

Travel the Benelux

Tourism, recreation define Durbuy

by **Tim Clark**

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Durbuy bills itself as the smallest city in the world, thanks to a charter granted in 1331.

A charming town in the Ardennes, Durbuy offers fine restaurants, boutique shopping and adventure sports. A major commercial center in the Middle Ages, Durbuy has become a popular tourist destination in the Ourthe valley.

The most popular attraction in Durbuy, "the world's largest topiary park" contains 250 specimens of sculpted boxwood covering more than 30,000 square feet. The sculptures include an impressive elephant, a mermaid and even Manneken-Pis. Some of the boxwoods in the park are more than 100 years old.

The town has kept its aged atmosphere with its narrow,

winding cobblestone streets and 18th-century chateau. A large area of Durbuy is restricted to pedestrians and is filled with small shops selling everything from clothes to tourist trinkets.

The Ourthe river passes through Durbuy, and many fine restaurants line the river. You can enjoy good food as you watch boats, rafts and kayaks float past.

Home to one of the largest adventure parks in Belgium, Rome, a hamlet of Durbuy, boasts 60 different types of outdoor activities. At Durbuy Adventure, you can hop on a mountain bike, go rock-climbing and ride four-wheelers, or maybe you'd rather experience paint ball, archery and laser tag or one of the many other activities there.

Outside the gate



Wèris: Rockin' it big time

Near Wèris, 4 miles south of Durbuy, you can see two dolmens (megalithic tombs with a large flat stone laid on upright ones) and many megaliths dating back to the Neolithic era. The Museum of Megaliths can be found in the center of Wèris.



(Clockwise) A stroll in the topiary park. • Kayaking down the Ourthe. • Shopping is popular in Durbuy. • Enjoying a meal at the Grand Café.



For your GPS: From:
 Durbuy Mons: 135 km
 Belgium Brussels: 123 km
 6940 Schinnen: 104 km