



Southern Germany





Southern Germany

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Southern Germany

The main event on my first extended trip to Europe was Astrid Baur's *Bavarian Castles Tour: King Ludwig II's Castles and the Bavarian Lakes*.

I was interested in the opportunity to see inside Neuschwanstein and the other castles, had a great time, and returned for another of Astrid's Castles tours in northern Germany. I was back in the south on a third trip to Germany and had a chance to re-visit some locations and to explore Munich a bit on my own.

The castles are indeed impressive, but they have stiff competition from the Bavarian countryside, the picturesque towns and villages, and the mountains.

My initial Castles tour eventually led to a role helping with Astrid Baur's website at www.EuropeanCastlesTours.com, but I've limited what's posted here to my original photos from my own trips.

As in most castles and palaces in Europe now, photography is not permitted inside King Ludwig's castles. I've included a few images from commercial sources, each noted as such.

– Bruce McKay

Southern Germany



Home base for the full duration of the *Bavarian Castles Tour* is at Hopfen am See, just north of Füssen.

The sequence of day trips varies depending on the weather.

Pictures are presented here grouped by subject rather than chronologically.



Hopfen am See

This village just north of Füssen and the Austrian border will be home base for the Bavarian Castles Tour.



Hopfen am See

We'll be staying at the Landhaus Kössel, a Bavarian country inn that prides itself in welcoming its guests as friends, not tourists.



Hopfen am See

The neighbours across the road from the Landhaus



Hopfen am See

The view of the Alps from my balcony



Hopfen am See

Early morning on Lake Hopfen



Hopfen am See

No Surfing !
As if.



Hopfen am See

The countryside around Hopfen is gorgeous, and relentlessly green.



Hohenschwangau

Castles explorations begin at the village of Hohenschwangau, just east of Füssen.



Hohenschwangau

Hohenschwangau Castle towers over the village and the neighbouring lakes.



Hohenschwangau This castle was King Ludwig II's boyhood home.



Hohenschwangau

Hohenschwangau was built by Ludwig's father between 1833 and 1837.



Hohenschwangau View from the castle



Hohenschwangau Ludwig learned to swim in nearby Lake Alpsee.



Neuschwanstein

Neuschwanstein, perched high atop Swan Rock opposite Hohenschwangau, was the first of King Ludwig's own castles.



Neuschwanstein

Neuschwanstein, seen from the
Mary's Bridge vantage point.



Neuschwanstein

Neuschwanstein was built
between 1869 and 1886.



Neuschwanstein

Neuschwanstein was designed by
Christian Jank, a theatrical set designer.



Neuschwanstein

Interior courtyard



Neuschwanstein

Neuschwanstein inspired the Disney castles.



Souvenir Booklet Photo

Neuschwanstein

Throne Room



Neuschwanstein

Singers' Hall



Neuschwanstein

Neuschwanstein remains uncompleted.



Linderhof

Linderhof, Ludwig's second castle, was built between 1870 and 1879.



Linderhof

Linderhof is set in a remote valley between Füssen and Oberammergau.



Linderhof

Linderhof was built in an elaborate rococo style.



Linderhof

Linderhof was Ludwig's favourite residence.



Linderhof

The Southern Terraced Hill is crowned by the classical Venus temple.





Souvenir Booklet Photo

Linderhof

Dining Room



Linderhof

**Linderhof's Eastern Flower Beds, with
Venus and Adonis as centrepiece**



Linderhof

The Grotto is an artificially constructed cave up in the hills above Linderhof.



Linderhof

The Grotto recreates the Venusberg Mountain from Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. Electric lighting was new technology in the 1870s.



Herrenchiemsee

Herrenchiemsee Palace, Ludwig's third major project, was hidden on an island in Chiemsee, Bavaria's largest lake.



Herrenchiemsee

Herrenchiemsee was inspired by Versailles, and was Ludwig's most expensive project.



Herrenchiemsee

The central Royal Palace was built between 1878 and 1885.



Herrenchiemsee

The formal gardens feature many fountains and statues, both in the classical style ...



Herrenchiemsee

... and in the fantastic style of romanticism
favoured by King Ludwig.



Herrenchiemsee

This stairway was copied from Versailles,
which Ludwig admired enormously.



Herrenchiemsee

Hall of Mirrors



Herrenchiemsee

Ludwig spent only a few days at
Herrenchiemsee, in September 1885.



Lake Starnberg

A cross in Lake Starnberg marks the location where Ludwig's body was found on June 13, 1886, under suspicious circumstances.



Lake Starnberg

Ludwig Votivchapel, near
where the body was found.



Oberammergau

The village of Oberammergau is a 30 mile
(48 km) drive east from Füssen.



Oberammergau

Oberammergau is famous for the frescoes on its buildings ...



Oberammergau

... and for the Passion Play it stages every ten years.



Oberammergau

Oberammergau is also noted
for its wood carvings ...



Oberammergau

... and year-round Christmas shops.



Bad Tölz

Bad Tölz is a town of about 18,000 about half way between Füssen and Lake Chiemsee.



Bad Tölz

The main street is pedestrian-only
after the early-morning deliveries.



Bad Tölz

Bad Tölz architecture also features the painted decorations of the region.



Wieskirche

Wieskirche, the Pilgrimage Church of Wies, was built in the country in the foothills of the Alps between 1745 and 1754.



Wieskirche

Wieskirche, sometimes called the Church in the Meadow, was added to the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites in 1983.



Wieskirche

Wieskirche is an oval rococo church, with an interior decorated with frescoes and elaborate stuccowork.



Wieskirche

**The Church in the Meadow actually
has a real meadow, with horses.**



**Andechs
Monastery**

Andechs Monastery is place of pilgrimage and a business which supports the Abbey of St. Boniface in Munich.



**Andechs
Monastery**

Parts of the Abbey church date from the 15th century.
It was remodelled in Baroque style in 1712.



**Andechs
Monastery**

The monastery operates a large organic farming business, a famous brewery, and beer gardens for tourists.



Nymphenburg

Nymphenburg Palace in Munich, the Summer Residence of the Bavarian royal family, was begun in 1664.



Nymphenburg

King Ludwig II was born here in 1845.



Nymphenburg

Nymphenburg continues to be a home and office for the head of the house of Wittelsbach.



Nymphenburg

The Court Stables are part of
a grand circle of buildings.



Nymphenburg

The grand parterre is the central feature of the 200 hectare / 490 acre Nymphenburg park.



Nymphenburg

Nymphenburg Palace's façade was redesigned in 1716 and again in 1826.



Nymphenburg

Nymphenburg's Great Hall is used by the Bavarian royal family for major receptions.



Nymphenburg

The Marstallmuseum (Carriage Museum) houses many of Ludwig's elaborate carriages.



Central Munich

Ludwigstrasse, with the Residenz on the left, the arched Field Marshall's Hall centre, and the Theatine Church centre-right.



Central Munich

The Propylaea is a gate at the west side of Königsplatz, a square created in 1816 at the command of King Ludwig II's grandfather.



Central Munich

Nationaltheater München is the home base for the Bavarian State Opera and the Bavarian State Ballet.



Central Munich

**The Rathaus (City Hall) at Marienplatz (Mary's Square),
the central square in the centre of Munich.**



Central Munich

The Rathaus Glockenspiel re-enacts two stories from the 16th century three times daily.



Central Munich

The Hofbräuhaus is probably the world's most famous beer hall.



Munich Residenz

The Munich Residenz is the former royal place of the Bavarian monarchs in the centre of Munich.



Munich Residenz

One of ten courtyards in the Residenz complex,
the largest city palace in Germany.



Munich Residenz

The Hall of Antiquities (1568-1571) is the largest Renaissance hall north of the Alps.



Munich Residenz The Court Chapel, added 1612 - 1617



Munich Residenz The Ancestral Gallery, added 1726 - 1731



Munich Residenz

**The Royal Regalia of Bavaria (1804)
in the Munich Residenz Treasury**



Olympic Park

**Munich's Olympic Park was constructed
for the 1972 Summer Olympics.**



Olympic Park

The Olympic Tower houses telecommunications facilities, a revolving restaurant, and an observation platform.



Olympic Park

The Olympic Stadium holds about 70,000. It is still used for athletic competitions and hosts pop music concerts.



Olympic Park

BMW is the Olympic Park's nearest neighbour.



Olympic Park

Munich as seen from the Olympic Tower



Allianz Arena

Munich's major football teams have moved to a new stadium further north.



Allianz Arena

The Allianz Arena opened in 2005.



Allianz Arena

The Allianz Arena can hold almost 70,000 spectators.



Allianz Arena

Interesting guided tours
are conducted frequently.



Allianz Arena

The guided tours include a visit to the locker room of the famous *Bayern München* football club.



Lindau

**We're off on a day-long Castles excursion
to Bodensee (Lake Constance).**



Lindau

Lindau is an ancient walled city on a near-shore island in eastern Lake Constance.



Lindau

The age of Lindau's city walls is not clear, but remains of an early Roman settlement have been found here.



Lindau

Central Lindau



Lindau

Lindau was first mentioned in writing in 882,
and narrow streets speak to its age.



Lindau

The decorated rear of City Hall,
built between 1422 and 1436



Lindau

Lindau is near the meeting point of the Austrian, German, and Swiss borders, and has a busy harbour.



Lindau

We set out across Lake Constance ...



Mainau

... to the garden island of Mainau.



Mainau

Grand Duke Frederick I of Baden purchased the 45 hectare / 111 acre island in 1853 and built a summer palace.



Mainau

Frederick also created an arboretum for exotic species and began the island's extensive gardens.



Mainau

Mainau is a paradise for plant enthusiasts because even tropical flowers grow in the mild climate of the lake.



Mainau

Ownership of Mainau passed to the Swedish royal family which created a foundation for its continuance in 1974.



Mainau

Mainau's designers and gardeners create dramatic floral sculptures.



Mainau

Mainau employs 350 gardeners and support staff during the flowering season.



Mainau

Mainau includes gardens, sculptures, park land, a children's zoo, and a playground.



Mainau

Fun for all.



Mount Zugspitze

Now we're off to the top of Mount Zugspitze,
Germany's highest mountain.



Mount Zugspitze

The cable car travels up 1.7 km / 1.1 miles
to the top in 10 minutes.



Mount Zugspitze

Zugspitze's elevation is
9,718 feet / 2,962 metres.



Mount Zugspitze

**Zugspitze offers breathtaking
views of the Alps.**



Mount Zugspitze

The summit buildings straddle the border between Germany and Austria.



Mount Zugspitze

**The comfortable Panorama
restaurant at the summit**



Mount Zugspitze

On a clear day you can see four countries – Germany, Austria, Italy, and Switzerland.



Mount Zugspitze

Ehrwald lies at the southern base of the Zugspitze, in the Austria's North Tyrol.



Mount Zugspitze

Ehrwald



Mount Zugspitze

Elbsee lake is in Germany's Bavaria.



Mount Zugspitze

Headed back down.
What a finish to Bavarian explorations!

< End >



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