

## The Getaway: 2

# Hotel pools its resources to aid Ardennes escapes

By Martin Banks

In the mood for a short break, away from it all, without having to dip too deep into the pockets and jump on a plane to Greece or Spain? If so, a beautifully restored hotel at the gateway to Belgium's Ardennes could be just the ticket.

Overlooking Robertville Lake on one of the country's best beauty spots, is the four-star Hotel des Bains, Lac de Robertville - a spa and wellness hotel.

This family-run haven of peace and tranquility has 13 rooms, a swimming pool and Jacuzzi-style bath, all overlooking the well-tended gardens.

The complex is situated on the edge of the Haute Fagnes natural park, and each of the rooms have been tastefully restored in an individual style by owners Elisabeth and Jean-Pierre Robert-Rey.

The couple, who live on the premises, bought the hotel five years ago and spent several months restoring it, adding the spa and wellness centre.

Jean-Pierre, who once worked in some of the best restaurants in Brussels, oversees the cooking in the restaurant. This is split in two - with one part offering flavoursome brasserie-type food and the other serving up a more top-end, eclectic gastro menu for diners. Breakfasts at the hotel are delicious too.

Aside from its own attractions, The Robertville acts as a convenient base for visits to local attractions, such as the Spa-Francorchamps F1 race track,



which is just 20 minutes away. Well worth a visit too is the Reinhardstein Castle, built in 1354, which is open for visits at weekends and during school holidays.

Forestia animal park at nearby La Reid is another place the kids will love. More than 40 hectares of plains and woods accommodate 300 animals of 30 different species living as freely as is feasible. For this reason, children must be aged 4 or above.

Visitors will never be short of things to do in this area

but you don't actually have to go anywhere. Perhaps the best thing to do is simply relax and unwind at the Hotel des Bains while enjoying its facilities and great location.

The hotel's setting is superb at any time of year, but certainly not least in the summer when guests can loll about in the gardens or on the terrace.

And the price is right too - when we visited, the hotel was offering a Friday evening Resto and Spa package: get access to the wellness centre from 17 euro, followed by a two-course dinner for 39 euro per person.

**Hotel des Bains**  
[www.hoteldesbains.be](http://www.hoteldesbains.be)  
 Tel: 080 679 571

**Forestia Animal Park**  
[www.forestia.eu](http://www.forestia.eu)  
 Tel: 087 541 075

