

Central Germany

Introduction	3
Мар	4
Rhine River	
Rüdesheim	5
Rhine Valley	18
St. Goar	40
Burg Rheinfels	42
Marksburg	54
Koblenz	62
Ehrenbreitstein	65
Cologne	72
Moselle River	
Burg Eltz	76
Cochem	81
Trier	83
Neckar River	
Heidelberg	89
Neckar Valley	98
Main River & Tributaries	
Rothenburg	100
Würzburg	109
Frankfurt	116
Frankfurt Airport	128

Central Germany

I first saw castles along the Rhine unexpectedly in 1979 while on a train journey from Munich to Amsterdam. Counting castles going by on the hilltops was a unique and thrilling experience, so it was inevitable that I would return.

I had a brief look again at the beginning of a 2005 trip to Europe, just long enough to cruise on the Rhine a bit and take some pictures.

The first part of this central Germany trip focused directly on the Rhine and its tributaries. I signed up for Astrid Baur's *River Castles Tour: The German Rivers Rhine, Moselle, Neckar and Main and their Castles.*

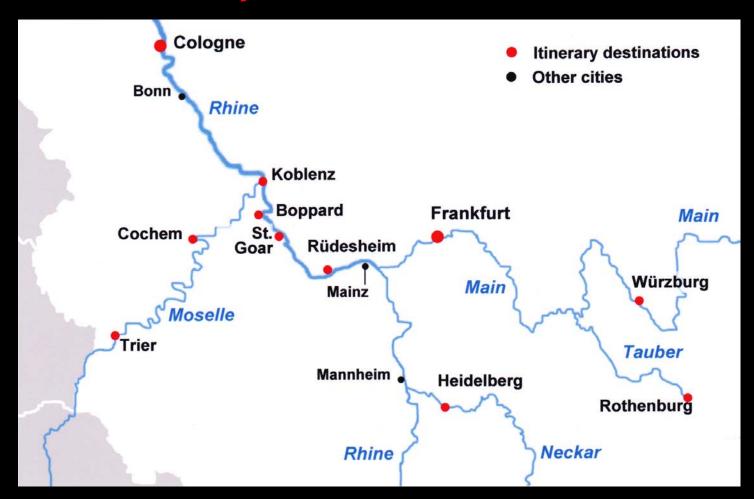
The castles and almost everything else here were older than in Bavaria which I had visited earlier, and the area had an enormously rich history. Plus striking scenery, and fine white wines.

I had a chance to explore Frankfurt a bit on my own while passing through, and I've added some of those photos.

My Castles tour experiences eventually led to a role helping with the website of www.EuropeanCastlesTours.com, Astrid Baur's tours company, but what's posted here are my own photos.

- Bruce McKay

Central Germany



Photos are presented here in the sequence of the *River Castles Tour*, which started and ended in Frankfurt. My own explorations of Frankfurt are at the end.

The tour route went west through Rüdesheim and used Boppard as a home base for trips along the Rhine and Moselle Rivers. The final days of the tour swung south to Heidelberg and then back up through Rothenburg and Würzburg.



Rüdesheim Rhine Valley Rüdesheim is at the southern end of the portion of the Upper Middle Rhine that is on the UNESCO World Heritage list.





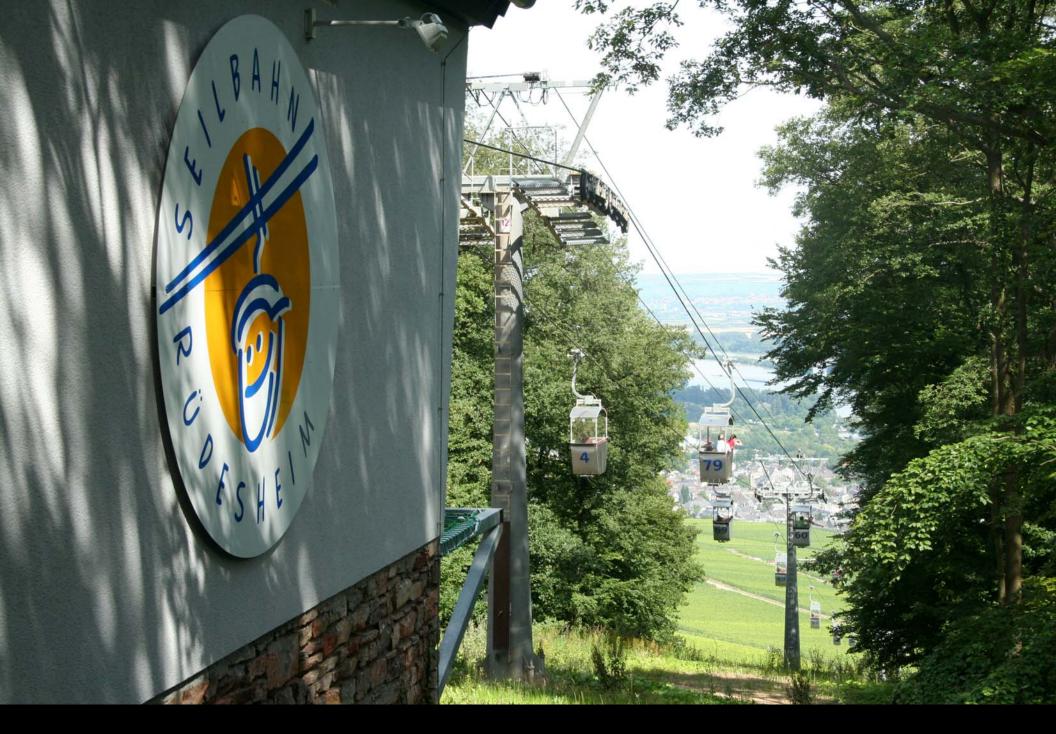
The Drosselgasse shopping lane is a major attraction.



Drosselgasse can be busy.



A cable car runs up to the Niederwald Monument.



The cable car ride takes 10 minutes and climbs 666 feet.



Looking south, back over Rüdesheim and the Rhine.



The Niederwald monument, with its statue of Germania, commemorates the establishment of the German Empire in 1871.



View from the Niederwald monument





Vineyards on the hills at Rüdesheim.



The Rhine Valley is Germany's major wine-producing region ...

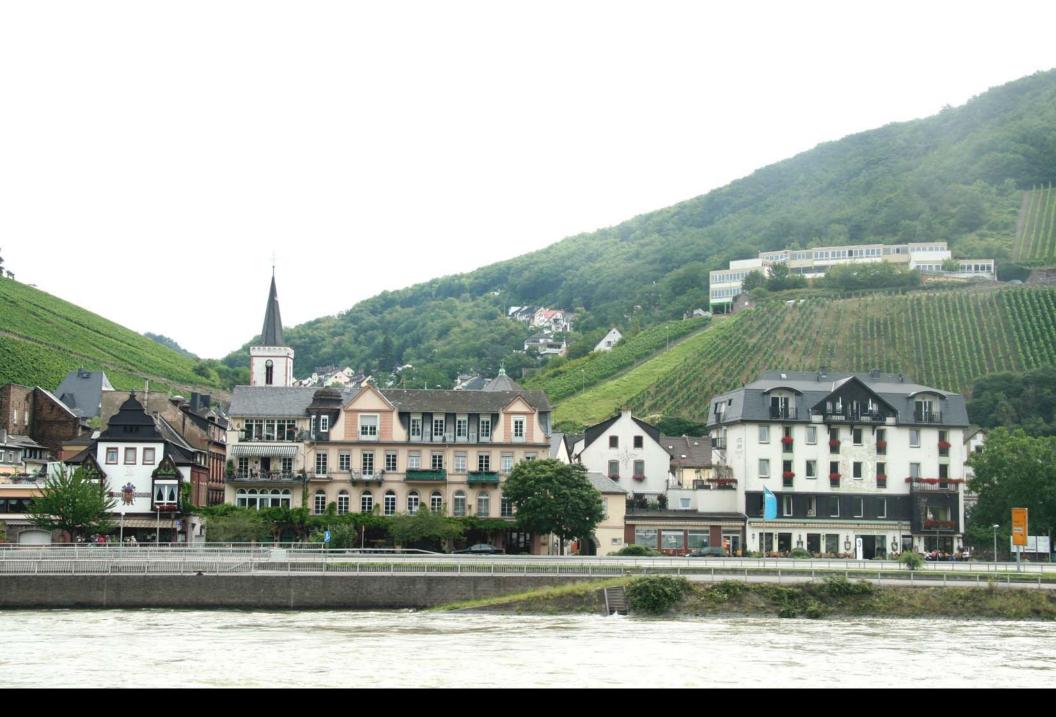




We go cruising down the Rhine from Rüdesheim.









Heimburg Castle (1290) at Bacharach overlooks commercial shipping traffic.





Mauseturm, near Bingen (~968 AD), was the toll booth of a greedy Bishop who met his fate there at the hands of a plague of mice.



Rhine Valley

Ruine Ehrenfels, near Rüdesheim, dates from 1210 A.D.

The castles start going by on the hills ...



... very frequently.
Burg Rheinstein, near Trechtingshausen, 13th century.



Rhine Valley

Burg Rheichenstein, near
Trechtingshausen, 11th century.



Rhine Valley

Burg Sooneck, near
Niederheimbach, 1000 A.D.





Rhine Valley

Burg Stahleck, at Bacharach,
12th century.















Rhine Valley

The Lorelei Rock, at a treacherous point in the Rhine, was said to be the home of a beautiful maiden who lured sailors to their deaths with alluring singing.





Rhine Valley

Burg Katz, St. Goarshausen, 1360



St. Goar Rhine Valley

St. Goar is the home of Burg Rheinfels, the region's largest castle.



St. Goar Rheinfels Castle on the hill overlooks the town.





Rheinfels withstood a French siege in 1692, but the French army destroyed the castle in 1797.





A Rheinfels guide explains the castle's history.





Burg Rheinfels





St. Goar and the Rhine River as seen from Burg Rheinfels



Burg Katz, on the hill above St. Goarshausen, as seen from Burg Rheinfels



The railway tracks and highway follow the Rhine.



A restored portion of Rheinfels is home for one night.





Marksburg Rhine Valley The Marksburg at Braubach is the only Rhine castle that was never destroyed. It has survived for over 700 years.



The Marksburg evolved from a 12th century start.





A guide explains the design of armor from various periods.



Reading and work areas were constructed at window openings.



The castle's cannons could reach across the Rhine.







Koblenz Rhine & Moselle The Moselle River (centre) joins the Rhine River (from the left) in Koblenz at what is know as "the German Corner".



Koblenz

The German Corner was settled as early as the Middle Stone Age (9000 B.C.).



Koblenz

A monument to Emperor William I dominates the German Corner.



Ehrenbreitstein Koblenz

The Ehrenbreitstein fortress guards the German Corner.



Ehrenbreitstein was built by Prussia between 1817 and 1832.



Ehrenbreitstein is strategically positioned above the Rhine ...



... guarding river and land transportation routes.



Ehrenbreitstein was the largest military fortress in Europe except for Gibraltar.



Ehrenbreitstein's design is a masterpiece of military architecture, but it was never attacked.



Ehrenbreitstein's unique architecture saved it from destruction after WW I.



Cologne Rhine River Cologne is the oldest major city in Germany. It was first named by the Romans in 50 A.D.



Cologne

The Dom (Cathedral) is Cologne's distinctive symbol. Construction began in 1248.



Cologne

The Dom was not completed until 1880.



Cologne

The Dom is the largest Gothic church in Northern Europe.



Burg Eltz Moselle Valley Burg Eltz is a medieval castle in the hills above a tributary to the Moselle River.



Burg Eltz Burg Eltz was first documented in 1157, 850 years ago.



Burg Eltz Political influence saved it from destruction in 1688.



Burg Eltz The castle is still owned by a branch of the same family that lived there in the 12th century, 33 generations ago.



Burg Eltz

The interior of the castle was segmented to accommodate three branches of the family.



Cochem Moselle River **Cochem Castle overlooks the town of Cochem and its riverside Promenade.**



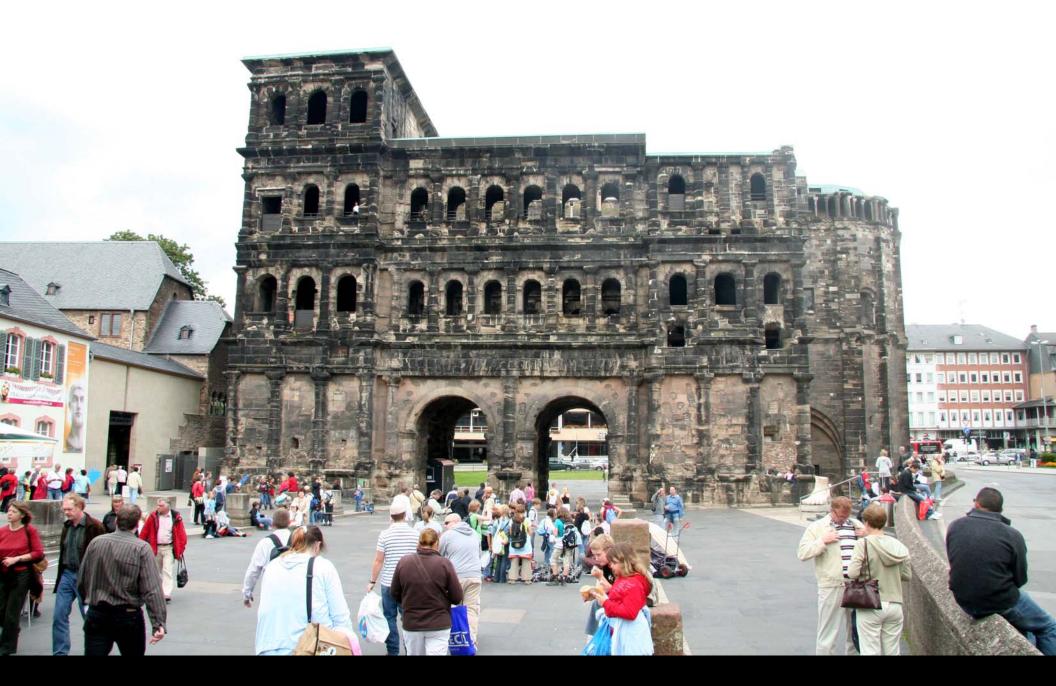
Cochem

Cochem Castle was built around 1000 A.D. but was destroyed by the French in 1689.



TrierMoselle River

Trier is the oldest city in Germany, founded by the Romans in 16 B.C. Construction of fortifications began in 180 A.D.



The Porta Nigra (Black Gate) today is the largest Roman city gate north of the Alps.



The Konstantin Basilika is the largest surviving single-room structure from Roman times.





The Electoral Palace dates from 1615.



Trier The Baroque Palace Gardens were inspired by Italian garden design concepts.



Heidelberg Neckar River The Celts settled around Heidelberg about 800 B.C. The Romans established a camp here around 80 A.D.



The stone Alte Brücke (Old Bridge) was built between 1786 and 1788.



The southern gate end of the Alte Brücke was part of the city wall.



Heidelberg Castle overlooks the city from 260 feet up the hill.



Wars brought repeated destructions of the Castle.



The castle was first destroyed in 1622 during the 30 Years' War between Protestants and Catholics.



The French blew up part of it in 1689, but were forced to retreat.



In 1693 the French destroyed the town and demolished the castle with mines.





Neckar Valley

Eberbach, on the Castle Road from Heidelberg to Rothenburg





Rothenburg ob der Tauber

Rothenburg is a well-preserved 16th century walled town.



You can walk around the entire wall circling the city.



You can climb to the top of one of the towers.



Most of the enclosed city is a pedestrian zone.



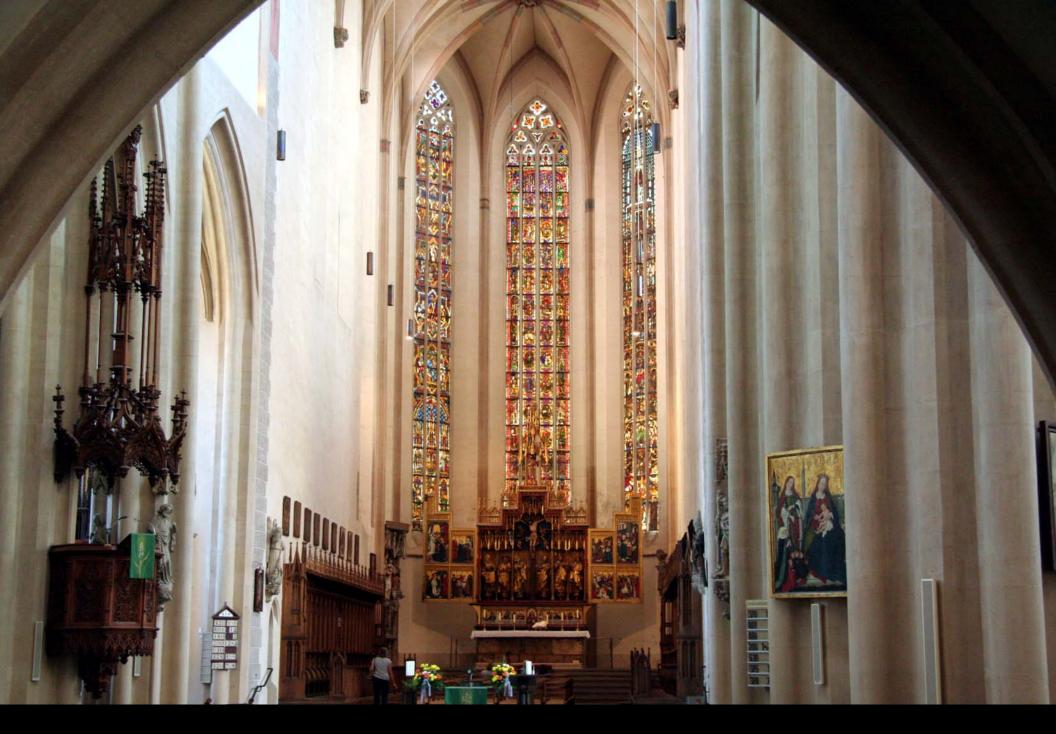




The white part of the Rathaus (Town Hall) was built between 1250 and 1400.



Rothenburg Marktplatz (Market Square)



St. Jakobs Lutheran Church, built 1311 - 1471



Würzburg Main River On the Romantic Road to Würzburg



Würzburg

Fortress Marienberg has a notorious history.



Würzburg

The Würzburg Residenz complex was built by two Prince-Bishops to demonstrate their wealth.



Würzburg

The Residenz was built between 1720 and 1744 and embellished by the most prominent European artists.









FrankfurtMain River

Frankfurt, from the observation deck of the Maintower skyscraper



The Main River is a busy freight route.



Sparkasse bank on the left, Deutsche Bank twin towers on the right



The Old Opera House, rebuilt 1976 - 1981



Eschenheim Tower, 1428, part of the original city wall



St. Catherine's Church, built 1678 - 1681



Left up to right: St. Paul's Church, the reconstructed Römerburg city centre, and the Old Nikolai Church, opened in 1290



The Römerberg square has been the home of Frankfurt's city government since 1405.





Old Nikolai Church, first mentioned in 1264



Customs Tower, where harbour fees were collected



The Iron Bridge for pedestrians, 1869



Frankfurt Airport Frankfurt Airport is the third busiest in Europe, and a surprisingly interesting sightseeing destination.



Frankfurt Airport

For €6 you can take an Airport Sightseeing Tour on buses which go out onto the airfield.





Frankfurt Airport ... and the picture taking begins.







Frankfurt Airport The one is getting ready to leave.



< End >

Central Germany