Visiting Historic Liege in Belgium by Sean Burke

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Liege is one of the oldest cities in Belgium, dating from the Roman occupation of the region in the fourth century. The city holds an important strategic position on the River Meuse, and was used as important port for the industrial goods of the entire Walloon region. With Belgian independence, the city became increasingly important as the centre of Belgiumâ€™s steel industry, although this has declined in the years since the Second World War. If you are planning a trip to Liege, then it is impossible to miss the historic buildings and architecture. However, there are also plenty of museums where you can learn more about the history of this interesting and ever-changing city.

Many of the historic buildings date from the period known as the Prince-Bishopric, when Liege was ruled by the bishop of the city. The Palace that the bishops built - St. Lambertâ€™s remains to this day and forms a spectacular centre to the city. Liege Cathedral was initially on the site of the Palace, although after the French Revolution it was destroyed, and a new one was built nearby. The Cathedral contains the tomb of St. Lambert, a missionary who converted the area to Christianity in the eighth century. One of the most impressive buildings in the city is the Church of Saint-Jacques, began in the fourteenth century, and a product of the early Renaissance.

If you are more interested in museums than historic buildings, then Liege is an ideal place to visit. The city is famous for its Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, known locally as the MAMAC. This houses a wide range of contemporary pieces of art, and allows the visitor to learn of the changing nature of art throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The museums of Walloon Art and the Museum of Walloon Life both provide insights into the Walloon region.

If you are planning a trip to Liege, then booking early is a must, particularly if you intend to travel during the summer. The city is famous for its festival on the 15 August, and many of the hotels and hostels are booked for this date well in advance. Liege has ideal transport links, with both a railway and an airport that serve the city. The city has a range of accommodation options, from the Liege airport hotel to hotels in the centre of the city. The short flight times from the UK mean that Liege is an ideal place for a city break.

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