

WORLD'S UGLIEST TOWN BECOMES AN ATTRACTION



Charleroi becomes an item of comedy tourism. Tourists flock to see the town nobody wants to live in.

Belgium's recent history has been littered with quarrels and fights between the richer Flemish population in the north and the French-speaking Walloons in the south. However, there is one thing that all Belgians agree upon: that the Walloon town of **Charleroi** is one of the ugliest places on the planet, which should belong to the Siberia of the Stalin era and not Western Europe.

It is a town full of **derelict factories, abandoned litter dumps** and the general atmosphere makes for a famously **high suicide rate**. Most visitors, usually on their way to Bruges, northern France or Brussels, are stunned to see the state of Charleroi. Even the inhabitants are ashamed of living in such an unattractive place. The most famous residents of Charleroi make testament to the reputation of the place.

Firstly, the world's first ever white female suicide bomber died in Iraq during an extreme Islamic attempt on terrorism with her passport nearby stating her town of residence as Charleroi. If the reputation of Charleroi needs strengthening, look no further than to Marc Dutroux, the infamous paedophile murderer whose house is part of several guided tours now.

Add these incidences of horror to the fact that the infamous Belgian town is struggling with the current recession having not yet recovered from the previous two and we have the most unattractive place in Europe.

However, just as people queue to see 'freak shows' at the circus and often enjoy the less attractive part of life, amazingly, visits to Charleroi have trebled in recent years. Today **tourists come to climb a slagheap** or inspect acres of post-industrial wasteland. Due to the town's ugliness, it has become a tourist trap, which it surely would not be if it looked decent and did not have a history of terrifying residents.

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