



3 There are more than 40 religious sites along the Grand Tour, including chapels, small shrines, and calvaries.

4 **Wooded detour** along a 3 km loop through Cambier Forest, not suitable for strollers or bicycles other than mountain bikes.

5 Following Thierry II of Walcourt's promise to build an abbey, the first **Cistercian** communities settled in 1232 at the site known as "**le Jardinnet**", establishing one of Belgium's earliest Cistercian communities. Over the centuries, significant buildings were constructed, of which only one remain today, the monumental **porch**, now a listed heritage site. During the Middle Ages, the abbey also owned several of the beautiful square farms scattered across the surrounding countryside.



It is here, near the Chapel of Notre-Dame, that the Miracle of Le Jardinnet is reenacted each year.

The statue of the Virgin is first placed in a birch tree planted for this purpose. As soon as it is barely lowered, the branches are stripped by the crowd,

who take them as lucky charms and protection against fires.



6 **Quairrelles**, or **Cwerêles** in Walloon, comes from the Latin quariria, meaning "quarry." This was indeed the site of an old limestone quarry used for constructing buildings in the region. At this spot, the **Eau d'Yves** splits into a diversion canal that once supplied the mills of the suburb.

7 The **Calvary Chapel** marks the **fifth stage** of the **Trinity March** and is where the statue of the Virgin is dressed in its finest robes for the solemn return of the procession. This is a highlight of the March, with the square battalion in front of the chapel, accompanied by mounted riders, musket volleys, and rolling drumbeats.



The Legend of Our Lady of Walcourt

Our Lady of Walcourt is the source of many miracles and legends, the most famous being the **Legend of Le Jardinnet**.

In the year **1228**, as the townspeople watched helplessly while a devastating fire ravaged the church of Walcourt, they witnessed the Notre-Dame's statue of Our Lady being miraculously lifted from the Collegiate Church into the air without any human intervention, perhaps by angels? It came to rest in a tree below the town, at a place called Le Jardinnet. Despite repeated attempts, the statue remained inaccessible until **Thierry II, Lord of Walcourt**, intervened. Kneeling at the foot of the tree, he promised to rebuild the church and to erect an abbey in this place. Following this vow, the statue allowed itself to be lowered from the tree and brought back to the town.

Thus, was born the great pilgrimage of Notre-Dame de Walcourt, which celebrates the **Miracle of Le Jardinnet**. The medieval processions have since evolved into the folkloric marches of the Entre-Sambre-et-Meuse region, with Trinity Sunday becoming one of the highlights of this local tradition.



Did you know?



The Trinity Sunday procession is recognized as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of the French Community and is also listed as **Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** by **UNESCO**. The event will celebrate its **700th** anniversary in 2029!



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Start: Basilica of Walcourt, Grand Place

7 Km - 2:00

Trail Markings :



The Grand Tour route is walked every year by hundreds of pilgrims and Marchers during the Trinity Sunday procession. This is a folkloric March of the Entre-Sambre-et-Meuse region, dedicated to Notre-Dame of Walcourt. The statue of Mary in the basilica, one of the oldest in Europe (10th century), has been the object of great veneration since the Middle Ages. Along the way, you will pass nearly 40 sacred sites and enjoy panoramic views of the medieval town, its distinctive onion-shaped bell tower, and the picturesque Eau d'Heure valley.



Walker's Opinion

A pleasant walk that will give you a new perspective. Rich in heritage and history, this route is accessible for strollers and bicycles thanks to its paved sections, but it does include some steep inclines.



Following in the footsteps of medieval pilgrims, along a sacred path through remarkable landscapes

The route

From the **Saint-Materne Basilica of Walcourt** ❶, head uphill with the Town Hall on your left, then go down rue Notre-Dame Street. You will pass over the Eau d'Heure River. At the **route des Barrages** (N978) ❷, carefully cross and take the paved farm track directly opposite, which gently rises toward the plateau. About one kilometre further, at the spot called Le **Grand Bon Dieu** ❸, enjoy panoramic views over the town and its Condrusian landscape.

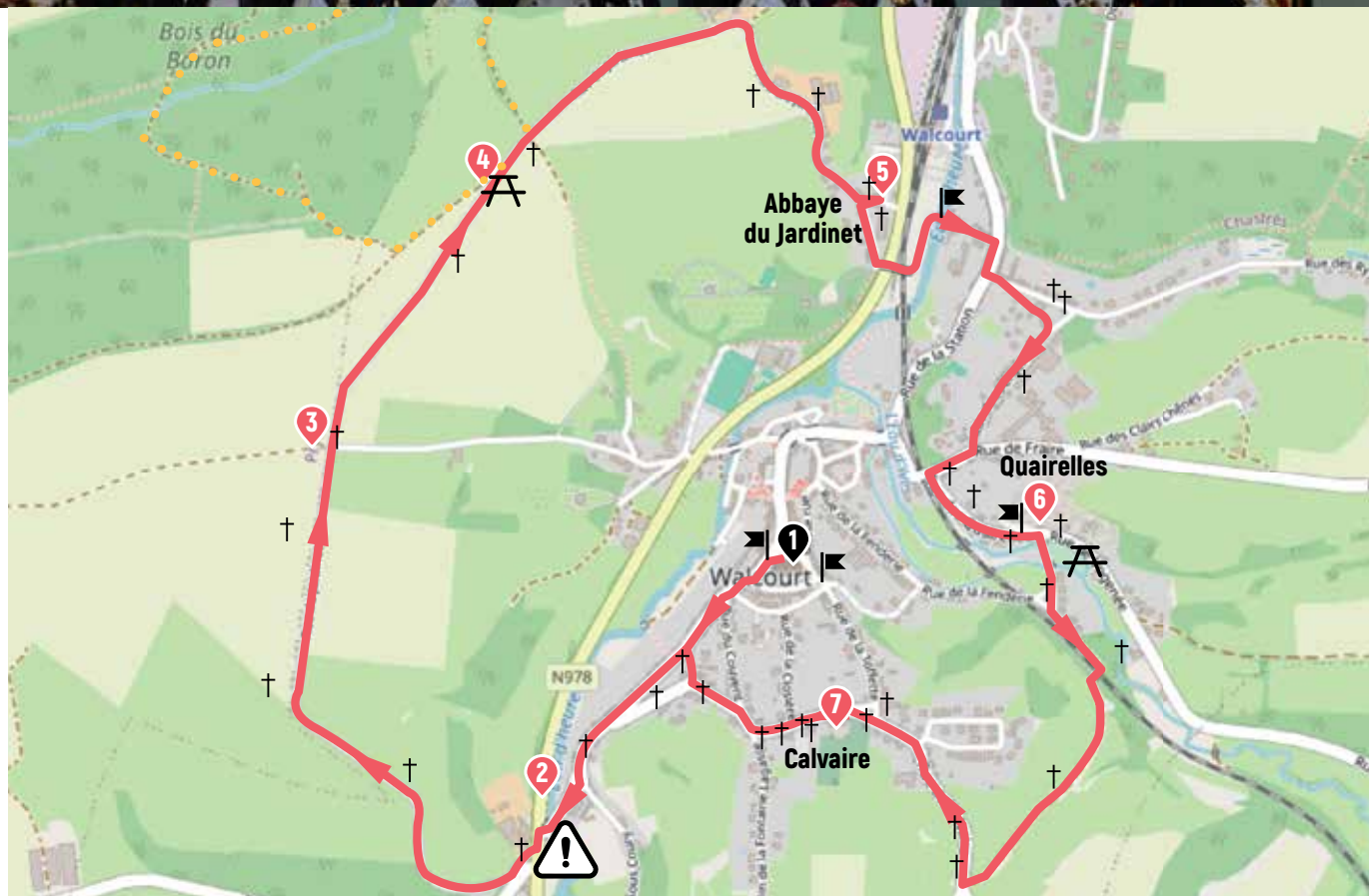
When you reach the picnic table, you can extend your walk along the trail "**Through Pry's Wonders**" ❹ by following the yellow markers or continue on your main route. After the **Abbaye Farm**, at the bottom of the descent, you will see two red markers. Take the left one to discover the porch of the **Jardinet Abbey** ❺, the last remnant of a large abbey complex. Then retrace your steps to the double marker, turn left, and cross the bridge.

At the T-junction of Rue de la Station, turn right, then left onto Rue des Ry de Ry, and finally right onto Rue des Bergeries. At the end of this street, keep to the right and then turn left onto Rue des Quairelles.

After passing a restored **old wash-house** ❻, turn right where a rest area allows you to catch your breath before the next climb. Continuing along the road, you will see on your left a small bridge over the railway; cross it and follow the stone-paved path back up toward the plateau. At the city entrance, leave the Domaine de la Maladrerie on your right and continue along Rue du Calvaire.

At the **Calvary Chapel** ❼, the "square battalion" ceremony takes place: officers of the companies fire salvos in honour of the Virgin, who is solemnly carried while wearing her ceremonial cloak. Pass the cemetery on your left and continue to the police station. Leave it on your right and turn right onto the next street to return to the starting point.

And why not enjoy a Charles Quint beer in its traditional **four-handled mug** while discovering a new local legend?



❶ According to oral tradition, **Materne of Cologne** (4th century) built the first church in Walcourt. The Basilica of Saint-Materne / Notre-Dame of Walcourt later became a Gothic-style building (13th century), with foundations dating back to the 11th century. This architectural gem has been an important regional pilgrimage site since the Middle Ages. Its remarkable onion-shaped bell tower took its present form in 1621, thanks to master carpenter Jean le Coustre. The basilica houses, among other treasures, the **Charles V Rood Screen** (1531), the Virgin Mary Statue (10th century), and an ecclesiastical treasure of goldsmith pieces created by **Hugo d'Oignies**, a goldsmith born in Walcourt at the end of the 12th century.

❷ The Route des Barrages was built along the former path of railway line 132, which passed through Cerfontaine until 1971.

Legend

- Start
- Point of interest
- Information board
- Picnic table
- Through Pry's Wonders