

Ambassador Howard Gutman's Visit to Chimay on August 17, 2010

The local edition of Catholic *Vers L'Avenir* (circ. 94,100) this August 18 devotes a full page to the Ambassador's visit to Chimay the day before.

Under the heading "The Ambassador Finds Chimay Charming," the journalist writes: "Incredible, wonderful! When hearing what he said and seeing how he looked at everything, no doubt that the U.S. Ambassador will in the future also be the Ambassador of Chimay in his country. But it is a fact that the visit of the castle and of its theater with Princess Elisabeth herself as a guide was the highlight of a long day full of discoveries of various treasures from Chimay.

"Being Ambassador in Brussels since one year, Howard Gutman has decided to apply to Belgium the recipe that made the success of his friend Barack Obama: visiting as many cities as possible, discovering their assets, and meeting local actors. After Ypres, Bouillon, and Bruges, it was Chimay which he was visiting yesterday. As soon as he arrived at the City Hall, he was able to see the particular nature of a city which he until then only knew thanks to its famous Trappist beer. The importance of the presence of the Prince in the city, the role of the abbey in the development and the reputation of the city, and also the gratefulness of people from Chimay for U.S. troops who liberated the city in 1944, all this was mentioned by the Mayor, Denis Danvoye.

"After that, the Ambassador visited the assets of the city. After a special visit to the brewery, Howard Gutman and his staff had lunch in a famous restaurant in Virelles before being received at the castle for a guided tour by the Princess of Chimay.

"Like she has been doing for 30 years, she explained to him in a perfect English and with her usual enthusiasm the history and numerous anecdotes about the city. 'It is a treasure,' the Ambassador concluded. The Ambassador left at the end of the day probably remembering this sentence from the Princess: 'when one speaks about Chimay, one always responds 'oh yes, the beer!' I hope that in the future, people will also say 'oh yes, the castle!'

In a separate article under the heading "Ambassador of Chimay in the United States?" the journalist reports on the visit to the Trappist brewery, pointing out that the brewery is in a monastery and that the Ambassador got a very special visit as the public is generally not allowed to visit the place where the famous Trappist

beer is brewed – she points out that yesterday’s visit was even a first for some officials from Chimay who were accompanying the Ambassador.

She also reports that, during a beer tasting at the end of the visit, the former director of the brewery who is also Chancellor of a local historic association invited the Ambassador to come back next October 10 in order to be made member of honor of that association.

She concludes: “Howard Gutman, who was honored by the invitation, took note and, if his schedule permits, perhaps will he then wear the double hat of U.S. Ambassador in Chimay and Ambassador of Chimay in the United States.”