There is certainly no shortage of fun things to do with children in Belgium - the only real problem will be convincing them to leave when the time comes!

This is a list of favorite places of ISB families. If you visit somewhere that you think others would enjoy, please send details to facommunications@isb.be and we will add it. Similarly if you visit somewhere on this list and find that the prices have increased (rarely would they have decreased!) then please let us know so that we can make the update.

INTERNET RESOURCES

- **www.petitmoutard.be**: This website is in French and Flemish, but still very useful. On the home page you can plug in the age(s) of your children, a location in Belgium (you can search in France and the Netherlands as well), and the type of activity you want to find (indoor/outdoor, and there is a list of possibilities – playground, pool, nature, museum, etc). The computer will then generate a list of possibilities that meet your criteria. If the place has its own website, there will be a link to that (which may be in English).

- **www.agenda.be**: This is a listing by date of cultural activities for kids – concerts, plays, puppet shows, etc. The site is only in French and Flemish. As for the shows -- don’t be put off just because of the French or Flemish, kids generally enjoy the programs even if they don’t understand the language.

- **www.nocturnes.be**: From September to December, every Thursday evening 3 or 4 selected museums in Brussels stay open late, usually until 21:00. Frequently there are special events –short concerts, story-telling, guided visits. Santa Claus (or Saint Nick) usually puts in appearance at one or more of the museums in December.

- **www.b-rail.be**: Don’t feel like driving? Some of the places listed below (and many, many others) can be reached by Belgian rail and you can purchase a combination ticket (rail and admission and save money). Look at B-excursions on the Traveling in Belgium page. And the website is available in English!

- **www.cinebel.be**: This website lists all the movies for all of Belgium and contains a section on kid movies. Unlike the US and Australia, there is no rat-
ing system for the movies; if you want that you will need to check the website for the movie itself. The Musée du Cinema also shows old and classic movies for kids on usually on Saturday mornings or Sunday afternoons – check out the website www.cinematheque.be (in French) and look under programme pour jeune public. Movies are usually in the original language and there is a recommendation on as to what age is appropriate.

OUTDOOR PLAYGROUNDS IN BRUSSELS

Red Cloister/le Cloitre Rouge in Auderghem
Probably the best playground in the city. It is in a beautiful park next to the woods with several large ponds. There are actually three playgrounds including a large play/climbing structure that looks like a large sailing ship. On weekends, light meals, snacks and drinks are available in a café near the art center (a short walk from the ship playground). Located 1500 meters from the Hermann Debroux metro (be sure to walk north of the motorway/highway and enter the park after the sports fields). Going by car: Park at the sports fields along the beginning of the E411/A4 or go by Chausee de Tervereun and Chemin des Chenes and park by the Art Center.

Tournay-Solvay in Boitsfort
This is very close to ISB as the crow flies; located in the middle of the woods. The play structures are wooden, including a large airplane. Going by car: Park at the Boitsfort train station and then follow the park maps to the walled garden at the far end of park – finding the playground is half of the fun. It is a lovely hilly walk (past a “haunted house”) with ponds along the way. Go through a walled garden and turn right and the playground is a few meters ahead. There are no snack or drink facilities in the park.

Parc Malou in Woluwe-Saint Lambert
A large playground on the edge of the woods with lots of sand and a café for drinks, snacks and ice cream. Going by car, enter from Chaussee de Stockel or Chaussee de Struykbeken Going on the Metro, exit at Rodebeek or Vandervelde.

Parc de Wolvendael in Uccle
Large climbing pyramid and other playground equipment in a pretty wooded park. No sand or food/drinks available.

Bois de la Cambre in Ixelles
Not a huge playground, but located next to a café/restaurant so parents can enjoy a drink outside while the kids play. On weekends during spring and summer there are also bouncy castles and high jump trampolines (for a fee).
Brussels Park in central Brussels
Not a huge playground, but a good place to let the kids run after sightseeing downtown. There is a puppet theater adjacent to the playground where performances are held on summer weekends. Located between the Royal Palace and the Belgian Parliament. Near Parc metro

Petit Train a Vapeur in Uccle (« The Little Steam Engine”) in Forest
There is a small playground here but the real reason to go is to ride the small steam trains. The trains only run on Sundays and Belgian holidays in the spring and summer. Check out the website for dates and times. Definitely worthwhile for any young train enthusiast – and don’t forget your cameras. Drinks and snacks available only when the trains are running. Address: Chaussee de Neerstalle 323b, B-1190 Forest Brussels. www.ptvf.fte2.org

Provincial Domaine Huizenberg
Near the E19 on the western outskirts of Brussels, this is a huge park with a couple of different playgrounds including a fabulous new one on the top of the hill that opened at the end of June, 2008. This park has farm animals and birds, trampolines, row boats, mini-golf, go-carts, and beautiful gardens. Park is open daily from 9:00 to sundown with a nominal admission charge from April to October. From May 1 to September, there is an outdoor pool. Pool costs 7 euros for those over 12, 2 euros for under 12 (in addition to admission fee for the park). If you live in Vlaams Brabant, the pools costs 2 euros per person regardless of age.
www.vlaamsbrabant.be/provinciedomeinen/huizingen

Adventure Park in Wavre
Not really a playground but for lack of a better category have included it here. This is a climbing adventure place for bigger kids (ages 8 and up – perfect for middle schoolers who don’t have a fear of heights). Price varies depending on the course(s) you do – between 19 and 29 euros and you should allow at least half a day. Check website for opening dates and times. Snacks and drinks available on-site. About 30 minutes from Brussels. Take E411 towards Namur, exit 5.
www.aventureparc.be

OUTDOOR PLAYGROUNDS OUTSIDE BRUSSELS
(worth the journey)

Kessel-Lo
Large playground with several different play areas including a climbing circuit for older children. There are tennis courts, a fishing lake and a special track for rollerblading and skateboards. Kids love the mini-town complete with stoplights and pretend train crossings where the kids 3-11 can ride bikes, trikes or go-karts. Also available are electric boats (6 and up), mini-golf, electric cars and row boats. Park is open all year and is free. The special activities (go-karts, etc) are open from April until the end of September for a nominal fee. There is also a beautiful outdoor pool (and a baby pool) with a slide perfect for elementary school kids and younger.
Valery Cousin Provincial Recreational Area near Ciney/Dinant
About 1 hour from Brussels SE on the E411. Entrance is relatively steep at 10 euros per person over 6 (under 6 free) but all activities (except horseback riding) are included in the admission price. You can also get a yearly pass for your car that costs 60 euros and you can bring in whoever is in your car whenever you visit. This park has to be seen to be believed. It is very large and there are 10 unique playgrounds spread throughout the park with different themes including tree houses, Robinson Crusoe, Trojan horse, just to name a few. There are also tennis and basketball courts, mini-golf, row boats and canoes and a large outdoor pool with a slide. There are several restaurants and cafeterias.
http://www.province.namur.be/

Durbuy Adventure, Rome (Durbuy)
About an hour and a half from Brussels, SE on the E411. A great place for teens as well as younger children, in fact it’s a great place for the whole family. Challenger course through the forest, quad bikes, climbing, kayaking, paint-ball, archery, rifle shooting, treasure hunt, electric go-karts, fishing. You can do as much or as little as you like. There are several day packages to chose from or you can make a weekend of it and stay in an indian tepee, chalet or holiday house. Recommended for birthday parties (especially for active boys!)

Queen Fabiola Park in Namur
This is a cross between a playground and a low tech amusement park with mini-golf, trampolines, bouncy castles and pedal go-karts and electric cars. For the older kids (over 8) there is an adventure climbing circuit. There is a restaurant that serves light meals, drinks and snacks and there are picnic tables and grills if you want to bring your own food. About 30 minutes from Brussels SE on the E411. Exit 14 follow signs for the citadel (also worth a visit). Open only from April to October from 11:00 to 18:00. Admission is 3 euros for adults, 2 euros for kids, under 1 meter free. 1 euro for the trampolines, go-karts and electric cars. Mini golf 1,5 euros
www.citadelle.namur.be

Provincial Domain Halve Maan near Diest
This park features a large outdoor swimming pool surrounded by sand, great playgrounds, kayaks, trampolines and mini-cars. Food is available. About 1 hour NE of Brussels. Address: Omer Vanaudenhovelaan 48, B-3290 Diest.
www.vlaamsbrabant.be/diest

Bokrijk Park
This is the Belgian version of colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. The park is a huge open-air museum and on weekends there are people dressed up in costumes and demonstrating crafts from by-gone days. Kids can try out stilts and other games
from bygone days. Adjacent to the museum is a very large playground including a water play area (not for swimming but expect your kids to get soaked). There are mini-cars, some farm animals (pony rides) and mini-golf. There are several places to eat and drink in the museum and the playground. About 1 hour east of Brussels. Address: Bokrijklaan 1, B-3600 Genk. www.bokrijk.be

**Provincial Sports and Recreation Center de Nekker near Mechelen**
There is a nominal entrance fee from the end of March until the end of September. Free the rest of the year. Swimming lake that includes a climbing structure and slides. There is a large outdoor playground and small indoor one should it rain. Mini-golf and pedal go-karts also available for a fee. There is a café for light meals, snacks and drinks or you can bring your own picnic. About 30 minutes north of Brussels. Nekkerspoel-Borcht 19, B-2800 Mechelen. www.denekker.be

**INDOOR PLAYGROUNDS**

For those not so rare occasions when it rains, there are several large indoor playgrounds where the kids can burn off their excess energy.

**Kids Factory in Waterloo**
Large bright and clean play area with bouncy castles and climbing structure. You can buy one ticket; you get a discount if you buy a card for ten entries. A small café with snacks and drinks. You can also do birthday parties here. Address: Chaussee de Bruxelles 63, 1410 Waterloo www.kidsfactory.org

**Kids Paradise in Auderghem**
Close to ISB near the Hermann Debroux metro and the Carrefour. Address: Boulevard de Souverain 220, 1160 Auderghem www.thekidsparadise.be

**INDOOR POOLS AND WATERPARKS**

Brussels offers a large selection of indoor pools, many have slides or other attractions for the kids, as well as two indoor water parks. For some incomprehensible reason, many Belgian pools require boys to wear Speedo style suits; others also require swim caps. Best to come prepared with both.

**Overijse Pool**
Worth the journey even if you don’t live in Overijse. The main attraction here is an incredible water slide that is more like going down a rushing waterfall – perfect for older elementary and middle school kids. No speedo/swim caps necessary! There is also a nice kiddie pool and a sauna. A café onsite provides snacks and drinks. Prices vary by age and you get a discount if you buy a card for 10 entries. Address: Begijnhofplein, 3090 Overijse. www.begijntjesbad.be
**Piscine Nausicaa in Waterloo**
When the weather is nice the roof of the pool retracts and becomes an outdoor pool. There is a sliding board and a good-sized kiddie pool. No café, only vending machines for snacks. Address: rue Theophile Delbar 33, 1410 Waterloo  
[www.waterloo-sports.be](http://www.waterloo-sports.be)

**Espadon in Etterbeek**
Baby pool has a jungle theme and a small slide; for older kids there is a big curvy slide. There is a café next to the pool. Address: Rue des Champs 69, 1040 Etterbeek  
[www.etterbeeksport.be](http://www.etterbeeksport.be)

**Poseidon in Woluwe Saint-Lambert**
Starting to show its age, but still a nice baby, kiddie and lap pool. Café on the premises. Address: Avenue des Vaillants 2, 1200 Woluwe St. Lambert

**Park Molenheide**
Park Molenheide is the perfect answer to a rainy weekend day. The complex includes a pool with several water slides and a very large baby pool with all kinds of small play structures. Next door is a very large indoor playground/quasi-amusement park which would appeal to elementary kids and younger. New in 2008 is an Indoor Adventure Golf. A bit more than 1 hour from Brussels. Address: Molenheidestraat 7, B-3530 Houthalen-Helchteren.  
[www.beourguest.be](http://www.beourguest.be)

**Calypso**
Near ISB. The baby pool has a small slide and a café onsite. Address: Leopold Weiner 60, 1170 Watermael-Boitsfort  

**Oceade**
Large waterpark located next to the Atomium (cool to look at but not much inside and there is generally a long and slow line to take the elevator to the top) and Kinepolis movie complex in northern Brussels.  
[www.oceade.be](http://www.oceade.be)

**Aqualibi in Wavre**
Next to the Walibi amusement park. Take E411 towards Namur; exit 6 and follow signs.  
[www.walibi.be](http://www.walibi.be)

**ZOOS**
Two great zoos that also have wonderful playgrounds. Both offer annual passes which are good value if you plan to go more than a couple of times a year.

**Parc Paradiso in Bruggelette**
About 1 hour SE of Brussels. Admission price includes show with birds of prey.  
[www.paradisio.be](http://www.paradisio.be)

**Planckendael outside Mechelen**
Leuvenseteenweg 582, B-2812 Mechelen  
[www.planckendael.be](http://www.planckendael.be)
MUSEUMS
There are many museums in Brussels and Belgium but we are only including here those of special interest to children.

Museum of Natural Sciences
The dinosaur galleries have been recently restored and are well worth a visit. There is also a new hands-on gallery for kids 5-12 (extra charge). Special exhibits are often kid-friendly. You can also have birthday parties here but you need to reserve well in advance. Address: Rue Vautier 29, B-1000 Brussels
www.naturalsciences.be

Children’s Museum in Ixelles
A small and well-organized hands-on museum for younger children (fourth grade and younger). The museum often has special activities such as painting, baking or theater performances. There is a small but rundown playground next door. Available for birthday parties but you need to book far in advance. Open Wednesday afternoons, Saturdays and Sundays from 14:30 to 17:00. Closed in August. Price is 6,85 per person, 6 admissions for 38 euros or 10 admissions for 58 euros. Address: Rue du Bourgmestre, 1050 Ixelles www.museedesenfants.be

Technopolis
A great science museum with fun for the whole family on a rainy day. For kids 4-8, there is a new part that is more like a children’s museum where kids can make pretend pizzas, fix a car, go to the bank (including printing money with their photo) and the grocery store and a construction zone with large Legos. Bigger kids can ride a unicycle high up in the air. Lots of hands-on activities and demonstrations (in Dutch). Note: Middle School goes here for a field trip. About 30 minutes north of Brussels, just off the E19. Address: Technologielaan, 2800 Mechelen. www.technopolis.be

ICE SKATING
Poseidon  Available during the winter months; next door to the Poseidon pool (see above).

Conrad Hotel.  Avenue Louise.  Pricey but nice small rink.

Over the Christmas holidays, there is a large market at Place Catherine in Brussels which includes an outdoor skating rink. The MS/HS Band performs here so worth checking the FA NewsFlash in December and coinciding your visit to see them play.
PUPPET THEATRES
Belgium is famous for its puppet theaters and there are several to choose from.

Le Theatre Royal du Peruchet
This is a quaint little theater not far from ISB. Check the website for shows and times. Kids love the shows (in French) even if they don’t understand a word. Snacks and drinks are sold at the intermission. Ticket price includes the “museum” which is a large room with all the puppets from the theater on display - not hands on! You can also have birthday parties here – there is a room available where you can serve your cake after the show. Address: Avenue de la Foret 50, 1050 Ixelles
www.theatreperuchet.be

Toone
Toone has been a Brussels institution for nearly 200 years. Shows are in French, Dutch, German and occasionally English. Worth a visit just to see in the theater which is located not far from the Grand Place in the walking district. The shows tend towards the bawdy so probably more appropriate for middle school and high school rather than younger children. Address: Petite rue des Bouchers-Impasse Schuddeveld 21, 1000 Brussels
www.toone.be

THEATRE IN ENGLISH
OK, OK, Brussels in no London, but prices are reasonable and there is some good English language theater here. Some productions may have adult themes and would not be appropriate for children. You can find information on the individual websites below or at www.theaterinbrussels.com You can join mailing list(s) to be notified of upcoming productions.

Brussels Light Opera Company (BLOC)
BLOC puts on a major musical every fall. In November 2009 they will be doing Pirates of Penzance. They also do cabaret evenings featuring songs from favorite Broadway shows or operas. www.bloc-brussels.be

American Theater Company www.atc-brussels.com
Brussels Shakespeare Society www.shaksoc.com
Green Parrot Productions www.greenparrot.be

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