Welcome!

Rothenburg continues to embody the authentic reality of medieval urban life and remains a prime destination on any sight-seeing tour. The town’s fortified walls enclose a wealth of listed buildings of every shape and size. This architectural heritage is a living expression of humanity, harmony and romanticism, reviving the full gamut of our emotions at every step. Although sometimes hard to access, its beautiful features are never less than enchanting! The town is a cultural hot spot for the arts, the ruin and the tambourine. Its position high above the beautiful Tauler Valley makes it the perfect vantage point from which to experience nature right at the town gates. Far, small town in Franconia, Rothenburg has a huge reputation. It is a worldwide heritage site that has been recognized by the German government for its diversity, an attractive setting where breath-taking cultural heritage and natural amenities exist side-by-side. Our town is home to over 11,000 residents, young and old, from over 60 different countries. We are pleased to have been recognized for our diversity with the “Der Ort der Vielfalt” (Place of Diversity) prize.

Things to – Cultural amenities

- green: wheelchair-accessible
- yellow: accessible with assistance
- red: very difficult to access

- **The Town Hall**
  The Town Hall on Market Square features two architectural styles: Gothic at the rear (1250–1400) and Renaissance at the front (1572–1578). (Plans to provide an elevator in the near future.) It’s worth the steep climb up the 200 ft. stairs to view the ancient rooftops (via Town Hall’s main entrance).

- **City councilors tavern / Tourist Information Office**
  The Tourist Information Office is in a former tavern that was once exclusive to city councilors. On the build- ing, figures emerge from the astronomic clock and recreate the legend of the “Der Meistertrunk”, the town’s most famous tavern, that was once exclusive to city councilors. On the build- ing, figures emerge from the astronomic clock and recreate the legend of the “Der Meistertrunk”, the town’s most famous tavern, that was once exclusive to city councilors. On the build- ing, figures emerge from the astronomic clock and recreate the legend of the “Der Meistertrunk”, the town’s most famous tavern, that was once exclusive to city councilors. On the build- ing, figures emerge from the astronomic clock and recreate the legend of the “Der Meistertrunk”, the town’s most famous tavern, that was once exclusive to city councilors. On the build- ing, figures emerge from the astronomic clock and recreate the legend of the “Der Meistertrunk”, the town’s most famous tavern, that was once exclusive to city councilors. On the build- ing, figures emerge from the astronomic clock and recreate the legend of the “Der Meistertrunk”, the town’s most famous tavern, that was once exclusive to city councilors.

- **The Historical Vaults**
  In the dungeons beneath the Town Hall, this museum reflects the Thirty Years War, when this part of Europe was in turmoil. Rothenburg’s most powerful Lord Mayor, Heinrich Toppler, died here in 1400.

- **St James’ Church**
  Construction of this church began in 1311. Rent an exhibition, open year-round, on the history of Christ- mas in Rothenburg. This town gate, dating from the late 14th Century, still has its toll booth and gatekeeper’s cottage. The Räter Tor is the only town gate along the city walls.

- **Imperial Town Museum**
  Smaller sections wheelchair-accessible

- **Medieval Crime and Justice Museum**
  Smaller sections wheelchair-accessible

- **Castle Gate**
  The castle is gone, but the impressive outer gate re- mains. Note the mask with a “macht”. Through this hole, the castle’s defenders posted hot tar onto attackers. The side down were deliberately small, so that only one per- son at a time could enter at night.

- **Castle Garden**
  Where the garden is now was the site of the Rosen- lants’ castle in 1412. The castle was destroyed by an earthquake in 1356. Only the St Blaise Chapel was re- built. The castle garden offers a stunning view of the old town and the Tauler Valley.

- **Franciscan Church**
  The oldest church in the city, built in early Gothic style in 1285, is home to yet another fine altarpiece carved by Tilman Riemenschneider.

- **German Christmas Museum**
  An exhibition, open year-round, on the history of Christmas in Rothenburg, its traditions, entertainments and decorations.

- **George’s Spring**
  The largest spring in the city, it is 25 feet deep, holds 25,000 gallons. The decoration on the pillar is from the late Renaissance period (1680).

- **Meat and Dance House**
  This participant’s house with its half-timbered gate is where you will find the exhibition space run by the members of the Rothenburg Künstlerbund e.V. (Artists’ Association). On old days, the vaulted room on the top floor were a place for dancing and entertainments, while butchers sold their wares down below.

- **Medieval Crime and Justice Museum**
  Dedicated to the history of crime and punishment from the late Middle Ages to the 19th century, the collection includes instruments of torture, as well as historical documents and pictures.

- **St John’s Church**
  The Gothic Church, built between 1390 and 1410, wheelchair-accessible side entrance.

- **Plönlein/Sisters Tower**
  One of the world’s most popular photo opportunities is the Plönlein (Little Square), at the end of Schnappacher. Beyond, the Sisters Tower (dating back to 1385) was part of the “hein” fortifications.

- **The Old Forge**
  This historic half-timbered house.

- **Räter Gate**
  This town gate, dating from the late 14th Century, still has its toll booth and gatekeeper’s cottage. The Räter Tor is the only town gate along the city walls.

- **Old Rothenburg Craftsmen’s House**
  Look at the beautiful design of the doors. The buildings were part of Rothenburg’s first fortifications around 1200.

- **White Tower**
  Part of the 13th-century walls, the 900-year-old White Tower is attached to the pink, half-timbered building that was the town’s Jewish Community Center from 1130 to 1530.

- **St Wolfgang’s Church**
  Smaller sections wheelchair-accessible

The aim of our town is to achieve reasonable improve- ments and to minimize barriers through continuous efforts. This town map includes recommended routes through the old town that have been tested by wheel- chair users, so that you can decide for yourself where to go and what to do. You will also find a list of disabled parking, toilet facilities, wheelchair accessible cafes, bars, and shops. The play areas dotted around the city walls make this the perfect place for the whole family. Walks, such as the almost barrier-free Tower Walk, or scenic paths, such as the Valley Mill Walk, or the wine and gastronomy education trail will enable you to experience nature at first hand. You will see that Rothenburg is not a city for just one day or for a particular season. We hope you enjoy your stay!

Rothenburg on the square
On the square in front of the St James’ Church you can touch the historic buildings, courtyards, streets, squares and defenses of a castle model of the old town – with Braille and plain text inscriptions.

Klingen Tower and was one part of its fortifications, complete with gun emplacements and dungeons. It is also known as the Shepherds’ Church and houses a display about the annual Schäfertanz, the Shepherds’ Dance. Großenlehn Castle

Entrance to the Old Town

Imperial Town Congress Hall

Dating from 1409, this was where farmers delivered their tithes, or “taxes”. Renovated and reopened in 1975, this is now a conference and event venue.

Klosterleit Tower

Built around 1300, this is part of the city’s fortifications, with four gates.

Klosterleit Tower and Double Bridge

Walk through the Klosterleit Tower (1300) with its views of the Tauler Valley and the famous Double Bridge. The Klosterleit Tower dates back to the 14th century.

Toppler Castle

Built partly as a defensive tower, partly as a residence in 1388, this moated castle once belonged to the powerful Lord Mayor Heinrich Toppler. Toppler Castle is filled with furniture from the 16th to the 19th century.

1325: The city allies itself to the mobs’ leader, Roman Bleym at the Peasants’ War. The city’s decline begins.

1544: The Reformation occurs in Rothenburg.

1618–1648: During the Thirty Years’ War, Protest- ant Rothenburg is occupied several times. In 1631 the so-called “Meistertrunk” (Master Draught) saves the city from destruction.

1802: After 500 years of independence, the Franco- Prussian Rothenburg is reluctantly annexed to the Bavarian Kingdom.

1945: The city is victim of a bombing attack by the allied forces. The eastern part of the city is destroyed and a total of over 40% of the old buildings goes up in flames. Generous financial support from all over the world enabled the destroyed areas to be rebuilt. It is still protected by exemplary preservation laws.

If you need further advice, we’re happy to help:

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www.rothenburg.de/tourismus
www.facebook.com/rothenburg.de

Sign language town tour for deaf people: Information and reservations at the Rothenburg Tourism Service.

There is an online version of this city map on the website of the town of Rothenburg. www.rothenburg.de

Brief History of the city

1160: First community in Detwang in the Tauler valley.

1162: Erection of the Imperial Castle (lat. “Castrum Imperial”) by the Hohenstaufen King Konrad III.

A community, later named Rothenburg, develops on the hill next to the castle.

1187: After the death of Friedrich, Duke of Routhen- burg, the castle is abandoned. Thanks to its geo- graphic location, the city develops over the years into a commercial center.

1274: King Rudolf of Habsburg elevates Rothenburg to a Free Imperial City.

1356: An earthquake destroys the entire imperial castle and parts of the city.

1400: The city experiences its heyday under Mayor Toppler, its population grows to over 6000 inhabitants.

1434: Rothenburg is one of the largest cities of the empire.

**Your visit in Rothenburg**

The town’s medieval flair is characterized by the cobbled-stoned streets that are as much part of Rothenburg as its enclosing town walls. The sometimes considerable differences in height found in the picturesque town are both charming and disorienting at the same time. The rocks and crevasses, humps and hollows of this wonder- fully twisted architecture are visually pleasing but can be physically punishing on residents and visitors alike. As you’ll expect of buildings from past centuries, not every single part of the town can be made fully accessi- ble to visitors with particular physical difficulties if this medieval jewel is to retain its unique character.

Rothenburg ob der Tauber: Romantik erleben.