



## Walk My Way by Mayenne Carmona

Catholics who have a devotion to Mama Mary celebrate her birthday on September 8 in a solemn way. This year, my sisters and I decided to honor her by going on a two-day pilgrimage to the sites of her apparition in two cities in Belgium - Banneaux and Beauraing. We landed in Paris and took a land trip to the sacred pilgrim sites.

Banneaux which has the Shrine of our Lady of Banneaux (also known as the Shrine of the Virgin of the Poor), is a Marian shrine, and a place of healing. It is a small hamlet just southeast of Liege and 50 miles East South East of Brussels.

# The “Mary” Month of September

## History

In the winter of 1933, a young girl named Mariette reported that the Virgin Mary appeared to her on eight separate occasions. Mariette was 11 years old and came from a poor Catholic family. The Virgin spoke briefly to her during her apparitions but encouraged the girl to pray and led her to a spring with healing powers. After the apparitions, many healing Miracles associated with the spring at Banneaux were reported. The site of the apparitions at Banneaux was officially approved by the Catholic Church in 1949.

## A pilgrimage site

Today it is a pilgrimage site and the Shrine of the Virgin of the Poor includes the sacred spring, the Chapel of the Apparitions, a large church,

several small chapels throughout the forest, the Stations of the Cross, a hospital for the sick who come for healing and a pilgrim's information office.

## The Apparitions at Beauraing

Between November 1932 - Feb 1933, our Lady appeared to five children whose ages ranged from 9-15 in Beauraing, Belgium. For several years after the apparition, pilgrims flocked to the small town of Beauraing, province of Namur, Belgium. The children reported that the Lady requested that a chapel be built at the site and stated: “I am the Immaculate Virgin.” She also wished for pilgrims to come to the site and asked the children and everyone to “pray, pray, pray.” In one of her final visions, she revealed to the children her Golden Heart. Our



Lady of Beauraing, is also known as the Virgin of the Golden Heart.

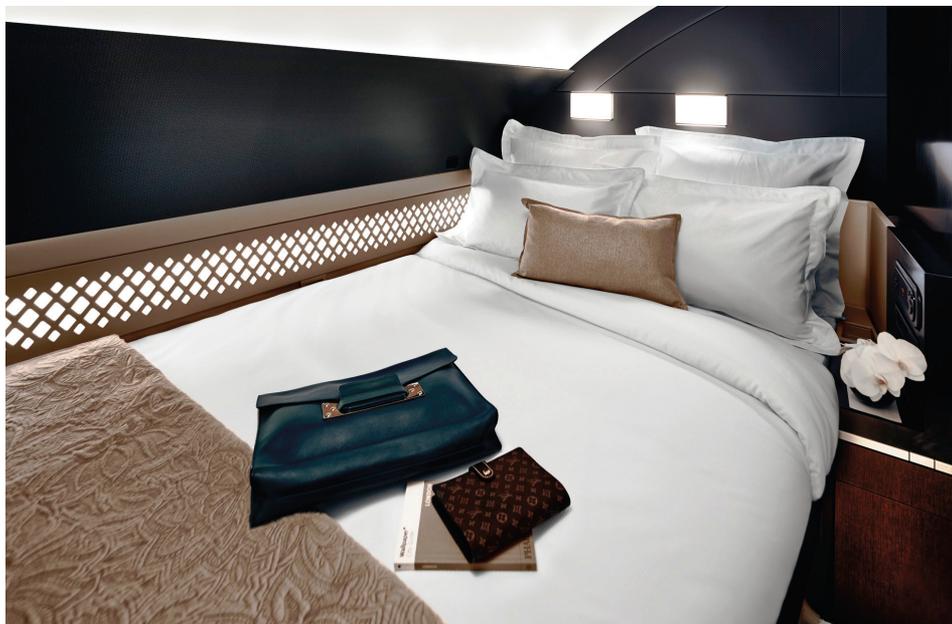
In July 1949 the shrine was officially recognized by the Catholic Church declaring the many cures that have taken place there as miraculous.

After we had finished our pilgrimage to the two shrines, we went to a nearby town, Pepinster, and stayed in a charming, tastefully decorated hotel, Lafarques. Our gastronomic dinner at Lafarques's restaurant, a member of the Chaine des Rotisseurs, was a climactic way to end our pilgrimage.



**Etihad, the airline I took to Paris**

There are many factors I consider when I choose an airline for a trip: the price of the airline's business class, the comfort of the seat - it should be a seat that flattens into a bed, service, cuisine, and schedule. I chose Etihad because it met all my requirements. Their business class fare is reasonable, the seat lays flat for a good night's rest, the schedule of departure from Manila at 18:45 is ideal, the return flight from Paris at 22:00 gives me a whole day in Paris, the service at Etihad which I experienced in 2014 is always excellent, and the cuisine meets my standards. But what truly impresses me with Etihad is their Residence, a notch higher than First Class. It is an ultra-exclusive private three-room suite measuring 125 square feet. It is located on the forward upper deck of the 380 and is available for single or double occupancy. Features include a living room, a shower room, and a double bedroom. It has TV sets in both living room and bedroom. The Residence includes a personal Butler and an onboard Chef, offering a bespoke, made to order dining experience. If price were no object, this is the only way to travel!



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