

worms: more than history



City map

*A Walk Through
2,000 Years of History*

Welcome to Worms

Welcome in Germany's oldest city. Archaeologists have found traces of settlements that go back more than 6,000 years. In the Middle Ages, Worms was the scene of events that shaped European history, with German Emperors holding momentous Imperial diets, and even a Pope being crowned in its magnificent Romanesque cathedral. The Middle Ages come alive every year in a giant re-enactment fair in the city park. Worms is also known as the setting of the Nibelungenlied, a great Mediaeval epic that every German child learns at school, which is reflected in monuments, statues, street names, and, of course the Nibelungen festspiele, a drama festival staged every summer against the backdrop of the venerable cathedral. But Worms is also the place where in 1521 Martin Luther refused to recant his teachings when pressed to do so by the Emperor and the German sovereigns. It was one of the most famous Jewish communities in the world, boasting the oldest Jewish cemetery of Europe. And, to top it all, Worms has been a city of winemaking since the Romans brought vines here, and the Backfischfest, a fun fair drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors every summer, is one of many opportunities to sample the rich variety of splendid wines.

Tourist Information Worms



















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Hours

Apr–Oct Mon–Fri 9 am–6 pm, Sat, Sun, public holidays 10 am–2 pm
Nov–Mar Mon–Fri 9 am–5 pm

Key

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|
|  | public toilet |  | sight |
|  | accessible toilet |  | more information overleaf |
|  | baby changing facilities |  | entrance / access |
|  | Tourist Information (C5) |  | barrier-free entrance to the Cathedral via Schlossgasse (B4) or Schlossplatz (C4) |
|  | parking facilities |  | pedestrian area |
|  | 30 min bus parking (C5) |  | “Salians” and “Rhine terraces” cycling routes |
|  | bus parking (G1) |  | “Barbarossa” cycling route |
|  | main station (A/B 1) |  | “Veloroute Rhein” cycling route |
|  | post office (D/E 3) | | |
|  | caravan site (I 1) | | |

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A B C D E F G H I

RHINE

0 50 100 150 200 metres

stadium 1.4 km
public bath 1.2 km

city park 390 m
zoo 1.4 km

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Sights

- 1 St Peter's Cathedral (Dom St. Peter) B/C 4**

Romanesque pillar basilica with a double choir and a transept, built 1125/1130–1181 on the foundations of a structure erected by Bishop Burchard (1000–1025). Elaborate decorations in the east and west choirs. The “Emperor’s portal” on the north side is the setting of the “quarrel of the queens” in the Nibelungenlied epic. Gothic south portal (pre-13th century) with representational designs displaying an “illustrated stone Bible”; Gothic St Nicholas chapel adjoining. The cathedral’s interior features Romanesque and late-Gothic stone sculptures. After the city’s devastation in 1689, the east choir was given a baroque design (high altar by Balthasar Neumann). Burial vault with sarcophagi of five generations of Salian dukes (10th–11th centuries). St John’s baptistry in front of the south front demolished in 1807. Open for sightseeing in summer 9 am – 6 pm, in winter 10 am – 5 pm.
- 2 St Magnus' Church B 5**

Former Carolingian one-room church (8th/9th century), extended later. Parish church of the former St Andrew’s chapter. Early Protestant preaching church and hotbed of the Reformation in Worms around 1521.
- 3 City of Worms Museum (Museum der Stadt Worms) B 5/6**

The Museum, formerly built as St Andrew’s church and cloister in the Romanesque style (12th/13th, Gothic extensions and more recent alterations), illuminates the city’s pre- and early history, the Roman, Franconian, medieval and modern eras. Temporarily closed for restoration work. Reopening scheduled for Apr 2021 for a major Martin Luther exhibition.
- 4 Luginsland A/B 5**

Historic vineyard site by the city wall running along Andreasstrasse / Willy-Brandt-Ring. Emperor Frederick II had his son, the German king Henry VII, incarcerated here in 1235 in the “Luginsland” (“view of the country”) tower.
- 5 Jewish Cemetery (Jüdischer Friedhof “Heiliger Sand”) A 4/5**

Europe’s oldest extant Jewish cemetery, 2,500 gravestones, the oldest of them from 1058/1059). Impressive view of the cathedral from the younger part on the former outer city ramparts (“Buber view”). Open Apr – Sep 8 am – 8 pm, Oct – Mar 8 am – 4.30 pm. Closed on Shabbat and religious holidays. Male visitors are kindly asked to cover their heads during the visit.
- 6 Heylshof Museum C 3**

Art museum with a notable collection of paintings, china, small-scale sculptures, stained glass, glass, ceramic, and graphic art. Special exhibitions. Open Mar–Dec: Tue–Sat 2–5 pm; Sun, public holidays 11 am–5 pm.
- 7 Heylshof Gardens (Heylshofpark) (former bishop’s palace) B/C 4**

Before its destruction in 1689, the bishop’s palace was the place of the city’s legal proceedings and also the scene of the momentous confrontation between Emperor Charles V and Martin Luther on 17/18 April 1521. Plaque marking the former location of the palace. Educational and interactive walk with art installations on Luther (May – Oct).
- 8 Luther Memorial (Lutherdenkmal) C 3**

World’s largest Reformation memorial, completed in 1868 and based on a design by Ernst Rietschel. Statues and emblems illustrate Reformation history, with Martin Luther and the Diet of Worms in the centre.

- 9 Wheel of Fortune (Schicksalsrad) C3**
Double-sided, rotating bronze wheel created in 1986 by Gustav Nonnenmacher. One side shows events that impacted on the city, the other depicts scenes from everyday local life.
- 10 Winegrowers' Fountain (Winzerbrunnen) D3**
Created in 1983 by Gustav Nonnenmacher. Centre of the Kämmererstrasse pedestrian area. Wine-related historic scenes and allegories pay tribute to Worms' significance as a winegrowing city.
- 11 Ludwigsplatz D2**
Memorial (1895), 24.3 metres tall, with obelisk and a fountain flanked by lions recalling Ludwig IV, Grand Duke of Hesse.
- 12 St Martin's Church D2**
Three-aisled Romanesque pillar basilica (11th–13th) with a straight-ended choir. According to the legend, St Martin of Tours was incarcerated in a dungeon beneath the church.
- 13 Martin's Gate (Martinstor) E2**
Built in 1904 to designs by Georg Metzler, inspired by the forms of the city's former northern city gate (destroyed in 1689).
- 14 Rashi Synagogue and Jewish Quarter E2**
Worms, *Varmayza* in Hebrew, had a prosperous Jewish community from the 11th century on. Romanesque synagogue (first building from 1034, rebuilt in 1174/1175, destroyed in 1938/1941, reconstruction completed in 1961) with women's synagogue. Open Apr–Oct: 10 am – 12.30 pm, 1.30 pm – 5 pm; Nov–Mar: 10 am – 12 am, 2 pm – 4 pm. Ritual bath (*mikvah*, 1185/1186) temporarily closed due to restoration works.
- 15 Jewish Museum in Rashi House E2**
Supposed former site of the Jewish school, where the famous Jewish scholar Rashi studied around 1060. Part of the ground floor preserved from the Middle Ages. The present building (completed in 1982) is modelled on the former structure and houses the Jewish museum and the municipal archive. Open Apr–Oct Tue–Sun 10 am – 12.30 pm, 1.30 pm – 5 pm, Nov–Mar Tue–Sun 10 am – 12.30 pm, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm.
- 16 Woog Bridge F3**
Remains of the impressive ramparts of the former bastion (17th century?). The bastion provided one of the main accesses to the medieval city.
- 17 Frederick's Church and Red House (Friedrichskirche und Rotes Haus) E3**
Church of the Reformist community, built in 1744. The Red House, the only extant bourgeois Renaissance structure, built in 1624, today houses a Protestant community centre.
- 18 St Paul's Church E4**
Built in 1016 by Bishop Burchard on the foundations of the Salian ducal castle as a three-aisled pillar basilica (11th–13th century). Romanesque choir and western building with octagonal dome (13th century). Nave remodelled as a baroque hall after the city's devastation in 1689. The towers' tops are inspired by Oriental architecture ("pagan towers"). Portal with a replica of the Bernward Doors of St Mary's Cathedral in Hildesheim. Today the chapter buildings and the cloister house a Dominican monastery.

- 19 Nibelungen Museum and Torturmplatz** E5
Multimedia museum about the medieval epic, attached to the medieval city wall, opened in 2001 as a “walkable audio book” on the Nibelungenlied. Underground “Myth lab” with multimedia information hub on sagas and myths of the world. Open Tue–Fri 10 am – 5 pm, Sat, Sun, public holidays 10 am – 6 pm.
Torturmplatz (“gate tower square”) with “Siegfried’s tomb”, a mound flanked by two sandstone menhirs.
- 20 Romanesque House Wall** D4
Preserved wall of a grand residential house (early 13th).
- 21 City Hall (Rathaus), Market Square (Marktplatz), Fountain of Justice (Gerechtigkeitsbrunnen)** D4
The City Hall (1958) was the site of the grammar school after the city’s destruction in 1689. The late-medieval town hall (“civic court”) was situated in today’s Hagenstrasse. Fountain of Justice, originally erected at the site of today’s Siegfried fountain in 1778 as a watering place.
- 22 Trinity Church (Dreifaltigkeitskirche)** C/D4
Built by the magistrate in the form of a baroque hall (1709–1725) as a Lutheran and Reformation memorial church. After its destruction in the Second World War, reconstruction (1955–1958) to plans by Otto Bartning.
- 23 Siegfried Fountain (Siegfriedbrunnen)** C4
Heptagonal fountain (1921) with larger than life-sized statue of Siegfried the dragonslayer, based on designs by Adolf von Hildebrand. Gift of Cornelius Wilhelm von Heyl, a former local leather magnate.
- 24 Baroque Building** C5
Stately and prestigious bourgeois residence (1725). Birthplace of the composer Rudi Stephan (1887–1915), today a pharmacy.
- 25 Rhine Promenade, Hagen Statue, and Nibelungen Bridge Tower** 1/2/3
Park laid out in the 1920s. Variety of cafés and restaurants. The Hagen statue, created by Johannes Hirt in 1905, recalls the Nibelungenlied warrior Hagen sinking the treasure of the Nibelungen in the river. The Nibelungen Tower, one of formerly two bridge towers designed by Karl Hofmann in the neo-Romanesque “Nibelungen” style and built in 1900, is used by the Scouts today.
- 26 City Wall (Stadtmauer)**
Begun in 900, with major parts still extant, the city wall backs against the museum of the city next to the wall opening at Andreastor (St Andrew’s Gate, 1907) (A/B 5/6), towers the city moat behind the cathedral’s west choir on the foundations of the former Roman wall (B4), and marks the north side of the Jewish Quarter with an opening in the wall (1907) at Rashi Gate (E/F 2). Gate Tower Square (E 4/5) offers the most impressive view of its obverse towards the east, with the major and lesser Rhine Gates, the Civic Tower, the Fishermen’s Gateway, and the Gate Tower.
- 27 Church of Our Lady (Liebfrauenkirche)** E1
Late-Gothic pilgrimage church (13th–15th centuries), set in the renowned vineyard that produced the original Liebfraumilch wine (which lost its fame after a plethora of plonks were sold under that name).