



The Roses of Limpertsberg  
Circular Walk “RosaLi”

Luxembourg

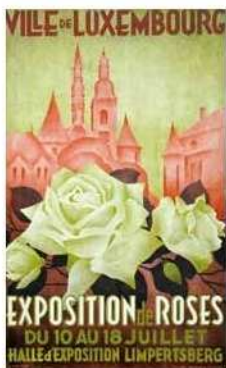
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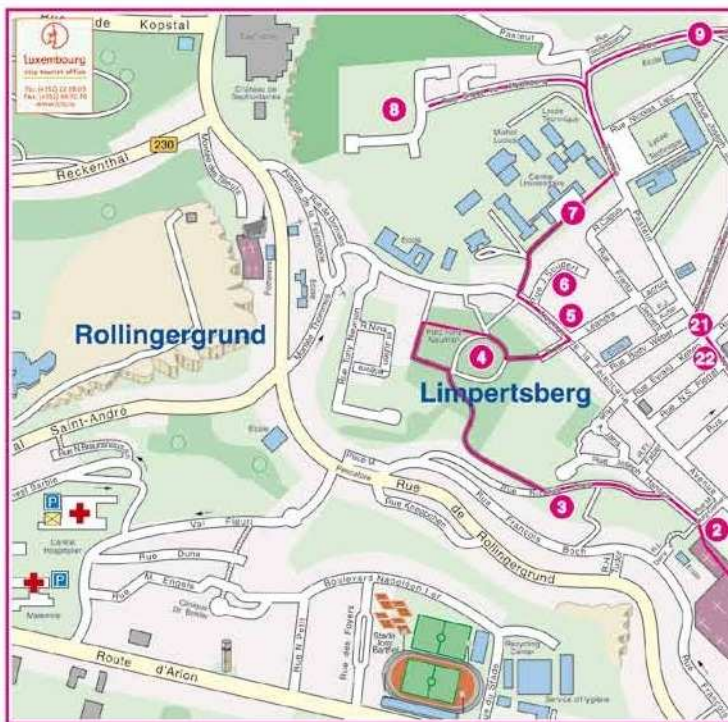
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## Roses of the Limpertsberg

Thanks to a strong tradition of rose cultivation, Luxembourg was known the world over at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the “Land of Roses”. Having slipped from memory, this fragrant bloom and treasured horticultural heritage is now experiencing a resurgence. The Limpertsberg plateau, nowadays a handsome residential and student quarter, was until 1867 merely a barren plain stretching before the fortress and for strategic reasons was kept devoid of permanent construction. In 1855, Jean Soupert and Pierre Notting, two young gardeners specialised in the cultivation of roses and the derivation of new varieties, established their nursery on the plateau [A]. Their exciting creations quickly gained recognition, garnering awards at international rose competitions and attracting a wealthy clientele in search of the luxury of the age, which was epitomised by their new and original varieties of repeat-flowering roses. Buoyed by their success, the rose gardens of Soupert & Notting went on to nurture other emerging businesses: the Ketten brothers and the brothers-in-law Gemen & Bourg learnt the secrets of their trade here, as did Peter Lambert of Trier. All went on to become rose growers of worldwide renown, earning Luxembourg recognition as a prestigious rose growing centre. From the 1880<sup>s</sup> onwards, the plateau became covered with rose gardens and was home to three large rose growing businesses, which shipped bare-root rose bushes throughout the world. These were supported by over a dozen plant nurseries. In order to reach their client base around the globe, these growers published biannual catalogues in several languages, which were posted in hand-addressed envelopes. The pioneers Soupert & Notting became suppliers to the King of the Netherlands, the King of Sweden, the Grand-Ducal Court of Luxembourg, the Queen Mother of Italy and the Count of Flanders, as well as suppliers by appointment to the Imperial Household of Brazil. They created more than 260 new varieties of roses.





### Guided tours on request:

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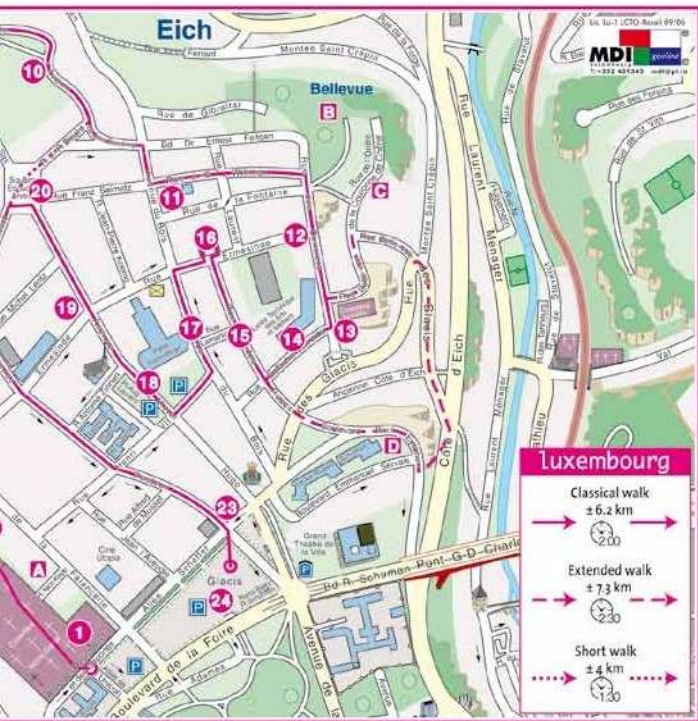
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**Circuit  
RosaLi**



[1] Notre-Dame Cemetery



### Impressum

Edition: Luxembourg City Tourist Office  
 Conception: Lamperbierger Syndicat  
 Original text: Lamperbierger Rousen-Initiative  
 English translation : Vivian Craig  
 Photos: Léon Doemer, Claude Vion  
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[1] Notre-Dame Cemetery (A. Zinnen)



[4] Park Tony Neuman

## The Roses of Limpertsberg Circular Walk “RosaLi”

This circuit will allow you to discover a multitude of little known treasures of the Limpertsberg, a district beginning at Allée Scheffer and Avenue de la Faïencerie which was progressively urbanised after the dismantling of the fortress, decided upon in 1867.

[1] **Notre-Dame Cemetery**, consecrated in 1691, was located outside the walls of the old fortress. In front and to the right of the main entrance stands the commemorative monument to the old Glacis chapel, erected in 1624 and dedicated to Our Lady, Consoler of the Afflicted. This place of remembrance is an integral part of Luxembourg’s scenic heritage. Some of the often artistically significant monuments chronicle the ups and downs of the nation’s history, while others preserve the memory of important figures in cultural, political or economic life, some of whom have lent their names to streets of the city: the landscape artist J.B. Fresez; the authors Batty Weber and N.S. Pierret. Also present are the graves of such diverse individuals as the Minister of State Paul Eyschen and the composer J. A. Zinnen, as well as those of a few colourful characters, such as the real Captain of Koepenick (Wilhelm Voigt). The Soupert & Notting family tomb is to be found in the upper part of the Rollingergrund cemetery, since the house of Soupert was at the time located within the Rollingergrund municipality. The quality of its headstones and monuments alone make the cemetery in itself well worth a visit. Both natural roses and their images in stone are prominently displayed within the grounds.

[2] **Rue Bourg-Gemen** lies to the right of the cemetery’s northern



[5] “Maison Soupert”

exit. The rose grower Charles Gemen, together with his brother-in-law and associate Bourg, were at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the world's largest exporters of roses.

We now follow [3] **Rue Nicolas Ries**, which runs along the edge of the plateau on the Rollingergrund valley side, giving a striking view out to the West. As the road begins to descend, we take the path across the plateau in the direction of [4] **Park Tony Neuman**. This large estate and villa was acquired in 1947 by the president of the administrative board of ARBED, who entrusted his gardener Alphonse Hollman with the establishment of an arboretum in its grounds. In 1979, the park was bequeathed to the Red Cross, who put it at the disposal of the city for a period of 99 years. The park, now open to the public, has become a favourite recreation area for local inhabitants. Across its tortured topography, between the valley and the heights, we find not only the last remnant of forest in the district, but also modern sculptures (by Lucien Wercollier) and arbours of climbing roses.

As we reach Avenue de la Faïencerie, we find ourselves opposite the [5] **"Maison Soupert"**, a large neo-gothic edifice, which from 1861 to 1989 was the residence and workplace of the rose growers Soupert & Notting, pioneers in the creation of repeat-flowering roses, and later that of their descendants, among whom the artists Frantz Heldenstein-Soupert and Huguette Etienne-Heldenstein. The building now houses the Faculty of Law, Economics and Finance of the University of Luxembourg (Limpertsberg Campus). We continue along Avenue de la Faïencerie. 50m further on is



[7] The University of Luxembourg's "campus of roses"

**[6] Rue Jean Soupert.** A little way up this street, we can see **[7] the University of Luxembourg's "campus of roses"** to our left. The campus is a hive of student activity within the old American Convent, a building designed by the architect J.-P. Koenig in 1903 and later converted to a catholic seminary. Continuing along alleyways shaded by majestic trees, we emerge onto Avenue Pasteur and turn left past the Lycée Technique (Technical College) that bears the name of the Luxembourgish geologist Michel Lucius.

Access to the rose gardens of the **[8] Cité Jardinière Vic Hastert** is via Rue Siggy vu Lëtzebuerg, to our left.

Now following **[9] Rue de l'Avenir** we come to the route of the ring road set out by the Cologne urban planner Joseph Stübben, who was commissioned by the city at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to organise the new district. From here you can enjoy a magnificent view over the "Bambësch" forest, the Kirchberg and the districts of Mühlenbach, Eich and Weimerskirch. To our right is the old **[10] "Barthelsklouschter"** the former Dominican convent.

**Shortcut: After site [10], follow Boulevard J. Pershing as far as Rue Jean-Pierre Beicht. Turn right onto this street to arrive directly at site [20] (Square Edouard André).**

At the top of Avenue du Bois stands the **[11] Water Tower**, constructed around 1900. This symbol of the district reaches the same height as the spire of Notre-Dame Cathedral. The water reservoir behind it to the left dates from 1886.



**[11] Water Tower**

On a rocky outcrop above the district of Eich and to the North of Rue Willmar, [B] “**Château Bellevue**”, the de la Fontaine family castle, can be glimpsed through the vegetation. This private estate, which is closed to the public, was the summer residence of Ignace Théodore de la Fontaine, Governor of the Grand-Duchy from 1841 to 1848 and father of the poet Edmond de la Fontaine, known as “Dicks”. In 1841, the Governor received William II, King of the Netherlands and Grand-Duke of Luxembourg, in his castle. It was during his visit, as the two took a stroll beneath the oak trees, that the Order of the Crown of Oak, a national honour awarded to Luxembourgish citizens of extraordinary merit, was conceived. The street below the castle, Rue de l’Ordre de la Couronne de Chêne [C], bears its name. On the land adjacent to the castle once stood the greenhouses of the explorer and orchid researcher Jean Linden (1817-1898).

[12] **Rue des Cerisiers** offers a good view of the Kirchberg’s European district. This street ends in a curious cul-de-sac, which is in fact an abutment constructed in the 1920<sup>s</sup>. The bridge that it was intended to support, planned by Stübben to span the Old Côte d’Eich towards Boulevard Emmanuel Servais, was never completed.

**Extension: Keen walkers may take a left turn at the [13] Jewish Cemetery to reach Rue des Glacis. Next to the traffic lights at the bottom of the road they will then take the staircase past the mysterious cave of “Péiter Onrou” to St. Crispin’s cliffs. Emerging onto [D] Boulevard Paul Eyschen, they will see both the United States Embassy and the “Lycée Robert Schuman”, the college which**



[14] lycée Technique des Arts et Métiers



[15] Rue des Roses

bears the name of one of the European Union's founding fathers. They will then turn right and head towards Rue des Roses.

On the right-hand side at the corner of Rue Guillaume Schneider is the old Jesuit Study Centre, built in 1900 according to a design by the architect J.-P. Koenig. It now houses the [14] **Lycée Technique des Arts et Métiers** (Technical Craft and Trade College), formerly the Ecole des Artisans de l'Etat (State Craftsmanship School), or Handwierkerschoul.

Built up from 1901 onwards, [15] **Rue des Roses** is a beautiful example of the district's urban planning, thanks to its eclectic houses, some in an Art Nouveau style. The street-front gardens of roses exemplify the Limpertsberg's glorious horticultural tradition.

At the northern end of the street is a [16] **Small square**, within which a commemorative plaque from 1939 marks the centenary of the country's independence.

Turn left onto Rue Ermesinde, named after the countess who granted the townspeople of Luxembourg their city charter in 1244.

Next take the first left onto [17] **Avenue du Bois**. Street-front gardens of roses once again greet the rambler. Find house number 73 and you will notice that its wooden front door is decorated with charming rose carvings. Further down and to the right are the buildings that served as exhibition halls from 1937 onwards. It was here in 1942 that Gauleiter Gustav Simon announced the forced conscription of young Luxembourgers



[17] Avenue du Bois (sculpted rose)



[17] Avenue

into the German Wehrmacht. To the left is Rue Lamartine with its eye-catching and beautiful Art Nouveau facades.

After continuing to the right along the plane-tree-lined Rue Henri VII and crossing Avenue Victor Hugo, we arrive at **[18] Place Auguste Laurent**, intended by Stübben to become an architectural showcase for the city. On the left is the primary school designed by the architect A. Kemp and completed in 1906; on the far side of the square is the Lycée de Garçons (Boys' High School), built by the architect Gustave Sert in 1908 as the State School of Industry and Commerce. To the right is the neo-Roman parish church, by City Architect Nicolas Petit, which was consecrated in 1913 by Bishop Koppes.

We continue to the north along Avenue Victor Hugo. At the intersection with Rue Ermesinde, we find **[19] the old municipal electric tram depot**, dating from 1908. The last tramcar was taken out of service in September 1964. The new **Tramsschapp** complex houses a Cultural Centre, as well as educational and sports facilities. The building facing onto Avenue Pasteur is divided into apartments for senior citizens.

We now head up towards **[20] Square Edouard André**, named after the prestigious French landscape architect who created the belt of city parks where there was once a ring of fortifications. Another of his achievements is the Roseraie de l'Haÿ near Paris, which is still a benchmark in rose garden design.



du Bois



[18] Place Auguste Laurent

Turning left onto Rue J-B. Fresez, we reach [21] **Avenue Pasteur**, which we then follow down to the left. At the next corner is the intersection with [22] **Rue Evrard Ketten**.

The “grandes cultures spéciales de rosiers” (special rose varieties) of the brothers Evrard and Jean Ketten are still highly prized by rose enthusiasts. At the pinnacle of rose growing on the Limpertsberg, the Russian Tsar entrusted the Ketten brothers with the design of his rose gardens in St. Petersburg. They also created rose gardens in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Ketten brothers together created 90 new varieties of roses.

A little further along on the left is St. Elizabeth's Convent, where the nuns established the “Kannerland” children's home in 1921. At number 63 is the Bourg-Gemen Foundation.

In the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the “Cirque Renquin” occupied the corner with Rue Alfred de Musset. The circus building, accommodating over 2.000 spectators, was demolished in 1904. On the corner of [23] **Allée Scheffer**, the “Westeschgaart” café maintains the tradition of the timber-built beer garden, where city residents have come since fortress times to enjoy refreshments after a summer walk. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the open area between Avenue Pasteur and Avenue du Bois was the site of the livestock market.

We are now back at the [24] **Glacis**, where the large “Schueberfouer” funfair takes place at the end of every summer. The fair was founded in 1340 by John the Blind and nowadays draws crowds from across Luxembourg and the Greater Region.



[21] Avenue Pasteur



## Luxembourg

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