

Aire-sur-la-Lys

Walk through the old pastures of Aire, including the old water cress beds, around the Lacquette stream and the marais of Lenglet (known as the « Chico-Mendes » site), then return to Aire to wonder at the magnificence of the Grand' Place.

The first part of the walk reveals the exceptional natural surroundings of Aire :

- the wet lands ; Aire is situated at the confluence of numerous streams (Lys, Mardyke, Lacquette, Lacque, etc.)
- the surrounds are riddled with marshland, lakes and heath, generally man made. An example is the water cress beds fed by bore-holes which supply water from 30 m down always at a temperature of 11°C.

The open spaces today are reserved for fishing or the observation of wild life ; the « Chico-Mendes » site being an example. It is classified as a natural reserve by Nord-Nature. It has been carefully preserved with a pond and plants typical of the locality for educational purposes.



The return to the centre of the town lets one appreciate its history. Aire is a frontier town poised between Artois and Flanders. It has been fortified since around 1200. The walls were strengthened by Emperor Charles V in the sixteenth-century and again by Vauban around 1700. Numerous remnants exist the

Town Hall and the ensemble of houses with their pilasters. Before the canal was dug between the Lys and the River Aa, at the end of the eighteenth century, all the goods from the channel ports were transported overland to Aire where they could be loaded into barges. This transhipment made the town's fortune since it became a veritable warehouse throughout the length of its quays where the remnants of mills, tanneries, clothing works, etc, can still be seen.

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 collegiate church, Saint-Jacques Chapel, water cress beds, etc.

Information

Mairie d'Aire-sur-la-Lys

9 Grand'Place - 62 120 Aire-sur-la-Lys
Tél. 03 21 95 40 40 - Fax 03 21 95 40 41
www.ville-aireurlalys.fr

Tourist Office**

Le Bailliage, Grand'Place - 62 921 Aire-sur-la-Lys
Tél./Fax 03 21 39 65 66
www.ot-aireurlalys.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

Guided Walks

in the community of
communes of Aire

8



Walk through the Marais (wet lands)

9 km - 3 hours

D AREA
cinema/
public garden
Aire-sur-la-Lys

Access : D 943



To download the leaflet for each walk go to
www.ot-aireurlalys.fr



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

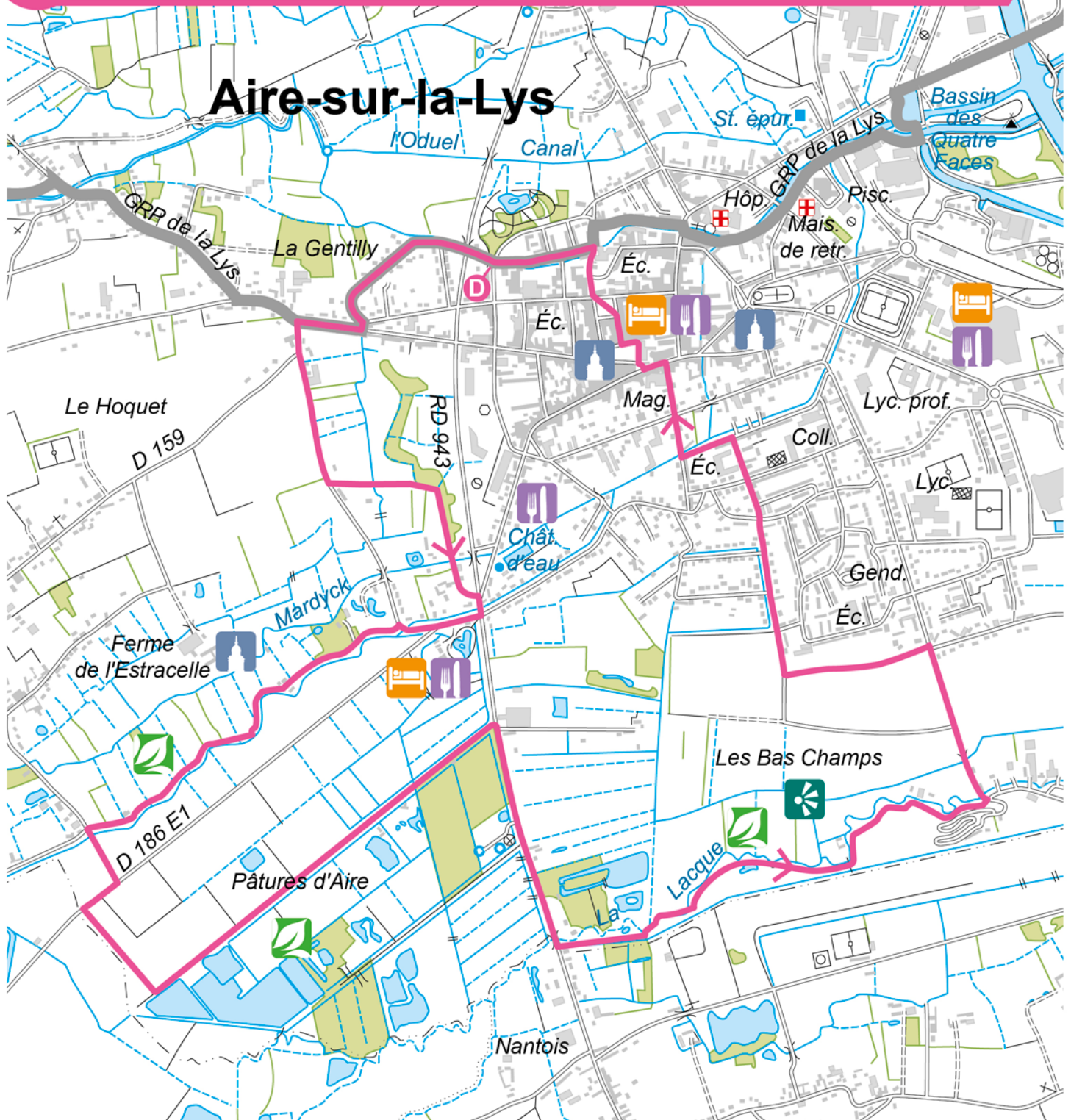


8

Walk through the Marais (wet lands)



9 km - 3 hours



Legend



Heritage site



Site of natural interest



Refreshment



Accommodation



Viewpoint

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.