

Simmerath Gives You A Chance At A Rare Butterfly Sighting

Simmerath will take you hours to explore, in no small part because it isn't all in one place.

The community is made up of 20 smaller villages and hamlets, each with its own historic structures and personality quirks. You can spend your whole visit just hiking between them, being mindful of the manufacturing grounds where the town shows off its engineering prowess.

However, if you only have eyes for the towns and factories, then you will miss out on all of the natural beauty of the area.

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The different hamlets surround the Rursee, which is a beautiful body of water peeking out among the forestry. There you can do light watersports, Nordic walking, or simply sit and picnic along the banks.

The land does draw you in, much as it has drawn in others for thousands of years. The Celts and Romans were both here. You can see their mark on the land and also some of the remaining Roman roads that cut through the area.

If you really have your eyes peeled while you are out in the woods and down by the water, you just might see the elusive *Lycaena helle*. This iridescent coppery blue butterfly is an endangered species, and lives in only a handful of places throughout Europe. They are small, so seeing one requires a sharp eye. When they are in season, Simmerath locals can provide special viewing tours.

With all the poking around and propping your eyes open, it is only natural to work up an appetite.

Simmerath cuisine benefits from the town's position near the border with Belgium and France. Opt for the fruit pastries when it is in season to really sink your teeth into a bit of the local flavor.

Fruit wines and beers are also widely available, made with local ingredients, and the taste of them can be a welcome consolation if you didn't see any butterflies during your stay.