

Esslingen

Guided tour through the medieval heart of Esslingen and the Castle (Burg)

http://www.tourist.esslingen.de/servlet/PB/menu/1270924_l2/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>

Ludwigsburg – The „Versailles of Wurttemberg“

In 1704, the presidential palace of Ludwigsburg was built by Duke Eberhard Ludwig of Wurttemberg 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, Friedrichhafen "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

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>

Nuremberg – Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds

If you ask someone from Germany to tell you about Nuremberg, she or he will tell you about the tiny little sausages (Nürnberger Bratwürste), tasty ginger bread (Lebkuchen), crooked half-timbered houses and the „Christkindlesmarkt“ (The Market of the Christ Child =Christmas Market). But Nuremberg has much more to offer. With a history of more than 950 years, where the city was the preferred residence of the German emperors from 1050 until 1571, with its marvelous Gothic buildings like the churches of St. Lorenz, St. Sebaldus and Our dear Lady, with its proud Patrician buildings and the impressive five kilometer long city wall and it's many museums, Nuremberg is a worth while place to spend a day.

On the one-day trip, we will visit the documentation centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds, titled "Fascination and Terror". With this we will look into the history of the Third Reich. The name of Nuremberg retains a stigma even today. Hitler wanted to build up Nuremberg as the new German capital as the „most German German city“, die „deutsche deutsche Stadt“. Four things stand out above all else as brand marks of the era of the Third Reich in Nuremberg – the NS rallies, the anti-Semitic "Nuremberg Laws", a decisive and irrevocable step towards the persecution of the Jews, which was ultimately to end in the Holocaust, the rabble-rousing paper „Der Stürmer“ (The Storm trooper) and the Nuremberg Trials after world war 2.

<http://tourismus.nuernberg.de/>
www.museen.nuernberg.de