

1,000 YEARS OF HISTORY  
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE  
FORTRESS WALLS AND OLD TOWN

CIRCULAR WALK  
**WENZEL**  
*History*

**luxembourg**  
my city • ma ville • meng stad



## A journey through 1,000 years of city history

The **Wenzel Circular Walk** guides the visitor through more than 1,000 years of city history. Its name pays tribute to Wenceslas II, Duke of Luxembourg between 1383 and 1419 during whose reign a part of the third ring, the so-called Wenzel wall, was erected. A lot of additional background facts will be provided during the walk. The Wenzel Circular Walk is signposted along the way and numerous information boards provide further information about the most important sights as well as the history of Luxembourg City.

The cultural and historical Wenzel Circular Walk guides us through the oldest quarters of Luxembourg City, with many historically outstanding and architecturally compelling edifices. In 1994, the historical core of the old town, as well as some of the fortress works which are still in good condition, were declared World Heritage by UNESCO. One of the singularities of Luxembourg is the way in which such a confined space reveals such a blend of contrasting styles of architecture: this mixture steadily developed in the last five centuries under the changing rulers.



## Wenzel Circular Walk

Our walk starts on the very **1 Bock Promontory**, the cradle of the city.

In the year 963, Siegfried, Count of the Ardennes, came into possession of the rock through bartering with the Abbey of St Maximin in Trier. For ages, this rocky ledge, on which Count Siegfried was to set up his castle, had been playing a strategically crucial role. As it was surrounded on three sides by the Alzette valley and only accessible from the west, defending it was quite easy. From this vantage point we have a magnificent view of the Alzette valley with the suburbs of Grund, Clausen and Pfaffenthal. Below the street the archeological crypt and the **Bock Casemates** are hewn into the rock. The longest casemates of the world are Luxembourg City's top tourist attraction. These underground galleries carved into the rock were part of the fortress' defence system. For more information on visiting options and opening hours, visit [luxembourg-city.com](https://luxembourg-city.com)

The **2 Castle Bridge** was built out of red sandstone in 1735, replacing a wooden construction with a drawbridge in use until then. Its peculiarity resides in the fact that it connected the Upper Town and the Bock Promontory in several manners both on the surface and underground. In 1992/93 the bridge was entirely restored and its upper part was slightly enlarged.



Our walk continues via the so-called **3 "Corniche"** ("Chemin de la Corniche").

Set up by the Spaniards in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and fortified by Vauban later on, this defence wall provides us with a breathtaking view of the Alzette valley with the suburb of Grund and the Rham Plateau. The Corniche is lined by some remarkable houses such as the "Maison de Cassal" and a few noble dwellings from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries alongside a picturesque row of houses. From here we also get a glance of the rear front of the Lëtzebuerg City Museum.

As we continue our way further downwards, we pass the bastioned gate built by the Spaniards in 1632, named second Grundberg Gate or **4 Grund Gate**.

We turn left, follow the meanders further down towards the bottom of the vale and reach a stone footbridge, called "Stierchen".

This part of the city wall provided protection for the inhabitants of the valley and is known as **5 Wenzel wall**. It connects the so-called Lower town and the Rham Plateau to the city's defence ring. Originally 875 meters long, the wall that





surrounded the entire city comprised 37 towers and 15 gates. Wander back and forth until you reach the riverbank, through the medieval tower of the “Stierchen”, for an extra muros view of part of the ring wall.

The **6 Moat** in front of the Wenzel wall was uncovered by archaeologists in 1992/93. Among other things they disclosed the very well-kept foundations of a medieval wooden bridge, which was part of the first highway to Trier, as a continuation of the “Krudelspuert” (cf. **7**). Furthermore, two exterior moat walls were brought to light, one being medieval and the other one dating back to the Spanish domination which has been reconstructed. These discoveries are all the more remarkable as they clearly illustrate the various stages of the construction of the so-called Wenzel wall.

Crossing the sentry walk of the battlements fitted out with loopholes, we pass the Robert Kriepps hall (“Tutesall”) where we find further remains of the Wenzel wall.

Glancing through a window in this building we catch sight of the previously mentioned **7 “Krudelspuert”**. The first reference of its existence goes back to 1395; up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century it linked the city districts of Grund and Clausen.



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The "Tutesall" is part of the complex of buildings forming the **8 Cultural meeting place of "Neimënster"**. After the first Neumünster Abbey was destroyed on the nearby Altmünster Plateau, the Benedictine monks settled in what was then St John's Hospital in 1547 and put up several new buildings to found the Neumünster Abbey. In 1796 they were driven out in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the cloister was used as a prison. In 1815 it underwent alterations so that it could be used as a military hospital up to 1867. After the retreat of the Prussians who were stationed there since joining the German confederation in 1815, the treaty of London signed in 1867 granted Luxembourg the status of a neutral state. Henceforth the buildings of the former Neumünster Abbey became State property and from 1869 to 1984 they were put to use as prison for male inmates. After extensive renovation, the whole complex is now used as a major venue for social and cultural events and named "Neimënster".

Ascending a staircase we arrive at the **9 Second Gate of Trier** which was built in 1590. A bridge leads across the road to the Rham Plateau.

On the way we pass a bigger gate, the **10 Dinselpuert**, or **Jacob Tower** also named "old Gate of Trier". From April to October, the film "The birth and the significance of the city walls in the Middle Ages" is shown here. This gate of the



Wenzel wall, with its rectangular ground plan, used to have a drawbridge, a moat in front of the gate and a cannon casemate in the top floor. The “Dinselpuert” was constructed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

On the Rham Plateau, you can discover defensive installations from several eras, namely the medieval era of the 1<sup>st</sup> French occupation (11 **Ravelin Vauban**) and the Prussian era (battery on the track). Further on, you reach a panoramic viewpoint and a tower of the Wenzel wall.

Alongside the imposing barracks built by Vauban, you descend slowly to the Alzette, which you cross via an old 12 **defensive bridge** called “**Maierchen**”.

Arriving at the popular district of Grund, walk along the Alzette and finish your journey at the bridge surrounded by cafes and restaurants. An easy return to the city centre is possible by public lift.









## THE WENZEL CIRCULAR WALK AT A GLANCE

Highlights	A journey through time with breathtaking panoramic views over the Luxembourg fortress.
Tour	On foot. Steep circular walk with stairways and climbs. Certain parts are not passable with strollers and wheel chairs.
Duration & length	3 hours & 5.5 km.
On your own	See leaflet and signs on-site. 🗺️
Individual tickets Guided tours	Individual tickets can be purchased at the information desk of the Luxembourg City Tourist Office or online at <a href="https://luxembourg-city.com">luxembourg-city.com</a>
Guided tours with a personal guide	Book the Wenzel circular walk for your group at the date and time of your choice (up to 20 people per guide). Please send a booking request on <a href="https://luxembourg-city.com">luxembourg-city.com</a> or by email to <a href="mailto:guides@lcto.lu">guides@lcto.lu</a> at least 10 business days in advance.
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