

The Henry VIII Tower

is one of the remains of Tournai's English past. This impressive tower is the last trace of a citadel which was built in 1515 by King Henry VIII to house his soldiers after he took the town in 1513. After only a few days of bombardment, the town – and its small garrison – surrendered. He treated the town as his own and even granted it the right to send MPs to the House of Commons. English troops left Tournai in 1519 when the town was bought by Francis I of France.

The citadel, which was located in the quarter of the town called the "castle quarter" was to be destroyed in the 1669-1688 period when Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban developed the town's fortifications, only leaving a single part of the old ones in place, which Tournaisians often call "the large tower", because the width of its walls (almost 7 metres or 23 feet) is impressive. In 1513 Henry VIII had held a great tournament to mark his "joyous entrance". The reconstitution of the tournament, in which a little more than 1,200 people took part, took place across two weekends in the month of July 1913. The «La Maison Tournaisienne» Folklore Museum still has a poster advertising the 1913 tournament, which you can see when you visit the Museum.



The Yeomen

of the Queen's Body Guard, the standard of which features the name of Tournai, did Tournaisians the honour of visiting in September 2014 to mark this piece of history.



In 1513, when the King of France and England made his entrance into Tournai, the ambitions of his chaplain **Thomas Wolsey** were very clear – he wanted to be the Bishop of Tournai. However, the position was held by Louis Guillard, an elected bishop, who refused to pledge allegiance to King Henry VIII. Wolsey only obtained the position of administrator of the diocese, which did not satisfy him. He endeavoured, for years – but in vain – to change his position of administrator into that of bishop. Politics was to have the last word. By means of the Treaty of London, Tournai was returned to France. On 12/02/1519, Louis Guillard was back in place and Wolsey was to receive a handy annuity of 12,000 gold crowns.



Tournai porcelain

constitutes a jewel in the crown of Tournai's industrial and artistic past in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Manufacture de Porcelaine de Tournai notably produced, at the request of Philip, the Duke of Orleans, a decorated set featuring illustrated reproductions of birds inspired by the 10 volumes of "l'Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux" (the natural history of birds) by Count Buffon. The order was delivered in 1792, but no payment was made for it. The set was put on sale and the Prince of Wales, George August of the House of Hanover and the future George IV, acquired the almost 600 items, the majority of which are now at Windsor Castle.



Louis and Charles Haeghe

were Tournaisian lithographers in the 19th century. After a visit to England the aim of which was to find work, they lived there definitively from 1823. Louis set up, along with William Day, the "Day and Haghe" printing house, in 1830, while Charles was employed as an assistant. In 1838, "Day and Haghe" were appointed "lithographers to the Queen". They notably went on to print, by means of lithography, 250 water colours painted by David Roberts. Louis Haghe's grave is at the West Norwood cemetery.



David Cohen

is a cellist from Tournai. This musician of great talent is invited to play at concerts put on by the London Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra and the London Chamber Orchestra.



The Southern cemetery

in Tournai features a military cemetery maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Almost 700 graves are located there. Amongst them is the grave of Lieutenant Vincent Waterfall and the grave of Lieutenant Charles Bayly, the first two British aviators who died during the First World War. They lost their lives on 22 August 1914 between Ath and Enghien, during a reconnaissance mission.



What's on



- > Carnival (Laetare)
- > Big annual Flower Market (on Good Friday, since 1825)
- > L'Accordéon, moi j'aime (at Ascension - musicians playing different styles of accordion music)
- > Flea markets – every Sunday morning (Shopping Centre "Les Bastions")
- > Historical Procession & the 4 Parades (on 2nd Sunday of September)

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visit **TOURNAI**

Belgium

Tournai is not only the oldest city of Belgium. Thanks to King Henry VIII Tudor, it is also the sole Belgian city that was English. Crossed by the Scheldt, this 2,000-year-old city is waiting for you!



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A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW



MUST-SEES

Cathedral

The Notre-Dame Cathedral is a gem of mediaeval architecture, listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Its impressive dimensions, the harmonious blend of Romanesque and Gothic styles and its daring architecture make this building a benchmark for religious monuments of the West.



Belfry

Dating from the 12th century, the belfry of Tournai is the oldest in Belgium. It is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. At the top, you can enjoy a breath-taking view of Tournai and surroundings



Fine Arts

The turtle-shaped Museum of Fine Arts is the only building in Wallonia designed by Victor Horta, and his only museum! It houses the modern art collection of the Brussels patron of the arts Henri Van Cutsem, as well as Flemish masters and the only two works by Manet exhibited in Belgium...



Grand-Place and terraces, quays

The Grand-Place is a relaxing area where you can enjoy our local specialities in the shadow of the Belfry, of the Cloth Hall and of the Saint Quentin's Church. Looking for another place to relax? Go to the quays of the Scheldt, and stroll along the river.



Tastes of Tournai

Come and taste Tournai in all its ways. Our cosy city has the Belgian record numbers of eating and drinking establishments per capita!



We have created a gourmet walking tour through the picturesque streets : with our free map, you go for a walk for the eyes and the taste buds to discover the heritage of the city and our best breweries, bakeries, butchers, chip shops and other local specialities such as cakes, waffles, black candies, beers, chips, chocolates, ... Enjoy it!

Shows

In its new projection room, the Tourist Office presents two films :

"The Mad Stories of Tournai"

This brand new 20 -minute animated film retraces the 2000 years of history of the oldest city of Belgium. This film, rich in animations, illustrations and sounds, presents the tumultuous history of Belgium's oldest city in a humorous or offbeat way.



"Heaven carved from Stone"

In this 20-minute film Frédéric Gersal, history and heritage commentator on the French TV channel France 2, describes in broad outlines the full history of the UNESCO cathedral, from its inception to its current form. He presents a building that is unique in Europe in terms of design, size and architecture. As the cathedral is currently undergoing major renovation works, the filmmakers were able to climb the scaffolds to capture parts of the building that are normally hidden from view. The aerial views of this gem of medieval architecture and the 3D-technology used for the editing of the film perfectly complement your visit to the cathedral. Both films are available in English.



Tourist train

Board the tourist train on the Paul Emile Janson Square (in front of the TourTourist train approx. 40 minutes through picturesque streets and discover remarkable buildings and the historical districts of Tournai. Only on reservation for groups (20pers. min.) Free onboard commentary in English.

UNESCO guided visits

Discover the two UNESCO World Heritage sites: the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Belfry. For an hour, a guide will explore the history of these two magnificent monuments.

These gems will no longer have any secrets for you!

Meeting place: Tourist Office - On Sundays (1h)

July - August



Our craft beers

In Belgium, beer is a tradition for all its inhabitants ... Belgian beer culture is even recognised as part of UNESCO's intangible Cultural Heritage! Tournai is no exception to the rule. Some of our craft beers were voted best beer in several contests across the world! Many cafés will welcome you to taste these local specialities. With our «Time 4 beer» guide, find the most appreciated and recognized beers of our region. And some nice places to enjoy them!



TOURNAI IS SUCH A BRITISH CITY

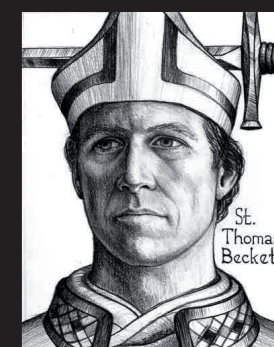
Thanks to king Henry VIII Tudor's occupation between 1513 and 1518, it is the sole Belgian city that was English.

But this is not the sole link that Tournai has with Britain. Still today, the city retains signs of its period under English rule, and some Tournaisians and Tournaisian products ended up the other side of the English Channel.



Thomas Becket

spent some time in Tournai in the 12th Century, The man who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1163 to 1164 paid with his life for his opposition to King Henry II. Indeed, the King wanted to have full powers over the church itself, in addition to the powers he had as regards church land, but Thomas Becket defended the rights of the church. He was accused of challenging royal authority and of malfeasance, and the only option available to him was to leave the country the day before his trial. He found refuge in several towns, and notably in Tournai, where one of his chasubles can still be seen in the Treasure Room at the Cathedral. His exile lasted seven years, and the King had him murdered upon his return.



Perkin Warbeck

constitutes an enigma and doubtless an enigma will never be resolved. Perkin Warbeck was a pretender to the crown of England during the reign of King Henry VII. He claimed to be Richard of Shrewsbury, the Duke of York and the younger brother of the deposed King Edward V, who died in 1483 during the "Princes in the Tower" episode, which made him a threat as regards the legitimacy of the new Tudor dynasty. Henry VII said that he was an imposter, and after he was captured he was identified as Perkin Warbeck, who was from Tournai, where he was born in about 1474. He was executed by means of hanging on 23 November 1499 at Tyburn.

