

DISCOVER THE EARTHLY PARADISE OF JAN VAN GORP



The child prodigy from Hilvarenbeek



The earthly paradise of Jan van Gorp is part of the Sagas & Legends routes
Enjoyable cycling and walking routes in Brabant

— 10-kilometre cycle route and a 5.5- kilometre walking route in the surroundings of Hilvarenbeek —



BICYCLE ROUTE DETAILS

Bicycle route: 10 km

S Start and finish point:
De Vrijthof, Hilvarenbeek

JUNCTIONS

42 - 51 - 38 - 50 - 08 - 51 - 42

P De Nieuwe Hoef
Gorp aan de Ley 1
Hilvarenbeek



WALKING ROUTE DETAILS

Walking route: 5,5 km

S Start and finish point:
De Nieuwe Hoef
Gorp aan de Ley 1
Hilvarenbeek

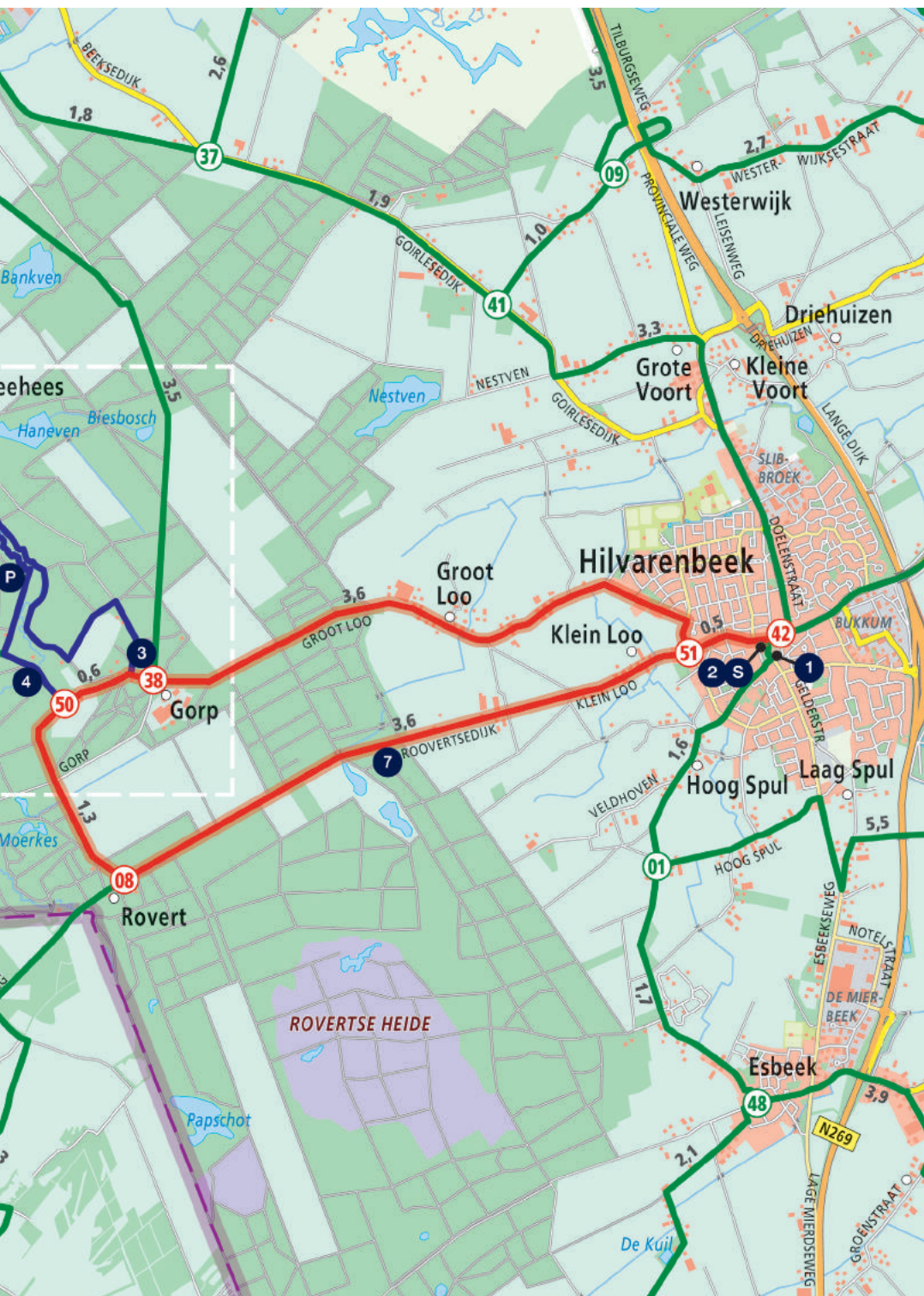
JUNCTIONS

92 - 93 - 94 - 67 - 68 - 92



SIGHTS ON ROUTE

- 1 Saint Peter's Church
- 2 "Geboden Linde"
- 3 Van Gorp Castle
- 4 "Paradijsbrug"
- 5 Earthly Paradise, the painting (replica)
- 6 Rovertse Leij
- 7 Rovertse Bergen





SIGHTS ON ROUTE



1

Saint Peter's Church

Saint Peter's Church stems from 990! A tuff stone church was built here at that time. The current (Gothic) church and tower date back to around 1300. The church has a 74.5-metre tower that you can climb.

'Geboden Linde'

The centuries-old linden tree on the Vrijthof has seen everything pass by. From criminals who were tried under its branches to funfair-goers who whirled around it in all kinds of fairground attractions. But above all, it has seen hundreds of festivals and parties.

2



3

Van Gorp Castle

This hunting lodge was also called Van Gorp Castle. The house was built around 1870. The garden in front of the house contains a lovely statue of Diana, the goddess of hunting.

'Paradijsbrug'

In the stunning nature areas of the Gorp en Roovert Estate, you will find 'paradise bridge', one of the many references to Jan van Gorp.

4





DISCOVER THE EARTHLY PARADISE OF JAN VAN GORP

The child prodigy from Hilvarenbeek

A 'child prodigy' was born in Hilvarenbeek in the 16th century. It was Johannes Goropius Becanus, also called Jan van Gorp. Jan had a great gift for languages, amazing intuition and vast knowledge of nature. He combined that knowledge with feeling and found... the EARTHLY PARADISE. Read more about Jan's story here and join us on a trip.

In 1535, Jan is 14 years-old and studying at the Latin School of Hilvarenbeek. That particular day, he learned about the Earthly Paradise: a paradisiacal world, a heaven on earth. On his way back home, he thought, 'If an Earthly Paradise exists, I want to find it.' Soon after, Jan saw a lark, the symbol of the connection between heaven and earth. He decided to follow the lark in the hope of finding the Earthly Paradise.

Jan ran and ran, via the Groot Loo and into the forests of Gorp and Roover. Jan kept running until he lost his way and the lark. He then arrived at 'Paradijsburg' (Paradise Bridge). Here, there was a meandering stream, animals were drinking, and all kinds of things were growing on the banks. 'Wow, I think I have found it! It is so beautiful here, this must be the Earthly Paradise,' Jan said to himself out loud.

Jan started to explore and was amazed by the herbs and seeds that grew there. 'These are not any old herbs, but herbs which can be used to heal people.' Until then, he had only read about them. Jan picked some herbs and seeds, and then he saw the lark suddenly re-appear. He decided to continue following the bird and arrived back in the centre of Hilvarenbeek, where the lark flew into the tall church.



Jan climbed the tower and once he got to the top, he saw the statue of Saint Christopher. The patron saint of travellers was beautifully illuminated by the sun. 'This must be a sign,' Jan thought. 'I must leave Hilvarenbeek and travel if I want to learn more.'

No sooner said that done. But before Jan left, he planted a seed in the middle of the centre of Hilvarenbeek. 'This way, no one will forget that I lived here.' You don't have to look hard to see the beautiful centuries-old linden tree on the Vrijthof these days.



Things you may not know about Jan...

- Jan van Gorp is better known as Johannes Goropius Becanus.
- He also found poppies in the Earthly Paradise. This plant helps against toothache. You can find more information in the Heem- en kruidentuin D'n Doornhof (wildlife and herb garden) on Doelenstraat in Hilvarenbeek. More information on [kruidentuindedoornhof.nl](https://www.kruidentuindedoornhof.nl).
- He wrote the book 'Origines Antwerpianae', in which he demonstrates that Adam and Eve must have spoken Brabantian/Beeks, and that the Early Paradise must have been located in Gorp (in Hilvarenbeek). You will find the original book in De Beekse Toren museum (in Saint Peter's Church). More information on [beeksetoren.nl](https://www.beeksetoren.nl).
- He had a great gift for languages and could therefore speak various languages.
- He travelled to far away countries, where he studied the Earthly Paradise, its nature and language.
- Later he became a philosopher and personal physician in royal circles? If you would like to know more, go to Museum De Dorpsdokter. More information on [museumdedorpsdokter.nl](https://www.museumdedorpsdokter.nl).

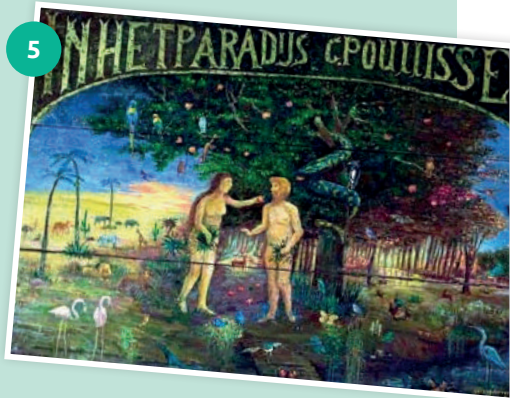




SIGHTS ON ROUTE

5 Earthly Paradise, the painting (replica)

A replica of the painting 'The Earthly Paradise with the Fall of Adam and Eve' hangs in Gasterij De Nieuwe Hoef. The original is hanging in the Beekse tower.



6

Roovertse Leij

A small river flows from Belgium into the estate of Gorp and Roovert, meandering entirely naturally through the forest. Lily of the valley and wood anemones are just two of the flowers growing and blooming on the banks of the Roovertse Leij. You will also find nuthatches, wood warblers, kingfishers and beautiful demoiselles there.

Roovertse Bergen with a giant bench

You will find a lovely play forest at the Roovertsedijk. Children can do all kinds of things here: building huts, climbing in trees and simply running and playing around.

7



Go to bezoekhilverenbeek.nl
for more information



— Experience the story of the region of Hilvarenbeek —

DISCOVER THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Sagas and legends live on in Brabant. Beautiful routes take you past the most impressive spots where regional stories come to life. Join us on an exploration and experience the story of Jan van Gorp and his Earthly Paradise.



.. On his way back from Latin School, Jan saw a lark, the symbol of the connection between heaven and earth. He followed the bird and made various discoveries in his lovely Hilvarenbeek.

Discover the story of Jan van Gorp in Hilvarenbeek, where you can enjoy yourself amid the stunning countryside, centuries-old buildings and eat delicious food at the many pavement cafes.

Description

The cycle route starts on the Vrijthof in Hilvarenbeek and is 10 km in length. On the way, you can stop at Gasterij De Nieuwe Hoef. Here, you can park your bike and start a 5.5-km walk through the stunning countryside.

CYCLING AND WALKING JUNCTIONS

Follow the route from one numbered junction to the next via these recognisable signs. You can easily cycle or walk from number to number. You will find the junction route numbers on the signs on the side of the road. Arrows then point you in the direction of the next number.

