



## THE SEMOIS, FROM CHINY TO BOUILLON

*Easy and wild, in the heart of nature, with small rapids and dam passages, this section offers all the ingredients of a real canoe-kayak journey. Be careful, however, when the water level is close to the authorized maximum: the current can be very strong locally, and fallen trees or branches may partly block the river. Navigate in the center. Near islands, stay preferably in the main channels and never take small side arms during high water. Suitable for beginners. Difficulty WW I (I+ during high water).*

*The Semois is ideal for multi-day canoe-kayak trips, giving the journey an adventurous yet sporty character, with nearly 75 km of uninterrupted navigation. The descent takes place almost entirely through protected natural areas. The campsites along the river are real green havens. On the water, the current is sometimes lively, sometimes calm, without major difficulty. However, capsizing is a real risk, especially at dam passages, so travelers must be equipped with waterproof barrels or bags and carefully scout each passage in advance.*

*Multi-day river trip: another way to discover the Semois*



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**Multi-day river trip: another way to discover the Semois**



ID Card – SEMOIS FROM CHINY TO BOUILLON		
Distance +/-75 km	Recommended duration: 3 days	
Difficulty WW I	Technicality *	Commitment **
Key points	Dams, branches and fallen trees, rocks, currents	
Opening period:	All year; see website <a href="#">Site Kayak du Service public de Wallonie</a>	

## TRAJECT CHINY - CHASSEPIERR

25 KM (+/-5 U), HET HELE JAAR OPEN VOLGENS DE GELDENDE BESLUITEN (5 H)

**Boarding takes place at the Chiny lake, upstream from the Saint-Nicolas bridge, at the "Chiny beach" area on the right bank, right at the entrance of the Canada campsite (parking available).**

It is recommended to paddle for a few minutes on the lake to get familiar with basic maneuvers and the handling of your boat. If there is current on the lake, it indicates a high water level and should be taken as a sign to proceed with increased caution during the descent.

Downstream from the bridge, the first dam — easily passable — is crossed on the left side (the "pass" is sometimes marked by a wooden pole and an arrow).

At dams, the front passenger often gets splashed: be cautious if you have young children, as this first contact with the water may be quite cold.

Reminder: **do not enter the mill channel of the Cambier mill (on the right side).**

After this first passage, the river quickly picks up its pace; depending on the water level, a few large rocks must be maneuvered around — a fun opportunity to steer your kayak.

The river makes a wide bend around the hill of the village of Chiny and quickly leads to a second dam, **the Noue pass**. You can enter the small channel on the left. This pass is narrow, so do not navigate side by side but rather in single file, leaving space between kayaks (**beware of low branches, rocks, and current**).

After 4 km, you will reach the **Chiny footbridge**, near the Hôtel des Comtes. The Semois then continues its path through the forest until it reaches the **Lacuisine lake**, where the approach is marked by a clear slowing of the current.

A rocky promontory on the left bank is often used by local youngsters who jump into the river from several meters high. A few hundred meters past this rocky promontory, you will arrive at the **Le Hât stop**, and then shortly after, at the **Lacuisine landing area**, located along a beautiful wide meadow on the right bank.



From the Lacuisine reservoir, the descent continues by crossing the Lacuisine dam via a wide passage located roughly in the middle (it's best to warn your front passenger – splash guaranteed!). The river then meanders through open countryside, heading toward Florenville, whose church stands proudly on the cuesta overlooking the valley.

To visit Florenville, stop at the municipal campsite (left bank, easy parking and access) or, better yet, at the "La Rosière" stop, also on the left bank (signposted access to Florenville center).

Turning your back on Florenville, the Semois heads north to the village of Martué (1 km), where remnants of an old dam force you to carefully choose a passage among several small islets, often obstructed by debris. At high water, beware of strong currents immediately after this section.

Soon after, the Semois enters a forested area for nearly 10 km, with numerous meanders that can make you lose your bearings (a small compass might come in handy...).

Depending on water levels, rocks can add extra fun and technical challenge to this part of the journey.

Exiting the forest, a final large meander flows across meadows bordering the lovely village of Chassepierre. Just after Chassepierre's bridge, the "Les Cabrettes" stop lies on the left bank by a large meadow (easy parking and access).

## CHASSEPIERRE - LINGLÉ Section

22 KM (+/-4 H 30), OPEN ALL YEAR depending on current regulations

After Chassepierre, the Semois flows north again, entering a fully forested route all the way to the French border, some 95 km downstream.

The river remains fun and easy to navigate. About 6–7 km downstream from the Chassepierre stop ("Camping Les Cabrettes"), you'll reach the Vanne des Moines dam. This can be passed by portaging your boat on the right bank (safe option), or by wading through on the right side (sporty option).

To paddle through, use the small chute on the far-right side of the dam (approx. 2 meters from the riverbank – spotting it in advance is essential). This is the only suitable route; the left side is too steep and dangerous due to submerged concrete blocks. Be cautious of rocks in the water.

If portaging, it's easy to relaunch your boat on the gravel bank downstream.

About 5 km after the Vanne des Moines, two tight meanders lead to the first aquatic plant zone, over a short distance. A few hundred meters later, the forest opens on the left, revealing the park of the former Conques Priory. Another meander brings you to an old dam — the passage varies with water levels but is generally easier on the right.

150 meters downstream from this dam, on the right bank, lies the "Champ le Monde" stop (difficult landing: rocks, concrete blocks, branches, awkward maneuvering, no parking).



One kilometer further, after a large (now disused) railway bridge, you'll see the Moulin Willaime dam and campsite on the right bank. A narrow, unofficial passage between rocks lies toward the left side of the dam, roughly in the center. This path is hard to spot and requires a sharp right turn immediately after crossing — tricky for beginners, especially in tandem boats. It's usually best to portage over the dam near the mill (right side).

About 300 m downstream, at the end of a meadow (private land, access allowed via the nearby campsite), there's a stop at Moulin Willaime (car access and small parking lot).

The river then plunges back into the forest for a long meander known as **Tombeau du Chevalier** ("The Knight's Tomb").

6 km downstream, the current slows near **Herbeumont beach** (right bank).

The **Nawés Dam (also called Moulin Deleau)** is crossed using a series of chutes on the left. Beware of metal debris in and around the water — for heavier boats like tandem canoes, it's safer to go through empty.

Downstream from Moulin Deleau, the Semois leads to **Linglé**, with a stop on the left bank just before the bridge (easy maneuvering and parking).

From here, the Semois becomes officially "navigable" (or rather, "floatable") in legal terms — a reminder of the historical use of the river to transport goods instead of relying on isolated, difficult forest roads.

## LINGLÉ/MORTEHAN - BOUILLON Section

30 KM (+/-6 H), OPEN ALL YEAR depending on current regulations

A wide meander with gentle flow offers great views of the villages **Cugnon and Mortehan**. Just upstream from the bridge linking the two villages is a dam that can easily be crossed using the wide chute on the left side. Be sure to admire the old mill as you pass.

About 1.5 km downstream, you'll find the **Saint-Remacle camping stop** (municipality of Bertrix) on the right bank, along the river branch that bypasses the island on the right.

After **Maka ford**, the Semois forms several islands. Always pass to the right — the left branches often have debris and may be impassable or dangerous.

Note: **landing on the islands is strictly forbidden** (to protect nesting birds).

4 km (about 1 hour) downstream from Maka, the **old Dohan dam** is easy to cross (at high water, avoid going far right).

Under **Dohan Castle**, near the bridge, there's another old dam (crossable) and a landing point called **"Le Saty"**, directly under the bridge and about 40 m downstream on the left bank (no parking, difficult landing in high water).

After Dohan, the river makes a 7 km wide meander heading north.

After around 4 km (1h), you'll encounter an old dam — the best route is generally on the right, depending on water levels (in low water, avoid the left-bank arm).

The river then gradually turns back south.



On the **right bank**, you'll find the “**Gué du Han du Han**” stop — a large grassy area ideal for picnics (tables at the forest edge, 100 m from the river; car access and parking available). About 2 km downstream from Gué du Han du Han, after a vast meadow on the right, a large island is best passed on the **left** (the right side is often blocked and dangerous). The Semois flows through two final large meanders over 7 km, bringing you to **Bouillon**. Landing is **mandatory on the left bank before the dam**, at the “**La Vanne**” stop.

### IN IMAGES...



View of the start of this section, the Chiny lake and the Saint-Nicolas Bridge (view upstream). If the water level allows, the dam is best crossed at the point indicated by the arrow.



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The pass at the Chiny dam (Cambier Mill), the first "splasy" passage of this route.



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The Noûe pass. This pass is narrow; do not paddle side by side, but one behind the other, keeping a distance between kayaks. (Beware of low branches, rocks, and strong current).



The Lacuisine dam, to be crossed via the well-designed pass in the middle (reversal current possible).



The Semois in Florenville.



The Semois approaching Chassepierre, another major tourist stop on this route.



Approaching the "Conroy" area near Sainte-Cécile.





The Vanne des Moines dam, with a pass located along the right bank (often tricky to cross, strong current). Caution is required. It is possible to disembark on the right and carry your boat past the dam before re-entering the water, avoiding the descent by boat.



Old dam just upstream of the "Champ le Monde" area in Herbeumont. The best passage depends on the water level and debris (generally on the left or far right side of the dam).



The Nawés dam (Deleau Mill): a deceptively harmless-looking passage where the risk of damaging your boat is very real. The crossing is not adapted for canoes or kayaks (presence of metal pieces).



The series of small basins at the Nawés dam, seen from downstream (stay centered in the passes).



The Willaime dam and mill, whose crossing is quite sporty (no designated pass and risk of being dragged by strong water flow). A passage is sometimes possible on the left side of the dam (narrow, must be scouted).



Boarding and disembarking area at the Linglé bridge, end of this section (left bank).



Disembarking area at the "Vanne" in Bouillon. Stay close to the left bank and avoid drifting to the right.