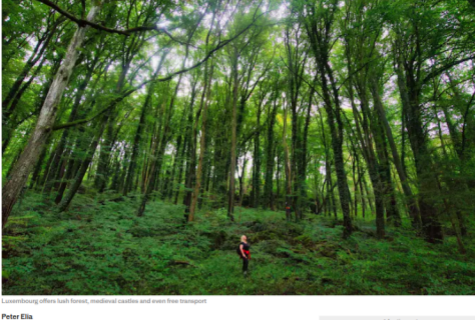


Travel > Destinations

Why this tiny country is Europe's most underrated hiking paradise

Long overshadowed by its formidable neighbours, little Luxembourg punches well above its weight when it comes to outdoor adventure



Luxembourg offers lush forest, medieval castles and even free transport

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Luxembourg isn't the first place that springs to mind when planning a hiking trip. Europe's last surviving Grand Duchy is often associated with [EU institutions and finance](#), but nothing suggests this is an adventure hub waiting to be discovered.

However, in 2020, Luxembourg became the world's first country to make all public transport free – buses, trams and trains. That bold move opened the country up to residents and visitors alike, and it got me wondering if I could use the [transport system](#) to find a hidden gem of a hiking route. Surprisingly, I discovered that the tiny nation, bordered by Belgium, France, and Germany and no larger than Dorset, boasts more than 5,000 km of trails, spanning its many diverse regions from the forested Ardennes in the north to the industrial “Land of Red Rocks” in the south.

Keen to investigate further, I flew to [Luxembourg City](#), where I took a tour to get my bearings. My guide, Millie Theisen, enthusiastically introduced me to the capital's blend of historic and modern architecture, including the Pfaffenthal Panoramic Elevator (where the glass lift rises 71 meters and offers stunning views of Luxembourg's Old Town – a Unesco World Heritage Site since 1994), the Gothic-style Notre-Dame Cathedral and the Grand Ducal Palace.



Peaceful Luxembourg City is built on the foundations of a medieval fortress

I was immediately struck by the city's laid-back charm and the warmth of its locals. “It's a small city; you get to know a lot of people,” Millie explained, in between greeting almost everyone we passed, switching effortlessly between French and Luxembourgish. “It's no big deal here to say hello to the Prime Minister or stop him for a chat.”

But it was a search for the great outdoors which had brought me here. The next morning, I left the capital and headed 40 minutes east to [Berdorf](#), a small town in the heart of the Mullerthal region, known as “Little Switzerland” for its striking rock formations and dense forests. I had chosen it for its direct access to some of the best routes on the 112-km Mullerthal Trail, which is divided into three interlinked circuits that can be hiked separately. With plenty of spots to refuel, it's an ideal start and endpoint for hikes.

My first day's walk followed Mullerthal Trail Route 1 from Echternach, a town 10 minutes from Berdorf by bus, to Rosport. Recently nourished by rain, the trail wound through lush forests, all calm and tranquility, the sounds of streams and birdsong accompanying me, echoing off the majestic moss-covered sandstone cliffs.



The ‘Little Switzerland’ region boasts hilly landscapes and distinctive sandstone rock formations

Marked trails made navigation easy, and I enjoyed the solitude – a refreshing break from typical tourist routes. As the day drew to a close, I reached the tiny town of Rosport, then made use of that helpful free public transport to take the bus back to Berdorf.

The following morning, under rainy skies, I set out on the Berdorf B2 trail, a 4.7 km loop often hailed as one of Luxembourg's best hikes. The route took me through towering rock formations on a stretch known as “The Labyrinth”, where narrow passages open into tunnels and dramatic gorges. When the rain paused, sunlight pierced gaps in the stone, casting a magical glow.

Soon, I reached the Predigtstuhl, or Preacher's Chair – a pulpit-like rock formation with sweeping forest views – before continuing into Werschrummschleff Gorge, where more steep, mossy cliffs rose on either side. Emerging from the forest, I crossed farmland to Bistro Martbusch, a favourite lunch stop serving generous portions of comfort food, before returning to Berdorf.

Craving a brief respite from the weather, I took a break from hiking to visit nearby Beaufort Castle, a medieval fortress ruin dating back to the 12th century with fantastic views over the grounds and surrounding countryside. Its crumbling ruins, shadowy corridors and dimly lit dungeons felt eerie – not least thanks to the legend of Maria van Beckum, a noblewoman accused of witchcraft, whose tragic fate at the stake seemed to linger in the air. Outside, the rain and fog had intensified, and before departing for Echternach, I warmed myself with a shot of Cassero, a blackcurrant liqueur crafted on-site.



Beaufort Castle, in eastern Luxembourg, consists of an 11th century ruined fortress and a nearby Renaissance chateau

On my final day, I made the short walk from Berdorf to the circular El Wollefsschlucht trail, or “Wolf's Gorge”, a dramatic ravine once rumoured to shelter wolves. Starting in Echternach the trail led to Huel Lee, a man-made cave where millstones were quarried for local castles and monasteries in the Middle Ages. The path gradually climbed through quiet forests that afforded glimpses of the Sûre River before Echternach's rooftops appeared in the distance. When I emerged back onto the town's streets, I realised I hadn't seen another soul for hours.



The Huel Lee Cave, created by the extraction of millstones

And therein lies the beauty of hiking in Luxembourg – its wonderful peacefulness, so far removed from Europe's [busier hiking spots](#). Here, it's not about scaling towering peaks or navigating crowded trails – it's about finding calm in a landscape that feels untouched, where each path holds a sense of discovery. It's a wonder that this tiny country remains so resolutely under the radar. But then, perhaps that's part of its magic.

Essentials

[Luxair](#), [British Airways](#), [EasyJet](#), and [Ryanair](#) all fly from the UK to Luxembourg, with returns from £31.

Berdorfer Eck, a contemporary guesthouse in the heart of [Berdorf](#), has rooms from £127.

Entry to numerous attractions (including Beaufort Castle) is free with the [Luxembourg Card](#) (from €14/£11.70)

For more information, see [mullerthal-trail.lu](#);

[visitluxembourg.com](#);

[instagram.com/themanwhohikedtheworld](#)

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