

Esslingen “city rally and Kessler sekt”

During a city rally we will tour of the old town of Esslingen learning about its history. The rally will end at the “Kessler wine cellars” which is the oldest producer of sparkling wine (Champagne) in Germany. Here we will have a tour and a wine tasting.

http://www.tourist.esslingen.de/servlet/PB/menu/1270924_12/index.html

Tübingen, the old university town and castle “Hohenzollern”

Tübingen is a romantic medieval town south – southwest of Stuttgart. Because of its renowned and ancient university – founded in 1477– it can be compared to Heidelberg. The astronomer Johannes Kepler, the philosopher Friedrich Hegel and the poets Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller were only a few of the world-famous students at Tübingen university.

Tübingen today is still dominated by its students: 80 000 inhabitants, 20 000 students. Students are registered in 16 faculties, they can choose between 74 different subjects.

So Tübingen is ancient and traditional, but at the same time very young, modern, open, cosmopolitan and tolerant, with a rich and colourful cultural and intellectual life. The history of the town and its young and lively present create this very special atmosphere that is typical for Tübingen.

The old town is worth seeing: beautiful half-timbered houses, small cobble lanes, traditional wine taverns, student pubs and boutiques, a beautiful market place with the original Town Hall from 1435. Tübingen was not bombed in the 2nd world war, therefore it is almost completely preserved and very carefully restored.

In Tübingen we will have a guided tour and reservations are made for punts – special local boats – for our boat-ride on the Neckar River. You will then have the opportunity to visit the annual french-italian-german-market with its wonderful swabian and mediterranean aspects and typical smells of its various products. Or you have a snack in a beer-garden at the riverside or in a simple old student restaurant. Or you relax in the nearby former botanical garden.

<http://www.tuebingen.de/en/1559.html>

Castle – Hohenzollern The third version of the castle, which stands today, was constructed for Frederick William IV of Prussia between 1846 and 1867, under the direction of Friedrich August Stüler, who based his design on English Neo-Gothic style as well as the castles of the Loire Valley.[1] Because the castle was built as a family memorial, no member of the Hohenzollern family took residence in this third castle until 1945, when it became home to the last Prussian Crown Prince Wilhelm; he and his wife, Crown Princess Cecilie, are buried there.

Among the historical artefacts of Prussian history contained in the castle today are the Crown of Wilhelm II and some of the personal effects of Frederick the Great and a letter from US President George Washington thanking Baron von Steuben, a scion of the House of Hohenzollern, for his service in the American Revolutionary War. The castle is today a popular tourist destination.

<http://www.burg-hohenzollern.com/startpage.html>

Heidelberg

During a city rally, visit the old bridge, castle (Schloss), Palatine Museum, student jail, University museum, see the “Great Wine Barrel”, shaped from 130 oak trees, it is the world’s largest wine cask etc.....

The Heidelberg skyline is dominated by church spires that tower above the houses. But the town’s churches and monasteries are not just impressive from the outside, it is also well worth taking a look inside.

As you stroll through Heidelberg you will also be tempted to stop off in some of the many public squares and gardens, little oases of green that are popular meeting places for people of all ages.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/germany/baden-wuerttemberg/heidelberg/things-to-do>

Ludwigsburg – The „Versailles of Wurttemberg“

In 1704, the presidential palace of Ludwigsburg was built by Duke Eberhard Ludwig of Wuerttemberg according to the model of the castle in Versailles. It is one of the biggest German baroque palaces still around today. It has 452 rooms in 18 buildings. In 1750, a „porcelain factory“ was founded, producing precious figures, artificially painted tableware, jewelry and necessities of the highest quality.

The „Swabian Versailles“ is surrounded by a permanent garden show, the „Blooming Baroque“, a unique park landscape with its garden art from different epochs and regions, for example the Japanese garden, the aviaries which house native and exotic birds from all over the world and the fairy-tale garden. There, we can listen to the fairy-tales of the famous Grimm brothers.

Constance, Friedrichshafen “Zeppelin museum“ and the city of Constance

Soon after it completes its descent from the Alps, the Rhine River broadens and forms Lake Constance before continuing its 820-mile route to the North Sea. Measuring 40 miles in length and 8.5 miles in width, Lake Constance covers 220 square miles, making it central Europe's second largest freshwater lake. Lake Constance, which in German is called “Bodensee”, is bordered by three countries: Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. More than 4.5 million people in these three countries rely on the lake for drinking water.

About 2.2 million people live in the watershed of Lake Constance, which extends over 4,825 square miles. To the south rise the Swiss and Austrian Alps. To the north are the rolling hills of southern Germany.

Settlers lived on the shores of the lake as long ago as 8,000 years. Early lake dwellers erected houses on stilts at the water's edge. By the 17th and 18th centuries, the region had become famous for its fruit orchards and vineyards. Many people also made a living from fishing, and some continue to do so.

The need for protection of Lake Constance has been recognized by governments several times in the last several decades. In 1982, the bordering countries agreed to protect the shoreline of the lakes. In 1989, the European Community recognized the threats facing Lake Constance when it included the area in its list of the 60 most important and threatened habitats in Europe.

For more than 70 years, citizens groups around the lake have sought to protect water quality, sensitive habitats, and wildlife. While some protections have been achieved, rapid development since the 1960 has triggered renewed efforts. Some of these efforts support collaboration among non-governmental organizations, government agencies, and businesses in insuring that economic and other activities are compatible with a healthy, diverse, and productive Bodensee.

The excursion includes a visit to the “Zeppelin-museum” in Friedrichshafen, which is built around a recreated section of the “Hindenburg”, the largest airship ever, and a trip by catamaran across the lake to Constance, where a guided tour through the city has been organised.

<http://www.konstanz-tourismus.de/service-kontakt/tourist-information.html> www.zeppelin-museum.de

Stuttgart – Mercedes-Benz-Museum

The Mercedes-Benz-Museum belongs to the oldest motor car factory in the world, showing collections of used and luxury vehicles like the state coach of the Japanese emperor, racing and record breaking cars like the „silver arrow“, boat and plane engines; permanent exhibition of the current car program.

http://www.mercedes-benz-classic.com/content/classic/mpc/mpc_classic_website/en/mpc_home/mbc/home/museum/home.flash.html

Other places of interest nearby:

The Stuttgart TV Tower is the oldest in the world! It was built in 1956 by the architects Leonhardt, Gutbrod and Heinle. It stands 217 m high with its 4-level „basket“ with restaurant and sightseeing platform. From the top you can have a splendid view over Stuttgart up to the Lake of Constance and the Swiss Alps in the south and the Black Forest in the west.

<http://www.fernsehturmstuttgart.com/en/tower>

Porsche Museum

Porscheplatz 1
70435 Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen
info.museum@porsche.de

Munich

First we take an organized tour to explore the old city with its Church of Our Dear Lady, the Marienplatz with the New Town Hall and the „Viktualienmarkt“. You can learn more about the history of Munich and about its world famous beer gardens!

Afterwards you have free time and different possibilities: May be you wish to visit the „Deutsches Museum“ – a museum of the superlative. It is the biggest technical museum in the world and the most visited. From measurement equipment dating back to the renaissance to futuristic objects of microelectronics, space travel or laser technology – everything can be found in this museum on 15 kilometers of walk-ways. You have to choose carefully what you would like to see most: the underground mining or air and space travel, legendary locomotives, the world's first motor car built in 1886 by Carl Benz or the first computers.

Or worth a visit is also the BMW-museum, one of the other Munich museums, the former Olympic arena, or perhaps you prefer to stroll along the river Isar and through the royal garden, the art gallery Pinakothek or other interesting places.

<http://www.muenchen.de/> <http://www.oktoberfest.de/de>