



The Collegiate Church of St Gertrude and its impressive jacquemart



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The *jacquemart* (an animated mechanised figure which strikes the hours on a bell with a hammer) of the Sainte-Gertrude collegiate church in Nivelles is one of 3 in Wallonia. Made of gold plates brass, this representation of a warrior is quite impressive in size: 2 metres high and 350 kg in weight! The locals are so used to the automaton marking the passing of time the city would not be the same without it.

The automaton, **given to Nivelles by Charles the Bold in the XVth century**, was first placed on the town hall before being transferred to the south tower of the collegiate church in 1617. **The locals first named him Jean de Nivelles**, a reference to a popular song and expression at the time (Source: Wikipedia). In time, the name would become Djan Djan.

The Sainte-Gertrude collegiate church

The Jewel of Nivelles in Brabant-Wallon province is the Collegiate

Church of St Gertrude which was consecrated in 1046 in the presence of Henry III, the Emperor of the Holy Germanic Empire.

The imposing sanctuary is in Otto-Roman style and stands out because of its unusual layout, having two transepts and two choirs. The central nave is 102 metres long making it one of the longest in the world.

The west end (or "west-bau") consists of an apse, two chapel-galleries and a large high room called the "salle impériale" (Imperial room) and an **octagonal belfry flanked by two side towers**.

The crypt, the archaeological basement and the cloister can also be visited.

Visitors with specific needs

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Website editor

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