

Travel Rocks – and can win you prizes too!!

A Lille bit of festive fun!

December 12, 2017 admin Places to Visit, Travel Tips, Worldwide Travel



The Team Go Walkabout festive trip this year was in Lille, Northern France. This destination is proving to be very popular with Brit-trippers looking for a spot of Gallic Christmas fun, probably because it is so accessible to the UK via ferry, Eurotunnel or Eurostar train and has a popular Christmas market running from the 17th November 2017 until the 27th December 2017.

It is a great choice for a short stay to pick up some charming and unique Christmas gifts, sample some of the local foodie delicacies and take in a great aerial view of the festive scene below by taking a spin on the giant ferris wheel (albeit some of our team weren't really enjoying the extreme height that the ferris wheel rotated to, especially as they are open-air capsules!)

Lille is about an hour and a half's drive from Calais, and as it is very close to the border to Belgium, there is a distinct Flemish character to both the food and the architecture. We opted to get there by road, and ferry from Dover, which then allowed us to bring back some duty-free delicacies as well. Find out more details about ferry crossings to Calais from [P&O Ferries](#).

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There are around about 80 stalls at the Christmas market in central Lille, which sells an eclectic mix of wares including handmade decorations, toys and jewellery as well as the obligatory seasonal mulled wine, and tasty cuisine such as sweet and savoury waffles and hot roasted chestnuts.

It is quite compact, and was very busy when we visited, so you may only prefer to browse for a while before heading off somewhere a little less crowded. There is a wide range of nearby shops, restaurants and bars offering a respite from the festive frenzy, where you can recharge your batteries and warm up a bit, if it's as cold as it was when we were there!



We snapped up a great deal that is currently available on the [Lille Office de Tourisme website](#) which includes 1 night in a hotel, 1 ferris wheel ride, 1 mulled wine from the Christmas market and an audio-commentary coach city tour with the combined deal available from 39 Euros per person. We stayed in the [ibis Lille Centre Grand Palais hotel](#), which is a comfortable, three-star hotel, within easy walking distance of all of the main festive attractions, and which served up a continental, buffet-style breakfast in the morning.

The audio coach tour was great, as it allowed us to see further afield from the comfort of a heated coach, than the time that we had available, would allow on foot. It showcased architectural and historical highlights of the city, as well as other points of interest, with an audio commentary available in 9 languages.



We elected to use some of our precious time in Lille, enjoying the top tourist attraction according to Trip Advisor, which is [Team Break Lille](#), offering a choice of 4 different missions, with varying levels of difficulty – these are the Haunted Room, Walking Dead, Mission Impossible and Prison

Break. As a fan of ghosthunting and the TV show Most Haunted, I talked my colleagues into doing the Haunted Room! By their own admission, a few of them were a bit dubious about what would be involved, and how enjoyable it would be, but they all LOVED it. From the moment we were led down to the sombrely lit Haunted Room (or rooms as it turned out) by our rather sardonic host, the mood was set, and the atmosphere was charged for some genuine jump-very-high-and-scream-very-loud moments of pure terror (mainly at what we imagined was about to happen) as well as a lot of very enjoyable teamwork trying to crack the mission that we had been set, as investigative journalists. The puzzles and props were imaginatively combined, and we were very proud at the end of the allotted time that we had completed our given tasks – with a mere 53 seconds to spare...!



To reward ourselves for the amount that our brains had been taxed, and our nerves shredded, we headed to the Greek restaurant [L'île de Crete](#) for dinner that evening for some delicious Grecian cuisine in stylish surroundings – there was even the spectacle of a spot of Greek dancing as the evening wore on.

We had a lovely time in Lille – it is a great choice for some cosmopolitan festive cheer, and with the great offer being spearheaded by the Tourist Office at the moment (December 2017), it is one not to miss!

Albeit not on the festive theme, Lille is also famous for [Lille Braderie](#), on the 1st weekend in September, where antique dealers, flea marketeers and householders alike, gather in the city streets with an eclectic range of antiques and vintage goods for people to browse and buy. We have also visited and written an article about this important event in the city calendar, [read it here](#).

We'd love to see your Christmas market and festive travel pictures, so get in touch on Twitter @GoWalkaboutUK or via our [Facebook page](#) (where you can also get 10% off your next travel insurance policy, by 'liking' us!) You can also take a look at more of our snaps on Instagram (gowalkabouttravelinsurance)

Joyeux Noel!



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