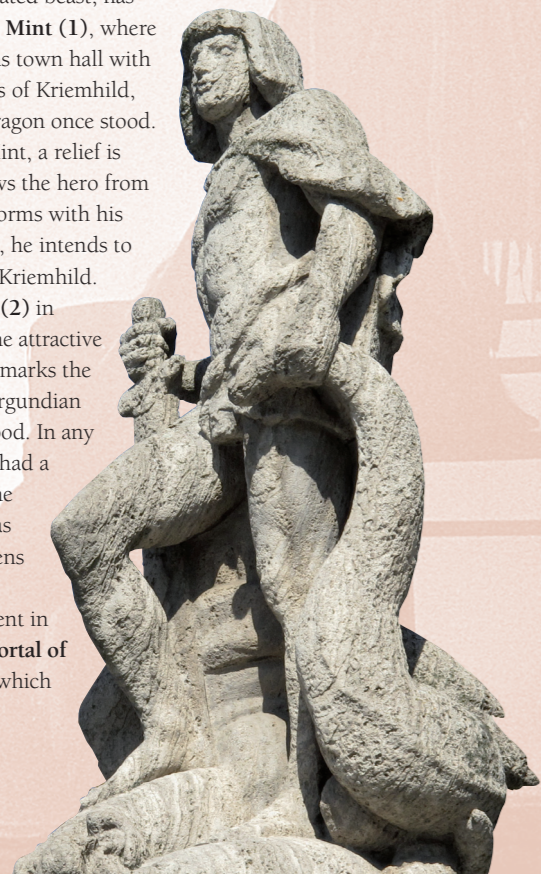


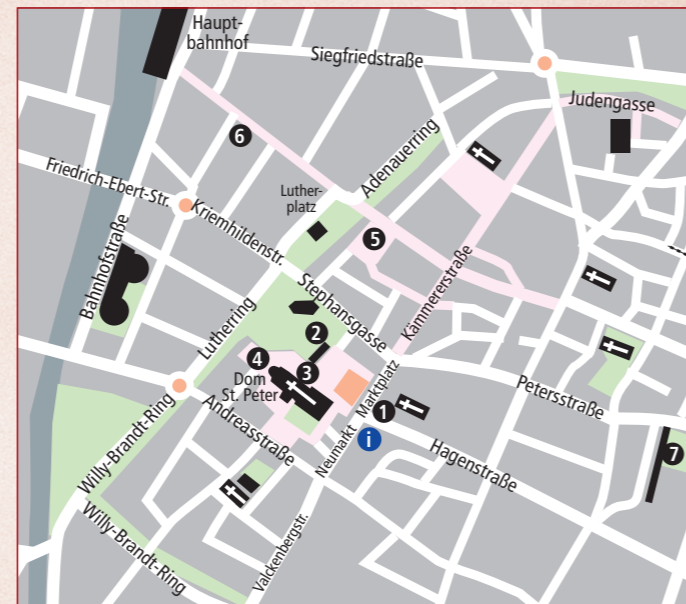


Anyone who is inspired by the Nibelungenlied can still retrace the course of the dramatic plot around the cathedral, as far as it took place in Worms. For almost one hundred years, the Siegfried fountain, on which the young hero triumphantly places his foot on the defeated beast, has been in front of the **Mint (1)**, where the splendid Worms town hall with the life-size pictures of Kriemhild, Siegfried and the dragon once stood. Opposite, on the Mint, a relief is preserved that shows the hero from Xanten entering Worms with his companions. There, he intends to court the beautiful Kriemhild.

Heylsschlösschen (2) in Schlossplatz with the attractive neighbouring park marks the place where the Burgundian palace may have stood. In any case, Charlemagne had a palace there, and the episcopal palace was here later. The queens may have had their unfortunate argument in front of the **north portal of the cathedral (3)**, which



1 cm \triangle ca. 100 m



- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Mint | 6 Nibelungenlied fountain |
| 2 Heylsschlösschen/Heylshof Park | 7 Torturmplatz with Nibelungen Museum |
| 3 North portal of the cathedral | 8 Hagen monument on the Rhine |
| 4 West portal of the cathedral /Platz der Partnerschaft | i Tourist Information |
| 5 Obermarkt | |



Tourist Information Worms
 Neumarkt 14 · D-67547 Worms
 Tel: (0 62 41) 853 7306
 Fax: (0 62 41) 853 7399
 touristinfo@worms.de
 www.worms.de

Gestaltung: Visuelle Kommunikation Beykirch Worms
 Fotos: R. Uhrig, Stadt Worms, U. Beykirch
 Text: Ulrike Schaller

worms: city of the Nibelungen



Siegfried & Co.



Worms is the city of the Nibelungen. For in the Middle High German Nibelungenlied, which was included in the Memory of the World Register in 2009, Worms is the seat of the kings of Burgundy and the site of the dramatic events. In manuscript C, which is now considered to be the oldest copy of the lost original, the city and the surrounding area are mentioned more than thirty times. And other compositions, such as Waltharius, the Rosengartenlied, and the Thidrek saga, also refer to Worms as the capital of Gunther's kingdom. There is also a local Siegfried tradition, the popular "Lied vom Hürnen Seyfried" (end of the 15th century), in which the hero rescues Kriemhild from captivity by the giant Kuperan, and a saga that brings blacksmith and dragon slayer together in folklore: thus, the Worms synagogues server Juspa Schammes (end of the 17th century) passes on the story of the blacksmith who allows himself to be devoured by the terrible dragon in armour with shearing blades, in order to save the king's daughter and, with her, the city of Worms.





was formally the imperial portal. Anyone who walks around the cathedral can be convinced of the immense power of the Nibelungen hero in the **Platz der Partnerschaft (4)**. There, to this day, there is a boulder that he is supposed to have hurled across the Rhine. The truth is, however, much less romantic: the stone is nothing other than the counterpart of a beam wine press.

The quarrelling queens, part of an art project of Nibelungen-Siegfriedstraße, are also at loggerheads in front of the northern façade of the cathedral, and are immortalised on the **Wheel of Fortune in Obermarkt (5)**. A sculpture of the minstrel Volker von Alzey who guards the heroes in the land of the Huns with Hagen, sits high up on the Mint and looks down into Hagenstraße. In Rathenaustraße, there is even a whole **fountain (6)** devoted to the Nibelungen, and a monument

in **Torturmplatz (7)** reminds us of the legendary megalithic tomb of horny-skinned Siegfried, which is supposed to have been located in the south of the city. Kaiser Frederick III had this area dug up in search of the remains of the hero, unfortunately without success.

The most famous depiction of the Nibelungenlied and the symbol of Worms is, however, the **Hagen monument on the Rhine (8)**. For more than 100 years, the grim hero has stood there and sunk the hoard, which the city of Worms really could have used, in the Rhine day after day. But it was not just in the last century that Worms remembered its great past in the legends and even created a Nibelungen style, which is referred to as neoromanticism in the specialist language of architectural history. At the start of 2001, the **Nibelungen Museum (7)** was opened on the historic city wall. As it did not have either Siegfried's sword or Brünhild's



girdle, it made use of state-of-the-art technology to bring the saga to life. In the tower of sight, the Rütelin, the magical sceptre from the Nibelungenlied, unfolds a colourful world of images of Nibelungen phantasies, and in the listening tower, you can listen to the old languages directly. From the tower room outwards, you have a view of the Nibelungen land, and in the underground myth laboratory you can find everything related to old and new myths.

The Nibelungen Festival has taken place in front of the cathedral since 2002: it is sometimes the austere northern façade, sometimes the **west choir (4)**, sometimes the tree-lined southern forecourt that provides the magnificent backdrop for the drama of love, betrayal and revenge. This is not always so tragic as star director

Dieter Wedel has thoroughly done away with the outmoded paths in his productions, and taken a satirical, sometimes even humorous tone. During the festival, the visitors, who come from throughout Germany, enjoy not just the action on the stage by the republic's most celebrated actors, but also an evening stroll in the wonderfully illuminated **Heylshof Park (2)**, if possible with a delicious meal and a fine glass of wine from Rheinhessen.



TIP
The open air Nibelungen Festival takes place every summer against the magnificent backdrop of Worms Cathedral. In addition to this great legend of medieval poetry, the performers also take up other subjects, and thus the festival has achieved international attention and enormous media interest.
Further information: www.nibelungenfestspiele.de

