

SOUTHERN RHINELAND

Updated by
Joseph Reaney



WELCOME TO SOUTHERN RHINELAND

TOP REASONS TO GO

★ **Loreley:** The inspiration for the 19th-century story of a siren whose voice lured boatmen to their doom, the spectacular Loreley promontory looks out over the Rhine near St. Goarhausen.

★ **Burg Eltz:** Still inhabited by the 33rd generation of the Eltz family, who have lived there since the 12th century, this stunning castle is one of few that was never destroyed.

★ **Rhine in Flames:** Four out of five of these massive fireworks displays take place in the Southern Rhineland. They're always on Saturday: in July in Bingen/Rüdesheim; in August in Koblenz; and in September twice—first in Oberwesel, then in St. Goar/St. Goarhausen.

★ **Romance galore:** From terraced vineyards to ruined castles, evening cruises to morning coffees, romance is in abundance along the Rhine.

★ **Spectacular wine:** Some of Germany's most highly regarded wineries can be found in this region, producing the country's distinctive white wines.

The Southern Rhineland can be divided into two spectacular stretches of river—with one charming city at their confluence. Head southwest from Koblenz and you'll follow the beautiful, vineyard-flanked Mosel all the way to Trier. Head southeast from Koblenz and you'll follow the Rhine Gorge past ruined castles and rocky outcrops to Wiesbaden.

1 Koblenz. A picturesque town situated at the meeting of the Rhine and Mosel rivers.

2 Braubach. Medieval streets are overlooked by the beautiful Marksburg.

3 Winningen. This village with steep terraced vineyards is the gateway to the Mosel.

4 Alken. A former Celtic village with vast castle ruins perched above it.

5 Cochem. A gorgeous castle-topped town with riverside promenades.

6 Ediger-Eller. Charming twin villages with romantic narrow alleys.

7 Traben-Trarbach. An unexpected Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) treat.

8 Bernkastel-Kues. A wine-growing center and birthplace of medieval



polymath Nikolaus Cusanus.

9 Trier. A Roman town with an amphitheater and the largest Roman gate north of the Alps.

10 Boppard. A quaint hiking destination with famous river-bend views from a chairlift.



11 St. Goar. A small town situated below the ruins of Burg Rheinfels Castle.

12 St. Goarhausen. The site of the unmissable Loreley promontory and charming Katz & Maus castles.

13 Oberwesel. A lovely medieval town with a largely intact city wall.

14 Bacharach. Come for patrician manors and Riesling-themed local dishes.

15 Bingen. Home of the 12th-century mystic Hildegard von Bingen.

16 Rüdesheim. Packed with medieval alleyways lined with shops and restaurants.

17 Oestrich-Winkel. A small town with weekly changing outdoor wine tastings.

18 Eltville. A village renowned for its sparkling white wines and rosés.

19 Wiesbaden. The historic Hesse state capital with famous mineral hot springs.

The hills along the Rhine are crowned by castle after castle and covered in the vineyards that provide the livelihood of many of the villages dotted along the banks of the river. In the words of French poet Victor Hugo, “The Rhine combines everything. The Rhine is swift as the Rhône, wide as the Loire, winding as the Seine ... royal as the Danube and covered with fables and phantoms like a river in Asia.”

The importance of the Rhine cannot be overestimated. Although not the longest river in Europe (the Danube is more than twice as long), the Rhine has been the main river-trade artery between the heart of the continent and the North Sea (and Atlantic Ocean) throughout recorded history. The Rhine runs 1,230 km (764 miles) from the Bodensee (Lake Constance) west to Basel, then north through Germany, and, finally, west through the Netherlands to Rotterdam.

Vineyards, a legacy of the Romans, are an inherent part of the Rhine landscape from Wiesbaden to Bonn. The Rhine tempers the climate sufficiently for grapes to ripen this far north, and the world's finest Rieslings come from the Rheingau (and the Rhine's most important tributary, the Mosel). Thanks to the river, these wines were shipped far beyond the borders of Germany, giving rise to the wine trade that shaped the fortune of many riverside towns. Rüdesheim, Bingen, and Koblenz remain important commercial wine centers to this day.

The river is steeped in legend and myth.

The Loreley, a jutting sheer slate cliff, was once believed to be the home of a beautiful and bewitching maiden who lured boatmen to a watery end in the swift currents. Heinrich Heine's poem *Song of Loreley* (1827), inspired by Clemens Brentano's *Legend of Loreley* (1812) and set to music in 1837 by Friedrich Silcher, has been the theme song of the landmark ever since. The Nibelungen, a legendary Burgundian people said to have lived on the banks of the Rhine, serve as subjects for Wagner's epic opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1852–72).

William Turner captured misty Rhine sunsets on canvas. Famous literary works, such as Goethe's *Sankt-Rochus-Fest zu Bingen* (*The Feast of St. Roch*; 1814), Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1816), and Mark Twain's *A Tramp Abroad* (1880), captured the spirit of Rhine romanticism on paper, encouraging others to follow in their footsteps.

MAJOR REGIONS

Koblenz and Trier aren't very far apart as the crow flies, but the driving distance along the twists and turns of the **Mosel Valley** is more than 200 km (124 miles). Rest assured: the journey is worth it. The region remains remarkably unspoiled, and most of its towns, including Winningen, Alken, Cochem, Ediger-Eller, Traben-Trarbach, Bernkastel-Kues, and Trier, are joys to explore. The scenery is a medley of vineyards and forests, and there are countless Roman artifacts, medieval churches, and castle ruins to admire.

The romance of the Rhine is most apparent in the **Mittlerhein** (Middle Rhine), which stretches for 65 km (40 miles). The area was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2002 due to its concentration of magnificent castles, medieval towns, and the vineyards of the Rhine Gorge. It begins in Koblenz, at the confluence of the Rhine and Mosel rivers, and takes in Braubach, Boppard, St. Goar, St. Goarshausen, Oberwesel, and Bacharach, before ending in Bingen.

Here, the river takes a sharp, 90-degree turn as we enter the **Rheingau** region. At the heart of the region's wine tourism is Rüdesheim, a good starting point for touring any of the well-marked cycling, hiking, and driving routes through local villages and vineyards. Heading east, you'll pass through Oestrich-Winkel (home to the region's largest vineyard) and Eltville (the region's biggest town) on the way to Wiesbaden (the region's largest city).

■ **TIP→** In summer, nearly every Rheingau village has an outdoor **Weinprobiertand** (wine-tasting stand), usually near the riverbank. It is staffed and stocked by a different wine estate every weekend.

Planning

Getting Here and Around

AIR

Frankfurt Airport (🌐 www.frankfurt-airport.com) is the country's busiest international airport. Just 20 minutes from Wiesbaden by car, it also has frequent train connections to Koblenz (change here for trains to Trier).

No-frills carriers that fly within Europe are based at the tiny Hahn Airport (🌐 www.hahn-airport.de) in Lautzenhausen, between the Rhine and Mosel valleys. It's a one-hour drive from Koblenz, Trier or Wiesbaden, but public transport connections are more limited.

Luxembourg Airport (🌐 www.lux-airport.lu) is close to the upper Mosel River valley, just a 30-minute drive (or 1-hour bus with change) from Trier.

BOAT

While the fastest way to get around the region is by car or train, the Rhine and Mosel rivers have been navigated by ship for thousands of years, and this option remains the most scenic, not to mention the safest for visitors looking to drink wine while soaking up a little history. The Rhine is the more popular of the two rivers, but many find its little sister, the Mosel, even more beautiful.

The most popular starting point for cruises exploring the southern Rhineland is Koblenz, where the Rhine and Mosel converge. The area between Koblenz and Bingen, the Rhine Gorge, offers the shortest cruises with the highest concentration of castles.

Trips along the Rhine and Mosel range in length from a few hours to days or weeks. Day-trippers don't generally need advance reservations, and the tourist offices in the major Rhine or Mosel towns can provide information about

short round-trip cruises (*Rundfahrten*) or hop-on, hop-off waterbuses (*Linienfahrten*), which generally run on the Rhine daily from Easter to late October and on the Mosel from June through September. Some multiday cruises also make extra trips in November and December to stop at Christmas markets.

Bingen-Rüdesheimer (🌐 www.bingen-ruedesheimer.de) offers short Loreley and castle cruises along the Middle Rhine, plus a ferry service between Bingen and Rüdesheim.

Köln-Düsseldorf Deutsche Rheinschiffahrt (KD; 🌐 www.k-d.com) is one of the region's most popular short-journey lines, this company offers day trips on both the Rhine and Mosel, and cruises combined with experiences such as city, brewery, mountain, or castle tours.

Primus-Linie (🌐 www.primus-linie.de) offers Frankfurt- and Wiesbaden-originating short cruises on the Rhine—including the stretch between Wiesbaden and St. Goarhausen—range from short sightseeing trips to dinner and evening cruises. There are also themed Oktoberfest and Christmas excursions.

Rösslerlinie (🌐 www.roesslerlinie.de), based in Rüdesheim, offers Middle Rhine cruises including the castle-rich stretch between Rüdesheim and Assmanshausen.

TRAIN

InterCity and EuroCity expresses connect all the cities and towns of the area. German Rail Passes are valid on these and all Deutsche Bahn trains; passes come in many configurations and include Rhineland-specific bonuses like discounts on KD Rhine Line cruises.

Hotels

The most romantic places to lay your head are the old riverside inns and castle hotels. Ask for a *Rheinblick* (Rhine view)

room. Hotels are often booked well in advance, especially for festivals and when there are trade fairs in Cologne, Düsseldorf, or Frankfurt, making rooms even in Wiesbaden and the Rheingau scarce and expensive. Many hotels close for winter.

Restaurants

Although larger cities like Wiesbaden are home to many talented chefs, some of Germany's most creative classic and contemporary cooking can be found in smaller towns or country inns.

⇒ *Prices in restaurant reviews are the average cost of a main course at dinner, or if dinner is not served, at lunch. Prices in hotel reviews are the lowest cost of a standard double room in high season.*

What It Costs in Euros

\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
RESTAURANTS			
under €15	€15–€20	€21–€25	over €25
HOTELS			
under €100	€100–€175	€176–€225	over €225

Visitor Information

CONTACTS Rheingau-Taunus Kultur &

Tourismus. ☒ *Probeck'scher Hof, Rheingeweg 30, Oestrich-Winkel* ☎ 06723/602–720 🌐 www.rheingau.com. **Rheinland-Pfalz Tourismus.** ☒ *Löhrstr. 103–105, Koblenz* 🌐 www.rlp-tourismus.com.

When to Go

The peak season for cultural, food, and wine festivals is March through mid-November, followed by colorful Christmas markets in December. The season for many hotels, restaurants, riverboats,

cable cars, and sights is from Easter through October, particularly in smaller towns. Opening hours at many castles, churches, and small museums are shorter in winter. Orchards blossom in March, and the vineyards are verdant from May until late September, when the vines turn a shimmering gold.

Koblenz

127 km (79 miles) northeast of Trier, 76 km (47 miles) northwest of Wiesbaden.

The ancient city of Koblenz is at a geographic nexus known as the Deutsches Eck (German Corner) in the heart of the Mittelrhein region. Rivers and mountains converge here: the Mosel flows into the Rhine on one side; the Lahn flows in on the other; and three mountain ridges intersect.

Founded by the Romans in AD 9, the city was first called *Castrum apud Confluentes* (Fort at the Confluence). It became a powerful center in the Middle Ages, when it controlled trade on both the Rhine and the Mosel. Air raids during World War II destroyed 87% of the city, but extensive restoration has done much to re-create its former atmosphere. As the host of Germany's Federal Horticultural Show in 2011, the city saw widespread urban development, including the Seilbahn that now transports visitors across the river and up to the Ehrenbreitstein fortress.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

It's quick and easy to reach Koblenz from Trier or Wiesbaden by car or train, with journey times of between 1 and 1½ hours. If you're not in a rush, take a more leisurely and scenic drive along the Mosel or Rhein, or an even more mellow boat trip. Once in Koblenz, all the main attractions are within walking distance, though for Ehrenbreitstein fortress you may prefer to save your legs and take the Seilbahn.

Favorite Places



Joseph Reaney: While beer reigns supreme in most parts of Germany, the southern Rhineland is wine country. I love to cruise along the Rhine or Mosel, flanked by steep vineyards that are busy producing the world's finest riesling wine. Visit an individual vintzer to sample their latest vintage, or compare and contrast the region's best producers at the superb Mosel-Weinmuseum in Bernkastel-Kues.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Tourist-Information im Forum**

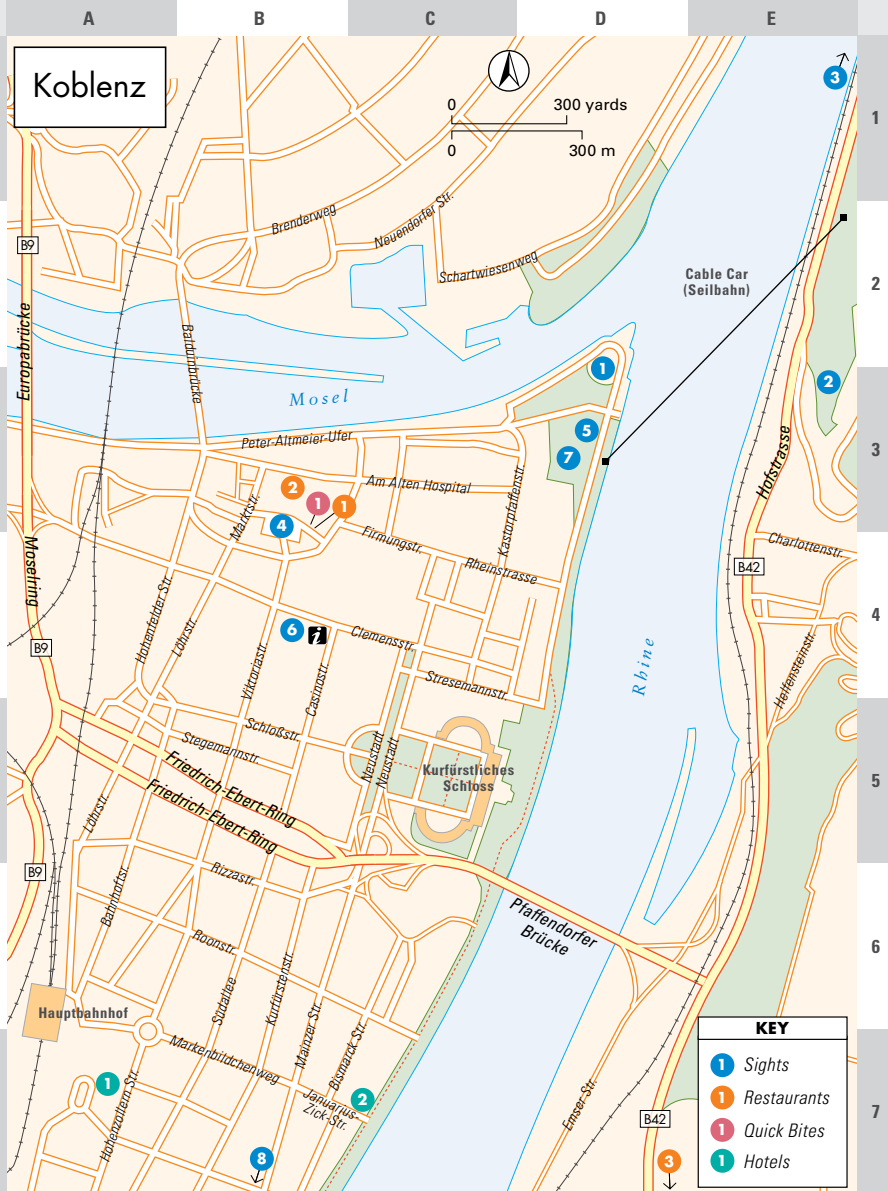
Confluentes. ✉ *Zentralplatz 1, Koblenz*

☎ 0261/129-1610 🌐 *www.visit-koblenz.de.*



Deutsches Eck (*German Corner*)

VIEWPOINT | This pointed bit of land, jutting into the river like the prow of an early ironclad warship, is at the sharp intersection of the Rhine and Mosel rivers. In 1897, an equestrian statue of Kaiser Wilhelm I, first emperor of the newly united Germany, was erected here as one of the more effusive manifestations of German nationalism. It was destroyed at the end of World War II, and replaced for 40 years by a ponderous monument to Germany's unity, but a new statue of Wilhelm was placed here in 1993—and still stands today. It's accompanied by three pieces of the Berlin Wall on the Mosel side, a memorial to those who died as a result of the partitioning of the country. ✉ *Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer, Koblenz.*



- Sights** ▼
- 1 Deutsches Eck D2
 - 2 Festung Ehrenbreitstein..... E3
 - 3 Garten der Schmetterlinge Schloss Sayn E1
 - 4 Liebfrauenkirche B3
 - 5 Ludwig Museum D3
 - 6 Mittelrhein-Museum Koblenz B4
 - 7 St. Kastor Basilika D3
 - 8 Schloss Stolzenfels..... B7

- Restaurants** ▼
- 1 Altes Brauhaus B3
 - 2 Weinhaus Hubertus B3
 - 3 Zum Schwanen D7
- Quick Bites** ▼
- 1 eGeLoSla B3

- Hotels** ▼
- 1 GHOTEL hotel & living Koblenz A7
 - 2 Hotel Kleiner Riesen C7

★ Festung Ehrenbreitstein (Ehrenbreitstein Fortress)

CASTLE/PALACE | Europe's largest fortress, towering 400 feet above the left bank of the Rhine, offers a magnificent view over Koblenz and where the Mosel and the Rhine rivers meet. The earliest buildings date from about 1100, but the bulk of the fortress was constructed in the 16th century. In 1801 it was partially destroyed by Napoléon, and the French occupied Koblenz for the next 18 years. The museum has exhibits on the history of local industries, from wine growing to technology. Pride of place is given to the fortress's 16th-century Vogel Greif cannon, which has done a lot of traveling over the years. The French absconded with it in 1794, the Germans took it back in 1940, and the French commandeered it again in 1945. The 15-ton cannon was peaceably returned by French president François Mitterrand in 1984. For an introduction to the fortress and its history, head for the *Besucherdienst* (visitor center). English-language tours are for groups only, but you can often join a group that is registered for a tour. A *Seilbahn* (cable car) carries you a half mile from Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer over the river to Ehrenbreitstein, offering spectacular views of the Deutsches Eck below. Lifts can accommodate 7,000 passengers in an hour, and operate continually throughout the day from a half hour before the site opens until a half hour after it closes. ☒ *Felsenweg, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/6675-4000 🌐 *tor-zum-welterbe.de/festung-ehrenbreitstein* 🎫 €8.

Garten der Schmetterlinge Schloss Sayn (Palace Sayn Butterfly Garden)

CASTLE/PALACE | **FAMILY** | Butterflies from South America, Asia, and Africa flit back and forth over your head between the branches of banana trees and palms at this glass-enclosed garden north of Koblenz. The palace houses a small museum of decorative cast-iron objects, a restaurant, and a café, and its park can be explored. To reach the castle by

public transport, take Bus No. 8 from Koblenz Hauptbahnhof to the last stop, "Schloss Sayn" (40 minutes). ☒ *Fürstlichen Schlosspark, Schloss, Koblenz-Olper-Str. 164, Bendorf-Sayn* ➔ 12 km (7½ miles) north of Koblenz city center ☎ 02622/15478 🌐 *www.sayn.de* 🎫 €13 ⌚ Closed mid-Nov.–mid-Mar.

Liebfrauenkirche (Church of Our Lady)

CHURCH | This church stands on Roman foundations at the Old Town's highest point, where, on surrounding streets, war damage is evidenced by the blend of old buildings and modern store blocks. The bulk of the church is of Romanesque design, but its choir is one of the Rhineland's finest examples of 15th-century Gothic architecture, and the west front is graced with two 17th-century baroque towers. ☒ *An der Liebfrauenkirche 16, Koblenz* 🌐 *www.liebfrauen-koblenz.de*.

Ludwig Museum

ART MUSEUM | Sitting just behind the Deutsches Eck, this modern art museum is housed in the restored 13th-century Deutschherrenhaus. Industrialist Peter Ludwig, one of Germany's leading contemporary-art collectors, bequeathed his collection of French, American, and German art to the museum in 1992. There have been many additions since, but the core collection, featuring works by the likes of Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst, and Man Ray, remains. ☒ *Esther-Bejarano-Str. 1, Koblenz* 🌐 *www.ludwigmuseum.org* 🎫 €6 ⌚ Closed Mon.

Mittelrhein-Museum Koblenz

ART MUSEUM | Relocated in 2013 to the new Forum Confluentes (right by the Tourist Information office), this museum, founded in 1835, houses the city's excellent art collection, including extensive holdings of landscapes focusing on the Rhine. It also has a notable collection of secular medieval art and contemporary works by regional artists. ☒ *Zentralpl. 1, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/129-2520 🌐 *www.mittelrhein-museum.de* 🎫 €6 ⌚ Closed Mon.

Schloss Stolzenfels

CASTLE/PALACE | On the outskirts of Koblenz, on the road to Boppard, the neo-Gothic towers of Schloss Stolzenfels come into view. The castle's origins date to the mid-13th century, when the archbishop of Trier sought to counter the influence (and toll rights) of the archbishop of Mainz, who had just built Burg Lahneck, a castle at the confluence of the Lahn and Rhine rivers. Its superbly furnished period rooms and beautiful gardens are well worth a visit. From B9 (curbside parking) it's about a 15-minute (uphill) walk to the castle entrance. By public transit, Bus 670 from the train station stops at the castle, as do boats from the Koblenz waterfront from mid-April through October. ☒ *Schlossweg 11, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/6675-4850 🌐 tor-zum-welterbe.de/stolzenfels 💶 €5 ☹ Closed Mon.–Wed. Closed Dec. and Jan. Closed weekdays Feb.–mid-Mar. and Nov.

St. Kastor Basilika (*Basilica of St. Castor*) **CHURCH** | It was in this sturdy Romanesque basilica, consecrated in 836, that plans were drawn for the Treaty of Verdun, which formalized the division of Charlemagne's great empire and led to the creation of Germany and France as separate states. Inside Koblenz's oldest church, compare the squat Romanesque columns in the nave with the intricate fan vaulting of the Gothic sections. The St. Kastor Fountain outside the church is an intriguing piece of historical one-upmanship. It was built by the occupying French to mark the beginning of Napoleon's ultimately disastrous Russian campaign of 1812. ☒ *Kastorhof 4, Koblenz* 🌐 www.sankt-kastor-koblenz.de.



Restaurants

Altes Brauhaus

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | For a classic brewery pub experience, look no further than this traditional German restaurant with its classic chequered flooring and wooden

furniture. The hearty food here comes in large portions: if you're feeling especially hungry, order the *Haxentopf "Spezial"*—chunks of pork knuckle meat braised with onions and vegetables and served in a cast-iron pan with potatoes and a fried egg. **Known for:** good selection of beers; friendly service; welcoming atmosphere. ☎ *Average main: €18* ☒ *Braug. 4, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/133-0377 🌐 www.altesbrauhaus-koblenz.de ☹ No credit cards.

Weinhaus Hubertus

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Hunting scenes and trophies line the wood-paneled walls of this cozy wine restaurant, named after the patron saint of hunters and built in 1689. Expect hearty portions of fresh, traditional fare such as *Wildschwein Würstchen*, or wild boar sausages. **Known for:** friendly atmosphere; excellent selection of wines; historic hand-painted murals. ☎ *Average main: €18* ☒ *Florinsmarkt 6, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/31177 🌐 www.weinhaus-hubertus.de ☹ Closed Tues.–Wed. No lunch.

Zum Schwanen

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Follow the east bank of the Rhine down from Koblenz and you'll come to this charming half-timber boutique hotel that has been offering a warm welcome to guests since 1693. The hotel's Restaurant Zum Schwanen is an elegant but rustic place, renowned for its set menus of gourmet cuisine using fresh, regional ingredients—from river trout and pasture-fed beef to Nettetal asparagus and garden-grown herbs. **Known for:** official Rheinsteig trail partner; upmarket but unfussy; lovely outdoor seating. ☎ *Average main: €35* ☒ *Zum Wiessen Schwanen, Brunnenstr. 4, Braubach* ☎ 02627/9820 🌐 zum-weisen-schwanen.de ☹ Closed Mon.–Wed. No lunch.



Stroll through Koblenz's Old Town, stopping for a bite at a sidewalk café along one of the squares, such as Jesuitenplatz.



Coffee and Quick Bites

eGeLoSia

\$ | **ICE CREAM** | Gelato fans shouldn't miss a visit to this ice cream shop opposite the Liebfrauenkirche. Natural ingredients and inventive (and occasionally slightly baffling) flavors, from "cold eggnog" to "English soup," make this place hugely popular. **Known for:** selection of ice creams and sorbets; unusual seasonal flavors; cash only. **\$** Average main: €5 **✉** Braug. 6, Koblenz **☎** 0261/133-4264 **🌐** www.egelosia.de **💳** No credit cards **🕒** Closed Dec.–mid-Feb.



Hotels

GHOTEL hotel & living Koblenz

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | What this modern block lacks in character it more than makes up for with its location, being ideally positioned for accessing trains, the city center, and Koblenz's main sights. **Pros:** three-minute walk from train station; underground garage with e-bike charging; air-conditioned. **Cons:** €15 per day charge for

parking; some rooms a little small; restaurant gets very busy during peak times.

\$ Rooms from: €125 **✉** Neversstr. 15, Koblenz **☎** 0261/200-2450 **🌐** www.ghotel.de **➡** 120 rooms **🕒** Free Breakfast.

Hotel Kleiner Riesen

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | You can literally watch the Rhine flowing by from the four front rooms of this friendly, family-operated hotel, about a 10-minute walk from the station. **Pros:** quiet with no street noise; very good breakfast buffet; good location near most sights. **Cons:** some rooms a little dated; no online booking; paid parking only (can be booked in advance).

\$ Rooms from: €120 **✉** Januarius-Zick Str. 11, Koblenz **☎** 0261/303-460 **🌐** www.hotel-kleinerriesen.de **➡** 22 rooms **🕒** Free Breakfast.



Performing Arts

Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie

(Rhenish Philharmonic Orchestra)

CONCERTS | The Philharmonic plays regularly at various concert venues

around town. ☒ *Eltzerhofstr. 6a, Koblenz*
☎ 0261/301-2272 🌐 www.rheinische-philharmonie.de.

Theater Koblenz

THEATER | Built in 1787, this gorgeous neoclassic theater is still in regular use and has resident drama, ballet, and musical theater ensembles ranging from classic to contemporary. ☒ *Clemensstr. 1-5, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/129-2870 🌐 www.theater-koblenz.de.

Shopping

Koblenz's best shopping can be found in the Old Town streets around the market square, Am Plan, where there are plenty of independent boutiques to explore.

Forum Mittelrhein

MALL | This spacious and modern shopping mall offers a wide variety of stores, including well-known brands and smaller boutiques, plus a food court and plentiful parking. ☒ *Zentralpl. 2, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/293-5870 🌐 www.forum-mittelrhein.com ☺ *Closed Sun.*

Pfeffersack und Söhne

FOOD | A bit of a cult destination for German foodies, Pfeffersack und Söhne create their own dried herb and spice blends from regionally grown plants where possible, as well as dried produce from farther afield. You can buy the gorgeous ceramic pots the spices are sold separately; also on offer are various gourmet specialties such as mustard, oil, and tea. The staff are friendly, knowledgeable, and very happy to advise you on your spice purchases. ☒ *An der Liebfrauenkirche 1, Koblenz* ☎ 0261/4509-9296 🌐 www.pfeffersackundsoehne.de.

Braubach

10 km (6¼ miles) southeast of Koblenz.

Lying southeast of Koblenz on the eastern bank of the Mosel, Braubach is known for its half-timbered medieval buildings and its towering hilltop castle, Marksburg.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Koblenz, drive 15 minutes south on Braubacher Strasse, following the eastern shore of the Rhine. You'll see Marksburg before you arrive in town.

Sights

★ Marksburg

CASTLE/PALACE | This eye-catching castle sits on the eastern shore of the Rhine overlooking the town of Braubach. Built in the 13th century to protect the silver and lead mines in the area, it's the only land-based castle on the Rhine to have survived the centuries intact. Within its massive walls are a collection of weapons and manuscripts, a medieval botanical garden, and a self-service restaurant with a terrace offering stunning views. The castle can only be visited as part of a 50-minute guided tour: individual English tours take place daily during the summer months at 1 and 4 pm; call ahead if you'd like to join a pre-arranged tour at a different time. Well-behaved pets are allowed. ☒ *Marksburg, Braubach* ☎ 02627/206 🌐 www.marksburg.de 📄 €11 (parking €4).



Winningen

10 km (6 miles) southwest of Koblenz.

Winningen is a gateway to the Terrassenmosel (Lower Mosel), the portion of the river characterized by steep, terraced vineyards. Winches help haul miniature monorails, with the winegrowers and their tools aboard, up the steep incline, but the tending and harvesting of the vines is still done by hand. Sample the fruits of their labor at one of the village's many *weinguts* (wineries).

While staying in Winningen, take a side trip to the neighboring village of Koblenz-Gondorf, home to the beautiful

12th-century Matthiaskapelle, as well as pretty half-timber houses ringing the market square. It has a wider selection of accommodation options than Winningen, so you may even prefer to stay there.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

The riverside B416 connects Koblenz to Winningen; it's typically less than 15 minutes' drive. Alternatively, take the Trier-bound train from Koblenz Hauptbahnhof, jumping out after 10 minutes. Tiny Winningen is easily explored by foot, but it's about an hour's walk (or a five-minute train ride) to the restaurants and hotels of Koblenz-Gondorf.

Sights

Domgarten-Weinpfad

TRAIL | FAMILY | Winningen marks the start of several of the region's loveliest and most informative short walks: the educational *Weinpfade* (wine trails). There are five trails to choose from, with varying lengths from 4 to 9 km (2½ to 5½ miles), but the best introductory trail is the Domgarten-Weinpfad (Cathedral Garden Wine Trail). It starts and ends at the Weinhof (also a Tourist Information Office), leading up and through the vineyards that lie above the town. The beautiful, medium-difficulty, 4½-km (3-mile) circular route is lined with signs explaining the grape-growing and wine-making processes, as well as plenty of benches for enjoying the spectacular river views. The whole thing usually takes around two hours, excluding stops—and if you find you still have energy, there are four more trails to tackle. ☒ *Weinhof, Weinhof 4, Winningen* ☎ 02606/342 🌐 www.winninger-weinpfade.de.

★ Madame Flöck Wines

WINERY | For a Winningen winery with a difference, take a trip to this natural, low-intervention wine producer set up by two North American expats: American Robert Kane and Canadian Derek-Paul Labelle. Take a tour of the 150-year-old cellar, where you can taste the excellent wine straight out of the barrel, or join one of the duo on a (steep) walking tour around the vineyards. ☒ *Friedrichstr. 1b, Winningen* ☎ 0173/437-0130 🌐 www.madameflockwines.com 🚗 *Cellar tour and tasting €20; cellar tour, vineyard tour, and tasting €40.*

Weingut Weyh

WINERY | Step off the train and straight into this century-old winery. Tutored tastings allow you to discover a selection of locally grown wines while you learn about the production and harvesting process. Alternatively, simply let the wine speak for itself; take a seat in

the cellar or garden and order a bottle to share. ☒ *Röttgenweg 4, Winningen* ☎ 02606/1858 🌐 www.weingut-weyh.de 🍷 *Wine tasting from €12.*

Restaurants

Alte Mühle Thomas Höreth

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Thomas and Gudrun Höreth's enchanting country inn—a former mill dating back to 1026—is a labyrinth of little rooms and cellars grouped around oleander-lined courtyards. Highlights of the menu include homemade cheeses, terrines, pâtés, and *Entensülze* (goose in aspic), served with the Höreths' own wines. **Known for:** excellent wine and Sekt (sparkling wine); beautiful location; eclectic but charming decor. ☑ *Average main: €28* ☒ *Höreth im Wald Landhotel, Mühlental 17, Koblenz-Gondorf* ➡ *Via B416* ☎ 02607/6474 🌐 www.thomashoereth.de 🕒 *Closed Jan. No lunch weekdays.*

Hotels

Hotel Simonis

\$\$ | **B&B/INN** | Two of the suites in this traditional hotel on Koblenz-Gondorf's market square, 6½ km (4 miles) from Winningen, are across the courtyard, in what might be Germany's oldest half-timbered house (1321), but direct online bookings are not available at this writing. **Pros:** historic timber-framed building; elegant decor; in-room breakfast available (ask when booking). **Cons:** no elevator or air con-conditioning; limited parking; close to the train tracks (can be loud at night). ☑ *Rooms from: €110* ☒ *Marktpl. 4, Koblenz-Gondorf* ☎ 02607/974-8537 ➡ *15 rooms* 🍳 *Free Breakfast.*

Alken

13 km (8 miles) southwest of Winningen.

Settled by the Celts in 450 BC, Alken is one of the Mosel's oldest towns. Today, it's best known for its 12th-century

castle, Burg Thurant, and its pretty water-side setting backdropped by rolling vineyards. This makes it among the loveliest wine village stops along the Terrassenmosel between Koblenz and Pünderich.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

If driving from Winningen, head south along the riverside B416 to Kobern-Gondorf, then cross the bridge to continue down the B49. The journey takes around 15 minutes. The nearest train stop on the Regionalbahn from Koblenz (via Winningen) is at Löf, across the river and linked to Alken by a bridge and a 2½-km (1½-mile) walk.

You can walk up to Burg Thurant, but it's difficult to get to Burg Eltz without a car. From April through November, Bus 365 travels every 30 minutes from Hatzenport to the Burg Eltz carpark, from where you must take a shuttle bus for €2.

Sights

★ Burg Eltz (*Eltz Castle*)

CASTLE/PALACE | Situated in the middle of the Eltz forest, almost halfway from Alken to Cochem, this genuinely medieval (12th–16th century) and genuinely stunning fortification deserves as much attention as King Ludwig's trio of castles in Bavaria. Ask at the souvenir shop for the 40-minute English-language tour, which guides you through the period rooms and massive kitchen, as well as a treasure vault filled with gold and silver. Alternatively, take the English-language flyer and stroll around yourself. To get here from Alken, exit B416 at Hatzenport, proceed to Wierschem, and follow signs to the parking lot near the Kapelle St. Antonius. From here it's a 15-minute walk, or take the shuttle bus (€2 each way). Hikers can reach the castle from Moselkern, on the riverside, in about an hour. ☎ *Wierschem* ☎ 02672/950–500 🌐 www.burg-eltz.de 🕒 €14 🕒 Closed Nov.–Mar.

Burg Thurant (Thurant Castle)

CASTLE/PALACE | Alken's undoubted highlight, this 12th-century castle towers over the village and the Burgberg (castle hill) vineyard. Castle tours include the Cologne Tower, chapel, cellar, and gardens, as well as views galore. A kiosk in the courtyard serves wine and snacks. Allow a good half-hour for the steep climb up from the riverbank. The castle even has a rental home for up to 6 people, but it requires a 5-night minimum stay. ☎ *Burg Thurant, Alken* ☎ 02605/2004 🌐 www.thurant.de 💶 €5 🕒 Closed mid-Nov.–Feb.

Restaurants

Turmgastrhaus Burg Thurant

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | This stylish guesthouse sits at the foot of the castle, next to a venerable stone tower on the riverbank, offering dinner and lunch on Sunday. The restaurant serves classic German dishes (steaks, soups, schnitzel) with an emphasis on fresh seasonal ingredients such as white asparagus in spring and chanterelle mushrooms in summer, accompanied by wines from the region's finest producers. **Known for:** lovely riverside seating; friendly and attentive service; reservations can be made only by phone. 💶 *Average main:* €17 ☎ *Moselstr. 15, Alken* ☎ 02605/849–8580 🌐 www.turmgastrhaus.de 🚫 *No credit cards* 🕒 *Closed Wed. and Thurs.* *No lunch Mon.–Sat.*

Cochem

27 km (17 miles) southwest of Alken.

Cochem is one of the prettiest towns of the Mosel Valley, with a riverside promenade to rival any along the Rhine. It's especially lively during the wine festivals in June and late August. If time permits, savor the landscape from the deck of a boat—many excursions are available, lasting from one hour to an entire day. From the **Enderttor** (Endert Town Gate)

you can see the entrance to one of Germany's longest railroad tunnels, the 4-km (2½-mile) Kaiser-Wilhelm, an astonishing example of 19th-century engineering.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Alken, it's a 30-minute drive southwest along the Mosel-hugging B49 to Cochem. Alternatively, it's a 35-minute walk across the river to Löf, followed by 25-minute train ride. Cochem is larger than you might expect, so prepare for a fair amount of walking—particularly up to the Reichsburg.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Tourist-Information Ferienland Cochem.** ☒ *Endertpl. 1, Cochem* ☎ 02671/60040 🌐 www.cochem.de.

Sights

Burg Metternich (Metternich Castle)

CASTLE/PALACE | On the opposite shore of the river, the romantic ruins of this medieval-era castle crown the Schlossberg (Castle Hill) vineyard. The Lords of Braunshorn are named as owners of Metternich as far back as 1268, but the core of the castle is probably even older than that. Enjoy a glass of wine or a hearty meal in the castle's terrace café, then take a stroll down to the village of Beilstein. It's known as "Sleeping Beauty of the Mosel"; once you ascend the *Klostertreppe* (monastery steps) to the baroque monastery church for views of the winding streets lined with half-timber houses, you'll understand why.

☒ *Burg Metternich, Beilstein* ➔ 10 km (6 miles) south of Cochem ☎ 02673/93639

🌐 www.burgmetternich.de 🚶 €3

🕒 Closed Nov.–Mar.

Cochemer Sesselbahn (Cochem Chairlift)

VIEWPOINT | Hop on this chairlift to the Pinner Kreuz for great vistas, which you can enjoy from the terrace of the café at the top. As the name suggests, these lifts are the open-air foot-dangling type, rather than the enclosed gondolas, so those with a fear a heights may prefer

the steep walk instead. ☒ *Talstation, Endertstr. 44, Cochem* ☎ 02671/989-063 🌐 www.cochemer-sesselbahn.de 🚶 €5.90 one way; €7.90 round-trip 🕒 Closed mid-Nov.–mid-Mar.

Historische Senfmühle

FACTORY | Wolfgang Steffens conducts half-hour daily tours at 11, 2, 3, and 4, showing how he produces the gourmet mustard at his 200-year-old mill. Garlic, cayenne, honeycomb, Indian curry, and Riesling wine are among the flavors you can sample and buy in the shop. ☒ *Endertstr. 18, Cochem* ☎ 02671/607-665 🌐 www.senfmuehle.net 🚶 Tours €2.50.

Reichsburg Cochem (Cochem Imperial Castle)

CASTLE/PALACE | The 15-minute walk to this 1,000-year-old castle overlooking the town will reward you with great views of the area. English guided tours lasting 40 minutes take place on the hour between 11:30 am and 4:30 pm; it's not possible to visit the castle and courtyards without a tour. During the first week of August, there's a medieval festival including colorful tournaments. Regular medieval banquets are available with advance booking only. These take place in German but with English translation sheets to accompany the feasting and merriment; the price includes a castle tour.

☒ *Schlossstr. 36, Cochem* ☎ 02671/255

🌐 www.reichsburg-cochem.de 🚶 Tour €7

🕒 Closed Nov.–mid-Mar.

Restaurants

Alte Gutsschänke

\$ | **GERMAN** | Locals and tourists mingle naturally at this proper, old-world *Geheimtipp* (hidden gem), near the open fireplace and antique winemaking equipment; as the night progresses, locals might unpack their musical instruments and start playing. The food is local and fortifying: sausages, cheeses, ham, and homemade soups served with

the wines from host Arthur Schmitz's own estate. **Known for:** very friendly atmosphere; simple, rustic dishes; excellent wine list but no beer. ☞ *Average main:* €15 ☒ *Schlossstr. 6, Cochem* ☎ 02671/8950 ☒ *No credit cards* ☺ *No lunch Mon.–Thurs.*

Restaurant Müllerstube

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | **FAMILY** | Beneath the exposed beams and painted ceiling of this cozy hotel restaurant, trout from the hotel's own fish farm will grace your table, served alongside German and French wines. It's on the site of a historic mill that belonged to the current proprietor's great-great-grandfather, tucked away in the forested hills of the Enderdtal (Ender Valley) around 3 km (2 miles) northwest of Cochem's center.

Known for: underground bar filled with 1970s kitsch; seasonal specialties; quiet location only a short drive from Cochem.

☞ *Average main:* €26 ☒ *Moselromantik Hotel Weissmühle, Im Enderdtal, Cochem* ☎ 02671/8955 🌐 www.hotel-weissmuehle.de.

Ediger-Eller

15 km (9 miles) south of Cochem.

Ediger-Eller, once two separate hamlets, is a photogenic wine village with well-preserved houses and remnants of a medieval town wall. It's particularly romantic at night, when the narrow alleys and half-timber buildings are illuminated by historic streetlights.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Following the Mosel by car down from Cochem to Ediger-Eller, along the B49, takes about 25 minutes. You can shave off a minute or two by cutting the corner between Sehl and Senhals. By train, it's just five minutes on the Koblenz–Trier line, though the station is a 15-minute walk from the village's center. Ediger-Eller

itself is easily walkable, but discovering the area around will require hiking boots, a car, or both.

Sights

Calmont Klettersteig

TRAIL | From Ediger-Eller train station, head west into the hills instead of east into the village, and you'll find yourself on a hiking route among Europe's steepest vineyards. The path, which runs for 3½ km (2 miles) between Ediger-Eller and Bremm at an altitude of between 200 and 300 meters, comes with steel ropes for support (it's very steep in places) and provides stunning views up and down the Mosel. Look out for the romantic ruins of a 12th-century Augustinian convent; it's across the river just before the loop to Bremm. The path is reserved for those with a good level of fitness and in possession of sturdy footwear.

☒ *Calmont Klettersteig, Bremm* 🌐 www.calmont-region.de.

Martinskirche (St. Martin's Church)

CHURCH | This beautiful red-and-white church, which overlooks the corner of Kirchstrasse and Oberbachstrasse, is a remarkable amalgamation of art and architectural styles. Step inside and take a moment to admire the 117 carved bosses in the star-vaulted ceiling of the nave. Among the many fine sculptures throughout the church and the chapel is the town's treasure: a Renaissance stone relief, *Christ in the Winepress*. ☒ *Kirchstr., Ediger-Eller*.

Hotels

Zum Löwen

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | This charming "Moselromantikhotel" comes with friendly service and a splendid terrace overlooking the Mosel. **Pros:** fine view of the Mosel; some rooms have balconies; good restaurant with seasonal cuisine. **Cons:**

Continued on page 497

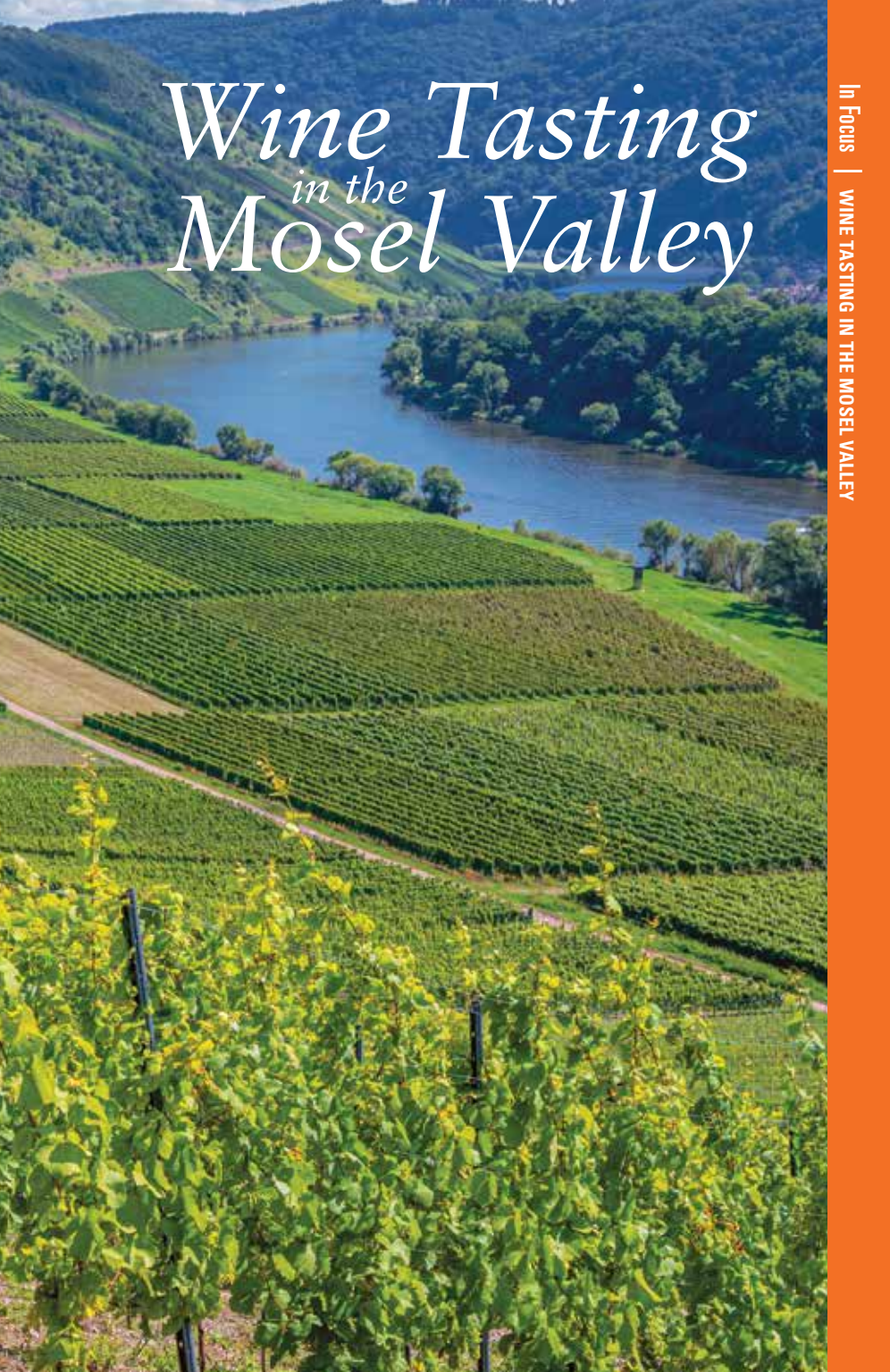


In the heart of the Mosel Valley lies the Mittelmosel (Middle Mosel), where vineyards tumble down steep slate slopes to riverside villages full of half-timbered, baroque, and belle époque architecture. Famed for its warm climate and 2,000-year-old wine making tradition, it produces some of the best Rieslings in the world. The Middle Mosel's many wineries and tasting rooms are concentrated along a meandering 75-mile stretch of lush river valley, picturesque towns, and rural estates between the ancient town of Trier and the village of Zell, allowing for multiple sips in a short amount of time.

By Jeff Kavanagh

Above, a green Mosel wine bottle.
Left, Vineyards in the Mosel Valley.





Wine Tasting *in the* *Mosel Valley*

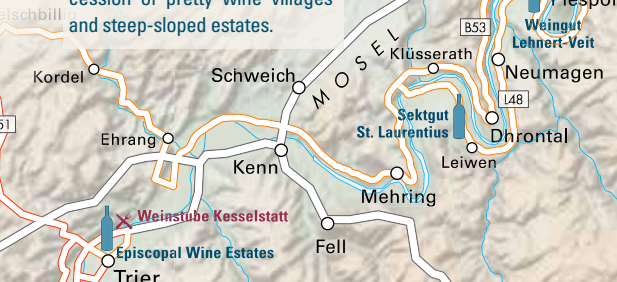
In Focus | WINE TASTING IN THE MOSEL VALLEY



TWO DAYS IN THE MIDDLE MOSEL

DAY 1

Small, family-run wineries that have been producing high-quality wines for generations dominate the Middle Mosel. Starting in Trier, just across the border from Luxembourg, the tour follows the B-53 and the Mosel River as it flows northwest through a succession of pretty wine villages and steep-sloped estates.



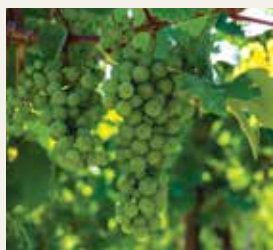
Bischöfliche Weingüter

Drop down into a labyrinth of cellars beneath Trier's streets or visit the estate's elegant *vinothek* (wine store) to sample fine Rieslings built upon almost two millennia of priestly tradition. **Try:** fruity and elegant Scharzhofberger Riesling.

✉ Gervasiustrasse 1, Trier

☎ 0651/145-760

🌐 www.bischoefflicheweingueter.de



Mosel grape harvest

Sektgut St. Laurentius

Whether in the spacious tasting room, on the outdoor terrace, or in the modern little wine bar near the river, there are plenty of places to taste this winery's *sekt* (sparkling wine), considered some of the best in the region. **Try:** fruity, creamy, and yeasty Crémant.

✉ Laurentiusstrasse 4, Leiwien

☎ 06507/3836

🌐 www.st-laurentius-sekt.de

Weingut Lehnert-Veit

In addition to Riesling, visitors can sample Merlot, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay in this winery's Mediterranean-style garden on the banks of the Mosel. **Try:** playfully fruity Felsenwingert Goldtröpfchen Riesling.

✉ In der Dur 6-10, Piesport

☎ 06507/2123

🌐 www.lehnert-veit.de

Weingut Karp-Schreiber

This welcoming winery's varietals include Riesling, Weissburgunder, and Regent. It also produces a nice Rotling, a *cuvée* (blend) of Müller-Thurgau and Regent. When the sun's shining, the best place to taste them is on the winery's little trellised veranda. **Try:** fresh, elegant "my karp" Riesling.

✉ Moselweinstrasse 186, Brauneberg

☎ 06534/236

🌐 www.karp-schreiber.de

Weingut Bauer

An extension of the family home, where four generations reside beneath the same roof, the Bauer's simple, modern tasting room is a good place to sample award-winning still and sparkling white wines presented with old-fashioned hospitality. **Try:** refreshing Winzersekt Riesling Brut.

✉ Moselstrasse 3, Mülheim

☎ 06534/571

🌐 www.weingut-bauer.de



Wine barrels at Kerpen



Bernkastel-Kues



Weinstube Kesselstatt

DAY 2

From the quiet village of Mülheim, the Mosel makes a couple of sweeping loops up the valley, passing through the towns of Bernkastel-Kues and Traben-Trarbach as it winds along.

Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler

This winery's presence in the Mosel includes vineyards in seven different villages and a grand villa in the center of Bernkastel, where its cozy vinothek finds space within the mansion's vaulted cellars. **Try:** racy, flinty Alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling.

✉ Gestade 15, Bernkastel

☎ 06531/3002

🌐 www.pauly-bergweiler.com

Kerpen

A friendly husband-and-wife-run winery, Kerpen has eight generations of winemaking tradition, a special collection of Rieslings with labels designed by visiting artists, and an unpretentious tasting room within a stone's throw of the river.

Try: dry Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett Feinherb.

✉ Uferallee 6, Bernkastel-Wehlen

☎ 06531/6868

🌐 www.weingut-kerpen.de

Rebenhof

You'll find only Rieslings in Rebenhof's stylish, contemporary tasting room, which shares space with stainless-steel fermentation tanks. **Try:**

flinty, old-vine Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese.

✉ Hüwel 2-3, Ürzig

☎ 06532/4546

🌐 www.rebenhof.de

Schmitges

Located on an unassuming village lane, Schmitges specializes in the production of high-quality dry whites that, along with the modern, wine-bar style of their vinothek, distinguishes them from many other local establishments.

Try: light, summery Rivaner.

✉ Hauptstrasse 4, Erden

☎ 06532/2743

🌐 www.schmitges-weine.de

Weingut Martin Müllen

Established in 1991, this winery is a mere infant compared to many others here, but its success has its roots in modern and traditional winemaking principles, and one of the best *Grand Cru* (great growth) vineyards in the region. **Try:**

light but complex Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese.

✉ Alte Marktstrasse 2,

Traben-Trarbach

☎ 06541/9470

🌐 www.muellen.de

STOP FOR A BITE

Weinstube Kesselstatt

Sitting beneath vines in the shadow of the Liebfrauenkirche and the Trier Dom you can sip Kesselstatt estate wines and snack on wild boar and locally produced cheese.

✉ Liebfrauenstrasse 10, Trier

☎ 0651/41178

🌐 weinstube-kesselstatt.de

✗ Weinromantik Richtershof Hotel

An ideal place for lovers of the grape, this stately hotel has a bistro that serves seasonal dishes such as white asparagus and ham, a gourmet restaurant offering contemporary cuisine, and a wine list that runs to 350 bottles, 150 of which are from the Mosel.

✉ Hauptstrasse 81-83, Mülheim

☎ 06534/9480

🌐 www.weinromantikhof.de

✗ Burg Landshut Restaurant

Offering stunning views of the Mosel River, this sleek and modern restaurant serves modern German food. Try the Kaiserschmarrn, a shredded pancake dessert filled with rum-soaked raisins.

✉ Burg Landshut, Bernkastel-Kues

☎ 06531/500-5900

🌐 www.burglandshut.com

✗ Jugendstilhotel Bellevue

Traben-Trarbach's premier hotel has a first-class reputation that derives from its belle époque architecture, fine cuisine, professional, knowledgeable staff, and superb wine list.

✉ An der Mosel 11, Traben-Trarbach

☎ 06541/7030

🌐 www.bellevue-hotel.de

WINE TOURING AND TASTING



WHEN TO GO

The best time to visit the region is between May and September, when a lightly chilled glass or two of wine is the perfect complement to a sunny spring day or a warm summer evening. This coincides with high season in the valley, when roads and cycle paths swell with tourists, particularly in the warmer months, and in September during the wine harvest. Fortunately, the next wine village is never far along the Mosel River. If you arrive and find a tasting room that's too busy, there's invariably another just around the corner.

IN THE TASTING ROOM

While varietals such as Müller-Thurgau, Weissburgunder, and Pinot Noir are produced in the Middle Mosel, the staple of most estates is Riesling. Given that the wineries are predominantly small, family-owned operations, there tends to be an emphasis on the production of high-quality, low-quantity wines. Their tasting rooms, when not part of the winery itself, are frequently extensions of family homes, affording visitors intimate contact with the winemakers. Naturally, German is the dominant language spoken by local tourists and many of the Dutch, Belgians, and Luxembourgers who pop

across the border for a visit, but most winemakers speak English at least well enough to describe their wines. Opening hours vary, and although you can drop into most tasting rooms outside of these times, there may not always be someone around to serve you. To avoid disappointment it's worth checking websites for opening times first.

BOTTLE PRICES AND TASTING FEES

Once the most expensive wines in the world, Mosel Valley Rieslings have come down significantly in price since their heyday in the early 20th century, yet they remain world class. Quality bottles of Riesling start at about €10; each winery's price list is generally detailed in brochures found in its tasting room. Most wineries won't charge to taste a couple of their wines, but will expect you to purchase a bottle or two if you try more. Those that do have tasting fees, which are commonly between €5 and €15, will often waive them if you purchase a bottle.

Left, Romantic wine village on the Mosel River.
Right, Burg Landshut Restaurant

on the busy B49 street; no elevator; suite only bookable for three nights or more.

📞 *Rooms from: €135* 📠 *Moselweinstr. 23, Ediger-Eller* ☎ *02675/208* 🌐 *www.mosel-hotel-loewen.de* 🕒 *Closed Dec.–Easter* ➡ *20 rooms* 🍳 *Free Breakfast.*

Traben-Trarbach

32 km (20 miles) south of Cochem.

Traben-Trarbach offers pleasant promenades on both sides of the river Mosel, which runs through its midst. Its wine festivals are held in July. Traben's Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) buildings are worth seeing, in particular the Hotel Bellevue, the gateway on the Mosel bridge, the post office, the train station, and the town hall.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

By car, it takes 35 minutes to follow the winding B49 and B53 roads down from Ediger-Eller to Traben-Trarbach. You'll pass through Zell, worth a stop to try its renowned *Zeller Schwarze Katz* (Black Cat) wine. If coming by train, head five minutes south from Ediger-Eller to Bullay on the Koblenz-Trier line, then switch to the Traben-Trarbach train; it runs every hour and takes around 20 minutes. Once it's town, everything's walkable.

Sights

Mittelmosel Museum

HISTORY MUSEUM | Housed in the beautiful baroque villa Haus Böcking (1750), once frequented by the likes of Goethe and King Friedrich-Wilhelm IV, this museum shows how life was for the 18th and 19th century bourgeoisie. Discover 20 exhibition rooms showcasing magnificent period furnishings and impressive works of art, along with a collection chronicling the historical development of Traben-Trarbach. 📠 *Casino Str. 2, Traben-Trarbach* ☎ *06541/9480* 🌐 *mittelmosel-museum.de* 🎫 *€3* 🕒 *Closed Mon. and Nov.–Apr.*

Weingut Martin Müllen

WINERY | Only fully established in 1991, this winery is one of the newest in the region. Combining modern and traditional winemaking principles, it has succeeded as one of the finest and most interesting Grand Cru vineyards in the region. The winery's five hectares of steep vineyards grow almost exclusively Riesling grapes; try the light but complex Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese. 📠 *Alte Marktstr. 2, Traben-Trarbach* ☎ *06541/9470* 🌐 *www.muellen.de* 🍷 *Wine tasting €20* 🕒 *Closed Sun.*

Hotels

Romantik Jugendstilhotel Bellevue

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Traben-Trarbach's premier hotel has a first-class reputation thanks to its distinctive architecture and decor, knowledgeable staff, and gorgeous river views. **Pros:** fantastic art nouveau surroundings; prime Mosel-side location; wonderful breakfast. **Cons:** expensive in high season; room decor bland compared to public areas; not all rooms have river views. 📞 *Rooms from: €225* 📠 *An der Mosel 11, Traben-Trarbach* ☎ *06541/7030* 🌐 *www.bellevue-hotel.de* ➡ *69 rooms* 🍳 *Free Breakfast.*

Bernkastel-Kues

22 km (14 miles) southwest of Traben-Trarbach.

Bernkastel and Kues straddle the Mosel, on the east and west banks, respectively. Bernkastel is home to famed Bernkasteler Doctor, a small, especially steep vineyard that makes one of Europe's most expensive wines. Early German humanist Nikolaus Cusanus (1401–64) was from Kues; today his birthplace and St.-Nikolaus-Hospital are popular attractions.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

By car, Bernkastel-Kues is about 25 minutes southwest of Traben-Trarbach along the B53. It's a beautiful drive, passing by world-famous vineyards including Erden-Treppchen, Ürziger Würzgarten, the *Sonnenuhr* (sundial) sites of Zeltingen and Wehlen, and Graacher Himmelreich. Bus 360 runs the same route every hour, with a journey time of around 40 minutes. The closest train station is in Wittlich, about a 15-minute taxi ride away.

Once you're in Bernkastel-Kues, everything is within walking distance, though it's surprisingly easy to clock up the steps by climbing up to the castle and criss-crossing the river.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Mosel-Gäste-Zentrum Bernkastel-Kues. ☒ *Gestade 6, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ 06531/500-190 🌐 www.bernkastel.de.



Burg Landshut

CASTLE/PALACE | Take a walk up to the hilltop ruins of this 13th-century castle for splendid views along the Mosel. It was here that Trier's Archbishop Boemund II is said to have recovered from an illness by drinking the local wine. This legendary vineyard, still known as "the Doctor," soars up from Hinterm Graben street near the town gate, Graacher Tor. You can sample these Grand Cru wines at the castle's excellent restaurant (though be prepared to pay for the privilege) or pick up a bottle in one of the many shops below. The restaurant is open Friday to Sunday only for both lunch and dinner. ☒ *Burg Landshut 1, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ 06531/500-5900 *Restaurant* 🌐 www.burglandshut.com ☺ *Restaurant closed Mon.–Thurs.*

Jüdischer Friedhof

CEMETERY | Until the 1930s, Bernkastel was home to a large and well-assimilated Jewish community; although, as this cemetery reveals, they were still required

to bury their dead far outside of the town limits. Ask at the Tourist Information to borrow a key to the cemetery, which is reachable by a scenic half-hour hike through the vineyards in the direction of Traben-Trarbach. Opened in the mid-19th century, it's home to around 30 graves, as well as a few headstones from a destroyed 17th-century graveyard. ☒ *Bernkastel-Kues.*

Marktplatz

PLAZA/SQUARE | Elaborately carved 16th- and 17th-century half-timber houses and a beautiful Renaissance Rathaus (town hall) frame Bernkastel's photogenic medieval market square. In front of the town hall stands Michaelsbrunnen (St. Michael's Fountain), just as it has for more than four centuries. At the beginning of September, the square and riverbank are lined with wine stands for one of the region's largest wine festivals, the Weinfest der Mittelmosel. ☒ *Markt, Bernkastel-Kues.*

St. Nikolaus-Hospital

HOSPITAL | The Renaissance philosopher and theologian Nikolaus Cusanus (1401–64) was born in Kues. The St.-Nikolaus-Hospital is a charitable *Stiftung* (foundation) he established in 1458, famous for his library that contains more than 300 handwritten manuscripts from the 9th through 15th centuries, and it still operates today as a home for the elderly and a wine estate. While the library is only accessible by guided tour, you can visit the gothic chapel and wine museum for free. ☒ *Cusanusstr. 2, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ 06531/2260 🌐 www.cusanus.de 📮 *Church and wine museum free; library tour €10 ☺ No tours Nov.–Mar.*

Weingut Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler

WINERY | This winery's presence in the Mosel includes vineyards in seven different villages and a grand villa in the center of Bernkastel, where a cozy *vinothek* (shop) is found inside the mansion's vaulted cellars. English-language

tastings are available, but groups of five or more people should call ahead to book (for a large enough group, they'll even open Monday through Wednesday). Try the light and flinty Alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling. ☒ *Gestade 15, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ 06531/3002 🌐 www.paul-bergweiler.com 📠 *Tastings from €18* ☹ *Closed Sun.–Wed. and Nov.–Easter.*

Weingut Kerpen

WINERY | A friendly husband-and-wife team run this winery, which has eight generations of winemaking tradition behind it. They make a special collection of Rieslings with labels designed by visiting artists, and have an unpretentious tasting room close to the river. ☒ *Uferallee 6, Bernkastel-Kues* ➔ *Around 4 km (2½ miles) north, at Wehlen* ☎ 06531/6868 🌐 www.weingut-kerpen.de 📠 *Tastings from €15* ☹ *Closed Mon.–Wed.*



Restaurants

Der Ratskeller

\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Just off Bernkastel's main square, Der Ratskeller serves uncomplicated regional food to be enjoyed at an outside table with a view of the action, or inside among vaulted arches, bare brick walls, and leaded windows. The regular lunch and dinner menus are full of standard German fare—schnitzels, rump steaks, salads—but the seasonal menus deliver plenty of tasty surprises, from white-asparagus dishes in spring and early summer to hearty roasted goose, duck, and game in winter. **Known for:** outside seating with a great view; good burgers with chunky fries; friendly staff. ☑ *Average main: €20* ☒ *Markt 30, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ 06531/500–7938 🌐 www.ratskeller-bernkastel.de ☹ *Closed Mon.*

★ Rotisserie Royale

\$\$\$\$ | **FRENCH** | This excellent little French restaurant is housed in one of Burgstrasse's most charming half-timber

houses. Expect fancy twists on traditional and regional dishes on the five-course main menu (available to order for two people or more), with optional paired wines. **Known for:** superb five-course set menu; historic setting; slightly higher prices more than justified. ☑ *Average main: €26* ☒ *Burgstr. 19, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ 06531/6572 🌐 www.rotisserie-royale.de ☹ *No credit cards* ☹ *Closed Sun.–Mon.*

Saxler's Restaurant

\$\$\$\$ | **EUROPEAN** | North of Bernkastel in Zeltingen, this upscale restaurant is in the riverside Weinhotel St. Stephanus. Once part of a 19th-century manor house, the handsome dining room is a lovely setting for enjoying refined regional cooking with a hint of the Mediterranean. **Known for:** lovely settings indoor and out; choose each dish or opt for a multicourse menu; premium wine list. ☑ *Average main: €34* ☒ *Weinhotel St. Stephanus, Uferallee 9, Zeltingen-Rachtig* ➔ *6 km (4 miles) north of Bernkastel* ☎ 06532/680 🌐 www.hotel-stephanus.de ☹ *No lunch.*

★ Sonnora

\$\$\$\$ | **FRENCH** | One of Germany's finest dining experiences awaits in the restaurant of Waldhotel Sonnora, an elegant country hotel in the forested Eifel Hills. The eight-course tasting menu is a tour-de-force of classic yet inventive French cooking, with the chef transforming truffles, foie gras, and caviar into mouthwatering creations. **Known for:** an exceptional award-winning restaurant; excellent but expensive wine list; stay overnight at the attached luxury hotel. ☑ *Average main: €158* ☒ *Waldhotel Sonnora, 1 Auf dem Eichelfeld, Dreis* ☎ 06578/98220 🌐 www.hotel-sonnora.de ☹ *Closed Mon.–Wed. No lunch Thurs.*

Hotels

Wein- & Landhaus Raimund Prüm

\$\$ | GUESTHOUSE | The eight spacious rooms at this welcoming guesthouse are all individually decorated with a winning mixture of contemporary and antique furnishings and thoughtful touches such as fresh flowers and an honor bar. **Pros:** some rooms have vineyard and Mosel views; very good breakfast; charging point for electric cars (at an extra cost). **Cons:** no elevator; reception not manned 24 hours; no air-conditioning. **\$** *Rooms from: €150* ✉ *Uferallee 25, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ *06531/3110* 🌐 *www.sapruem.com* ➡ *11 rooms* 🍷 *Free Breakfast.*

★ **Weinromantikhotel Richtershof**

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | West of Bernkastel in Mülheim, this renovated 17th-century manor in a shady park offers comfortable rooms and first-class, friendly service. **Pros:** garden terrace; on-site parking; 24-hour room service. **Cons:** thin walls; no air-conditioning; decor a little dated. **\$** *Rooms from: €190* ✉ *Hauptstr. 81–83, Mülheim* ➡ *5 km (3 miles) west of Bernkastel* ☎ *06534/9480* 🌐 *www.weinromantikhotel.com* ➡ *43 rooms* 🍷 *Free Breakfast.*

Shopping

★ **Moselvinothek**

WINE/SPIRITS | Set within the historic vaulted cellars of St.-Nikolaus-Hospital, this atmospheric wine shop sells more than 140 wines from across the entire Mosel-Saar-Ruwer region. Struggling to decide on a bottle? There are organized wine tastings several times a day (€30). ✉ *St.-Nikolaus-Hospital, Bernkastel-Kues* ☎ *06531/4141* 🌐 *www.drk-sozialwerk.bks-wil.de.*

Trier

46 km (29 miles) southwest of Bernkastel-Kues.

Trier has a wealth of history and ancient sites. It's also an important university town, and accordingly boasts a surprisingly rich, modern cultural landscape for a city of its size (just over 110,000 residents).

Its roots reach back to at least 400 BC, by which time a Celtic tribe, the Treveri, had settled the Trier Valley. Eventually, Julius Caesar's legions arrived at this strategic point on the river, and Augusta Treverorum—"the town of (Emperor) Augustus in the land of the Treveri"—was founded in 16 BC. It was described as an opulent city, as beautiful as any outside Rome.

Around AD 275 an Alemannic tribe stormed Augusta Treverorum and reduced it to rubble. But it was rebuilt in even grander style and renamed Treveris. Eventually it evolved into one of the leading cities of the empire, and was promoted to Roma secunda (a second Rome) north of the Alps. As a powerful administrative capital it was adorned with all the noble civic buildings of a major Roman settlement, as well as public baths, palaces, barracks, an amphitheater, and temples. The Roman emperors Diocletian (who made it one of the four joint capitals of the empire) and Constantine both lived in Trier for years at a time.

Trier survived the collapse of ancient Rome and became an important center of Christianity, ultimately one of the most powerful archbishoprics in the Holy Roman Empire. The city thrived throughout the Renaissance and baroque periods, taking full advantage of its location at the meeting point of major east-west and north-south trade routes and growing fat on the commerce that passed through.

DISCOUNTS AND DEALS

The Trier Card, available from the visitor center's website or at the center in Porta Nigra, entitles the holder to free public transportation and discounts on tours and admission fees to Roman sights, museums, and sports and cultural venues. It costs €16 and is valid for three successive days. The Antikencard grants admission to two Roman sites of your choice for €12, or all four for €18; both also include free entry to the Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

By car, you can get from Bernkastel-Kues to Trier on the A1 in around 45 minutes, but follow the riverside B53 for a more leisurely and scenic drive. Two worthwhile stops along the way are Weingut Paulinshof, where Thomas Jefferson was once impressed by a 1783 Brauneberger Kammer Auslese (sample contemporary vintages of this wine in the beautiful chapel on the estate grounds) and the village of Piesport, home to no less than 35 vineyards (including one of Germany's finest, the Goldtröpfchen, or "droplets of gold").

Public transport is available, but less convenient. Moselbahn bus 330 runs from Bernkastel-Kues to Trier three times a day and takes a little over 1½ hours. A quicker but pricier option is to get a 15-minute taxi to Wittlich, followed by a 35-minute train (it's on the fast line from Koblenz).

Once in town, Trier is eminently walkable, though you might prefer the bus for out-of-the-center sights like the amphitheater. The city and wider region are excellent for biking, too, and rentals are available from the cycling station near track 11 of the city's main train station (from €14 per day). Cyclists can follow the marked route of the *Radroute Nahe-Hunsrück-Mosel* between Trier and Bingen.

TOURS

BUS TOURS

Römer-Express

TRAIN TOURS | You can circumnavigate the town with the multilingual narrated tours of the Römer-Express trolley. It departs from Porta Nigra, near the tourist office. Note that it doesn't really allow for photo stops. ✉ *Porta Nigra 3, Trier* ☎ 0651/9935-9525 🌐 www.roemer-express.de 📄 From €10.

WALKING TOURS

City Tours

WALKING TOURS | Various city tours are offered by the tourist office, by bike, foot, or bus. The English-language walking tour takes place Saturday at 1 pm, Easter through October. Reservations are essential; tickets are available from the tourist office or in advance online. ✉ *Trier Tourismus & Marketing, Simeonstr. 60, Trier* ☎ 0651/978-080 *Trier Tourismus & Marketing* 🌐 www.trier-info.de 📄 From €12.50.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Trier Tourismus & Marketing.

✉ *Simeonstr. 60, Trier* ☎ 0651/978-080
🌐 www.trier-info.de.

WHEN TO GO

In June, more than 100,000 people come out for the **Altstadtfest** music festival in Trier's Old Town, which features several music stages as well as a citywide run, markets, a parade, and 120 food and drink stalls. Major venues include the Trier Arena and Trier Europahalle, hosting the likes of André Rieu, James Last, and Deep Purple. 🌐

Also known as *Mosel in Flammen* (Mosel on fire), the annual **Moselfest Zurlauben** in mid-July is a celebration along the Zurlauben riverbank (as part of the several days-long festival, the *Zurlaubener Heimatfest*) involving much wine, sparkling wine, and beer, and an impressive display of fireworks.

The traditional **Olewiger Weinfest** takes place in early August in this southeastern district of Trier. As well as local wine, there's live music and various regional culinary specialties to be enjoyed. 🌐

The **Trierer Weihnachtsmarkt** (Christmas market) features nearly a hundred wooden huts selling Christmas decorations, toys, and candles, as well as *Glühwein* (mulled wine), sausages, and potato cakes. It takes place on the main market square and in front of the impressive backdrop of Trier cathedral. 🌐

Sights

★ Amphitheater

RUINS | FAMILY | The sheer size of Trier's oldest Roman structure (circa AD 100) is impressive; in its heyday it seated 20,000 spectators. You can climb down to the cellars beneath the arena—animals were kept in cells here before being unleashed to do battle with gladiators. Gladiatorial performances (1¼ hours) take place Friday through Sunday and holidays at 6 pm from April through October. Tickets can be booked in advance at Tourist Information. ☒ *Olewiger Str. 25, Trier* ☎ 0651/73010 🌐 www.trier-info.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/amphitheater 🎫 €4 ☺ Closed Nov.–Mar.

Bischöfliche Weingüter (*Episcopal Wineries*)

WINERY | Located right underneath Trier's streets, this labyrinth of cellars, full to brimming with historic Mosel wine barrels, dates back to 1380 AD and covers around three hectares. Descend for a 60-minute cellar tour, which includes a sparkling wine reception and gift bottle of wine. You can also opt for a wine tasting in the *vinothek*; pre-booking is required.

Drop down into a labyrinth of cellars beneath Trier's streets or visit the estate's elegant *vinothek* (wine store) to sample fine Rieslings, which were built on almost two millennia of priestly tradition. Tastings are available which showcase

six wines and one sparkling wine.

☒ *Gervasiustr. 1, Trier* ☎ 0651/145–760

🌐 www.bischoeflicheweingueter.de

☒ *Cellar tour from €25; tastings from €32* ☺ Closed Sun.

Kaiserthermen (*Imperial Baths*)

RUINS | FAMILY | This enormous 4th-century bathing palace once housed cold- and hot-water baths and a sports field. Although only the masonry of the *Calderium* (hot baths) and the vast basements remain, they are enough to give a fair idea of the original splendor and size of the complex. Originally 98 feet high, the walls you see today are just 62 feet high. ☒ *Weberbach 41, Trier* ☎ 0651/4362–550 🌐 www.trier-info.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/kaiserthermen 🎫 €4.

Karl-Marx-Haus

HISTORIC HOME | Built in 1727, this baroque residence was the site of a monumental moment in world history less than a century later, when future philosopher, political theorist, and revolutionary socialist Karl Marx was born here. Visitors with a serious interest in socialism, and social history in general, will be fascinated by its small museum featuring some of Marx's personal effects, as well as first-edition manifestos. Audio guides are available in English. ☒ *Brückenstr. 10, Trier* ☎ 0651/970–680 🌐 www.karl-marx-haus.de 🎫 €5.

Konstantin-Basilika (*Constantine Basilica*)

CHURCH | An impressive reminder of Trier's Roman past, this edifice, now the city's major Protestant church, was built by the emperor Constantine around AD 310 as the imperial throne room of the palace. At 239 feet long, 93 feet wide, and 108 feet high, it demonstrates the astounding ambition of its Roman builders and the sophistication of their building techniques. The basilica is one of the two largest Roman interiors in existence (the other is the Pantheon in Rome). Look up at the deeply coffered ceiling; more than any other part of the building, it conveys the opulence of the original structure. An

ornate rococo garden now separates the basilica from the Landesmuseum. ☒ *Konstantinpl. 10, Trier* ☎ 0651/9949–1200 ☉ ekkt.ekir.de.

Museum am Dom Trier (*Trier Cathedral Museum*)

ART MUSEUM | Located just behind Trierer Dom, this collection focuses on medieval sacred art, and includes fascinating models of the cathedral as it looked in Roman times. Look for the 15 Roman frescoes discovered in 1946, that may have adorned Emperor Constantine's palace. ☒ *Platz der Menschenwürde 1, Trier* ☎ 0651/710–5255 ☉ www.museum-am-dom-trier.de ☎ €5 ☹ Closed Mon.

★ **Porta Nigra** (*Black Gate*)

NOTABLE BUILDING | The best-preserved Roman structure in Trier was originally a city gate built in the 2nd century (look for holes left by the iron clamps that held the structure together). The gate served as part of Trier's defenses, and was proof of the sophistication of Roman military might and its ruthlessness. Attackers were often lured into the two innocent-looking arches of the Porta Nigra, only to find themselves enclosed in a courtyard. In the 11th century the upper stories were converted into two churches which remained in use until the 18th century. The tourist office is next door. ☒ *Porta-Nigra-Pl., Trier* ☎ 0651/460–8965 Tourist Information ☉ www.trier-info.de/sehenswuerdigkeiten/porta-nigra ☎ €4.

★ **Rheinisches Landesmuseum** (*Rhineland State Museum*)

HISTORY MUSEUM | The largest collection of Roman antiquities in Germany is housed here. The highlight is the 4th-century stone relief of a Roman ship transporting barrels of wine up the river. This tombstone of a Roman wine merchant was discovered in 1874, when Constantine's citadel in Neumagen, a village roughly halfway between Bernkastel and Trier, was excavated. Have a look at the 108-square-foot model of the city as it looked in the 4th century—it provides

a sense of perspective to many of the sights you can still visit today. ☒ *Weimarer-Allee 1, Trier* ☎ 0651/97740 ☉ www.landmuseum-trier.de ☎ €8 ☹ Closed Mon.

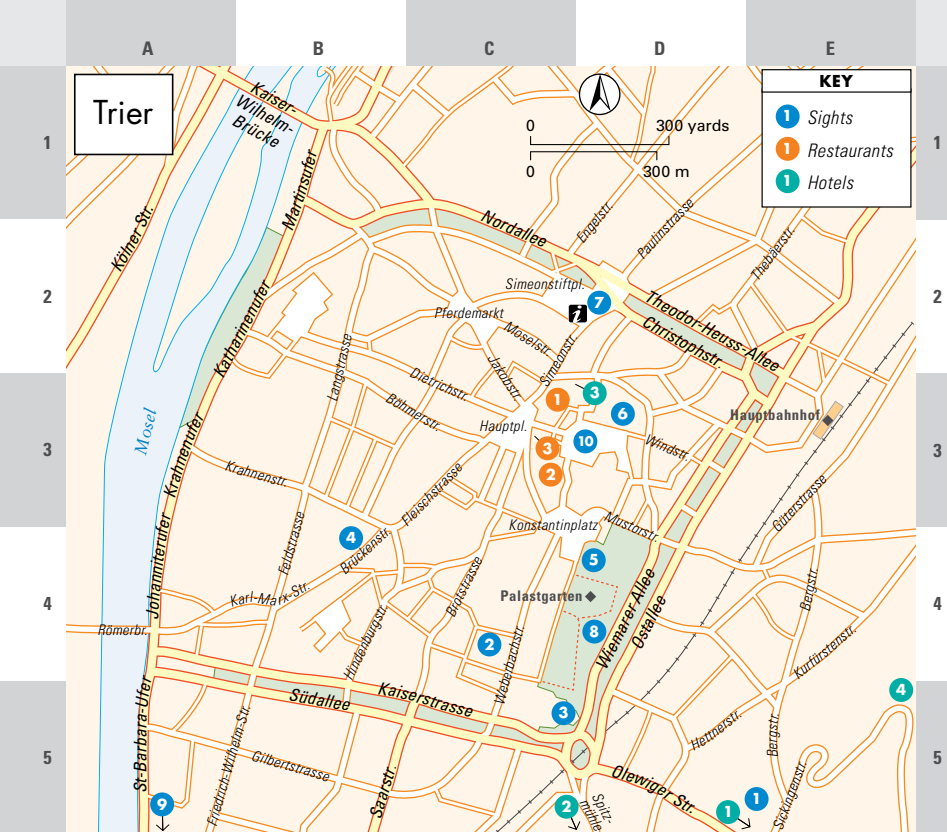
Roscheider Hof

MUSEUM VILLAGE | **FAMILY** | For a look at 19th- and 20th-century rural life in the Mosel-Saar area, visit this hilltop *Freilichtmuseum* (open-air museum) near Konz-Saar, 10 km (6 miles) southwest of Trier. Numerous farmhouses and typical village buildings in the region were saved from the wrecking ball by being dismantled and brought to the Roscheider Hof, where they were rebuilt and refurnished as they appeared decades ago. Old schoolrooms, a barbershop and beauty salon, a tavern, a shoemaker's workshop, a pharmacy, a grocery, and a dentist's office have been set up in the rooms of the museum proper, along with period rooms and exhibitions on local trades and household work, such as the history of laundry. In addition to a large collection of tin figures, there's also a Biedermeier rose garden, a museum shop, and a restaurant with a beer garden on the grounds. ☒ *Roscheiderhof 1, Konz* ☎ 06501/92710 ☉ www.roscheiderhof.de ☎ €10 ☹ Closed weekdays Nov.–mid-Mar. Restaurant closed Mon.

★ **Trierer Dom** (*Trier Cathedral*)

CHURCH | The oldest Christian church north of the Alps, the Dom was commissioned by Emperor Constantine in AD 330 and built on the site of the torn-down Palace of St. Helen, his mother. While the church burned down in 336, a second, even larger one was built soon after. Parts of the foundations of this third building can be seen in the east end of the present structure (begun in about 1035).

The cathedral you see today is a weighty and sturdy edifice with small round-head windows, rough stonework, and asymmetrical towers, as much a fortress as a church. Inside, Gothic styles



Sights	
1 Amphitheater.....	E5
2 Bischöfliche Weingüter	C4
3 Kaiserthermen	C5
4 Karl-Marx-Haus.....	B4
5 Konstantin-Basilika.....	D4
6 Museum am Dom Trier	D3
7 Porta Nigra	D2
8 Rheinisches Landesmuseum	D4
9 Roscheider Hof	A5
10 Trierer Dom.....	D3

Restaurants	
1 Schlemmereule	C3
2 Weinstube	C3
3 Zum Domstein.....	C3

Hotels	
1 Becker's	E5
2 Hotel Villa Hügel	D5
3 Romantik Hotel zur Glocke	D3
4 Vintage Hotel Petrisberg	E5



Trier's Porta Nigra (Black Gate), a city gate dating from the 2nd century, is the largest Roman structure north of the Alps.

predominate—the result of remodeling in the 13th century—although there are also many baroque tombs, altars, and confessionals. The highlight of the Schatzkammer (Cathedral Treasury) is the 10th-century Andreas Tragaltar (St. Andrew's Portable Altar), constructed of oak and covered with gold leaf, enamel, and ivory by local craftsmen. It's a reliquary for the soles of St. Andrew's sandals, as signaled by the gilded, life-size foot on the top of the altar. ✉ *Liebfrauenstr. 12, Trier* ☎ 0651/979-0790 🌐 www.dominformation.de 📮 Cathedral free; Treasury €3.

Restaurants

Schlemmereule

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | The name means “gourmet owl,” and, indeed, the chef caters to gourmets in the 19th-century Palais Walderdorff complex opposite the cathedral. In the evening, the menu is à la carte and truffles are a specialty, along with excellent fish. **Known for:** light-filled dining room decorated with a replica

Michaelangelo fresco; excellent-value lunch prix-fixe menu; courtyard seating during the summer. ☎ *Average main: €40* ✉ *Domfreihof 1b, Trier* ☎ 0651/73616 🌐 www.schlemmereule.com 😊 Closed Sun.–Mon.

Weinstube Kesselstatt

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Daily soups and stews, hearty fare, cold snacks, and fresh, regional cuisine are served with wines from the Reichsgraf von Kesselstatt estate. The *Tagesgericht* (daily special) and *Aktionsmenü* (prix-fixe menu) are a good bet; *Das Beste der Region* (the region's best) is an ample selection of local hams, cheeses, fish, and breads, served on a wooden board for two.

Known for: great wine selection; changing seasonal menus; shady terrace in summer. ☎ *Average main: €16* ✉ *Liebfrauenstr. 10, Trier* ☎ 0651/41178 🌐 www.weinstube-kesselstatt.de.

Zum Domstein

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Whether you dine inside or out, this city center *weinstube* (wine bar) is a great dining and drinking option.

In addition to the German dishes on the regular menu, you can order à la carte or prix-fixe based on recipes attributed to the Roman gourmet Marcus Gavius Apicius in the evening. **Known for:** great location; cozy atmosphere; good outdoor seating for people-watching. **\$** *Average main:* €18 ☒ *Hauptmarkt 5, Trier* ☎ 0651/74490 🌐 *www.domstein.de*.

Hotels

Becker's

\$\$ | HOTEL | This charming wine estate in the quiet suburb of Olewig offers modern, reasonably priced rooms and suites in a peaceful setting just 10 minutes from the city center by bus. **Pros:** comfortable rooms for all budgets; exceptional fine-dining restaurant; winery tours and tastings available. **Cons:** rooms not at the level of the restaurant; no spa facilities (though massages can be arranged); a bit out of the way. **\$** *Rooms from:* €110 ☒ *Olewiger Str. 206, Trier* ☎ 0651/938-080 🌐 *www.beckers-trier.de* ➡ 18 rooms 🚰 Free Breakfast.

Hotel Villa Hügel

\$\$\$\$ | HOTEL | This Art Nouveau villa dating from 1914 houses a family-run, full-service hotel that offers a nice mix of upscale and home-like atmosphere. **Pros:** fully air-conditioned; sauna and rooftop infinity pool; exceptional breakfasts. **Cons:** limited free parking; surprisingly expensive option; kitchen smell drifts into nearby rooms. **\$** *Rooms from:* €235 ☒ *Bernhardstr. 14, Trier* ☎ 651/937-100 🌐 *www.hotel-villa-huegel.de* ➡ 43 rooms 🚰 Free Breakfast.

Romantik Hotel zur Glocke

\$\$\$ | HOTEL | With roots dating to the 12th century, this elegant hotel is conveniently located about three minutes' walk from the Porta Nigra. **Pros:** elegant decoration; individually decorated rooms; some rooms have cathedral views. **Cons:** on a pedestrianized street, so no on-site

parking; no spa or big-hotel amenities; books out quickly. **\$** *Rooms from:* €190 ☒ *Glockenstr. 11-12, Trier* ☎ 0651/999-8800 🌐 *www.romantikhotel-zur-glocke.de* ➡ 18 rooms 🚰 Free Breakfast.

Vintage Hotel Petrisberg

\$\$ | HOTEL | The friendly, family-run hotel is high on Petrisberg hill overlooking Trier, not far from the amphitheater and a 20-minute walk to the Old Town. **Pros:** fine view of Trier; extremely quiet; free parking at the hotel. **Cons:** somewhat removed from the city center; restrictive check-in hours; not all rooms have balconies. **\$** *Rooms from:* €120 ☒ *Sickingenstr. 11, Trier* ☎ 0651/978-570 🌐 *www.hotelpetrisberg.de* ➡ 26 rooms 🚰 No Meals.

Performing Arts

Theater Trier

CONCERTS | Opera, theater, and ballet performances as well as concerts are staged in this popular modern theater. ☒ *Am Augustinerhof 3, Trier* ☎ 0651/718-1818 box office 🌐 *www.theater-trier.de*.

TUFA-Tuchfabrik

PERFORMANCE VENUES | Concerts, theater, exhibitions, and other events are staged at this sociocultural center and cabaret stage housed in a former cloth factory. ☒ *Wechselstr. 4-6, Trier* ☎ 0651/718-2412 🌐 *www.tufa-trier.de*.

Boppard

21 km (13 miles) south of Koblenz.

Boppard is a pleasant little resort that evolved from a Celtic settlement into a Roman fortress, Frankish royal court, and Free Imperial City. Contact the tourist office to arrange a walking tour of the town or guided tours through the wider region.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Braubach on the east bank of the Rhine, you'll need to travel back to Koblenz before heading south on the west bank. From Koblenz, it's a 20-minute drive down the riverside B9 to Boppard. Alternatively, it's 15 minutes on the Mainz-bound train. The town itself is compact and easy to walk around.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Tourist Information Boppard.**

✉ *Altes Rathaus, Marktpl. 17, Boppard*
☎ 06742/3888 🌐 www.boppard-tourismus.de



Sights

Basilika St. Severus (Church of St. Severus)

CHURCH | Excavations in the 1960s revealed ancient Roman baths hidden beneath this twin-towered Romanesque church, the main feature of Boppard's market square. The large triumphal crucifix over the main altar and a lovely statue of a smiling Madonna date from the 13th century. ✉ *Marktpl. 17, Boppard* 🌐 www.basilika-boppard.de.

Karmeliterkirche (Carmelite Church)

CHURCH | Two baroque altars dominate the interior of this Gothic church. It houses intricately carved choir stalls and tombstones and several beautiful Madonnas. Winegrowers still observe the old custom of laying the first-picked *Trauben* (grapes) at the foot of the *Traubenmadonna* (1330) to ensure a good harvest. ✉ *Karmeliterstr., Boppard* 🌐 www.basilika-boppard.de.

Museum Boppard

HISTORY MUSEUM | The town museum, housed in the 14th-century Kurfürstliche Burg (Elector's Castle) built by the archbishop of Trier, has exhibits on Boppard's Roman and medieval past, as well as an extensive collection of bentwood furniture designed by the town's favorite son, Michael Thonet (1796–1871). The cane-bottom Stuhl Nr. 14 (Chair No. 14) is

the classic found in coffeehouses around the world since 1859. ✉ *Kurfürstliche Burg, Burgplatz 2, Boppard* ☎ 06742/801–5984 🌐 www.museum-boppard.de 💶 €4 ☺ *Closed Mon.*

Römerkastell Bodobrica (Roman Garrison Bodobrica)

RUINS | A Roman garrison was established on this site in the 4th century, and would once have been enclosed by a 26-foot-high rectangular wall with 28 defense towers. Today, there are only ruins, set within an open-air archaeological park (sandwiched between Angertstrasse and Kirchgasse), but you can still see portions of the wall and towers. ✉ *Kirchgasse 5, Boppard.*

Sesselbahn Boppard (Boppard Chairlift)

VIEWPOINT | **FAMILY** | Take a ride on this 70-year-old chairlift and you'll be whisked a half-mile uphill to the Vierseenblick (Four-Lake View). It's called that because, at this particularly bendy point of the Rhine, the river appears to be a chain of four unconnected lakes. The journey takes approximately 20 minutes, but it's a rickety ride with your legs dangling, so it's not ideal for those scared of heights. Once at the top, as well as enjoying the views—including of Marksburg across the water—there are a number of hiking trails heading off into nature. ✉ *Mühlthal 12, Boppard* ☎ 06742/2510 🌐 www.sesselbahn-boppard.de 💶 €7.50 one-way, €11 round-trip ☺ *Closed Nov.–Mar.*



Restaurants

Weingut Heilig Grab

\$ | **GERMAN** | This wine estate's tavern and hotel, Boppard's oldest, is full of smiling faces: the wines are excellent, the food is simple and hearty, and the welcome is warm. Old chestnut trees shade tables in the courtyard. **Known for:** rustic atmosphere; charming staff; pretty garden in the summer. 💶 *Average main:* €9 ✉ *Zeltesg. 12, Boppard* ☎ 06742/2371 🌐 www.heiliggrab.de ☺ *Closed Mon.–Tues.*

Hotels

Bellevue Rheinhotel

\$\$ | HOTEL | In this traditional hotel, now run by the fourth and fifth generations of the same family, you can enjoy a Rhine view from many of the rooms, or from the terrace next to the waterfront promenade. **Pros:** secure parking close by; longer stays include free cable-car tickets; very atmospheric. **Cons:** not all rooms are air-conditioned; breakfast costs extra; night street noise in some rooms at the back.  **Rooms from:** €140  **Rheinallee 41, Boppard**  **06742/1020**  **www.bellevue-boppard.de**  **91 rooms**  **No Meals.**

Activities

Mittelrhein Klettersteig

HIKING & WALKING | If you have Alpine hiking ambitions, try this climbing path—a “via ferrata” complete with cables, steps, and ladders to help reach heights more quickly. It’s an alternate route of the Rhein-Burgen-Wanderweg (hiking trail from Koblenz to Bingen). The trail starts at St.-Remigius-Platz, right by the lower station of the Boppard Sesselbahn. Allow two to three hours for the climb, though there are several possibilities to return to the “normal” path in-between climbs. You can rent the necessary gear at the nearby Aral gas station (ID required).  **St.-Remigius-Pl., Boppard**  **06742/2447 Aral gas station.**

Weinlehrpfad Bopparder Hamm (Wine Hiking Trail)

HIKING & WALKING | This 11.3-km (7-mile) wine trail takes you along paved paths through the Bopparder Hamm vineyards. The route begins and ends at the large wine barrel by the Peternach level crossing on the B9, just outside Boppard in the direction of Koblenz. There are lots of benches and resting spots along the trail, from which you can enjoy glorious panoramic views of the river. Many other marked trails in the vicinity are outlined

on maps and in brochures available from the tourist office.  **Boppard**  **www.boppard-tourismus.de.**

St. Goar

14 km (9 miles) south of Boppard.

St. Goar, and its counterpoint St. Goarshausen on the opposite shore, are named after a Celtic missionary who settled here in the 6th century. He became the patron saint of innkeepers—an auspicious sign for both towns, which now live off tourism and wine. The town is busy with various events throughout the year, but the splendid fireworks display, “Rhine in Flames,” is an end of summer highlight.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

As with most towns on the Mittelrhein’s west side, the B9 links Boppard and St. Goar. It’s a 15-minute drive between the two. The train, on the Koblenz-Mainz line, takes around 10 minutes. The town is small and walkable, though prepare for a climb up to Burg Rheinfels.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS St. Goar Tourist-Information.

 **Heerstr. 81, St. Goar**  **06741/383**
 **www.stadt-st-goar.de.**

Sights

Burg Rheinfels

CASTLE/PALACE | FAMILY | The castle ruins overlooking the town bear witness to the fact that St. Goar was once the best-fortified town in the Mittelrhein. From its beginnings in 1245, it was repeatedly enlarged by the counts of Katzenelnbogen, a powerful local dynasty, and their successors, the Landgraviate of Hesse. Rheinfels was finally demolished by the French in 1797. Take time for a walk through the impressive ruins and the museum, which has a detailed model of how the fortress looked in its heyday. It’s a steep ascent by foot, but during the

summer taxis regularly shuttle between St. Goar and St. Elisabeth Church and the castle. ☒ *Parkplatz, Schlossberg 47, St. Goar* ☎ 06741/7753 🌐 www.roman-tischer-rhein.de/a-burg-rheinfels ☎ €6 ☺ Closed mid-Nov.–mid-Mar.

Stiftskirche

CHURCH | This pretty, 15th-century collegiate church was built atop the tomb of St. Goar, despite the fact that the tomb itself (an ancient pilgrimage site) was discovered to be empty during the church's construction. The 11th-century crypt is among the most beautiful to be found on the Rhine. Admire the exterior from the shade of the solitary oak. ☒ *Marktpl., St. Goar.*

Restaurants

Restaurant Landsknecht

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | North of St. Goar along the river, this hotel restaurant is all about superb wine—it's run by Martina Lorenz and her winemaker husband Joachim, who provides the delicious Bopparder Hamm estate wines—and local seasonal cuisine served as three-course set menus. Expect dishes such as chanterelle cream soup and roasted beef with potato gratin. **Known for:** set menus include sparkling wine aperitif; hikers welcome (it's a Rheinsteinig and Rhein-Burgen trail partner); minimum two diners per table. ☑ *Average main: €44* ☒ *Weinhotel Landsknecht, Aussiedlung Landsknecht 4–6, St. Goar* ⬇ 2 km (1½ miles) north of St. Goar ☎ 06741/2011 🌐 www.hotel-landsknecht.de ☺ Closed Tues. No lunch.

Hotels

★ Hotel Schloss Rheinfels

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Directly opposite Burg Rheinfels (and with spectacular views up and down the Rhine), this superb hotel has dozens of rooms and suites furnished in a modern country-mansion style as well as a nice restaurant. **Pros:** panoramic views

from rooms and public areas; excellent breakfast croissants and smoked salmon; free parking for guests. **Cons:** expensive option for the area; restaurant gets very busy in summer; elevator only goes to third floor. ☑ *Rooms from: €199* ☒ *Schlossberg 47, St. Goar* ☎ 06741/8020 🌐 www.schloss-rheinfels.de ☎ 67 rooms ☺ Free Breakfast.

St. Goarshausen

1½ km (1 mile) north of St. Goar.

The town closest to the famous Loreley rock, pretty St. Goarshausen even calls itself *Die Loreleystadt* (Loreley City), and it's a popular destination for Rhineland travelers—especially during the **Weinwoche** (Wine Week) festival, which takes place in September.

Overlooking the town are two 14th-century castles whose names, **Katz** (Cat) and **Maus** (Mouse), reflect but one of the many power plays on the Rhine in the Middle Ages. Territorial supremacy and the privilege of collecting tolls fueled the fires of rivalry. In response to the construction of Burg Rheinfels, the archbishop of Trier erected a small castle north of St. Goarshausen to protect his interests. In turn, the masters of Rheinfels, the counts of Katzenelnbogen, built a bigger castle directly above the town. Its name was shortened to Katz, and its smaller neighbor was scornfully referred to as Maus. Neither castle is open to the public.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

A 10-minute ferry crossing links St. Goar with St. Goarshausen. Ferries run from early morning to late evening all year round. A single crossing is €5.50 per car (including driver) and €1.80 per passenger. Pedestrians are charged €2.30; cyclists €3.30.

Other towns on the east/north side of the river, including Rüdesheim, Eltville, and

Wiesbaden, are connected by the B42 road and Koblenz–Frankfurt train line.

St. Goarshausen itself is small and walkable, but most of the big sights are outside town and most easily discovered by car.

Sights

Liebenstein and Sterrenberg

CASTLE/PALACE | Some 10 km (6 miles) north of St. Goarshausen, near Kamp-Bornhofen, is a castle duo separated by a “quarrel wall.” These are Liebenstein and Sterrenberg, known as the *Feindliche Brüder* (enemy brothers) in reference to the feuding descendants who inherited the castles from the king who built them. Liebenstein is now home to a charming medieval-style hotel complete with lavish period rooms, and Sterrenberg offers a traditional German restaurant with garden and terrace that offer wonderful panoramic views. ☒ *Hotel Burg Liebenstein, Zu den Burgen 1, Kamp-Bornhofen* ☎ 6773/308 *Hotel Burg Liebenstein* 🌐 www.castle-liebenstein.com.

★ Loreley

NATURE SIGHT | One of the Rhineland’s most famous attractions lies 2½ km (1½ miles) south of St. Goarshausen: the steep (430-foot-high) slate cliff of Loreley. It’s named after the beautiful blonde nymph Loreley from the story written in 1801 by author Clemens Brentano. Inspired by the sirens of Greek mythology, Brentano’s poetic creation describes her sitting on the ledge, singing songs so lovely that sailors and fishermen were lured to their demise in the treacherous rapids. The rapids really are treacherous; the Rhine is at its narrowest here and the current the swiftest.

You can approach Loreley from below or above. Rhine cruise ships stop beneath the rock, often playing a

haunting 19th-century ballad inspired by Brentano’s poem, while ramblers can tackle the steps up from the B42 to the viewpoint at the top of the rock, complete with bronze Loreley statue. Alternatively, drive up to the Parkplatz Loreley, watch the introductory film at the Tourist Information office, then follow one of the scenic paths—lined with information boards on the region’s flora and fauna, geology, wine, and more—to get to the same viewpoint. Finish your trip with a hard-earned beer in the Loreley Biergarten. ☒ *Loreley 7, Bornich, St. Goarshausen* 🌐 www.loreley-touristik.de 🅇 Parking €4.

Oberwesel

7 km (4½ miles) south of St. Goarshausen.

Oberwesel retains its medieval silhouette. Sixteen of the original 21 towers and much of the town wall still stand in the shadow of Schönbürg Castle. The “town of towers” is also renowned for its Riesling wines, which are celebrated during a festival held the first half of September. The Gothic churches on opposite ends of town are both worth visiting.

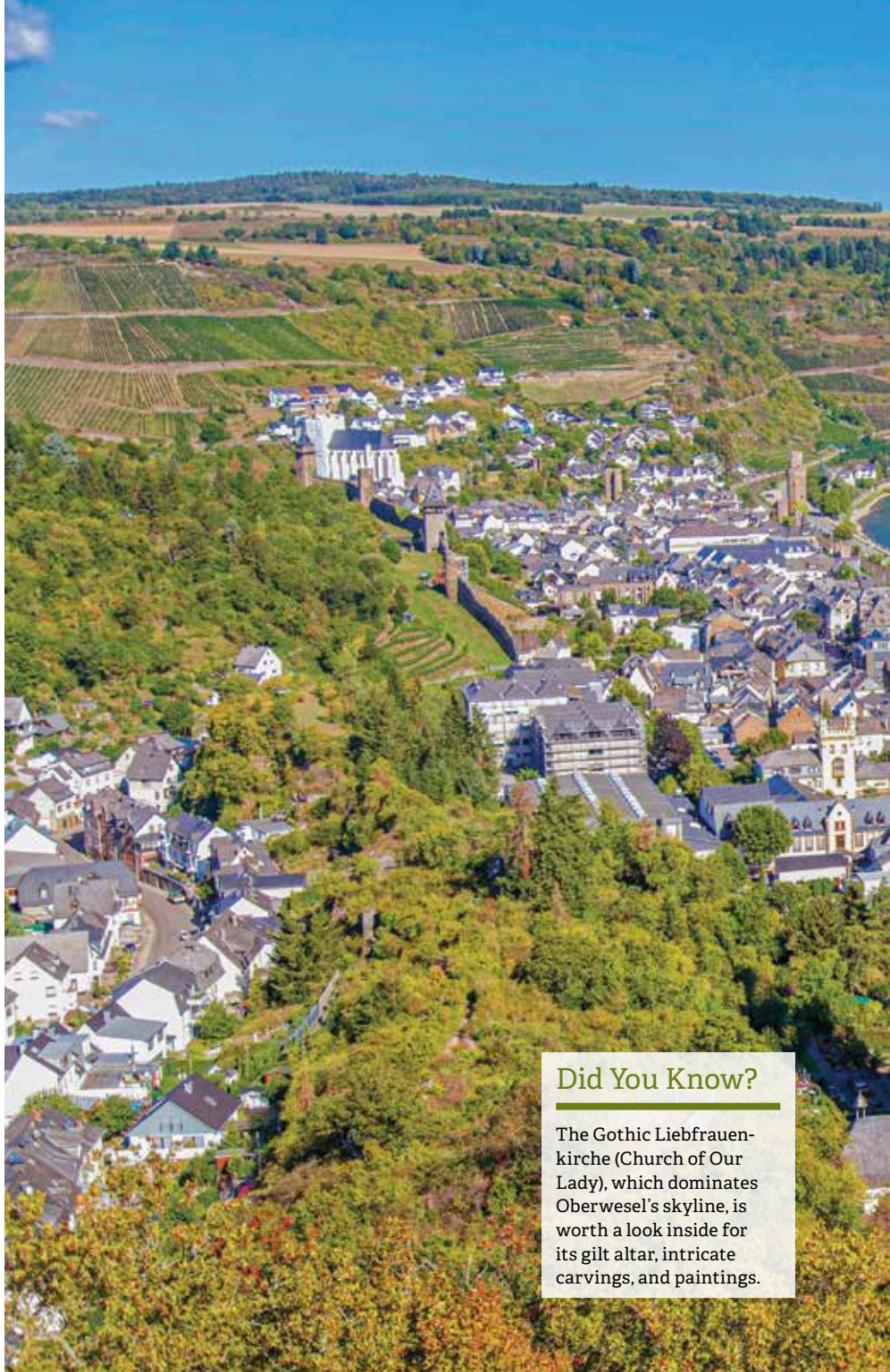
GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From St. Goarshausen, you’ll first need to take the ferry crossing to St. Goar. After this, it’s a 10-minute drive south along the river; park in any of the many spaces along the B9 and then venture through the gates of one of the wall’s *türme* (towers) on foot. Alternatively, it’s a 5-minute train journey and you’ll arrive into southeastern edge of the center.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Oberwesel Tourist-Information.** ☒ *Rathausstr. 3, Oberwesel*

☎ 06744/710-624 🌐 www.oberwesel.de.



Did You Know?

The Gothic Liebfrauenkirche (Church of Our Lady), which dominates Oberwesel's skyline, is worth a look inside for its gilt altar, intricate carvings, and paintings.

Sights

Liebfrauenkirche (*Church of Our Lady*)
CHURCH | Popularly known as the “red church” because of its brightly colored brick exterior, the towering Liebfrauenkirche has superb sculptures, tombstones, and paintings, as well as one of Germany’s oldest high gothic shrine altars (from 1331). It’s at the southeastern end of the town center, near the train station. ☒ *Kirchstr. 1, Oberwesel.*

Martinskirche
CHURCH | A fortresslike tower on a hill, the Roman Catholic St. Martin church is well worth the short but steep climb up from Wernerstrasse. Decorated in white and pastel pink inside and out, it’s particularly notable for its beautifully painted vaulting and magnificent baroque altar. Take time to explore Martinsgarten, a medley of manicured hedges and flower beds on the northern side of the church—the vistas of the town and river from here are second to none—before walking back to the center via the old Roman ramparts. ☒ *Martinsberg 1, Oberwesel.*

Stadtmuseum (*Town Museum*)
HISTORY MUSEUM | Part of the Kulturhaus Oberwesel, a historic winery turned culture center, this museum offers a virtual tour of the town, as well as a multimedia “journey through time” showing the area from the Stone Age to the present day. It also houses a fine collection of old etchings and drawings of the Rhine Valley, including one by John Gardner, an English clergyman and painter, who published a book of sketches upon his return to England and kicked off a wave of Romantic-era tourism in the late 18th century. ☒ *Kulturhaus Oberwesel, Rathausstr. 23, Oberwesel* ☎ 06744/714-726 🌐 www.kulturhaus-oberwesel.de 🎫 €5 ☹ Closed Mon. Apr.–Oct., also weekends Nov.–Mar.

Restaurants

Heimathafen550
\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Just around the corner from the Rathaus (Town Hall), this excellent little restaurant serves high-quality, down-to-earth German and Austrian cuisine; think sausages, schnitzels, and spinatknödel (spinach dumplings). For a real taste of Germany, try “Oma’s Sauerbraten,” which is heavily marinated roast beef served with potato dumplings and red cabbage. **Known for:** delicious sauerbraten (marinated beef); extensive menu of local wines; Monday is schnitzel day (veggie version available). ☎ *Average main: €19* ☒ *Hotel Das Wesel, Rathausstr. 2, Oberwesel* ☎ 01523/578-4008 🌐 www.heimathafen550.de ☹ Closed Wed. No lunch Mon. and Tues.

Hotels

★ **Burghotel Auf Schönbürg**
\$\$\$\$ | **B&B/INN** | A stay in medieval history-filled rooms, including an old library, chapel, and prison tower, is an unforgettable experience at this vineyard-fringed hotel within the 12th-century Schönbürg Castle complex. **Pros:** feels like something out of a storybook; stunning views around; gets free entrance to tower museum (usually €3). **Cons:** hotel is a climb up from the parking lot; restaurants close for autumn and winter; very expensive. ☎ *Rooms from: €260* ☒ *Auf Schönbürg, Oberwesel* ☎ 06744/93930 🌐 www.hotel-schoenburg.com ☹ Closed mid-Jan.–mid-Mar. ➔ 30 rooms 🍳 Free Breakfast.

Bacharach

6½ km (4 miles) south of Oberwesel.

Bacharach, whose name likely derives from the Latin *Bacchi ara* (altar of Bacchus), has long been associated with wine. Like Rüdesheim and Bingen, it was a shipping station where barrels would

interrupt their Rhine journey for land transport. Riesling wine from the town's most famous vineyard, the Bacharacher Hahn, is served on the KD Rhine steamers, and Riesling is used in local cooking for marinades and sauces; you can even find Riesling ice cream.

Ascend the 14th-century town wall for a walk along the ramparts, then stroll along the main street (one street but three names: Koblenzer Strasse, Oberstrasse, and Mainzer Strasse) for a look at patrician manors, typically built around a *Hof* (courtyard), and half-timber houses. Haus Sickingen, Posthof, Zollhof, and the Rathaus (Town Hall) are all fine examples.

In June you can sample wines at the **Weinblütenfest** (Vine Blossom Festival) in the side-valley suburb of Steeg, and, in late August, at **Kulinarische Sommernacht** (Gourmet Summer's Night) in Bacharach proper.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Oberwesel, it's a five-minute drive along the B9 to Bacharach. Look out for island-dwelling Pfalzgrafenstein Castle on the way and, once in town, park on the riverbank (then walk through one of its medieval gateways). The train takes even less than five minutes. In Bacharach, everything is walkable.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Bacharach Visitor Center.**

✉ *Rhein-Nahe Touristik, Oberstr. 10, Bacharach* ☎ 06743/919-303 🌐 *rhein-nahe-touristik.de.*



Sights

Burg Sooneck

CASTLE/PALACE | Perched on the edge of the Soon Forest, which is pronounced “zone” southeast of Bacharach, this small but beautiful castle was first mentioned in 1271—though it's likely older. It houses a beautiful collection of Empire, Biedermeier, and neo-Gothic furnishings, medieval weapons, and

paintings from the Rhine Romantic era; ask for the English-language information pack on arrival. The river views from the ramparts are worth the entrance fee alone. ✉ *Sooneckstr. 1, Niederheimbach* ➔ 6 km (3½ miles) southeast of Bacharach ☎ 06743/6064 Museum 🌐 *www.burg-sooneck.com* 💰 €6 🕒 Closed Nov.–Apr.

Kirche St. Peter (St. Peter's Church)

CHURCH | The massive tower in the center of town belongs to the parish church of St. Peter. It's a prime example of the “Rhenish Transitional Style,” a brief 13th-century movement when old Romanesque churches were decorated with elements of the newer French Gothic style, but without undergoing any major structural alterations. The church is most notable for its impressive four-story nave. ✉ *Blücherstr. 1, Bacharach.*

Wernerkapelle

RUINS | From the southern side of St. Peter's Church, a set of stone steps (signposted) leads to Bacharach's undoubted landmark, the Wernerkapelle. It's a bit of a climb, but well worth for a close-up look at these romantic sandstone ruins, famous for their filigree tracery, as well as for the sweeping views around. The Gothic chapel's roof succumbed to falling rocks in 1689, when the French blew up nearby Burg Stahleck; it's a 10-minute walk from here to the old castle, which lay dormant until 1925 when a youth hostel was built on the foundations. ✉ *Bacharach.*



Restaurants

Altes Haus

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | This wonderfully charming medieval half-timber house is Bacharach's oldest (dating to 1368) and a favorite setting for films and photos. It doesn't disappoint with its food and wine, either: the kitchen uses the freshest ingredients possible and buys meat and game from local butchers and

hunters, serving up local classics such as *Rieslingrahmsuppe* (Riesling cream soup) and *Reibekuchen* (potato pancakes) in addition to the seasonal specialties.

Known for: good regional wine list; friendly service; cozy atmosphere. [€] *Average main:* €16 ☒ *Oberstr. 61, Bacharach* ☎ 06743/1209 ☺ *Closed Tues.–Thurs. No lunch weekdays.*

Weinstube Zum Grünen Baum

[€] | **GERMAN** | The Bastian family (also owners of the vineyard Insel Heyles'en Werth, on the river island just north of town) runs this cozy tavern in a half-timber house dating from 1421. The "wine carousel" is a great way to sample a full range of wine flavors and styles (11 wines) alongside light snacks that include delicious *Wildsülze* (game in aspic), with potato salad, sausages, and cheese.

Known for: very pretty inner courtyard; excellent wines; friendly service. [€] *Average main:* €14 ☒ *Oberstr. 63, Bacharach* ☎ 06743/1208 🌐 www.weingut-bastian-bacharach.de ☺ *Closed Wed.*

Hotels

Altkölnischer Hof

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Flowers line the windows of the country-style rooms and suites in this pretty half-timber hotel near the market square, though the exterior is rather more romantic than the room interiors. **Pros:** half-timber romance; some room balconies look out at St. Peter's Church; great breakfast buffet. **Cons:** touristy area means it can get noisy; parking costs €6 and is a block away; reservations needed for restaurant. [€] *Rooms from:* €120 ☒ *Blücherstr. 2, Bacharach* ☎ 06743/947-780 🌐 www.altkoelnischer-hof.de ☺ *Closed Nov.–mid-Apr.* ➡ 24 rooms 🌞 | *Free Breakfast.*

★ Im Malerwinkel

[€] | **HOTEL** | This charming guesthouse on the banks of the lovely Münzbach stream near Bacharach's western gate (Steeger Tor), is a hidden gem. **Pros:** great-value

Bike the Middle Rhine



There is a 132-km (82-mile) cycle path called the Rheinradweg running through the Middle Rhine Valley parallel to the road and the railroad tracks from Bingen to Bonn. It's an ideal way of combining sightseeing with some not-so-strenuous exercise, unless you attempt to reach the castles on the hills, in which case: may your legs stay strong. Watch out for pedestrians and other bicyclists.

option with breakfast included; beautiful and serene yet minutes from the center; free garage parking with electric charging. **Cons:** rooms are very simply decorated; lacks air-conditioning; no online booking (email request only). [€] *Rooms from:* €98 ☒ *Blücherstr. 41-45, Bacharach* ☎ 06743/1239 🌐 www.im-malerwinkel.de ➡ 7 rooms 🌞 | *Free Breakfast.*

Rhein Hotel Bacharach

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | All of the modern rooms in this friendly, family-run operation, each of them named after a vineyard, come with comfortable beds, modern bathrooms, and stunning views. **Pros:** rooms offer Rhine and castle views; free bike loans for hotel guests; wonderful outside seating at the restaurant. **Cons:** no elevator; next to railroad (can be noisy); no air-conditioning. [€] *Rooms from:* €145 ☒ *Langstr. 50, Bacharach* ☎ 06743/1243 🌐 www.rhein-hotel-bacharach.de ☺ *Closed Dec.–Feb.* ➡ 14 rooms 🌞 | *Free Breakfast.*

Bingen

16 km (10 miles) southeast of Bacharach.

Perhaps most famous as the birthplace of Hildegard of Bingen, a famous mystic

visionary and composer of the High Middle Ages, Bingen overlooks the Nahe-Rhine conflux near a treacherous stretch of shallows and rapids known as the Binger Loch (Bingen Hole). From early on—as with Rudesheim on the opposite shore—goods were moved from ship to shore to circumvent the impassable waters. Bingen was also the crossroads of Roman trade routes between Mainz, Koblenz, and Trier. This central location at the meeting point of three of Germany's wine regions—Rheinhessen, Mittelrhein, and Nahe—helped Bingen grow into a major center of the wine trade. Wine is celebrated during 11 days of merrymaking in late August and early September at the annual **Winzerfest**.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Bacharach by road, take the B9 (Rheinstrasse). It's a 20-minute drive. The train takes less than 15 minutes. While the town center's sights are easy to walk between, you might want a car to visit Rochuskapelle, Mäuseturm, and Burg Rheinstein.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Tourist-Info Bingen.** ☎ *Rheinkai 21, Bingen* ☎ 06721/184-200 🌐 *www.bingen.de*.



Basilika St. Martin

CHURCH | First mentioned in AD 793, this soaring Catholic church was built on the site of an older Roman temple. It's been destroyed and rebuilt a number of times since then, which has resulted in an interesting mix of architectural styles; the 11th-century crypt and Gothic and baroque furnishings make it worth a visit. It's dedicated to the 4th-century Martin of Tours, and you'll find the former patron saint of France depicted in carvings and frescoes throughout the church. ☎ *Basilikastr. 2, Bingen*.

Burg Klopp

CASTLE/PALACE | Throughout its history, Bingen has repeatedly been destroyed by wars and fires, which means there are many ancient foundations but few visible architectural remains of the past. One very notable exception is this castle. Since Celtic times, the Kloppberg (Klopp Hill) in the heart of town has been the site of a succession of citadels, and since 1282 they've all been named Burg Klopp. Visit today and you'll find a terrace with good views of the Rhine, the Nahe, and the surrounding hills, and from April to October you can climb the tower for a more lofty view. ☎ *Off Mariahilfstr., Bingen* ☎ 06721/1840 🌐 *www.dein-bingen.de*.

★ Burg Rheinstein

CASTLE/PALACE | North of Bingen on the road from Bacharach, this impressive castle was the home of Rudolf von Hapsburg from 1282 to 1286. To establish law and order on the Rhine, he destroyed the neighboring castles of Burg Reichenstein and Burg Sooneck and hanged their notorious robber barons from the oak trees around the Clemens Church, a late-Romanesque basilica near Trechtingshausen. The Gobelin tapestries, 15th-century stained glass, wall and ceiling frescoes, a floor of royal apartments, and antique furniture—including a rare “giraffe spinet,” a harpsicord which Kaiser Wilhelm I is said to have played—are the highlights of a visit here. All of this is illuminated by candlelight on some summer Fridays. Rheinstein was the first of many Rhine ruins to be rebuilt by a royal Prussian family in the 19th century. ■ **TIP** → **If coming by car or boat, leave your transport at river level and prepare for a 10-minute climb up. By train, it's a 30-minute walk from Trechtingshausen station.** ☎ *Trechtingshausen* ➦ 4½ km (3 miles) north of Bingen ☎ 06721/6348 🌐 *www.burg-rheinstein.de* 🎫 €9.50 🕒 *Closed Jan.–mid Mar.*

Mäuseturm (Mouse Tower)

NOTABLE BUILDING | Looking west along the river from Bingen, you can just about spot the Mäuseturm, perched on a rocky island near the Binger Loch. The name derives from a gruesome legend. One version tells that during a famine in 969 the miserly Archbishop Hatto hoarded grain and sought refuge in the tower to escape the peasants' pleas for food. The stockpile attracted scads of mice to the tower, where they devoured everything in sight, including Hatto. In fact, the tower was built by the archbishops of Mainz in the 13th and 14th centuries as a *Mautturm* (watch tower and toll station) for their fortress, Ehrenfels, on the opposite shore; now an atmospheric ruin. It was restored in neo-Gothic style by the king of Prussia in 1855, who also rebuilt Burg Sooneck, but you can't go inside. ☒ *Mäuseturminsel, Bingen* ➔ 5 km (3 mile) drive northwest of Bingen on B9 🌐 www.bingen.de.

Museum am Strom (History Museum)

HISTORY MUSEUM | At this small but very well cared-for museum, you can see the most intact set of Roman surgical tools ever discovered (2nd century), period rooms from the Rhine Romantic era, and displays about Abbess St. Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179), one of the most remarkable women of the Middle Ages. An outspoken critic of papal and imperial machinations, she was a highly respected scholar, naturopath, and artist whose mystic writings and (especially) music became very popular starting in the 1990s, when her work was rediscovered and popularized by feminist religious scholars. An excellent illustrated booklet in English on Rhine Romanticism, *The Romantic Rhine*, is sold at the museum shop. The museum is housed in a former power station (1898) on the riverbank. ☒ *Museumsstr. 3, Bingen* ☎ 06721/184-353 🌐 www.bingen.de/kultur/museum-am-strom ☎ €5 ☺ Closed Mon.

Rochuskapelle (St. Roch Chapel)

CHURCH | The forested plateau of the Rochusberg (St. Roch Hill) is the pretty setting of the Rochuskapelle, the most visible Bingen landmark from across the river in Rüdesheim. Originally built in 1666 to celebrate the end of the plague, it has been rebuilt twice. In August 1814, Goethe attended the consecration festivities, the forerunner of today's Rochusfest, a week-long folk festival in mid-August. The chapel contains an altar dedicated to St. Hildegard of Bingen, with relics and furnishings from the convents she founded in modern-day Bingen and Eibingen. While the chapel is only open for services, it's worth a trip to stroll the leafy chapel gardens, with its shaded outdoor pews, tree-lined trails, and lovely Rhine and vineyard views. ☒ *Rochusberg 2, Bingen* 🌐 www.bingen.de ☺ Closed except during services.



Restaurants

★ Hildegard-Forum der Kreuzschwestern

(Hildegard Forum of the Sisters of the Cross)

\$\$ | **CAFÉ** | On the top of the Rochusberg, and on the road to St. Roch Chapel, this unusual-looking building is home to an excellent little café-restaurant that serves the town's best-value lunch buffet. The salads, soups, main courses, and desserts are all tasty and wholesome, with many of the dishes based on Hildegard of Bingen's own theories of nutrition. **Known for:** tasty and nutritious lunches; distinctive building surrounded by vineyards; a 30-minute uphill walk from the center.

☎ *Average main: €19* ☒ *Rochusberg 1, Bingen* ☎ 06721/181-000 🌐 www.hildegard-forum.de ☺ No dinner.

Weinstube Kruger-Rumpf

\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | A five-minute drive south of Bingen town center—you'll need to cross over the Drususbrücke, Germany's oldest medieval stone bridge, to reach the west side of the Nahe River—this charming restaurant and wine bar is a longstanding local favorite. Expect

refined country cooking with seasonal house specialties including *Geschmorte Schweinebacken* (braised pork cheeks) and *Winzerschmaus* (a casserole of potatoes, sauerkraut, bacon, cheese, and herbs), alongside wines produced by the Rumpf family. **Known for:** seasonal menu with tasty regional specialties; exquisite Nahe wines; friendly service. 📍 *Average main: €23* 📍 *Rheinstr. 47, Münster-Sarmsheim* ➦ 4 km (2½ miles) southwest of Bingen ☎ 06721/43859 🌐 *weinstube.kruger-rumpf.com* 🕒 *Closed Mon. and Tues. No lunch Mon.–Sat.*

Hotels

★ Burg Reichenstein

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Considering it's set within an imposing hilltop castle that dates back to the 12th century, the bedrooms in this hotel are surprisingly modern; each one, from the most basic Comfort room up to the signature Gallery suite, is individually decorated and features comfortable beds, flat-screen TVs, and rain showers. **Pros:** excellent breakfast and afternoon tea included; some rooms have river views; unique castle atmosphere and experience.

Cons: a short drive from Bingen; limited parking available for guests; some noise from the train tracks below. 📍 *Rooms from: €217* 📍 *Burgweg 24, Trechtingshausen* ☎ 06721/6117 🌐 *www.burg-reichenstein.com* ➦ 24 rooms 🍳 *Free Breakfast.*

Rüdesheim

4 km (2½ miles) northeast of Bingen.

Tourism and wine are the heart and soul of Rüdesheim. With south-facing slopes reaching down to the riverbanks, wine-growing has thrived here for 1,000 years. Since being discovered by English and German romanticists in the early 19th century for its picturesque solitude, Rüdesheim has long lost its quiet innocence, as the narrow, medieval alleys fill with boatloads of cheerful visitors from all over the world.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Bingen, take the ferry across the Rhine to Rüdesheim; you'll also be crossing the state border from Rheinland-Pfalz to Hesse. It's €5.70 per car (including driver) for a one-way trip, plus €1.80 per passenger. Pedestrians are €2.50 and cyclists are €3.30. Bring cash. From the ferry terminal and train station, everything in town is walkable.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Rüdesheim Tourist-Infor-

mation. 📍 *Rheinstr. 29a, Rüdesheim* ☎ 06722/906–150 🌐 *www.ruedesheim.de.*

Sights

Drosselgasse (Thrush Alley)

STREET | Less than 500 feet long but a major local attraction, Drosselgasse is a narrow, pub-lined lane between Rheinstrasse and Oberstrasse that buzzes with music and merrymaking from 10 am until well past midnight every day, all year round. The first wine tavern here, the Drosselhof, opened in 1727. Stop at the street's Art Cafe for a legendary *Rüdesheimerkaffee*—made by flambée-ing Asbach Uralt brandy and sugar in a specially made cup until the sugar dissolves, pouring strong coffee over it, and garnishing with mountains of whipped cream and chocolate flakes—and, if you still have space, pair it with a *Baumstriezel* (chimney cake). 📍 *Drosselgasse, Rüdesheim* 🌐 *www.drosselgasse.de.*

★ Niederwalddenkmal

MONUMENT | High above Rüdesheim and visible for miles around is Germania, a colossal female statue crowning the Niederwald Monument. This tribute to German nationalism was built between 1877 and 1883 to commemorate the rebirth of the German Empire after the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71). Germania faces across the Rhine toward its eternal enemy, France. At her base are the words to a stirring patriotic song:



Take the Seilbahn over picturesque vineyards to the Niederwald-Denkmal monument above Rüdesheim.

“Dear Fatherland rest peacefully! Fast and true stands the watch, the watch on the Rhine!” There are splendid panoramic views from the monument and from other vantage points on the edge of the forested plateau.

You can reach the monument on foot (allow an hour), by car (via Grabenstrasse, Zum Niederwald-Denkmal, and the L-3034), or over the vineyards in the *Seilbahn* (cable car; ☎ *Oberstraße 37*; 🌐 www.seilbahn-ruedesheim.de; open mid-March through October). There’s another chairlift to and from Assmannshausen, a red-wine enclave, on the other side of the hill; a “Ringticket” covers the cable car up from Rüdesheim to Niederwald, the cable car down from Niederwald to Assmannshausen, and the boat trip back to Rüdesheim; allow three to four hours for it all. ☎ *Off L-3034, Rüdesheim* ☎ *06722/2402 Seilbahn Rüdesheim* 🌐 www.niederwalddenkmal.de 📄 *Cable car: €6.50 one-way, €10 return; Ringticket €20* 🗓 *Closed Nov.–mid-Mar.*

Restaurants

Ratsstube

\$ | **GERMAN** | Just off the town’s pretty Marktplatz (Market Square), this popular bar-restaurant serves classic German fare: think goulash soup, currywurst, and schnitzel. But the undoubted highlights (and best value options) are the *flammkuchen*—wood-fired, thinly rolled-out discs of dough covered in a variety of toppings (a little like a thinner, crispier pizza). **Known for:** delicious flammkuchen; good wine selection; fast and friendly service. 📄 *Average main: €13* ☎ *Marktstr. 26, Rüdesheim* ☎ *0622/3461* 🌐 www.ratsstube-ruedesheim.de 🗓 *Closed Mon. No lunch Fri.*

Hotels

Breuer’s Rüdesheimer Schloss

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Vineyard views grace most of the rooms at this historic hotel, where guests are welcomed with a drink from the family’s Rheingau wine estate. **Pros:** right off the Drosselgasse; half-board

packages available; very welcoming (including families and dog-owners). **Cons:** touristy area means plenty of outside noise; restaurant can get very busy; live music a bit corny for some. 📍 *Rooms from: €169* 📠 *Steing. 10, Rüdesheim* ☎ *06722/90500* 🌐 *www.ruedesheim-er-schloss.com* 🕒 *Closed late Dec.–mid-Mar.* ➡ *26 rooms* 🍳 *Free Breakfast.*

Oestrich-Winkel

7 km (4½ miles) east of Rüdesheim.

Oestrich-Winkel's vineyard area is the largest in Hesse, and there are wineries on every street in this small riverside town. From April to September, you can sample the wines of weekly changing wineries at the outdoor wine-tasting stands down by the river, including at Weinprobierfass Oestrich, which is opposite the town's famous 18th-century wine-loading crane.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Rüdesheim, travel east on the B42 for less than 10 minutes and you'll reach Oestrich-Winkel. The train takes a similar amount of time, though factor in some walking time as the stations are on the edge of each town. You'll need sturdy footwear (or a car) to visit the wine estates around here.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Tourist-Information

Oestrich-Winkel. 📠 *Am Brentano-haus, Hauptstr. 87, Oestrich-Winkel* ☎ *06723/601–2806* 🌐 *www.oestrich-winkel.de.*

Sights

★ Schloss Johannisberg

WINERY | The origins of this grand wine estate, high in the hills above (and slightly west of) Oestrich-Winkel, date from 1100, when Benedictine monks built a monastery and planted vines on the slopes below. The striking

Better Late



Schloss Johannisberg was once owned by the prince-abbots of Fulda, and every autumn a courier was sent from Johannisberg to Fulda to obtain permission to harvest the grapes. In 1775 the courier returned after considerable delay. The harvest was late and the grapes were far riper than usual; the resulting wines were exceptionally rich and fruity. *Spätlese* (late harvest, pronounced *shpate-lay-zuh*) wines have been highly esteemed ever since. A statue in the courtyard commemorates the "late rider."

early-18th-century palace is closed to the public, but follow signs for the *Weinprobierstand* (wine tasting stand), where you can sample the local produce on a scenic terrace overlooking the vineyards. On the way, you'll pass by the beautiful, 12th-century parish church, notable for its suspended red cross. Elsewhere around the complex, you'll find a wine shop, which also offers the estate's gin, as well as Schlossschänke restaurant.

Between April and October, you can book a guided cellar tour and wine tasting (in German only), or throughout the year you can opt for a pricier, exclusive individual/group wine tasting (English option). Schloss Johannisberg is a 10-minute drive or 45-minute hike from the center of Oestrich-Winkel. 📠 *Parkplatz Schloss Johannisberg, Off Am Erntebinger, Geisenheim* ☎ *06722/70090* 🌐 *www.schloss-johannisberg.de* 🍷 *Cellar tour with wine tasting €30* 🕒 *No tours Nov.–Mar.*

★ Weingut Schloss Vollrads

WINERY | Built in 1211 north of town, Schloss Vollrads is the oldest of Germany's major wine estates. The tower, built

in 1330 and surrounded by a moat, was the Greiffenclau residence for 350 years until the present palace was built in the 17th century. There is a popular wine shop here, and the castle's period rooms can be toured during concerts, festivals, and wine tastings—check the website for specific dates. In addition to having a meal in the somewhat pricey restaurant, you can sit outside on the patio in the warmer months and order very good *flammkuchen* (baked thin-crust pizza, typically with bacon and onions) and sausages from the food truck. ☒ *Vollradser Allee, Oestrich-Winkel* ➔ *North on Kirchstr., continue on Vollradser Allee; it's 3 km (2 miles) north of town* ☎ 06723/660 ☉ www.schlossvollrads.com.



Restaurants

Die Wirtschaft

\$\$ | **GERMAN** | You're guaranteed a warm welcome from Florian Kreller and the team at this historic building full of cozy niches and exposed beams. Local dishes are the specialty here, with emphasis placed on fresh, local, seasonal ingredients. **Known for:** central location with a pretty courtyard; warm and friendly service; exceptional and great value wines by the glass. ☎ *Average main: €18* ☒ *Hauptstr. 1b, Winkel* ☎ 06723/7426 ☉ www.die-wirtschaft.net ☺ *Closed Mon.–Tues. No lunch.*

★ Gutsrestaurant Schloss Vollrads

\$\$\$\$ | **MEDITERRANEAN** | Great care is taken over the light, seasonal international dishes that make up the three-course menus here. Every dish is made with fresh, carefully chosen ingredients and served with the estate's wines. **Known for:** creative menu with excellent prix-fixe option; knowledgeable service; relaxed atmosphere. ☎ *Average main: €55* ☒ *Schloss Vollrads, Vollradser Allee, Oestrich-Winkel* ☎ 06723/6616 ☉ www.schlossvollrads.com/restaurant ☺ *Closed Tues.–Wed.*

Schlossschänke

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | At this Schloss Johannisberg restaurant you can sit on the patio, in the restaurant, or the glassed-in terrace, which affords a spectacular view of the Rhine and the vineyards where the estate's wines originate. The regular menu includes several meat dishes, with a smattering of fish and vegetarian options, but it's the seasonal specialties that really stand out. **Known for:** exceptional vineyard views; creative dishes and excellent wines; expensive option. ☎ *Average main: €38* ☒ *Schloss Johannisberg, Off Am Erntebringer, Geisenheim* ☎ 06722/96090 ☉ www.schloss-johannisberg.de ☺ *Closed Mon.–Tues.*

Eltville

9 km (5½ miles) east of Oestrich-Winkel.

The largest town in the Rheingau, Eltville rose to prominence in the Middle Ages as the residence of the archbishops of Mainz. Today, it's cherished for two things: its beautiful, time-honored architecture and its modern wine industry.

Take a stroll along the lanes between the B42 and the river and you'll discover a marvelous medley of half-timber houses and aristocratic manors. Some of the highlights include Bechtermünzer Hof (☒ *Kirchgasse 6*), Stockheimer Hof (☒ *Ellenbogengasse 6*), and Eltzer Hof (☒ *Martinstor gateway*).

While in town, sample its sparkling wines and rosés, the latter of which are celebrated most colorfully during the town's **Rosentage** (Rosé Days), held the first weekend of June. This is when the romantic Kurfürstliche Burg and the old town on the banks of the Rhine are transformed into a veritable sea of flowers. There are a number of prominent wineries in this area, and some of them offer tours and tastings. The Nussbrunnen, Wisselbrunnen, and Marcobrunn estates

get their name from the *Brunnen* (wells) that are beneath the vineyards.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

It's a 10-minute drive from Oestrich-Winkel to Eltville on the B42, or the same amount of time by train. There are also local bus services run by the RMV (Rhein-Main-Verkehrsverbund; www.rmv.de). Once in town, you can walk everywhere you'd want to go—even all the way to Kloster Eberbach, if you fancy a real hike.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Eltville Tourist-Information.**

✉ *Kurfürstliche Burg, Burgstr. 1, Eltville*
☎ 06123/90980 www.eltville.de



Sights

★ **Kloster Eberbach** (*Eberbach Abbey*)

HISTORIC SIGHT | The former Cistercian monastery is idyllically set in a secluded forest clearing 6 km (4 miles) northwest of Eltville. Its Romanesque and Gothic buildings (12th–14th century) look untouched by time—one reason why the 1986 film of Umberto Eco's medieval murder mystery *The Name of the Rose* was filmed here. Pick up an English-language leaflet and take a stroll around, seeking out highlights like the vast medieval Monk's Dormitory and the beautiful Klosterkirche, both of which are regularly used for concerts because of their superior acoustics. The manor house-style Monk's Dining Room is also worth a look.

The monastery's impressive collection of old winepresses bears witness to a viticultural tradition that spans nearly nine centuries. The wines can be sampled year-round in the atmospheric wine cellar (or on a roving tasting around the abbey), in the popular Klosterschänke restaurant (where you can pair the local wines with seasonal German cuisine; try the "Klosterauszeit" cold cuts platter), or in the vinothek (shop). In warmer months, you can also enjoy them outside at Kloster Eberbach's premier vineyard, the Steinberg, which is surrounded by a 3-km (2-mile) stone wall

that dates from the 13th to 18th centuries. ✉ *Kloster-Eberbach-Str. 1, Eltville*
☎ 06723/917-8100 www.kloster-eberebach.de 🚗 €16; €4 parking.

Kurfürstliche Burg (*Electors' Castle*)

CASTLE/PALACE | Eltville flourished as a favorite residence of the archbishops of Mainz in the 14th and 15th centuries, and it was during this time that the castle—which now houses Eltville's tourist-information center—was built. The museum includes an exhibition commemorating Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of modern letterpress printing, who was appointed courtier here in 1465; the Count's Chamber with its impressive 14th-century murals; an observation deck with a lovely view of the city; and a dungeon that is accessed by a narrow spiral staircase. More than 300 varieties of roses grow in the castle's courtyard garden, its walls, and out along the Rhine promenade. ✉ *Burgstr. 1, Eltville*
☎ 06123/90980 www.eltville.de 🎫 Museum €3.50; grounds free.

Weingut Robert Weil

WINERY | Built by the English aristocrat John Sutton, this beautiful villa in Kiedrich, 2½ km (1½ miles) northwest of Eltville, is home to one of Germany's leading wine estates. Its famed Rieslings can be sampled in the tasting room at no cost (but with the expectation that a bottle or two of wine is purchased afterward). For 10 people or more, an exclusive tasting including a two-hour cellar tour can be arranged in advance for a fee. ✉ *Mühlberg 5, Kiedrich* ☎ 06123/2308 www.weingut-robert-weil.com 🍷 Tastings free.



Restaurants

Baiken

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | Perched on a hilltop north of town, this superb restaurant overlooks the Rauenthaler Baiken vineyard. In addition to the lovely panorama vista from the vine-canopied terrace, the regional cooking, friendly atmosphere, and local



Kloster Eberbach, a former Cistercian monastery, is worth a stop for its well-preserved architecture and its winery.

wines make for a complete “Rheingau Riesling” experience. **Known for:** great steaks; excellent vineyard views; friendly staff. **☎ Average main:** €31 **📍** Wiesweg 86, Eltville **↔** 2½ km (1½ miles) north of town **☎** 06123/900–345 **🌐** www.baiken.de **🕒** Closed Mon.–Tues. No lunch weekdays.

Koegler Weinstand im Hof

🇮🇹 ITALIAN | The quiet, walled, rose-filled wine garden, run by the nearby Weingut J. Koegler and adjacent to their “weinhofel,” is a wonderful town-center spot to enjoy their fine wines alongside classic Italian delicacies, including freshly-prepared pizzas. **Known for:** self-service stands for wine and pizza; delicious mixed plates of Italian salamis and cheeses; regular live music in summer. **☎ Average main:** €14 **📍** Kirchg. 5, Wiesbaden **☎** 06123/2437 **🌐** www.weingut-koegler.de **🕒** No lunch weekdays.

★ Kronenschlösschen

\$\$\$\$ | EUROPEAN | Chef Roland Gorgosilich and sommelier Florian Richter continue the culinary traditions that have made

this stylish and intimate art nouveau house one of the Rheingau’s top restaurants. The menu showcases dishes with pan-European influences, with produce varying from Breton lobster to Galician veal, while the wine list focuses on the finest local estates for whites, along with Old and New World estates for reds.

Known for: set menus with a pan-European influence; beautiful restaurant and even lovelier terrace; superb local and international wines. **☎ Average main:** €125 **📍** Hotel Kronenschlösschen, Rheinallee, Eltville **↔** At Hattenheim **☎** 06723/640 **🌐** www.kronenschloessen.de **🕒** Closed Sun.–Wed. No lunch.

Zum Krug

\$\$\$\$ | GERMAN | Wine-maker Josef Laufer more than lives up to the hospitality promised by the wreath and Krug (an earthenware pitcher) hanging above the front door of his hotel and restaurant a few kilometers from Eltville. The wood-paneled dining room, with its old tiled stove, is cozy; the service is warm and welcoming; and the regularly

changing seasonal German fare includes Riesling cream soup, rump steak, trout from the Wisper River, along with the odd international curveball (Thai green curry, anyone?) **Known for:** traditional German menu with a few surprises; attentive service; drinks list includes hundreds of Rheingau wines and liqueurs. 📍 *Average main: €36* 📍 *Hauptstr. 34, Hattenheim, Eltville* ➔ *5.8 km (3.6 miles) southwest of Eltville* ☎ *06723/99680* 🌐 *www.zum-krug-rheingau.de* 🕒 *Closed Mon.–Tues. No lunch Wed. No dinner Sun.*

Hotels

★ **Weinhotel Koegler**

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Set within a 15th-century structure on Eltville's Weingut Koegler complex, this charming boutique hotel brings modern style to its historic setting (the building, Hof Bechtermünz, is where Johannes Gutenberg printed the world's first dictionary in 1467). **Pros:** historic and central setting; quiet location with free parking; right in the heart of Eltville.

Cons: no air-conditioning; gets booked up for weddings and events; upper floors accessible by stairs only. 📍 *Rooms from: €175* 📍 *Kirchg. 5, Eltville* ☎ *06123/2437* 🌐 *www.weingut-koegler.de* ➔ *16 rooms* 🕒 *Free Breakfast.*

Wiesbaden

14 km (8½ miles) east of Eltville.

Wiesbaden, the capital of the state of Hesse, is a small city of tree-lined avenues with elegant shops and handsome facades. Its hot mineral springs have drawn visitors since the days when it was known as Aquis Mattiacis (the waters of the Mattiaci)—the words boldly inscribed on the portal of the Kurhaus—and Wisibada (the bath in the meadow).

In the 1st century AD, the Romans built thermal baths here, a site then inhabited by a Germanic tribe, the Mattiaci.

Modern Wiesbaden dates from the 19th century, when the dukes of Nassau and, later, the Prussian aristocracy commissioned the grand public buildings and parks that shape the city's profile today. Wiesbaden developed into a fashionable spa town that attracted the rich and the famous. Their ornate villas on the Neroberg and turn-of-the-20th-century town houses are part of the city's flair.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Eltville, follow the B42 up (away from the river) and east, joining the A66 then diverting onto Biebricher Allee to reach the center of Wiesbaden. It's a 20-minute drive. Alternatively, you can take the train in just 15 minutes. Wiesbaden's Altstadt, where you'll find most attractions, can be explored by foot, but if heading further afield you may wish to take a bus or car.

TOURS

Thermine

TRAIN TOURS | For a 50-minute ride around the city, board this little train. A one-day ticket, purchased from the driver (cash only) or at Wiesbaden Tourist-Information (card accepted), enables you to get on and off at the Greek Chapel and the Neroberg funicular railway station in order to explore the sights. From April through October—and weekends during November and December—it departs numerous times daily between 10 am and 4:30 pm, from Café Lumen (behind the Marktkirche, opposite Tourist Information). 📍 *Marktpl. 1, Wiesbaden* ☎ *0611/5893-9464* 🌐 *www.thermine.de* 🕒 *€12* 🕒 *Closed Jan.–Feb. Closed weekdays Mar., Nov., and Dec.*

VISITOR INFORMATION

Small-group English-language guided walking tours of the city can be arranged in advance at Wiesbaden Tourist-Information.

CONTACTS **Wiesbaden Tourist-Information.**

📍 *Marktpl. 1, Wiesbaden* ☎ *0611/172-9930* 🌐 *tourismus.wiesbaden.de.*



Sights

Altstadt

NEIGHBORHOOD | Known as *Schiffchen* (Little Ship) because of the boatlike shape at its heart—formed by Grabenstrasse and Wagemannstrasse, located just behind the former duke's palace (and now seat of state parliament) Stadtschloss—Wiesbaden's pretty Old Town is packed with restaurants, cafés and shops. There aren't many standout sights within its margins, which are marked by Webergasse in the north, the Marktplatz in the east, Schwalbacher Strasse in the west, and Rheinstrasse in the south, but the interesting mix of architectural styles makes it a lovely area to stroll around.

☒ *Mauritiusplatz, Wiesbaden.*

Marktkirche

CHURCH | One of Wiesbaden's most recognizable attractions, this enormous, red, neo-Gothic church was built between 1853 and 1862. The town's main Protestant church, it is notable for its 49-bell carillon (which can be heard regularly every day) and its 6,198-pipe Walcker organ (which can be heard during the free organ recitals held each Saturday at 11:30 am). ☒ *Schlosspl. 4, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0611/900-1613 🌐 www.marktkirche-wiesbaden.de.

★ Museum Wiesbaden

HISTORY MUSEUM | This impressive city museum offers a heady mix of natural history and fine art. The permanent Aesthetics of Nature exhibition is spread across the two floors and divided into four fascinating themes: Color, Form, Movement, and Time. Expect to learn

about the functional white fur of polar bears, the swimming legs of crabs, the fossils left behind from when this region was a large sea, and much more. The art collection is spread across all three floors and includes everything from the figurative paintings of Dutch Old Masters to the abstract sculptures of European and American modernism. Look out for the bright, expressionist paintings of Russian artist Alexej Jawlensky, who lived in Wiesbaden for the last 20 years of his life, and don't miss the *Jugendstil* exhibit, featuring more than 500 magnificent Art Nouveau paintings, furnishings, and ornaments. Temporary exhibitions focus on art and culture from around the world. Don't miss the spectacular, gold-colored mosaics on the interior of the cupola, just to the left as you enter the museum.

☒ *Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 2, Wiesbaden*
☎ 0611/335-2250 🌐 www.museum-wiesbaden.de 🎫 €6 permanent collection,
€12 special exhibitions 🕒 Closed Mon.

Schloss Henkell

WINERY | Just south of Wiesbaden, this 20th-century "castle" is the headquarters of the international wine producer Henkell & Co. There are regular English-language tours of the property (lasting 60, 90, or 120 minutes), which take in both the impressive Rococo marble hall and the seven-story *sektkellerei* (sparkling wine cellars), followed by tastings of locally-produced bubbly. For a group tour, you'll need a minimum of five people, but there's also the opportunity for self-guided tours with your phone. There are regular events held here, from art exhibitions and classical concerts to wine parties and festivals.

☒ *Biebricher Allee 142, Wiesbaden* ➔ 3 km (2 miles) south of the city center
☎ 0611/630 🌐 www.henkell-freixenet.de/schloss-henkell 🎫 Self-guided tour €10; Guided tours from €15.

★ Spielbank Wiesbaden

CASINO | Built in 1907, the neoclassical Kurhaus is the cultural center of the city—and it's home to this beautiful,

grand casino. The *Klassisches Spiel* (table games area: roulette, blackjack, and poker) is a magnificent wood-paneled hall known for allowing very high stakes play; it's said to have been the inspiration for Dostoevsky's novel *The Gambler*. Jackets are required. To play here—or in the less formal *Automatenspiel* (slots) in the neighboring *Kolonnade*—you must be at least 18 (bring your passport).

Aside from the casino, the rest of the Kurhaus is given over to Thiersch-Saal, a splendid setting for concerts, and a Parisian-style bistro. The building is flanked by The Staatstheater (1894), appointed in baroque and rococo revival styles, and two beautifully landscaped parks—one with a boating pond. ☒ *Kurhaus, Kurhauspl. 1, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0611/536-100 🌐 www.spielbank-wiesbaden.de.

Thermalquelle Kochbrunnen

(Kochbrunnen Fountain)

FOUNTAIN | No less than 15 of Wiesbaden's 26 springs converge at the steaming Kochbrunnen Fountain, where the warm, salty, but (in theory) healthful waters are there for the tasting. First mentioned in 1366, the spring produces around 360 liters of 66°C (151°F), sodium chloride-rich water every single minute. As well as being used to medicinal purposes, the water is also used to heat the city's Stadt Wiesbaden (New Town Hall) building. The fountain square is one of the town's loveliest, flanked by grand old hotel buildings. ☒ *Kochbrunnenpl., Wiesbaden*.



Restaurants

★ Alebrijes

§ **VEGAN** | Wiesbaden's most interesting vegan restaurant is all about plant-based Latin American food. Expect everything from enchiladas to empanadas, chilaquiles to chicharrón. **Known for:** delicious filled tacos; great selection of cocktails; colorful food matches the colorful decor. 💵 *Average main:* €14 ☒ *Wilhelmstr. 36-38, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0176/2131-2544

🌐 www.alebrijesws.de 🕒 Closed Mon.
No lunch weekdays.

Benner's Bistronomie

\$\$\$\$ | **ECLECTIC** | Located in the Kurhaus, beside the Spielbank, this chic bistro has a striking art nouveau interior—think painted ceilings, walls crammed with paintings, and a grand piano (live music nightly)—that attracts an upscale clientele and the post-theater crowd. Delicately mixing French and German cooking, the restaurant is particularly known for its (expensive) black Angus steaks, best served with truffle fries. **Known for:** dine in beautiful interior and on lovely veranda; relaxed but sophisticated crowd; good service. [5] *Average main:* €36 ☒ Kurhauspl. 1, Wiesbaden ☎ 0611/536–200 🌐 www.benners.de.

★ Noir

\$\$ | **JAPANESE** | Traditional Japanese cuisine meets Western-style fine-dining culture at this excellent restaurant on the northern edge of the Altstadt. The stars of the show here are the spectacular sashimi and sushi, expertly prepared and beautifully presented, but expect all manner of Japanese treats, from miso soup to gyoza dumplings. **Known for:** the city's best sushi rolls; high-end setting and service; great price to quality ratio. [5] *Average main:* €16 ☒ Bärensstr. 5, Wiesbaden ☎ 0611/4459–0769 🌐 www.noir-sushi.com.

Weihenstephaner Wiesbaden

\$\$\$\$ | **GERMAN** | High ceilings, chandeliers, and traditional wooden furnishings help shape Wiesbaden's answer to a Bavarian beer hall, with a good selection of draft and bottled Weihenstephaner beers to match. The classic Bavarian food comes in very generous portions, from the best crispy *Schweinshaxe* (pork knuckle) in town—worth ordering in advance as they only make a set number each day—to schnitzel, fried chicken, and sausages with sauerkraut and fried potatoes.

Known for: good Bavarian beer; friendly atmosphere; excellent (but pricey) bar food. [5] *Average main:* €26 ☒ Taunusstr.

Hessian State Wine Domains



Sekt (sparkling wine) production in the Rheingau is primarily concentrated in Eltville, Wiesbaden, and Rudesheim. The administrative headquarters and central cellars of the Hessian State Wine Domains, Germany's largest wine estate, are in the town itself. The estate owns about 500 acres of vineyards throughout the Rheingau and in the Hessische Bergstrasse wine region south of Frankfurt. Its shops in the early-Gothic hospital at Kloster Eberbach stock a comprehensive selection of regional sparkling wines.

46, Wiesbaden ☎ 0611/205–9035 🌐 weihenstephaner-wiesbaden.de 🕒 Closed Sun.–Mon. No lunch.



Hotels

Hotel Klemm

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | If you like a bit of personality in your accommodation, you'll love the individually decorated rooms at this 19th-century art nouveau villa turned welcoming hotel. **Pros:** very friendly and helpful staff; definitely not a bland chain; quiet yet central location near bustling Taunusstrasse. **Cons:** short but steep uphill walk to reach hotel; extra charge for cots or additional beds; garage parking costs extra and must be pre-booked. [5] *Rooms from:* €120 ☒ Kapellenstr. 9, Wiesbaden ☎ 0611/5820 🌐 www.hotel-klemm.de ➡ 70 rooms 🕒 Free Breakfast.

★ Hotel Nassauer Hof

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Situated opposite the Kurhaus, this has been Wiesbaden's premier address for well over a century and was the first hotel in Germany to be awarded five stars. **Pros:** luxury through and

through; superb restaurants including the fine-dining Ente; Germany's only rooftop thermal pool. **Cons:** the queen beds are a little short; breakfast not included as standard; quite expensive rates. ☎ **Rooms from:** €305 ☎ **Kaiser-Friedrich-Pl. 3–4, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/1330 ☎ www.hommage-hotels.com/nassauer-hof 🛏 158 rooms 🍷 No Meals.

★ **Radisson Blu Schwarzer Bock Hotel**
 \$\$ | **HOTEL** | First opened as a bathhouse in 1486, this sophisticated hotel maintains stunning architectural features such as marble columns and an exceptionally charming wood-paneled room adjacent to the classically decorated bar. **Pros:** fully air-conditioned; excellent location by Kochbrunnen spring; wonderful old furnishings. **Cons:** rooms decor is a little bland; no parking (recommended garage is 450 meters away); street-facing rooms can be noisy at night. ☎ **Rooms from:** €135 ☎ **Kranzpl. 12, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/1550 ☎ www.radissonhotels.com 🛏 142 rooms 🍷 No Meals.

Town Hotel
 \$\$ | **HOTEL** | Its central location (a five-minute walk from the Kurhaus, Old Town, and shopping district), particularly friendly and helpful staff, and affordability make this modern hotel an excellent choice. **Pros:** cheap and cheerful option; convenient Altstadt location; very friendly and helpful staff. **Cons:** often full during the week; no air-conditioning; rooms are rather basic. ☎ **Rooms from:** €125 ☎ **Quellenviertel, Spiegelg. 5, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/360–160 ☎ www.townhotel.de 🛏 24 rooms 🍷 No Meals.

Nightlife

BARS

★ Jo's Weinbar

WINE BAR | Part of the RheinMain CongressCenter, this swanky wine bar has an excellent selection of whites, reds, and rosés, both local and international, along with a choice of beers

and cocktails. Light snacks, including *flammkuchen* (baked thin-crust pizza), carpaccio, and salads, are also available. However, it's only open on weekends if there are events. ☎ **Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 1, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/1729–1722 ☎ www.jos-weinbar.de.

Scotch 'n' Soda

BARS | This perennially popular Irish pub in the heart of the Old Town has a vast selection of whiskies and spirits. It also, somewhat surprisingly, does one of the city's best schnitzels. It's open from lunchtime until late. ☎ **Goldgasse 9, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/171–4424.

Performing Arts

CONCERTS

Kurhaus

CONCERTS | Throughout the year, performances and events ranging from classical to contemporary are hosted at the Kurhaus, including performances from the Hessian State Orchestra, and the annual Wine Ball and New Year's Eve party. In addition, there are very occasional organ concerts in the Friedrich-von-Thiersch-Saal, which has been home to an organ since the Kurhaus was built in 1907. On open days, you can visit the organ room, which is usually closed to the public. ☎ **Kurhauspl. 1, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/172–9100 **Wiesbaden Congress & Marketing** ☎ kurhaus.wiesbaden.de.

RheinMain CongressCenter

PERFORMANCE VENUES | The impressive modern RheinMain CongressCenter (RMCC) building, a glorious mix of natural stone, wood, glass, and metal, hosts all manner of events including concerts, cultural events, balls, and trade fairs. ☎ **Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 1, Wiesbaden** ☎ 0611/172–9444 ☎ www.rmcc.de.

THEATER

Hessisches Staatstheater

MUSIC | The Hessian State Theater was built in neo-baroque style by two famous Viennese architects for Emperor

Wilhelm II, and opened in 1894. Various extensions and reconstructions have been carried out since, and the frescos, stuccowork, and sculptures are a sight to behold. Classical and contemporary opera, theater, ballet, and musicals are presented on the theater's four stages. ✉ *Christian-Zais-Str. 3, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0611/132-325 box office 🌐 www.staatstheater-wiesbaden.de.

Shopping

Broad, tree-lined Wilhelmstrasse is one of Germany's most elegant shopping streets, with a host of designer boutiques housed in its fin de siècle buildings. Taunusstrasse and Nerostrasse offer between them a small selection of excellent—and expensive—antiques shops. Head to the Altstadt for a handful of upscale boutiques; Kirchgasse and its extension, Langgasse, are the heart of the store-filled pedestrian zone.

RSA Antiquitäten

ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES | Regine Schmitz-Avila specializes in antique German and some French furniture from the 18th and 19th centuries. The beautiful art deco, baroque, and Biedermeier pieces are lovingly displayed in her welcoming shop on Taunusstrasse. However, it's closed Sunday and Monday. ✉ *Taunusstr. 34, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0611/529-0570 🌐 www.antiquitaeten-wiesbaden.de.

Activities

SPAS

Kaiser-Friedrich-Therme

SPA | These thermal baths were built in the Art Nouveau style at the beginning of the 20th century and extensively renovated at the end of it, in order to restore and preserve the elegant decorations of the Irish-Roman bath. Pamper yourself in this historic setting with the thermal-spring and cold-water pools, Russian steam bath and saunas, two solaria, and a score of health- and wellness treatments.

Take a Hike!



The **Rheinhöhenweg** (Rhine Heights Path) gives its hikers splendid views and descents into the villages en route. These marked trails run between Oppenheim on the Rhine Terrace and Bonn for 240 km (149 miles) and between Wiesbaden and Bonn-Beuel for 272 km (169 miles). The most extensive hiking trail is the Rheinsteig, from Wiesbaden to Bonn on the right side of the Rhine. It comprises 320 km (199 miles) of well-marked paths that offer everything from easy walks to challenging stretches on a par with Alpine routes.

Towels and robes can be rented on-site, but come prepared to bathe nude. Children under 16 are not admitted, and advance reservations are required. On Tuesdays (except holidays) the facility is for women only. ✉ *Langg. 38-40, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0611/317-060 🌐 www.mattiaqua.de/thermen/kaiser-friedrich-therme 💶 €15 Mon.–Thurs., €17 Fri.–Sun.

Thermalbad Aukammtal

SPA | Year-round swimming can be had indoors and out thanks to the thermal springs—at a temperature of 32°C (90°F)—that feed the two large pools connected by a swim-through canal. The facility also includes an activity pool, six saunas, a steam room, a whirlpool, water massage, and various other treatments. The sauna is for ladies only on Monday (except holidays). Advance reservations are required. From the center, the baths are a 25-minute walk or 10-minute bus (get out at “Wiesbaden Thermalbad” stop) away. ✉ *Leibnizstr. 7, Wiesbaden* ☎ 0611/317-080 🌐 www.mattiaqua.de/thermen/thermalbad-aukammtal 💶 €15 Mon.–Thurs., €17 Fri.–Sun.