

Travel



16C** (T, R, R, W, G-88, S, F-18C, L, P, C-12C)

O&E Thursday, December 20, 1984

Tiny Luxembourg has a wealth of charm

A good travel base in heart of Europe

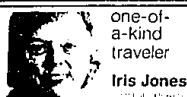
ONE OF THE pleasures of Europe is sitting at a sidewalk cafe and watching the world go by. That's what I am doing here in Vianden in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, watching the cars shift gears as they wind up and down the narrow streets. People crowd the sidewalks between high narrow buildings and lean over a stone bridge to watch fishermen along the Our River.

The streets of Vianden wrap around the base of a forested mountain that rises like a pedestal from the valley floor in the Ardennes Forest here in the northern mountains of Luxembourg.

At the top of the mountain pedestal, master of the town, the valley and all its surveys, is the castle of Vianden, an impressive spread of slate rooftops and stone walls that has been sitting high above the world since the first Count of Vianden started it in the 10th century. As I sit here I can't help thinking that visiting Luxembourg is like visiting a large private estate where you can relax with friends while sampling Europe on a budget. Within an hour's drive of the Luxembourg City airport you can visit vineyards, historic city settings and wonderful little mountain towns like this one.

LUXEMBOURG is a tiny country, 50 by 35 miles, bordered by Germany, France and Belgium in the heart of western Europe. For centuries it was a great power in Europe, a larger land whittled down in size over the centuries by its enemies.

Now it is the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with nearly 400,000 people led by the Grand Duke, Jean. It is a center, along with Brussels, of the European



Photos by
Micky Jones

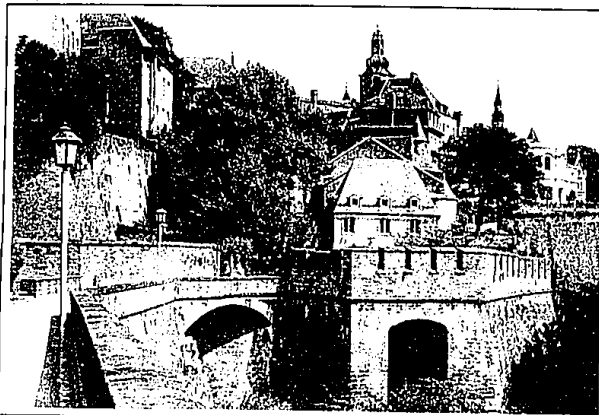
Common Market.

They love and memorialize Americans here because so many of our boys shed their blood in the Grand Duchy during the Battle of the Bulge, the decisive final battle of World War II. The 40th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge is being commemorated this month.

Like most small countries surrounded by powerful neighbors, Luxembourg is a multilingual country, so many of the people you meet speak English. French is the official language. German is spoken by many people. Luxembourgish, which sounds a little like German, is the popular everyday tongue.

A TYPICAL one-week tour of Luxembourg would take you to Luxembourg City, founded by the House of Luxembourg in the 10th century; to the vineyards along the Luxembourg Moselle, where they make a crisp dry white wine; and to the mountain villages of the Ardennes, especially the castle-town of Vianden.

Vianden is the grandest castle in Luxembourg, one of the finest medi-



Luxembourg City (above) is walled in places, a carryover from the days when Luxembourg was one of the powers of Europe.

The walker at right enjoys the sights in Vianden, which has Luxembourg's finest castle, visible at the top of photograph.

eval castles in Europe. It has been restored by the national government and will eventually be used for concerts, seminars and other public gatherings as well as for the pleasure of tourists. You don't have to wait for the renovation to be complete; most of it is open now to visitors.

The castle reached its heyday in the 14th century, when the Counts of Vianden owned 111 villages in this area. Near what is now the Luxembourg German border. The Knights Templar rode off to the crusades from here. The Germans occupied the castle ruins during World War II.

TOURISTS come from all the surrounding countries of Europe to occupy the castle, the sidewalk cafes and souvenir shops of the town, and to stay in the many small hotels that face onto the town's busy streets.

This is not a country of high-rise glass and steel hotels, although Le Royal opened downtown to fill that need in Luxembourg City last year and the Intercontinental opens near the Common Market facilities of the city in 1985.

There are many historic and interesting hotels and inns around the coun-

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