LUXEMBOURG CITY CENTRE, OLD TOWN, FORTRESS WALLS AND MAIN MONUMENTS

Visit Luxembourg City

CITY PROMENADE

luxembourg
my city · ma ville · meng stad

Historical overview

In 963, the Count Siegfried of the Ardennes built his fortified castle, "Lucilinburhuc", on the Bock promontory, which became the cradle of the city of Luxembourg. The first markets were held in front of Saint Michael's Church, surrounded by a simple fortification.

Across the centuries, a second and then a third wall were erected on the Western side, while the rocks of the Alzette and Pétrusse valleys served as a natural defence. Nevertheless, these strong fortified structures did not prevent the Burgundians from taking over the city in 1443, a city which beyond any doubt was to own a major strategic position on the European chessboard.

For over four centuries, the best military engineers from Burgundy, Spain, France, Austria and the German Confederation ended up turning it into one of the most fortified places on earth, the so-called "Gibraltar of the North". The strength of its defence stemmed from its three fortified belts, the first of which was composed of bastions, the second of 15 forts and the third, being the outside wall, was composed of 9 forts, all of which were carved into the rock. An extraordinary 23 kilometer-network of underground galleries – the famous Casemates – and more than 40,000 square metres of bomb shelters were lodged in the city's rocks. They could shelter not only thousands of defenders, including their horses and equipment, but also artillery and weapon workshops, kitchens, bakeries, slaughterhouses, and so forth.

While the city per se, made up of lowland towns only covered an area of 120 hectares, the fortifications spread across an area of 180 hectares. The structures were dismantled following the Treaty of London which was signed between the Superpowers on 11th May 1867, and only 10% of the structures remain visible nowadays. The bastions as well as the Old Town – which also has a very significant historical value – are world-renowned gems that were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List back in 1994.

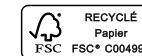**luxembourg**
city tourist office
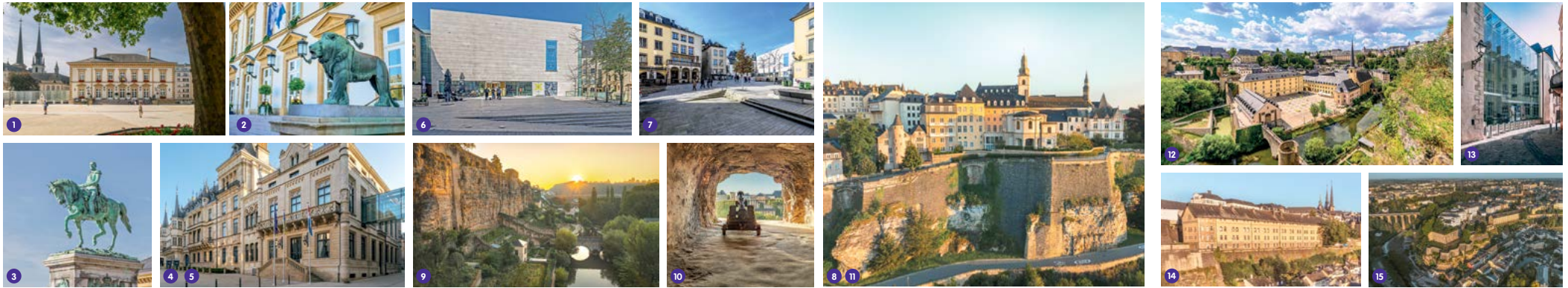
CITY PROMENADE AT A GLANCE*

Highlights	The most beautiful attractions and viewpoints in the city centre, the old town, around the fortifications and in the railway station district.
Tour	On foot
Length	City centre: +/- 3 km Railway station district: +/- 2,5 km
Individual tickets Guided tours	Individual tickets can be purchased at the information desk of the Luxembourg City Tourist Office or online at luxembourg-city.com
Group tickets Guided tours with a personal guide	Book the City Promenade for your group at the date and time of your choice (up to 20 people per guide). Please send a booking request on luxembourg-city.com or by email to guides@lcto.lu at least 10 business days in advance.
Information	Luxembourg City Tourist Office Tél. : (+352) 22 28 09 touristinfo@lcto.lu luxembourg-city.com

*subject to modifications

Walking tour "City Promenade"

1 Place Guillaume II: named after William II, King of the Netherlands and Grand Duke of Luxembourg. The Luxembourg City Tourist Office is located here.

2 Town Hall: built 1830-1838 in neoclassical style, site of the former Franciscan convent.

3 Equestrian Statue of William II: designed by Mercié (1884), erected in honour of the King and Grand Duke William II of Orange-Nassau (he ruled from 1840 to 1849 and granted the Grand Duchy its first parliamentary constitution).

Cross the rue du Fossé and follow the rue de la Reine.

4 Grand ducal Palace: the older Renaissance part dates from 1572, the middle part from 1741-43, in Baroque style but transformed into Renaissance style in 1890. Restored thoroughly from 1992 to 1995.

5 Chamber of Deputies: adjoined to the Palace in 1859.

*Turn left into the rue de l'Eau and,
at the end of the street, turn right into the rue Sigefroi.*

6 Nationalmusée um Fëschmaart: collections that give voice to the history of the city of Luxembourg and the Grand Duchy in more than 120 rooms.

7 Marché-aux-Poissons: historical centre of the Old Town, former crossroad between two Roman roads.

8 Saint Michael's Church (987): oldest shrine in the city.

9 Bock Promontory: cradle of the city of Luxembourg, linked to the city by the castle bridge (1735). On the "Bock" are situated the foundation walls of the first stronghold belonging to the Luxembourg Counts, converted into Monument of the Millennium in 1963. Incomparable panorama of the European Centre of Kirchberg, the Philharmonie Luxembourg, the Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (MUDAM), the Lower Towns of Grund, Clausen, Pfaffenthal, the Wenzel Wall, the Neimënster Cultural Exchange Center, the Rham Plateau with the barracks built by Vauban (1685) and the semicircular towers (remains of the Wenzel Wall, about 1390). In the distance, to the left, are the powder magazine of the Rubamprèz Fort (1847) and the redoubt of the Rumigny Fort (Vauban, 1688). Behind is the National Sports Institute, and, higher up, the remains of the old Dumoulin Fort (1836).

10 Bock Casemates & Archeological Crypt: underground defence works, built in the Austrian era (1745/46). The archeological crypt, antechamber of the Bock Casemates, houses the origins of the city of Luxembourg.

*Turn around and head towards the Corniche
by turning left after the bridge.*

11 Corniche: the "most beautiful balcony of Europe". Splendid views over the Holy Ghost Citadel with the Cité Judiciaire (2008), heart of the Luxembourg Justice, and over the lower town of Grund with the Saint John's Church, the National Museum for Natural History, Neimënster cultural centre (formerly Neumünster Abbey) and the Wenzel Circular Walk.

12 Neimënster: built in 1606 as a Benedictine abbey, the building also served as a military hospital and a prison for men during the city's tumultuous history. It now houses a cultural centre.

13 Lëtzebuerg City Museum: reflects the urbanistic and architectural development of the city since its creation.

14 National Archives: inaugurated in 1967 in the former Prussian military hospital (1862).

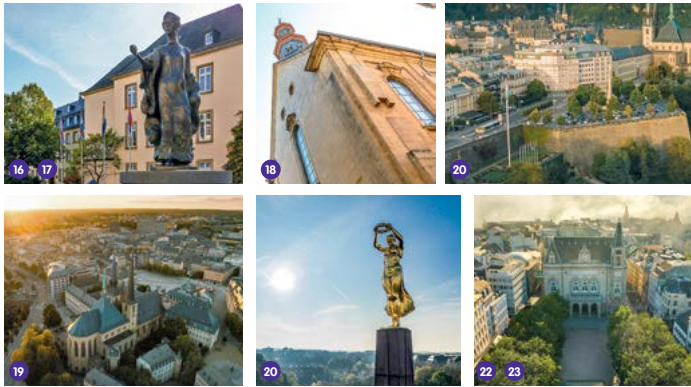**15 Plateau du Saint-Esprit:** this place now hosts the Luxembourg District Court.

*From the Plateau du Saint-Esprit,
turn right and follow the rue du Saint-Esprit.*

16 Place de Clairefontaine: the name of this square comes from a place of refuge that once belonged to the Clairefontaine Abbey (demolished in 1933), located on the Belgo-Luxembourg border.

17 Grand Duchess Charlotte Memorial: erected in honour of Grand Duchess Charlotte (1896-1985), designed by the Parisian sculptor Jean Cardot.

Turn right into the rue de la Congrégation.

18 Congregation Church: protestant church built 1739-1742, richly decorated portal of Baroque style.

*A bit further, at the end of the
rue de la Congrégation, turn right.*

19 Cathedral "Notre-Dame de Luxembourg" (1613): late Gothic style, various components and ornaments inspired by Renaissance style, raised to Cathedral in 1870, choir (1935).

20 Place de la Constitution: put up on the ancient Beck bastion (1644, 1685). "Gëlle Fra" Memorial: erected in 1923, in memory of the Luxembourgish soldiers who fell during World War I, today it symbolises freedom and resistance for the Luxembourg people.

21 Pétrusse Casemates: underground defence works, built during the Spanish, French and Austrian dominations.

22 Cercle Cité: administrative building "Cercle" with several festival halls, connected to "Le Cité" by a footbridge.

23 Place d'Armes: also named "Parlour of the City", completed in 1671, renewed in 1986.

End of the regular tour

Possible extension towards the Adolphe bridge and the railway station district

Departure Railway Station extension → **24** → **30** → End Railway Station extension
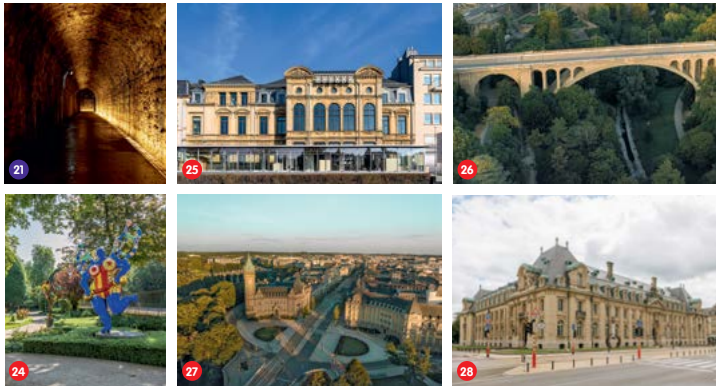+/- 2,5 km

24 "La Grande Tempérance" sculpture (1992): made by the famous Franco-American artist Niki de Saint Phalle.

25 Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain: built in 1882, nowadays Forum of Contemporary Art.

26 Adolphe bridge: erected 1900-1903, bridge with the biggest arch stone in the world at that time (span of 85 m), recently restored. A passerelle for cyclists and pedestrians has been integrated. Fabulous view over the Pétrusse valley and the National State and Savings Bank (Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat, BCEE) building.

i Departure → 1 → 23 → End of regular tour
+/- 2,5 km

Extension "Op de Rondellen"
+/- 500 m

PFAFFENTHAL (Lower Town)

VILLE HAUTE

GRUND (Lower Town)

GARE

Elevator connecting the Upper Town and the Lower Town

luxembourg
city tourist office

© Ville de Luxembourg - Service Topographie et géomatique

If you want to discover the district around the railway station, cross the Adolphe bridge.

27 Place de Metz, with the BCEE (1913), formerly the ESCS headquarters.

Follow the avenue de la Liberté.

28 19 Liberté: initially built in 1922 as administrative seat for the Luxembourgish steelworks "Aciéries Réunies de Burbach-Eich-Dudelange" ARBED (1992), later headquarter of the steel company ArcelorMittal, today owned by the BCEE.

29 Place de Paris: transformed into a pedestrian zone in 1986.

30 Railway station (1907-1913): since 2007 main station of the fast train TGV-Est.

To reach the city centre, follow the avenue de la Gare and walk across the viaduct (footbridge connecting the railway station district and the city centre).

© Ville de Luxembourg - Service Topographie et géomatique

30 15 0   30 Meters