



Best Brussels souvenir? The panorama from Parking 58!

Young tourists look for kicks other than waffles

USE-IT, the tourist info for young people, will soon celebrate its first ten years in Brussels. They're a household name for city maps made by young locals, with no-nonsense tips for how not to be caught as a tourist in Belgium. (Nope, we don't have fruit on our waffles.)

These maps are starting to conquer Europe, and the research team Expeditions has measured the impact on tourism in the entire network. Does alternative city info really make people move outside of the city centre? Do they stay longer? And what does this imply for the local economy? The results were very positive, and Brussels stands out.

59% of users say they went **further from the centre** indeed. Desk personnel at hostels and the tourist infos confirm. 86% think also that off-the-beaten track information boosts the investment in the **local economy**. Furthermore, 14% of the young tourists **extended their stay** with one or more nights, and nearly everybody (97%) would like to get the same kind of no-nonsense info on their next city trips.

When asked about their best experience in Brussels, the maps' **local tips** are mentioned more often than the tourist classics. Highlights include the panorama on top of Parking 58, the vegetable garden on top of the Albertina library, a walk through Molenbeek, going out at Bonnefooi until the morning, and pissing in the public urinal that's built against Sint-Katelijne church.

The survey ran in the entire European USE-IT network (more than 40 cities) and Brussels came out on top. Of the 4,000 respondents, **one out of three** had already used the Brussels map. Strikingly, a large number of them (38%) was also motivated to start up a USE-IT map for their own city.

"The creative side of Brussels speaks to many tourists' hearts, and USE-IT embodies that side well. As Alderman for Tourism it's important that we support young innovative teams. So we're proud that these city maps have spread out all over Europe from Brussels," says Philippe Close, the Alderman of Tourism in Brussels.

The USE-IT headquarters is stationed in the **Galerie Ravenstein**, where it attracts more than 20,000 travellers per year. Apart from all the European free maps, visitors also get tips about nightlife there from the young Brussels volunteers, or they head out together for a walk along the Anderlecht supporters' bars or the latest genital graffiti in town. Anything but the Manneken Pis.



More details about the report: www.use-it.travel/survey_2017
All cities in the USE-IT network: www.use-it.travel

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