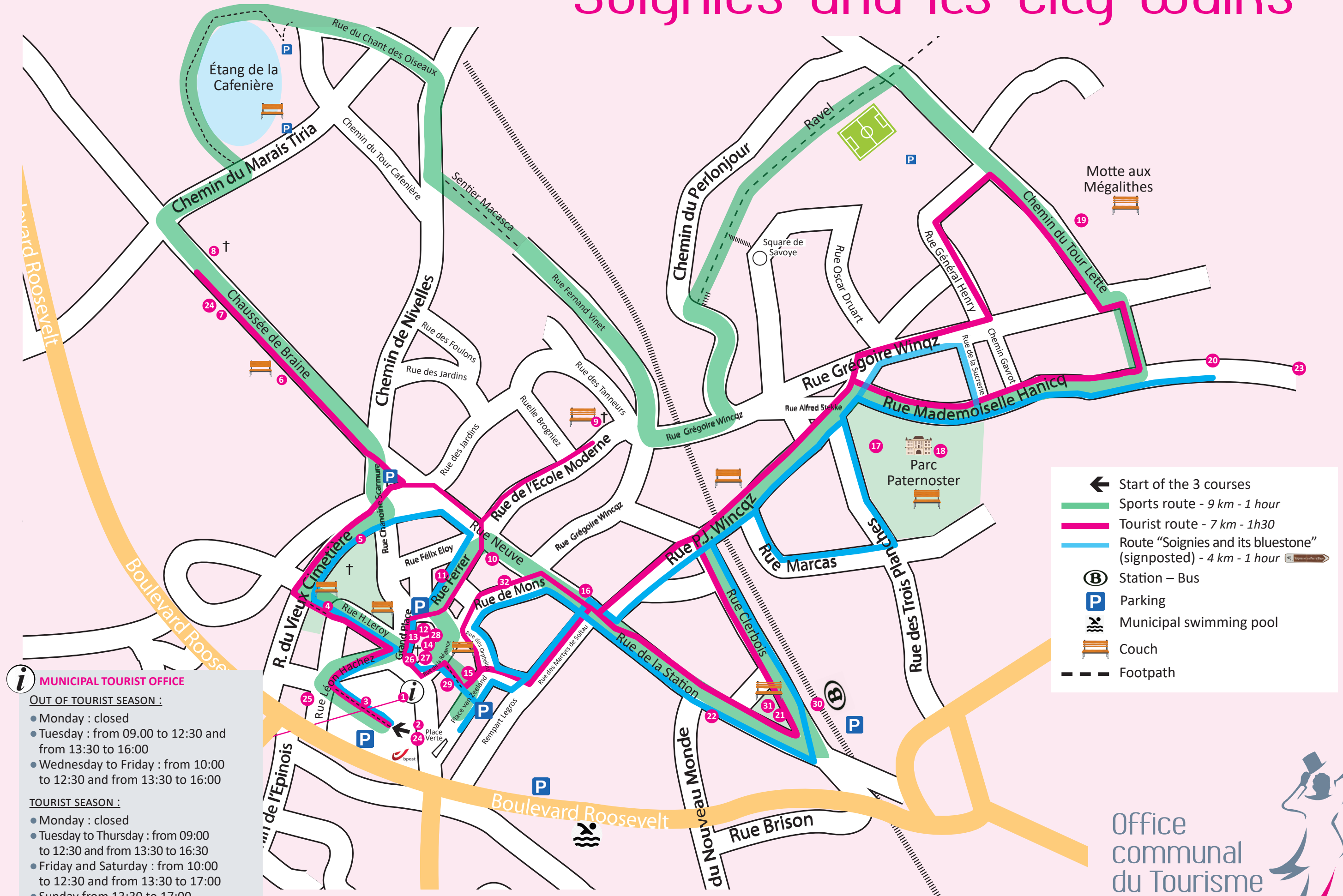


# Soignies and its city walks



## **MUNICIPAL TOURIST OFFICE**

### OUT OF TOURIST SEASON :

- Monday : closed
- Tuesday : from 09:00 to 12:30 and from 13:30 to 16:00
- Wednesday to Friday : from 10:00 to 12:30 and from 13:30 to 16:00

### TOURIST SEASON :

- Monday : closed
- Tuesday to Thursday : from 09:00 to 12:30 and from 13:30 to 16:30
- Friday and Saturday : from 10:00 to 12:30 and from 13:30 to 17:00
- Sunday from 13:30 to 17:00

Rue du Lombard, 2 - 7060 Soignies  
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[www.visitsoignies.be](http://www.visitsoignies.be)

Office  
communal  
du Tourisme  
**Soignies**





Discover Soignies, a charming ancient city nestled in lush greenery, from the Municipal Tourism Office.

Let yourself be seduced by one of our numerous walks through the historic center of our beautiful whole. In every street and alley you will discover a precious material that is mined in Soignies: Blue Stone or Petit Granit.

#### 1. Municipal Tourism Office

#### 2. The Town Hall

This is the third town hall in Soignies. The first one was located on the Grand Place and then Place du Millénaire. After a gas leak, it exploded on February 27, 1956. Since the late 1960s, it has been located in the buildings of the former tannery Van Cutsem. To the left of the portico you can see the house of the Van Cutsem (1886) and to the right the offices (1909).

#### 3. The Maison Nalis

This beautiful so-called "Spanish" house dates back to the 16th century.

#### 4. The Old Graveyard and its chapel

The Old Graveyard was the last home for the deceased from the 14th century to 1890. It has numerous funerary monuments from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. You can also admire a chapel from the 12th and 17th centuries that now houses the Museum of the Archaeological Circle.

#### 5. The Ramparts

In the Middle Ages these were land dikes (which still exist) bordered by ditches. They were then surmounted by walls and towers. They were dismantled in 1677, but they still remain visible in the landscape.

#### 6. The Saint Vincent College

This quadrangle was built from 1875 to the plans of Baron de Béthune in collaboration with the architects E. Nève and A. Verhaegen. This neo-Gothic building emphasises the blue stone, with the brick used only for the bays.

#### 7. The New Graveyard

It was built outside the city in 1890 for health reasons and is home to many monuments, some of which belonged to families of quarry masters and stonemasons. An impressive monument has also been erected in memory of the inhabitants of Soignies who died during the Great War.

#### 8. The Marais Tilleriau Chapel

This chapel is located in the middle of a small meadow planted with trees, which gave it its name. The Marais Tilleriau Chapel was built in Renaissance style on the initiative of Canon Bastien in 1618. The small oratory is one of the stops of the Tour Saint Vincent, a secular procession held in Soignies on Whit Monday.

#### 9. The Saint Roch Chapel

This lovely 17th century chapel was built for the worship of Saint Roch. The latter was invoked against the plague and the epidemic diseases that struck brutally at the time.

#### 10. The Archers of Saint Christina

The field of the Archers of Saint Christina has brought archers together since 1416.

#### 11. The Chanterrie

This building houses one of the oldest singing and music schools in Belgium. Witnessed as early as 1441, the voice of students has shaken the area for at least 600 years. Formerly occupied by a canon, this house was built on the site of the old chanterrie (singing school) of the chapter of Saint Vincent.

#### 12. The Saint Vincent Church

This extraordinary monument in primitive Romanesque style, protected as an exceptional heritage of Wallonia, is an essential milestone in the history of Belgian architecture. Its high rubble-stone walls and its 2 huge towers topped with haughty spiers give the building strength, majesty and elegance.

#### 13. The Chapter Museum (le Musée du Chapitre)

This museum is closely linked to the collegiate church and is located in one of the wings of the monastery with a visible roof structure, thus bringing to life the treasure of the canons (11th-18th century). Visits are possible from May to the end of September, every Sunday and public holiday from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

#### 14. The Blue Stone Documentation Center

The Centre de documentation de la Pierre Bleue houses a collection of minerals and fossils that allow visitors to learn more about the natural material and its formation, dating back 345 million years. The tools and the reconstruction of a stonemason's extension are reminders of the working conditions of the 19th and early 20th century. It is accessible every Thursday morning from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm or on request at the Tourist Office.

#### 15. The Cultural Center Victor Jara

This cultural center was established in the city center of Soignies in 2009. It houses the associative life of the entity, as well as exhibitions and shows. The name is a tribute to Victor Jara, born in 1932, a man of the theater, of Chilean music and cultural ambassador of the Allende government. A fierce opponent of the dictator Pinochet, he was cowardly murdered on September 16, 1973.

#### 16. The Franciscan Monastery

The gray nuns or Franciscans are part of the many religious congregations that used to be located in Soignies. This congregation was called upon at the end of the 15th century to replace the beguines in caring for the poor and pilgrims and is one of the oldest in the city and also the only one remaining. The sisters are now integrated into the team of a retirement home in the former convent. The monastic buildings will remain, organised around a closed cloister and a rectangular courtyard. The Tournai-style facades combine brick and limestone on two or three levels and retain some of their original window frames.

#### 17. The Paternoster Park

The Parc Pater, so commonly called, is a privileged place reserved for walkers and has an area of 12.35 acres, which is crossed by the Senne. This park has recently undergone several renovations, such as the Vitaparcours and the Agora track.

#### 18. The Paternoster Castle

This castle is a neoclassical style residence built around 1850 for Pierre-Joseph Wincqz, quarry master. At the beginning of the 20th century it became the property of the Paternoster family. Today it belongs to the municipality of Soignies. The castle is decorated with beautiful stained glass windows on the facade and bluestone for the portal and balustrades. An old circular conservatory to the side attests to the 19th century appeal of exotic plants and acclimatisation gardens. Nowadays there is also a playground for children and many different trees are arranged quite harmoniously.

#### 19. The Megalithic Clod

This site consists of access grounds to get to the nearby blue stone deposit. It covers 3.7 acres and has existed for more than 150 years. Gradually it was covered with trees and plants, the variety of which amazes us. Several paths make it possible to visit and view distant spaces. Here you will discover the orchard, the sun gate and a place for animals. Reconstructed megalithic tombs and menhirs also punctuate the visit, as does a giant steel dinosaur skeleton and a reconstructed stonemason's workshop.

#### 20. The Pôle de la Pierre

The Pôle de la Pierre, a training center for natural stone professions recently restored by the Walloon Heritage Institute, is an exchange center for professionals in the sector. On the facade of the offices is a monumental stone of 8 meters high, sculpted, engraved and chiselled to represent the Soignies industry and to promote the know-how of the quarry at the 1855 World Fair.

#### 21. Bordet Square

"Square Bordet" is a charming public park located opposite the station and houses the sculptures of the Rencontres Internationales de sculpture monumentale association.

#### 22. The Modern Hôtel

The existence of this former hotel restaurant can be explained by its proximity to the train station and the industrial district. The Modern Hôtel is a remarkable Art Nouveau building designed by the architect François in 1904. This hotel and brasserie restaurant is also the only one in Wallonia to present such an architectural style. It was classified in 1980 and its interior decoration has traveled through time.

#### 23. Carrières de Pierre Bleue

Carrières de Pierre Bleue (Blue Limestone Quarries), formerly Carrières Gauthier Wincqz, is one of the two large companies that mine blue limestone in Soignies. Little anecdote, it is from here that part of the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York was recovered.

#### 24. The monuments "Soignies and its heroes 1914 - 1918 and 1940-1945"

This bronze statue of Albert Brichart, on its bluestone pedestal, is dedicated to "the heroes who died in battle or as a result of the war".

#### 25. The Saint Vincent Fountain

Legend has it that this 18th-century fountain was the result of Saint Vincent's intervention during a terrible drought.

#### 26. The Cloth Hall

Despite a thorough renovation, this building has retained the characteristics of an architectural model of yesteryear. The building, which probably never was a "halle aux draps" (cloth hall), has a hard-to-see date below the projecting first floor.

#### 27. The Chaplain's House

The Maison du Vicaire is a fine example of Tournai architecture. This type of architecture is mainly recognisable by the alternation of bricks and blue limestone that form the frame of the bays.

#### 28. The Bourdeaux Pharmacy

This pharmacy has kept its furniture from the 1900s.

#### 29. The Venelle des artistes

This alley connects the rue de la Régence with la place van Zeeland. At the bottom of this alley is the Doyaume, the home of the dean in the time of the canons, and this until the 18th century.

#### 30. The Station

Soignies was one of the first cities to have a train station. It was founded in 1840 and its construction marked a very important event in the history of the city.

#### 31. The Statue of the stonemason

Inaugurated in 1905, this bronze statue of Léo Grandmoulin represents a «cayoteu», a stonemason.

#### 32. The Fontaine des gargouilles

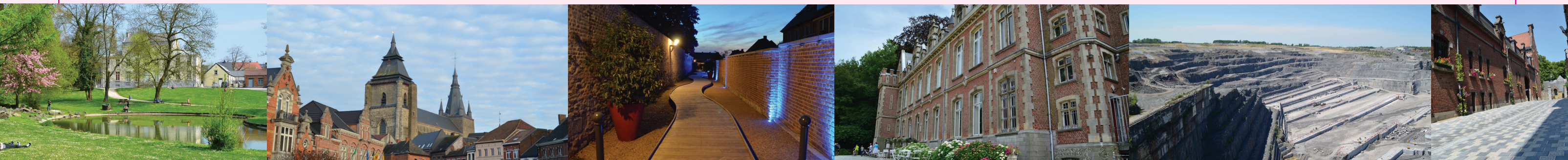
The fountain «Les gargouilles du monde» (Gargoyles of the world), dating back to 1998. Designed by Hughes Sirault and carved by Eddy Depretz, it symbolises democracy. Identical in their stylised features but different in their finish, these gargoyles spit out five continents free in the basin.



Find the list of our accommodations and our catering establishments at the Municipal Tourist Office or at [www.visitsoignies.be](http://www.visitsoignies.be)



**EMERGENCY SERVICES:**  
Emergencies: 112  
Police: 101



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