

# Colofon

This map was created at the request of Visit Leuven by a group of young people from Leuven and Mijnleuven, the city's label for youth.

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# 5x tourist classics

Unavoidable, indispensable and iconic, and also a little typical: 5 tourist classics in Leuven. Be sure to stop by to check them out on your way to a fun hangout, pub, shop, restaurant, or skate park. Our statues will show you the way!

## 1. TOWN HALL 1

You can't miss it when you're on the "Grote Markt": Leuven's town hall is simply magnificent. Look for 3 funny statues in the niches of the facade. The first row features scholars, artists and historical figures.

## 2. OUDE MARKT 2

Leuven's "Oude Markt" is simply Belgium's longest bar. A square with many cafés and eating spots. Take the test on this map to see which pub is best suited to you for partying the night away.

## 3. STELLA ARTOIS BREWERY 3

Here's another eye-catcher on Leuven's famous skyline: the AB Inbev brewery where great beer like Leuven's own Stella Artois is made. You can take a tour during the weekends but advance reservations are mandatory.

## 4. GREAT BEGUINAGE 4

Imagine yourself back in the Middle Ages strolling through the labyrinthine streets of the beguinage. This is a charming area, particularly if you want to see a quieter part of Leuven after the hustle and bustle of the "Oude Markt".

## 5. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY 5

The University Library features a number of stunning reading rooms and a tall tower with panoramic views of Leuven.

Time for a little competition... How fast can you climb all 289 stairs?



# 10x great hangouts

Chill out like Leuven's famous statue of Fiere Magriet at any of these 10 fabulous hangouts!

## 1. KEIZERSBERG 6

Although this hill is located in the middle of the city, you are surrounded by nature. The abbey was built on the crest of the hill in the 11th century and was once the residence of Henry IV, the count of Leuven. The abbey is still inhabited by monks and you can stay or creatively collaborate there too! The stunning views over the city are included in the rent.

## 2. SLUISPARK 7

Sluispark is the preferred hangout for Leuven's youth. On sunny days, this park is full of spikeball sets and groups of young people meeting up for a drink. Seek out the old locks on the Dyle or go for a walk along the newly constructed bypass for fish migration.

## 3. DIJLETERRASSEN 8

This great place smack in the city centre is perfect to stop for a bite to eat after a hard day's shopping. Enjoy terrific views of the Dyle from the pavement cafes and dream away. You will find Fiere Magriet reclining here as well. At very high tide, she simply floats on the water.

## 4. SINT-DONATUSPARK 9

Although the name of this park is officially "Sint-Donatuspark", everyone refers to it as "stadspark" (citypark). The park has lots of little hills and lawns where you can bask in the sun with your friends. A big favourite among the students.

## 5. BELLEVUE 10

Park Bellevue is a long, narrow stretch of park along the railway tracks. It has the atmosphere of a seawall, except with trains instead of waves in the background. It's the perfect place for an appetiser, while you take in the last rays of the afternoon sun.

## 6. PARK ABBEY 11

Although Park Abbey is located just outside of Leuven, it is certainly worth a visit. The ancient buildings and ponds, set in a natural landscape, take you miles away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

## 7. DIJLEPARK 12

This romantic spot in the heart of Leuven is known to the local population as "Little Paradise". Must do: have a photo taken of you and your sweetheart on the blue bridge. Must not do: make a lot of noise and disturb other couples enjoying a romantic date.

## 8. DE BRUUL 13

De Bruul is Leuven's "biggest playground" and an ideal spot for skating, a game of basketball or football, or to enjoy a picnic. You will always find lots of young people here. Also, several small-scale 'festivals' are held here in summer.

## 9. SINT-MAARTENS DAL 14

You will find the best spots to chill out with your friends amidst the orange towers of Sint-Maartensdal. Locals gather here for a chat, to play a game of petanque, to work in their communal vegetable garden or to enjoy a meal together.

## 10. VAN WAEYENBERGHPARK 15

Ready for a strenuous climb? Climb all the way to the top of Van Waeyenbergpark, follow the path that winds around the crest and enjoy the best view of the city on Leuven's most romantic park bench. A bit difficult to find, but more than worthwhile!

Just like Fonske's unquenchable thirst for knowledge, we have no doubts that you will probably be very thirsty after all that walking. These 10 spots will surely come to your aid.



# 10x cheap eats

## 1. HAL5 - €€ 16

Hal5 in Kessel-Lo is an old warehouse that houses various food concepts and social organisations. Take a seat on the convivial terrace with a pizza from Antico and a drink from the bar.

## 2. DE WERF - € 17

The preferred haunt of Leuven's student population offers cheap, tasty food, a gigantic outdoor seating area and a cute concept.

## 3. FLORIDA FOOD BAR - €€ 18

One of the hotspots along the river is Bar Florida. It has a cool interior and a lovely seating area on the water. Try their scrumptious pitas and order an original beer.

## 4. BANH MI AH QUY - € 19

The vietnamese restaurant Banh Mi Ah Qi is located to the rear of Alfons Smetsplein. We are big fans of their pho -vietnamese noodle soup- and home-made spring rolls. Cheap and delicious!

## 5. HET STRAND - €€ 20

Are you looking for an affordable vegetarian meal? You've come to the right place at Het Strand. Take a seat among the plants and make your selection from their 100 percent vegetarian menu.

## 6. ALFONS STREETFOOD - € 21

Alfons Smetsplein is centrally located between the university's various auditoriums. Students stop by here regularly to order something to eat from the various food stalls on the square. Our favourite: the Syrian specialities offered by Damasco are a really good deal!

## 7. VIAVIA - €€ 22

If you're looking for some truly superb spaghetti, Viavia in Heverlee, a travel café in collaboration with Joker, is your go-to restaurant.

## 8. ALFALFA - €€ 23

On the corner of Sint-Maartensdal you will find Alfalfa: a great little place that offers healthy snacks with an interesting twist. A must for lovers of falafel and halloumi.

## 9. FRITWINKELTJE - € 24

This is one of the better fries stalls in Leuven and one of the few still located in a genuine "barrack". After all: you can't possibly take a city trip anywhere in Belgium without ordering a serving of fries!

## 10. KAPUCIJN - € 25

This traiteur and butcher's shop is, without a doubt, the best sandwich shop in all of Leuven. Come on time: the queue can get pretty long around noon, but the friendly staff makes it worth the wait.

Many years ago, the Kotmadam (landlady) would cook for the poor students living under her roof. Nowadays, there are many tasty and just as inexpensive alternatives throughout Leuven.

You may not be able to charter a balloon flight in Leuven, but thanks to these 10 tips your day in the city will be brimming with activities!

# 10x great pubs

## 1. OPTIMIST 26

The atmosphere at Optimist is sure to put you in an optimistic mood thanks to its convivial outdoor seating -covered and heated in winter-, good food and friendly proprietors. Come on time: tables outdoors are quickly taken up by this pub's loyal fans.

## 2. APERO 27

This is one of the liveliest pubs on the Oude Markt. Dance on the beats of disco, funk and house until the wee hours. Check the website to see if a dj will be spinning while you're in town and party the night away!

## 3. DOKTEUR 28

Bar Dokter (doctor) was founded not long ago. The motto is: "If you have a parched throat, your best bet is to visit a doctor, right?". Its location smack in the centre of Leuven makes it a great first stop for an evening out.

## 4. BAR BERLIN 29

Its cosy armchairs make Bar Berlin the perfect place to stop for a good cup of tea or coffee during a strenuous walk around the city.

## 5. BLAUWE KATER 30

Blauwe Kater is a permanent fixture in Leuven. They moved to the Vismarkt a few years ago. They have a great terrace where you can watch the world pass by. It's also a great haunt for lovers of jazz, blues -and beer! They have more than 90 beers on the menu!

## 6. MOK 31

Mok is a convivial coffee bar located at the top of a shopping street. Order a coffee at the open bar and walk through to the back, where there is a lively spot with lots of tables.

## 7. COMMERCE 32

This cafe is situated where 2 squares come together. Arrive at lunchtime for some delicious spaghetti, stick around to enjoy the afternoon sun and hang out at the bar until the wee small hours. This is a very popular spot for residents of all ages!

## 8. REYNAERT 33

This pub is a real "old school" hangout. It's located in a student quarter with only a sprinkling of pubs, so it's populated by people from all walks of life.

## 9. METAFOOR 34

Metafoor is one of those "brown pubs" that are typical of Leuven. It's the perfect place if you want to escape from the Oude Markt, which is located only 1 block away. It's also very popular with beer lovers.

## 10. KAMINSKY 35

You can eat equally well and inexpensively at Kaminsky. Stick around for a few drinks afterwards and enjoy the magnificent outdoor area in summer. Thanks to the shape of the building, there are also lots of windows to sit and gaze outside.

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# 10x must-do activities

## 1. HET DEPOT 36

Het Depot is Leuven's go-to concert venue. Located near the railway station, it's easy to reach. The venue is famous all over Belgium for its convivial atmosphere and great acoustics.

## 2. STUK 37

Are you a lover of dance, film and/or sound? Then Stuk is the place to be! If you're hungry, thirsty or feel like playing a fun board game, be sure to visit the amusing Stuk-café. You can also stop by Cinema Zed to watch a great film!

## 3. CINEMA ZED 38

Cinema Zed is a film house the like of which is rarely found these days: convivial, no intermission and no annoying munching noises from the person next to you. No food is allowed in the auditorium. Expect only 'good films' at Cinema Zed that are deserving of your attention!

## 4. SKATEPARK SPORTOASE 39

The Sportoase skate park is the number one hotspot for Leuven's skating population. It is located just outside the city center, next to the swimming pool with the same name. Twits the number one skate shop in Leuven organises a popular skate contest every year.

## 5. OPEK 40

The acronym Opek stands for 'public warehouse for the arts' in Flemish. Every artistic discipline is represented here: dance, theatre, visual arts, literature, photography, and gastronomy. Opek is located at the end of the Leuven canal, so they have a wonderful outdoor seating area by the water.

## 6. STELPLAATS 41

The possibilities offered at Stelplaats are infinite. Every two weeks, there are club nights here with international DJs. Plus, there's a skate park, silkscreen studio, bike shop, a wall for legal graffiti, and numerous events in the main hall and courtyard.

## 7. M LEUVEN 42

Museum M is famous thanks to its beautiful building and exhibitions that are a perfect mix of modern and more traditional art. Enjoy a delicious aperitif in the roof garden in summer.

## 8. OPEN GYM WILSELE 43

The Open Gym in Wilsele is built entirely out of recycled materials and is open to the public. It's an ideal gym if you want to work out in a climateconscious and pleasant environment

## 9. BOTANICAL GARDEN 44

Leuven boasts one of Belgium's most beautiful botanical gardens. Go in search of turtles in the tropical conservatories or unwind in the garden. By the way: admission is free!

## 10. STUDENT GYM -ARENBERG- 45

Take a walk from the ring road in the direction of Arenberg Castle along countless student accommodations. Lots and lots of students come here on weekdays to work out at the gym, chill out, and attend classes.

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# 10x must-visit shops

## 1. THINK TWICE 46

At Think Twice you will not only find some great second-hand jumpers, shirts and dresses, but also leather jackets and flashy ski parkas. The entire contents of the shop are put on sale a few times a year including "1-euro days"-, so that you can purchase a few real gems at rock-bottom prices.

## 2. DE SLEGTE 47

This charming bookshop carries all the books on the best-seller lists as well as old ones that have a whole past behind them, photography, philosophy, fantasy, romance, politics: there is something for everyone!

## 3. BARBOEK 48

As you may have guessed from the name, Barboek is a bar and bookshop in one. You can obviously buy books here, but you can also get something to drink. Try their delicious home-made lemonade! What can be more enjoyable than flipping through books and enjoying a drink at the same time?

## 4. FLUGZEUG 49

Flugzeug is a renowned record shop that caters to those with a penchant for exclusive, underground music. The owner has been running this shop for a few years now, so if you're hoping for a specific recommendation you can be assured of a friendly answer. The shop also features small-scale exhibitions from time to time!

## 5. CONTENT 50

The content sold by "Content" is all 'zero waste'. This means they sell only unpackaged goods -recyclable packaging excepted-. Vegetables, fruit, bread, beverages: not only are they all environmentally and consciously produced, they are all locally sourced. It doesn't get any more typically Leuven!

## 6. GIRAFFE 51

The giraffe has to be one of the most popular urban clothing shops for the younger set in all of Leuven. Initially, the shop sold only vinyl and cd's, but they have expanded their offering to clothing from labels such as Arte, Obey, Carhartt, and Wasted Paris... If you're looking for some cool street wear, this is your go-to-shop.

## 7. HELT 52

Helt is a shop that sometimes dares to advertise itself as a seller of only male apparel, although it actually offers a wide array of gender-neutral clothes and accessories. Their range reflects primarily a Scandinavian aesthetic, but also features collections from other European countries.

## 8. EXOTIC WORLD 53

Exotic World is a truly international supermarket that sells wares from all over the world. Chinese, Polish, Iranian and Pakistani: you name it! Everything is displayed willy-nilly, so if you're looking for something specific just ask the staff and they will find it for you!

## 9. NIGHT-TIME SHOPS 54

The heroes of the night can't be missing from this list: the proprietors of Leuven's night-time shops. Thanks to their extended opening hours -until 4 am- you can stock up on food or beverages at all hours of the day or night.

## 10. VITES 55

This second-hand shop is located in a huge warehouse on the Leuven ring road. Used furniture, clothing, crockery, books: everything is sold here at ridiculously low prices.

# What bar should I go tonight?



Feel like a heated party? Interested in real belgian ambiance?

Want to experience an 'exotic' night? Want to get a taste of student life? Could you use a great beer? Experience a chill, no stress night at a real 'brown pub'?

BARVISTA Come have a great dance topped with a cocktail. BAR NINE The most 'instagram' cocktailbar. DE BLOKHUT Attracts a broad public. Café BELGE Nostalgia?

VILLA ARTOIS You ain't a student if you haven't been here. PLAZA Great to watch sports. AMBORIX Lots of people and cheap beer. DE GIRAF Feeling a bit alternative. BIERKELDER Heated parties in a basement. Café REVUE Open after all bars are closed.

# Practical information

Leuven is small, convivial and easy to find your way around. The city has more than 100.000 inhabitants. That number is increased by an influx of 50.000 new students at the start of every academic year. You can tell at a glance that Leuven is a city for young people: the pubs, cafes and restaurants charge affordable prices, the bicycle is the primary mode of transport, and parks are filled with young people on sunny days. First things first: what are the most important things to know before packing your bags for a visit to Leuven?

## GET AROUND

Leuven is small enough to discover on foot. That's why this map has 3 walks between 4 and 7 kilometers. If you do all of them, you've crossed the entire city. There are buses in Leuven but they will cost you more time. If you haven't noticed yet: most of the people in Leuven move around by bike. You can rent one for a day at Fietspunt Leuven.

## LOCAL RULES

If you decide to rent a bike: be careful and don't ride in pedestrian zones. Policemen will stop you! It is not allowed to drink alcohol on the streets between midnight and 8 am. Bars will serve you anything you want the whole night. Shops are open between 10 am, and 6 pm, and closed on sundays. Some supermarkets stay open until 8 pm, though. At most restaurants, food is served until 10 pm. Most bars are open 7-7.

## STAY OVER

Don't feel like leaving Leuven after one day? We get it. We have a few locations where you can stay for a reasonable price: Leuven City Hostel (Ravenstraat 37), Ibis Budget (Martelarenlaan 10), Hostel De Blauwpot (Martelarenlaan 11a). Booking in advance is recommended.

## LANGUAGE

Almost everyone speaks English in Leuven. So do not hesitate to ask us questions about directions or where to eat tonight!

## TOURIST INFO

You can find more info and all practical details about the sights on www.visitleuven.be.



## Visit

# LEUVEN

with tips for and by young people

# Walking tour 1

Follow the orange line.

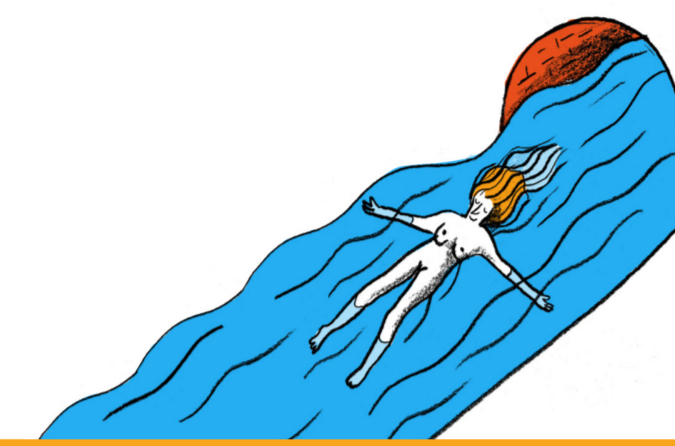
distance: 7 km - time: 1.30 hours walking

Explore the narrow streets of the old centre - with their trendy shops, pubs and cafes - and join us for a stroll along the Dyle to discover the loveliest green spots Leuven has to offer.

Leave the "Grote Markt" along 28 and cross the road to reach the geographical centre of Leuven - look for the stone! You will find many hidden gems in the cobblestone streets. So, what should you do first? Buy a new t-shirt as a souvenir at 49, flip through a stack of books over a cup of coffee at 46, share a bite to eat in the courtyard of 26, discover some great beer at 50? All up to you!

Turn onto Wandelingstraat until you reach 4. Say hello to "Fiere Magriet" and proceed to 13, to challenge the local youth to a game of football or basketball. Turn left onto Tessenstraat and stop at 29. If you miss your favourite food and drinks from home, you'll find them at 35, although it may take a bit of searching.

Stock up, because you've got quite a climb ahead of you - to the highest point of Leuven 15. Once you're there, look for the most romantic park bench in Leuven. Hint: it's well hidden among the trees! Descend through Waeyenbergpark and turn left onto Kapucijnenvoer until you reach 40: a picture-perfect spot!



# Walking tour 2

Follow the blue line.

distance: 4 km - time: 1 hour walking

Discover Leuven's student quarter: great inexpensive food, cosy pubs, parks filled with students and the most beautiful university library in all of Belgium.

This tour starts where most students end their day: the Oude Markt 2, also known as Europe's longest bar. Thirsty already? Treat yourself to a pint at 27. Or how about a snack? Walk up Krakenstraat and walk straight on the Hogeschoolplein: find yourself a good spot among the students at 17. Good, cheap food can also be found a little further on, on Alfons Smetsplein at 19 and 24. Stroll past the student bars until you reach Herbert Hooverplein, where you will find a fountain representing the city map of Leuven. You will now be standing at the base of the tower of 5: the view is well worth it.

Afraid of heights? Stay safely on the ground at 32 while your friends tire themselves out climbing all those stairs! Check out the medieval city wall and the groups of students in 9 and continue to Vesaliusstraat for some outstanding vegan food 20 or arthouse cinema 38.

Walk past numerous student digs and a cosy "brown pub" 33 until you reach the ring road. You will come across a swimming pool, gyms, a climbing wall and Leuven's enormous outdoor skate park 39 on the other side.



# Walking tour 3

Follow the rose line.

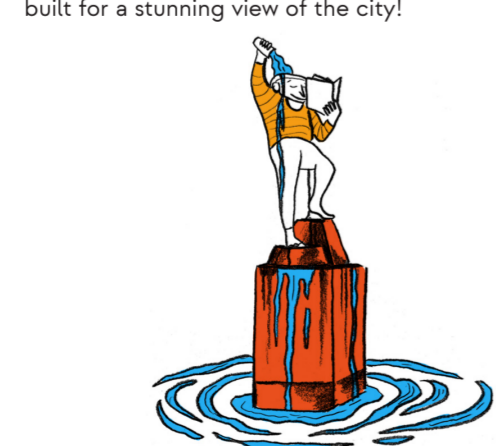
distance: 7 km - time: 1.30 hours walking

The newest hotspots in Leuven can be found behind the station and at the Vaartkom: funky industrial buildings, trendy cafes, restaurants, and cultural venues: you can't visit Leuven and skip this!

Start at the Grote markt and make a beeline to the railway station by way of Bondgenotenlaan unless you make a slight detour at 47 or 31. Highly recommended! You are now at Martelarenplein, with "Het Depot" music centre on the corner 36. Stroll past the skyscraper office buildings until you reach the Tiensepoort. Enjoy a bite or drink on the terrace of 35.

Turn onto Tiensesteenweg and cross the railway tracks: welcome to a park laid out like a 750-metre ribbon offering splendid views of the trains 10. Proceed until you reach 18, where it is always busy on sunny days at the bar and the lawn in front. Feel refreshed? Stroll back to the city centre through the railway station tunnel. If it's evening: stop at 41 if you're in a partying mood.

Otherwise, turn on to the Diestsestraat to check out some great thrift shops 43. Rifle through the immense record collection of 49. Or grab a cup of Leuven's best coffee at 31. Turn right onto Mincleberstraat: welcome to Sint-Maartensdal 14!



Tip: go in search of the "sunken garden" and the family of turtles inhabiting it. If you're hungry, stop by 25 for some tasty, inexpensive sandwiches.

Stroll through Jansenusstraat, cross the Dyle and enter the "Little Paradise" 12, as this park is called by the residents of Leuven. Walk a little further and let yourself be transported to the middle ages in 4. Time to travel back to here and now: cross the busy ring road and explore the green surroundings of the Arenberg student campus 45. Finish your walking tour on the terrace of 22. You deserve a nice treat!

Leave the civilised city and student world of Leuven behind and cross the bridge spanning the railway tracks: welcome to Park Abbey 11! This beautifully preserved oasis of tranquility is the perfect place to relax after the hustle and bustle of student life - or to steel yourself for the return journey, which is sure to end in one of the convivial pubs you passed on this walking tour!

Get a delicious take-away at 23 and grab a seat amidst the orange towers.

Follow your nose to the Stella Artois brewery 3 until you reach the Vaartkom. This former industrial district has since been transformed into a trendy new hangout. For great outdoor seating and great food visit 18, to take in a show - and enjoy yet another good outdoor seating area - check out 40. Or, if you just want to chill, stop at 7. Your last assignment: climb the hill on whose crest Keizersberg Abbey 6 was built for a stunning view of the city!

