

# Wittes - Aire-sur-la-Lys

*Discover the charming village of Witte and then the natural environment surrounding Aire-sur-la-Lys : allotments, the hydraulic complex of the basin with 4 Faces and the Great Canal.*

The Melde rises on the Heuringhem plateau and joins the Lys after passing through the siphon under the Canal of Aire. The Melde flows through the village of Witte which is known for its pony fair (the third Sunday in November) and its bio-market (every third Sunday of the month). Wittes has beautiful walled farms, signs of its rural past. These include the farms of the old Joly chateau, once a halt for stage-coaches and which now houses small businesses and a purification plant using reeds as filtration.

The Saint-Martin industrial park has been established by the community of communes of Aire to house the Logidis warehouses and other enterprises. The lakes of the Ballastiere are artificial made as a result of the



extract of stone for ballast for the local railways. Migratory birds winter here and the Ballastiere is a refuge for cormorants and large raptors. The green route for cyclists and ramblers was once the railway between Aire and Arques. It crosses the Ballastiere on its way to Wittes and then by extension towards Arques. Rising in Lisbourg 20 km away, the Lys is canalised and navigable from the lock at Fort

Gassion. The river joins the Escout at Ghent in Belgium, 195 km away. The Neufosse Canal, dug in 1825, links the River Aa with the Canal of Aire. These form the basis of the modern Dunkirk-Valencienne Liaison Canal for heavy barges, including convoys of 3000 tons.

## Refreshment and accommodation

in Aire town centre, and refreshment at Wittes.

## 2 circuits explore the historic centre of Aire-sur-la-Lys :

- the walk from one « open book » to another (1 1/2 hours)
- the « step-by-step » circuit (2 hours)

Group visits can be made to : the town watch tower (UNESCO site), the collegiale church, Saint-Jacques Chapel, water cress beds, etc.

## Information

### Mairie of Wittes

11 route Départementale 943 - 62 120 Wittes  
Tél. 03 21 39 06 70 - Fax 03 21 95 99 20  
<http://wittes.pagesperso-orange.fr>

### Tourist Office\*\*

Le Bailliage, Grand'Place - 62 921 Aire-sur-la-Lys  
Tél./Fax 03 21 39 65 66  
[www.ot-aioresurlalys.fr](http://www.ot-aioresurlalys.fr)

### In the community of communes of Aire

Hôtel de Ville - BP 29 - 62 921 Aire-sur-la-Lys Cedex  
Tél. 03 21 95 40 59 - Fax 03 21 39 26 74  
[www.paysdaire.fr/ht](http://www.paysdaire.fr/ht)

To download the leaflet for each walk go to  
[www.ot-aioresurlalys.fr](http://www.ot-aioresurlalys.fr)

## Guided Walks

in the community of  
communes of Aire

# 6

## Walk along the Melde

9 km - 3 hours

**D** parking at  
the Louis Vicart  
hall, Wittes,

or the Basin with  
4 Faces at  
Aire-sur-la-Lys

Access : D 943





## Waymarks

GRP ®  
Nationally  
recognised walks

PR ®  
Shorter,  
local walks

keep straight on



GRP ®  
Nationally  
recognised walks

PR ®  
Shorter,  
local walks

change direction



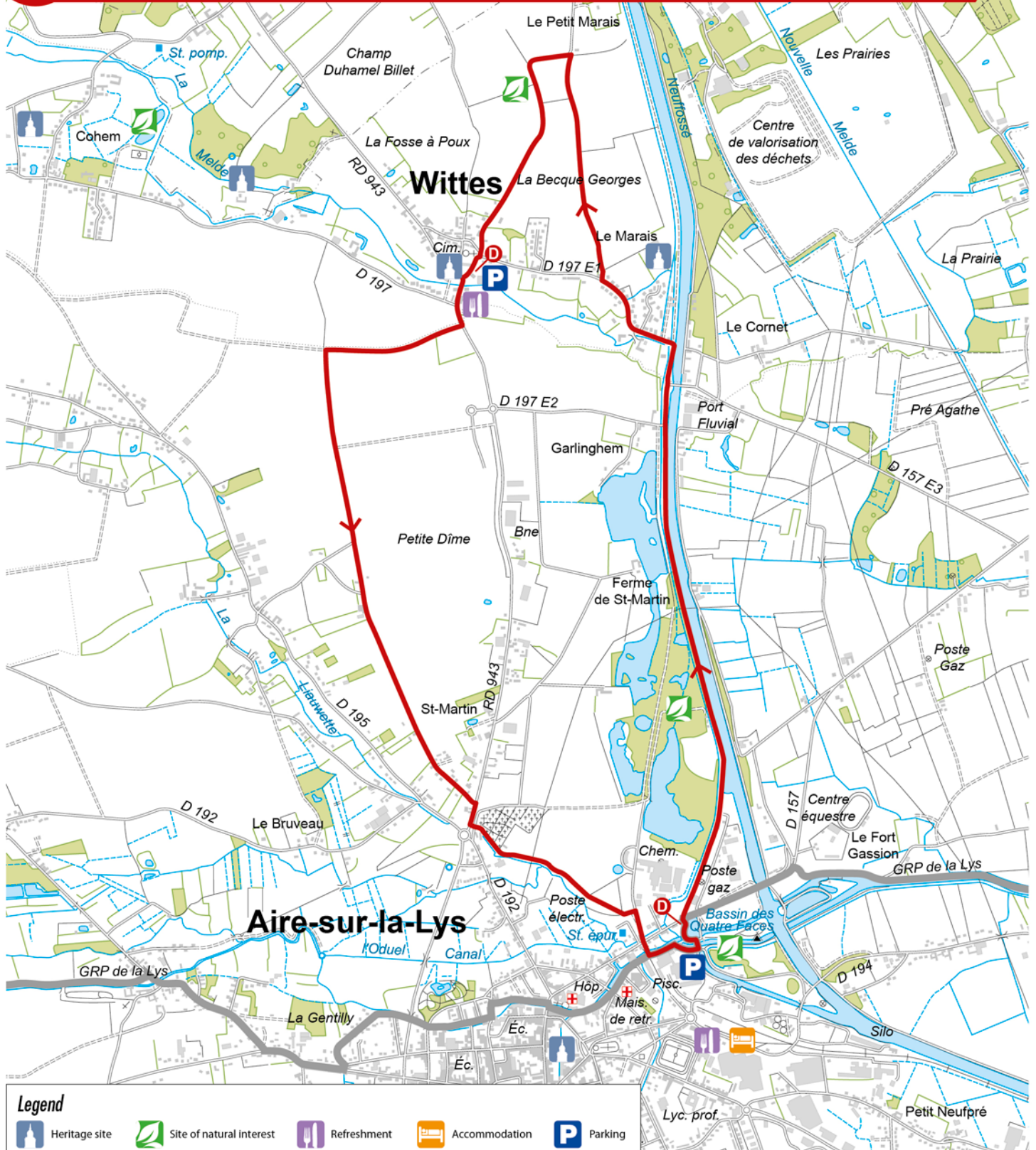
GRP ®  
Nationally  
recognised walks

PR ®  
Shorter,  
local walks

marked footpaths



# 6 Walk along the Melde 9 km - 3 hours



## Walkers' code :

1 - Keep to the paths and marked walks.  
2 - Keep dogs on the leash.

3 - Respect crops, farm animals, and machinery.  
4 - Be polite to other users of the paths and countryside.

5 - Do not drop litter, take it home with you.  
6 - Do not light fires.  
7 - Study animals and plants without touching them.  
8 - Be quiet and discreet.

9 - Respect signposts and other markers.  
10 - Inform the Office of Tourism of any unexpected obstacles, errors in the marking of footpaths, etc. as soon as possible.