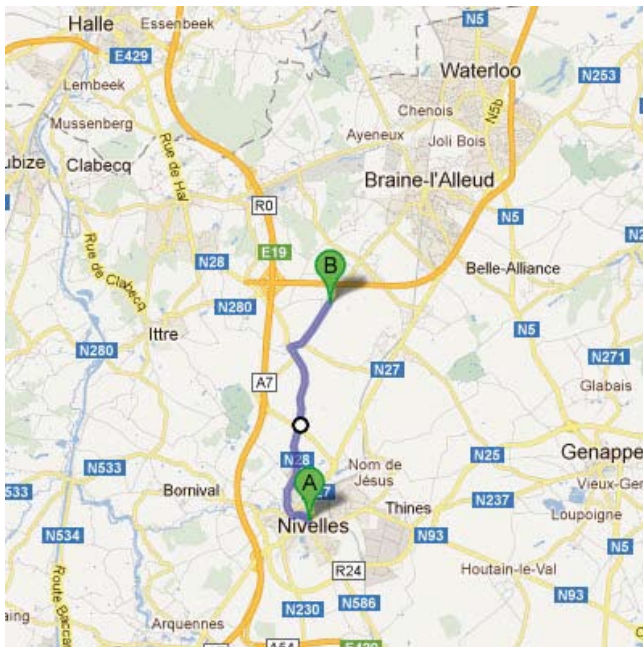




Package n° 4

The Collégiale Sainte Gertrude and the Chateau of Bois-Seigneur-Isaac



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The price include: reception (coffee), guided tour of the Collégiale, lunch, and guided tour of the Chateau of Bois-Seigneur-Isaac.

Lunch: starter, main course, dessert: drinks not included.

Coffee (and biscuit): at the Chateau, maximum 25 people.

Available languages: French, Dutch, English, German.

Group size: min.25 pers – max. 50 pers.

Booking essential: 30 % down-payment required at time of reservation. Balance to be paid no later than one week before visit. No refund for cancellations made within the week preceding the visit.

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The Collégiale Sainte Gertrude



The town of Nivelles sprang up around the noble abbey founded here at the dawn of Christian evangelisation in this country. A rare thing in Europe, it consisted of a double community, monks and nuns, but ruled by women. The exceptional architectural record includes the Romanesque church of the 11th century, a crypt, cloister, westwork, treasures from the 7th to the 18th centuries and an archaeological basement. Under the Carolingians, it became an imperial abbey, and later, part of the pilgrim route to Compostela. The St

Jacques district, at the feet of the church, is a witness to this pilgrimage.



From 646 and the first Merovingian church, to the present, 1350 years of architectural history can be traced. The church is built in the Ottonian style

of the great monuments of the Holy Roman Empire: Early Romanesque for the 11th century construction, and Late Romanesque for the exceptional westwork of the late 12th, which is complete and very rare. The ground-plan with a choir at each end is in the Carolingian tradition. The westwork features no less than 8 cupolas: this is unique in Belgium and emphasises the imperial nature of the foundation.

Chateau of Bois-Seigneur-Isaac



In the 11th century, a knight called Isaac caused a wood to be planted, since called "Bois Planté". Isaac accompanied Godefrey of Bouillon on crusade, and was imprisoned by the Saracens. He promised, if delivered from his captors, to build a chapel and dedicate it to the Virgin Mary.

Chateau: moated in the past, it was transformed in 1720 into a classic Louis XVth style, with an English park being added in the 17th and 19th centuries.



A round tower, the remains of an ancient rampart, still stands in the park. Visitors are received by the Baroness Snoy d'Oppuers. The 16th century chapel of the Chateau with its Gothic sacristy houses a relic of the Holy Blood and is a place of pilgrimage. Passing under the gate-way, one can walk at leisure in the garden of medicinal herbs cultivated by the Premonstratensians. The 18th century abbey farm is situated near-by. The entire site is classified.