community lies in the east of Wallonia, as suggested by its new name: East Belgium (Ostbelgien). The 10 provinces are equally shared out among the Flemish and Walloon regions: West and East Flanders, Antwerpen, Flemish Brabant and Limburg belong to the first ; Hainaut, Walloon Brabant, Namur, Liège and Luxembourg to the second. The German-speaking Community is a part of Liège. On the map, we can see two exclaves. To the north of Liège, Voeren (« Fourons » in French) belong to Limburg ; to the south of Ypres (Ieper in Dutch), Comines-Warmeton (Komen-Waasten in Dutch) is a part of Hainaut.



## Geography of Belgium

The relief becomes higher southwards. At sealevel (and even lower in the Polders) along the North Sea (« littoral » on the map below); lower than 100m in Low Belgium (« Basse Belgique on the map »), that means the Scheldt Basin and the Plains of Flanders and Campine) ; lower than 200m on the Central plateau (« Moyenne Belgique » on the map), between the Scheldt and the Sambre and Meuse valley ; between 200 and 700m in High Belgium (« Haute Belgique » on the map).



Where are the 25 Flemish climbs (Zone 1)?



The Kimmel and the Rodeberg lie in the Westhoek, not far from the Mont Cassel and the Mont des Cats in France. It's the epicenter of Gent-Wevelgem.

One third of the Flemish selected climbs are located in the Flemish Ardennes (Vlaamse Ardennen), to the south of Oudenaarde, the heart of the Tour of Flanders (Koppenberg, Taaiberg, Oude Kwaremont, Paterberg, ...). The Wall of Geraardsbergen and the Bosberg are farther east.



The Kimmelberg



The Flemish Ardennes

The Brabant Plateau is represented by the Keperenberg, the Bruine Put and the Smeysberg ; the Hageland by the Citadel of Diest ; the Haspengouw (« Hesbaye » in French) by Hauthem and the Burchtheuvel (in Borgloon, Limburg).



Landscape in the Hageland

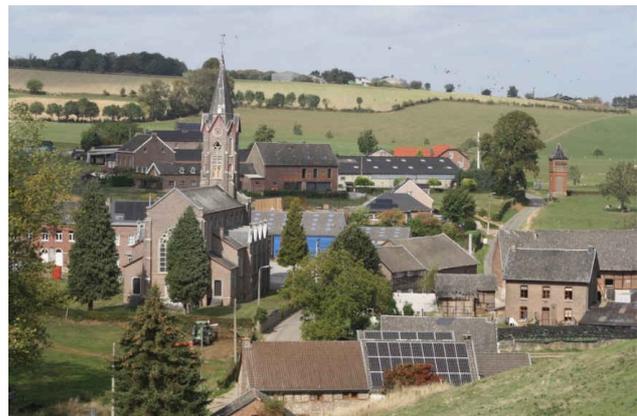


Borgloon in the Haspengouw

In Limburg, we've also chosen the Molenberg in Bessemer to visit the Campine (Limburgse Kempen) ; the Slingerberg on the Albert Canal (Maasland) ; Hagelstein and Beusdael in the Voerstreek, near the border with the Netherlands.



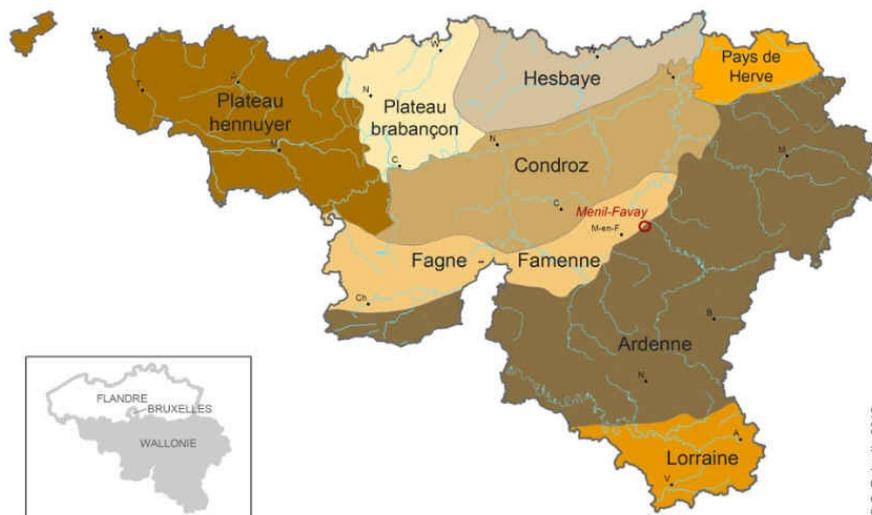
The Albert Canal in Kanne



Remersdael at the foot of Hagelstein

In Brussels, some of you will be surprised to discover that, in the capital of the « Flat Country », it's possible to climb 80m elevation gain: rue du Mystère / Mysteriestraat (Altitude 100 / Hoogte 100).

The 74 other climbs (Zones 2 and 3) lie in Wallonia. Logical choice since the altitudes keep growing southward. The highest point of Belgium is the Signal de Botrange (694m), on the High Fens Plateau, in the north-eastern part of the Ardennes.



The Sambre and Meuse valleys are the backbone of the Walloon geography, economy (coal and steel industries) and thus history. They separate Central and High Belgiums. Charleroi lies on the river Sambre ; Namur and Liège on the river Meuse.

You'll discover the Sambre in the Wall of Thuin and at the junction with the Meuse in Namur (Citadel). A lot of climbs start from the Meuse: 4 Chemins de Blaimont (close to France), Montagne de la Croix (Dinant), Gayolle, 7 Meuses and Triple Mur Monty upstream from Namur, Citadel of Namur, Barrière de Bayet downstream to Namur, Bohissau in Andenne, Mur and Thier in Huy, Côte de France, Laveu in Liège and Xhavée just before the border with Netherlands.



The Sambre in Thuin



The Meuse in Liège

On the Hainaut Plateau we find Tournai (Mont Saint-Aubert), the Pays des Collines (« Land of Hills »), which is the Walloon side of the Flemish Ardennes (La Houppes, Rossignol and Beau Site), Mons and La Louvière (Erbisoeul, Tienne du Dragon, Thuin,...), and Charleroi (Petit-Try), where the coal industry has left a lot of spoil tips (« Albert I » in the list).



The « Pays des Collines »



The cobbles in Biez (Walloon Brabant)

On the Brabant Plateau, we'll climb Huit Drèves from the Brussels-Charleroi Canal, Villers Abbey, Tienne des Français (Dyle Valley) and the cobbles in Biez.

Condroz lies just south to the Sambre and Meuse Valley. The altitudes are higher, but the elevation gains not necessary. The Belle-Motte represents the western part ; some High-Meuse tops (upstream from Namur) the central ; Lavis, Somal and Plaine Sapin the eastern.



Landscapes in the Condroz



and in the Famenne

In Fagne-Famenne, the Eau d'Heure Lakes (Petit Poggio), the Cerfontaine Forest and Hamerenne (Rochefort and Han-sur-Lesse) were chosen.

The Pays de Herve is a plateau bounded by the Meuse River to the west, the Vesdre River to the south and the borders with Netherlands and Germany, respectively to the north and east. We'll get there thanks to the Battice Fort, and also Hagelstein and Beusdael in Limburg (Zone1).



Bocage in the Pays de Herve



Signal de Botrange (694m)

The Ardenne is the most interesting part of the country and thus of the challenge: the hardest and the longest climbs and the best elevation gains are there. The hardest Belgian climb, the col de Haussire, is located above La Roche-en-Ardenne.

The Ardenne belongs to the same range than the French Ardennes and the German Eifel. It crosses the southern part of the country from southwest to northeast. In the Namur province (Zone 2): Ry de Rome Reservoir in Couvin, Moulin de Mazée, Trou du Diable, Winenne, Croix-Scaille (the highest point of the province) and Conrad on the Semois River.



The Croix-Scaille Plateau



The Vesdre Valley in Nessonvaux

The largest part of the massif is located in the Liège and Luxembourg provinces (Zone3). Where are the best spots? From north to south:

-in the Vesdre Valley (to the north: the Pays de Herve, to the south: the Ardenne) between Liège and Verviers (Maison-Bois, Bois de Beyne / Haie des Loups and one side of the Croix-Michel);

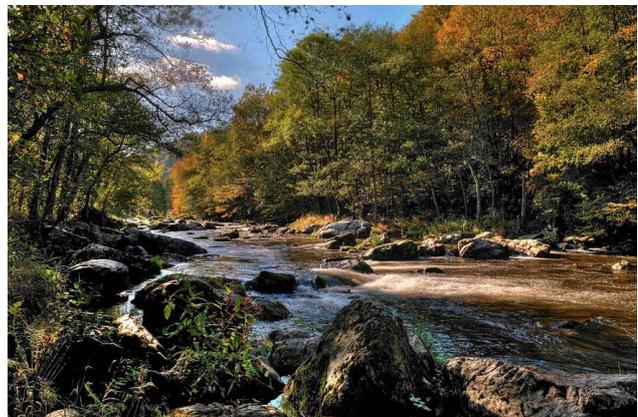
-on the Hautes-Fagnes Plateau (« Hohes Venn » in German), which is the most northerly part, at the border with the German Eifel (Signal de Botrange, Ferme Libert and Eifelturm);

-in the Ourthe Valley (Pied Monti, Haussire, Beffe and La Roche-aux-Faucons);

-in the Ambleve Valley (Stockeu, Haute-Levée, Wanne, Les Hézalles, Thier de Coö, Rosier, La Redoute and Chambralles);



The Ourthe River at the Herou dam (Nisramont)



The Ambleve River (Fonds de Quarreux)

-in the Our Valley, in East Belgium, close to the borders with Luxembourg and Germany (Wampach);

-in the Semois Valley (Sati, Corbion and Rochehaut in the Luxembourg province, and Conrad in Namur).



The Our Valley in Ouren



The Semois River at the Tombeau du Géant (The Giant's Tomb)

The far south is occupied by the Belgian Lorraine, lower in altitude than the Ardenne. The purists make the difference between the Gaume (extension of the French Lorraine, Virton on the map) and the Land of Arlon. In the first, you'll climb Orval Abbey, Montquintin and Torgny, the farthest south village of the country; in the second Anlier Forest and Maison Blanche (« White House »).





Florenville in Gaume



Arlon

## Tourism in Belgium

### UNESCO

14 sites belong to the World Heritage List and 16 are on the Tentative List. Unfortunately, most of them are located in the flat part of the country. It's indeed difficult to link the historical centers of Bruges, Ghent, Leuven and Antwerp, the Grand-Place in Brussels, the Tournai Cathedral, the Flemish Colonies of Benevolence with any climb,... Nor the Lion's Mound in Waterloo!

Two programs gather 56 sites under the title « Belfries of Belgium and France ». 33 of them are in Belgium, but they are located in the « Flat country ». One exception: it lies on the top of the Wall of Thuin. You'll be able to see three others in cities involved in our list (Oudenaarde, Leuven and Namur).

Strépy-Thieu belongs to the « Four (hydraulic boat-)Lifts on the Canal du Centre and their Environs ».



The Strépy-Thieu Lift



The Belfry of Thuin

The eponymous Spa (at the foot of Le Rosier) belongs to an international program (« The Great Spa Towns of Europe »), connecting 11 spa towns in 7 European countries (Bad Ems, Baden-Baden, Bad Kissingen, Baden bei Wien, Spa, Vichy, Montecatini Terme, Ville de Bath, Františkovy Lázně, Karlovy Vary et Mariánské Lázně).

Appear in the Tentative List:

- The Hautes-Fagnes Plateau (« Hohes Venn » in German, Signal de Botrange),
- The Hoge Kempen National Park (Molenberg in Bessemer),
- The three Meuse citadels in Dinant (Montagne de la Croix), Namur (The citadel itself) and Huy (Mur and Thier).



The Hoge Kempen National Park

-The « Cemeteries and memorials of the Great War » is a list of 105 sites in France and Belgium. A lot of them show how violent was the Battle of the Yser (October 1914), in particular in Ypres and Comines-Warneton. Some of them are located along the plugstreets, used in the classical race Gent-Wevelgem. The Mount Kemmel French Ossuary is in our list. In Hainaut, we've selected the French cemetery at the top of the Belle-Motte.

Comprehensive list (only in French) on <https://whc.unesco.org/fr/listesindicatives/5886/>



The Mount Kemmel Ossuary



The Belle-Motte Necropolis

Belgium doesn't despair of including its beer culture in the UNESCO's World Heritage List. The procedure is not only surrealist: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/beer-culture-in-belgium-01062?RL=01062>

### **Natural parks**

There's only one national park in Belgium, the already mentioned (UNESCO) Hoge Kempen. Its existence is surprising, since land management and tourism are regional and not national competences (Belgium is a federal country). The protection of green spaces is therefore not the same in the north and in the south of the country.

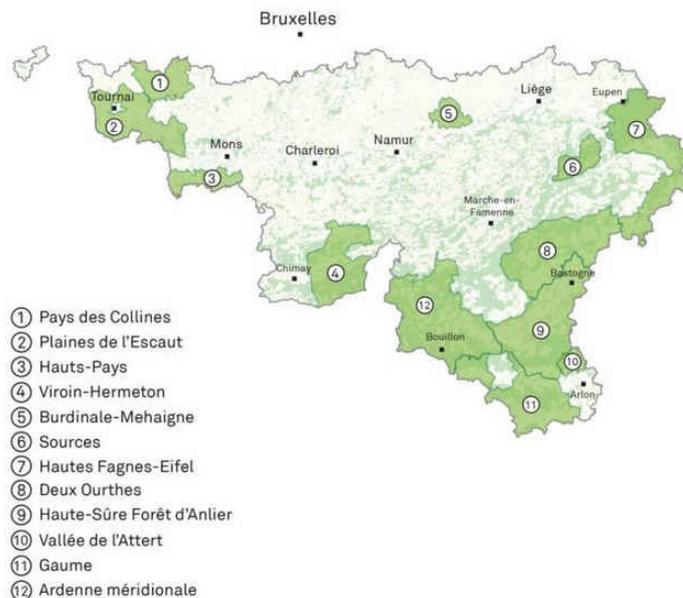
Official website of the National Park: <https://www.nationaalparkhogekempen.be/en>

The Flanders work with « regional landscapes » (Regionale landschappen), but the concept is very (too?) large. On the map below, we can see that Limburg (eastern part) is fully covered and the Flemish Brabant almost as much. Would become Flanders an ecomuseum? Our 25 climbs are located in the West-Vlaamse Heuvels, Vlaamse Ardennen, Pajottenland, Dijleland, Hageland, Haspengouw and Kempen-Maasland:

<https://www.regionalelandschappen.be/regional-landscapes-flanders/7993>



Wallonia has created 12 nature parks. In the Challenge, 10 of them are represented thanks to 26 climbs: <https://www.parcsnaturelsdewallonie.be/en/the-natural-parks/>



- 1-Pays des Collines (Hill Country): 9-Mont de l'Enclus (one side), 27-La Houppes, 28-Beau Site and 29-Les Papins.
- 2-Plaines de l'Escaut (Scheldt Plains): 26-Mont Saint-Aubert.
- 4-Viroin-Hermeton: 44-Ry de Rome, 45-Moulin de Mazée and 46-Trou du Diable.
- 5-Burdinale-Mehaigne: 61-Huccorgne.
- 6-Sources: 75-Rosier.
- 7-Hautes Fagnes-Eifel (High Fens-Eifel): 73-Eifelturm, 76-Bostrange, 77-Ferme Libert and 92-Wampach.
- 8-Deux Ourthes (Two Ourthes): 86-Haussire, 90-Pied Monti and 91-Saint-Roch.
- 9-Haute-Sûre-Forêt d'Anlier (Upper Sure Anlier Forest): 96-Forêt d'Anlier.
- 11-Gaume: 97-Orval, 99-Montquintin and 100-Torgny.
- 12-Ardenne méridionale (Southern Ardennes): 59-Croix-Scaille, 60-Conrad, 93-Rochehaut, 94-Sati and 95-Corbion.

Wallonia has also selected thirty villages gathered under the label « Plus Beaux Villages de Wallonie » (« Most beautiful villages »):

<https://walloniabelgiumtourism.co.uk/en-gb/3/where-to-go-in-wallonia/villages-of-wallonia>

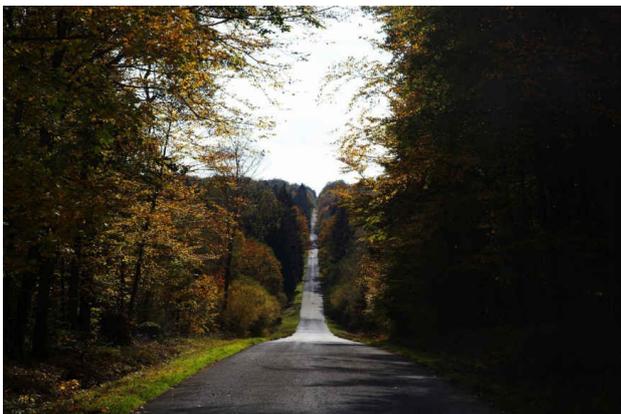
Two of them are in our list: Mirwart, at the foot of Les Hazeilles, and Torgny.



Through the Hoge Kempen (Bessemmer)



The Mount Saint-Aubert



The Anlier Forest



Torgny, Provençal village

4 reservoirs are in the list: Eau d'Heure (42-Petit Poggio), Ry de Rome (44), Eupen (at the foot of 73-Eifelturm) and La Gileppe (at the foot of 76-Signal de Botrange). On the Ambleve River, the Coo Waterfall is the highest natural waterfall in Belgium. It's located at the foot of 78-Thier de Coo. The caves of Han are situated on the Lesse River, at the foot of 58-Hamerenne. Other caves are worth seeing: Lorette in Rochefort (near Han), or Sougné-Remouchamps, at the foot of 71-La Redoute.



The Eau d'Heure Lakes



The Coo Waterfall

Some interesting viewpoints: Rodeberg, Wall of Thuin, Citadel of Namur, Sept Meuses, Plaine Sapin, Rochehaut,...

6 provincial highest points belong to the list: Signal de Botrange (Liège, 694m), Baraque de Fraiture (Luxembourg, 651m), Croix-Scaille (Namur, 504m), Hagelstein (Limburg, 287m), Kemmelberg (West Flanders, 156m) and Hotondberg (East Flanders, 150m).



Loker from the Rodeberg



The Sept Meuses

### Cultural tourism

5 of our climbs start an abbey: Sinnich (24-Kasteelstraat), Villers-la-Ville, Val-Dieu (Fort de Battice-N), Stavelot (Stockeu and Haute-Levée) and Orval.



Villers-la-Ville



5 castles are involved:

1 at the top (the ruins of Montquintin) and 4 at the foot: Beusdael (24-Côte de Beusdael), Vêves (Sur le Mont Lavis), La Roche-en-Ardenne (Col de Haussire) and Bouillon (Sommet de Corbion).



The Meuse, the citadel of Namur, the Sambre



The Tiegemberg Windmill

And 4 fortresses and citadels: Diest, Namur, Dinant (Montagne de la Croix) and Battice.

Less martial, the windmill (Bergmolen or Stampersmolen) at the top of the Tiegemberg.

We've already mentioned the cemeteries and memorials of the Great War (UNESCO). At the top of Plaine Sapin (drop zone in WW2), a monument commemorates the martyrs:

"PLAINE SAPIN, EN CE LIEU DU CIEL DESCENDIRENT LES PREMIÈRES ARMES DE LA RÉSISTANCE"  
(« Plaine Sapin, in this place from the sky were dropped the first arms of the Resistance »)

A memorial was erected under the rocks in Marche-les-Dames (48-Barrière de Bayet-SW), in honour of Albert I of Belgium, victim of a fatal fall during a rock climbing exercise in 1934.



The monument at Plaine Sapin



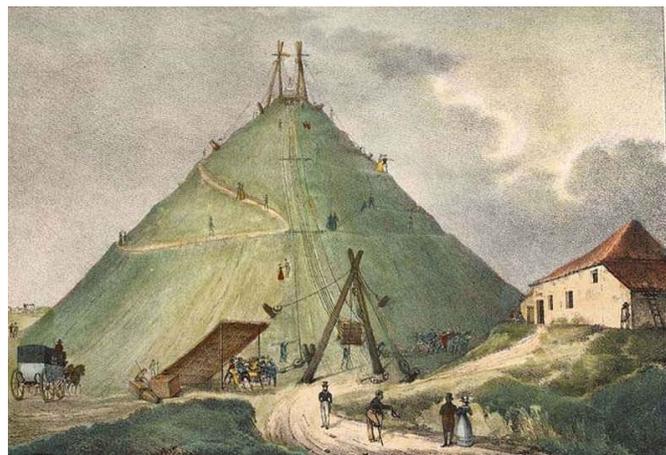
The rocks of Marche-les-Dames

In a complete different field, a coal tip also honours the memory of the « Knight King ». It's the only one we've found that is accessible by bike. The one of Beringen (Limburg) is more interesting (nice path), but it's strictly forbidden.

The Walibi leisure park is located at the foot of the Tienne des Français, where the Battle of Wavre took place in 1815, on the fringe of the Battle of Waterloo.



Coal tip Albert I



The Waterloo Lion's Mound... with a path

## Belgium in difficulty

### Top 10 in europoints

Col de Haussire 284  
Signal de Botrange 276  
Baraque de Fraiture 255

Col de Stockeu 251, Moulin de Mazée 249, La Roche-aux-Faucons 247, Les Hézalles 238, Col du Rosier 237, Thier de Coö 232 and Cheval de Bois 230.

Top 3 in Flanders: Hotondberg 117pts, Kluisberg 101 and the Wall of Geraardsbergen 100.



The hardest



The highest

### Top 10 in elevation gain

Signal de Botrange 430m  
Baraque de Fraiture 421  
Col du Rosier 356

Col de Haussire 272, Trou du Diable 256, Moulin de Mazée 240, Cheval de Bois and Rochehaut 234, Les Hézalles 230 and the Col de Stockeu 226.

Top 3 in Flanders: Hagelstein 134m, Hotondberg 128 and Kluisberg 114.

If you climb the 14 sides of Botrange, Fraiture, Rosier and Haussire, you'll get 4600m elevation gain.



LBL in Le Rosier



The end of Hagelstein (Magnebos)

### Top 10 in bomb

A reference: the Mur de Huy has 26pts.

Thier de Huy and Col du Sati 33

Kemmelberg and Xhavée 32

Ferme Libert 31

Vieux Thier de Tilleur, Saint-Roch, Mur des Sept Meuses and Montagne de la Croix 29

Muur of Geraardsbergen, Koppenberg and Paterberg 28

Col de Stockeu and Pied Monti 27

Gayolle and Thier de Coö 26



Thier de Huy, it hurts!



Kemmelberg: West side story

### Top 10 in length

Baraque de Fraiture 17km

Signal de Botrange 16,5,

Eifelturm 11,

Col du Rosier 9,5, Fort de Battice 9, Corbion 8,5, Rochehaut 7, Abbaye d'Orval 6,5, La Houpe,

Moulin de Mazée, Winenne, Croix Scaille and Hagelstein 6.

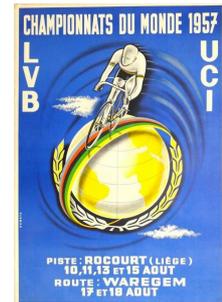


The Baraque de Fraiture



The Eifel Tower

## Cycling races in Belgium



2 of the 5 cycling monuments take place in Belgium: the Tour of Flanders and Liège-Bastogne-Liège. The Old Lady first, **LBL** exists since 1892. The Battle of the Bulge starts in Houffalize (côte Saint-Roch), it goes on with the tetralogy Wanne-Stockeu-Haute Levée-Rosier and finishes in La Redoute, les Forges, la Roche-aux-Faucons (and for a few years the Côte de Saint-Nicolas).



LBL starts with Saint-Roch



and comes to an end in La Roche-aux-Faucons

The **Tour of Flanders** (« **De Ronde** ») exists since 1913. It criss-crosses the Flemish Ardennes: Eikenberg, Wolvenberg, Berendries, Oud Kwaremont, Paterberg, Koppenberg, Taaiberg, Kruisberg-Hotondberg,... are very short and tough climbs, most of them are cobbled. They belong to the cycling history and legend. Since a few years, the Ronde avoids the Wall of Geraardsbergen and the Bosberg.



Strike in the Koppenberg



The pack in the Oud Kwaremont (2015)

Belgium organized 10 **World Championships**. The climbs of the challenge are in brackets: Liège (1930, Les Forges), Floreffe (1935), Moorslede (1950, Rodeberg), Waregem (1957, Tiegemberg), Ronse (1963 Kruisberg alone, 1988 Kruisberg and Hotondberg), Zolder (1969 and 2002), Yvoir (1975) and Leuven (2021, Smeysberg and Wijnpersstraat).



Kruisberg : arrival in 1988 (Ronse)



The Team Belgium in the Smeysberg (2021)

Belgium is also the foreign country the most visited by the **Tour de France** : 118 starts and finishes from 1947 to 2019, according <http://www.ledicodutour.com/pays/belgique.htm>

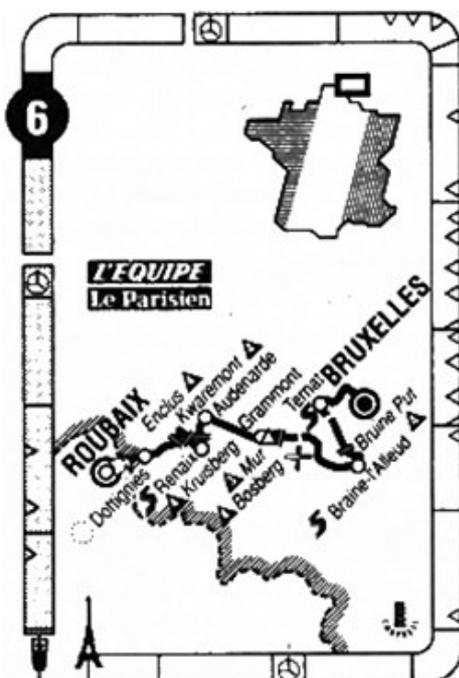
Since 1982, the Tour has gone 14 times through Belgium, that means 33 stages and 68 KOM. In the challenge, we find: Grammont (4x) ; the Citadel of Namur (3x) ; the Mont de l'Enclus (aka Kluisberg), the Bosberg, the Bruineput, the Haute-Levée, the Rosier and the Forges (2x) ; the Oud Kwaremont, the Kruisberg, the Côte de France, Wanne, Stockeu, Bohissau and the Wall of Huy (1x).

3 stages are particularly interesting, because they represent very well the profile of the Belgian classics:

1992-06 Roubaix-Brussels, stamped « Flanders » (Kluisberg, Kwaremont, Kruisberg, Geraardsbergen, Bosberg and Bruineput) ;

1995-07 Charleroi-Liège, stamped « LBL » (Yvoir, Durbuy, Petit-Barvaux, Ferrières, Basse-Bodeux, Haute-Levée, Rosier, La Reid, Mont-Theux and Les Forges) ;

2015-02 Antwerp-Huy, « Flèche wallonne » (« Walloon Arrow ») (Bohissau, Erefe, Cherave and finish at the top of the Mur de Huy).



Rodriguez winner in Huy

In 2006, the first four stages of the **Giro d'Italia** took place in Wallonia. A prologue in Seraing, followed by Mons-Charleroi (côte de Silenrieux), Perwez-Namur (Evrehaïlles and Ahin) and Wanze-Hotton (Wanne and Haute-Levée).

Let's go back to the one-day races, the classics:

**Gent-Wevelgem** goes through the Heuvelland, climbing the Kemmelberg and the Rodeberg-Baneberg.

The **Flèche wallonne** is a 200km race, but actually it's a 800m hill climb (the hardest part of the Mur de Huy). In the challenge, we've kept a touch of vintage: Bohissau and the Côte de France. We regret the lack of interest of the organizers in the Thier de Huy, much more decisive than Ereffe or Cherave.



The women in the Ban(an)eberg



Gilbert in the Mur de Huy (2011)

In March, many races are used to prepare the Tour of Flanders, with the same bergen: Het Nieuwsblad, Kuurne-Brussels-Kuurne, the E3 in Harelbeke and Dwars door Vlaanderen (« Across Flanders »).

With the Brabantse Pijl (« Brabant Arrow »), we move to the Flemish Brabant, but the bergen remain. For a long time, the race turned around Alsemberg; today (in 2021) the finish is in Overijse, not so far from Leuven. In the list we've taken the Bruineput and added the Smeysberg, instead of the small climbs in and around Overijse itself (Ijskelderlaan, Schavei, Hertstraat and Holstheide), due to its presence in the World Championships 2021.



Terpstra in the Bruineput in 2013



The Route merveilleuse (Citadel of Namur)

The start of the **GP de Wallonie** often changes, but not the finish at the top of the Citadel of Namur, where a leg of the UCI Cyclo-cross World Cup takes place.

**Paris-Brussels** became Brussels-Brussels (aka « Brussels Classic ») in 2013. The race visits both Brabants, Walloon and Flemish. The Smeysberg and the Bruineput are the most selected climbs. In 2014, the Smeysberg was climbed 5 times. The Keperenberg (in the Pajottenland, to the west of Brussels) is another reference climb. In 2013, the race occasionally goes through Hoegaarden to climb the Kauterhof and, in 2021, the riders climbed the Wall of Geraardsbergen and the Bosberg, deserted by the Ronde.

In the province Hainaut, the **GP Cérami** (finish in Frameries) has a changing route. The Tienne du Dragon is emblematic (for instance, 5 times in 2013), but it's neglected since 2014. La Houppé and Erbisoeul were climbed in 2016 and 2018. The Walls of Thuin and Geraardsbergen were also used (the first in 2019 and the second in 2016 and 2018).

In the same province, the **Tour de l'Eurométropole** (finish in Tournai) uses a few climbs of the challenge: the col de la Croix-Jubaru (Mont Saint-Aubert) in the final lap, Les Papins, the Beau Site or the Mont de l'Enclus (Kluisberg in Dutch).

The **Petit Poggio** (Eau d'Heure Lakes) was the climb of the Belgian Championships in 2016. It was also KOM in the Tour of Belgium.



Tienne du Dragon



Petit Poggio

The **Heiste Pijl** turns around the Heiste Berg, the only climb selected in the province Antwerp.

The **Tour of Limburg** (finish in Tongeren) uses a few climbs in the Flemish region Haspengouw, from which we've selected the Burchtheuvel in Borgloon.

Not far from there, in the Flemish Brabant, **Dwars door het Hageland** finishes at the top of the Citadel of Diest.



Heistse Pijl in 2019



Dwars door het Hageland in 2020

The **Benelux Tour** was created in 2005. It's a one-week race that takes place in Netherlands and Flanders, with some stages in Wallonia, in the Ardennes in particular. In the last 10 years (2012-2021), the Wall of Geraardsbergen was the most used KOM, often associated to the Bosberg and sometimes to La Houpe. Houffalize is the second most visited place, with the inescapable Mur de Saint-Roch.

Other climbs in the challenge, that were KOM in the Benelux Tour:

Berendries 3 times (in the 10 years sample);

Slingerberg, Hagelstein-De Planck, La Redoute (one finish halfway up the hill), Chambralles, Ferme Libert and Wanne 2 times;

Bruineput, Mont Rigi (Botrange) and Wandre (Xhavée) 1 time.



Van der Poel in Grammont in 2020



Saint-Roch

### The Tour of Belgium

From 2012 to 2021, the Flemish stages are flat (except Geraardsbergen in 2013 and 2019, combined with the Bosberg of the Berendries) and the stage in the Ardennes makes the difference. Only the KOM selected in the challenge:

2012: Côte de France 2x, Bohissau and the Mur de Huy

2013: Les Forges, Chambralles and La Redoute

2014: Mur de Huy

2015: nice stage finishing in St. Vith with Wanne, Stockeu, the Bergstrasse, Haute-Levée and Rosier

2016: stage cancelled because of an accident with 17 riders and a motorbike

2017: Chambralles, Les Forges, La Roche-aux-Faucons and Saint-Nicolas

2018: Mur de Huy 2x

2019: La Redoute and La Roche-aux-Faucons 2x

The Petit Poggio was used three times (from 2013), before the National Championships in 2016.



Chambralles



Saint-Nicolas in LBL

## The Tour de Wallonie (sample from 2014 to 2021)

The Wall of Thuin is a must-have. Don't forget that at the beginning in 1974 the « TRW » was called the « Tour du Hainaut Occidental ». In the same province, other KOM: the Croix-Jubaru / Mont Saint-Aubert (2014 and 2020), the Mont de l'Enclus (aka Kluisberg, 4x in 2014 + 2019), the Petit Try (2014 and 2021), the Tienne du Dragon (2015 and 2021), the Beau Site (2016 and 2019) and Les Papins (2019 and 2020).

The other KOM in the challenge:

2014: Citadel of Namur, Sati, Les Forges, Roche-aux-Faucons and Saint-Nicolas

2015: Sati and Citadel of Namur

2017: Bohissau and Saint-Roch

2018: Citadel of Namur 2x, 4 Chemins de Blaimont, Samrée (Baraque Fraiture) and Pied Monti

2019: Kruisberg, Signal de Botrange, Wanne, Les Hézalles and Baraque Fraiture

2020: Teuven (Beusdael), Rosier, Saint-Roch and Beffe 2x

2021: Ferme Libert, Wanne, Beffe 2x and Sati.



Mur de Thuin (TRW 2011)



Beffe (Gran Fondo Vélomédiane)

## A sport, a culture, a religion

After this litany, we can conclude that in Belgium cyclism is more than a sport, it's a part of the culture. Culture only? Each mythology has its heroes, dead or alive, and in Belgium there is no shortage of heroes, judging by the number of steles and memorials on the territory. According to VisitFlanders, there are 25 only in both Flanders, East and West:

[https://www.visitflanders.com/en/stories/cycling-in-flanders/monuments-to-monuments-1.jsp?country=en\\_US](https://www.visitflanders.com/en/stories/cycling-in-flanders/monuments-to-monuments-1.jsp?country=en_US)

[https://www.visitflanders.com/en/stories/cycling-in-flanders/monuments-to-monuments-2.jsp?country=en\\_US](https://www.visitflanders.com/en/stories/cycling-in-flanders/monuments-to-monuments-2.jsp?country=en_US)

Stan Ockers has his monument at the top of Les Forges, Eddy Merckx on the Stockeu, Claudy Criquelion in the double bend of the Mur de Huy, Frank Vandenbroucke in Ploegsteert and... Remco Evenepoel on the Mount Faro in Algarve, at 21 year old. Heroes are ageless!



Eddy Merckx on the Stockeu



Remco Evenepoel on the Mount Foia