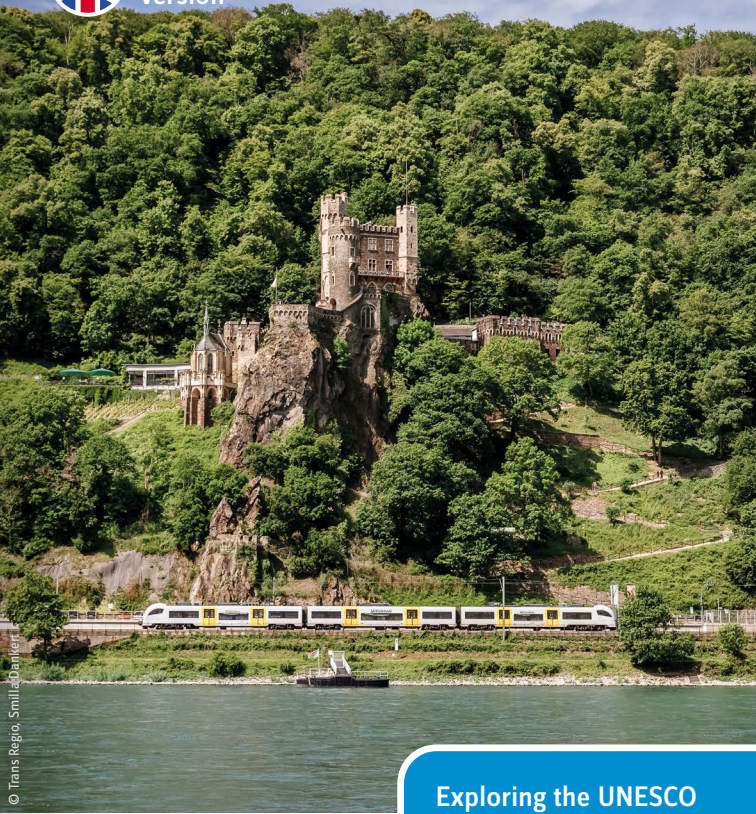




English  
version



Exploring the UNESCO  
World Heritage Site

# Middle Rhine Castles and Palaces

With rail & hike suggestions

[www.mittelrheinbahn.de](http://www.mittelrheinbahn.de)



# Table of Contents



# Dear MittelrheinBahn passengers

The MittelrheinBahn (RB26) transports you along one of Germany's most beautiful stretches of railway. It is a single line linking the cities of Cologne, Bonn, Koblenz and Mainz, with a plethora of fascinating places of interest all the way along its length. These include majestic palaces and mighty fortresses as well as imposing castles and picturesque castle ruins. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley alone has a good 40 of these – no other region in the world has as many. So it's no wonder that the Rhine Romanticism of the 19th century was inspired by these age-old structures.

Climb aboard the MittelrheinBahn and take a voyage of discovery through the castles and palaces of the region. By way of offering some ideas for your next excursion, we've provided information on some of the most impressive examples in the following pages. Let yourself be carried away by the magic of these ancient buildings. Take in stunning views of the magnificent scenery. And the many rustic inns of the traditional Middle Rhine wine-growing area are the perfect place to take a break and savour a glass of wine and some regional specialities. With the aid of the QR codes, you can find your way to the featured castles and palaces.

We hope you have fun hiking and exploring!







## The MittelrheinBahn – ideal for all your destinations

Whether you're visiting one of the many **places of interest** or want to take a tour of discovery through the beautiful Rhine valley, you will travel stress-free and in comfort with the MittelrheinBahn (RB 26).

We run an hourly service for the entire Cologne to Mainz route every day – until 2 a.m. in some cases, and stopping at every station on the left bank of the Rhine. For destinations between Mainz and Bingen, services run every half hour from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Friday. And the RB 26 even runs round the clock at the weekend between Cologne and Bonn.



What's more, at many stations you can change onto other lines or other local public transport networks without a long wait.

Our bright and spacious trains have space for around 250 passengers and 12 bikes. The MittelrheinBahn's modern electric carriages also have other features to make your journey more enjoyable:



**large panoramic windows**



**low-noise drive mode**



**full air conditioning**



**state-of-the-art passenger information system**



**access aids for passengers with limited mobility**



**accessible, barrier-free toilets**





Your route to the  
palaces



© Schloss Augustusburg Brühl-Gartensäle, Florian Mörtgen



© Horst Gummerbach

# Augustusburg *and* Falkenlust *Palaces*

 **Stop: Brühl**

**How to get there:** Augustusburg Palace is directly across from the station. From there it's a short 2.5 km stroll along Falkenluster Allee to Falkenlust Hunting Lodge.

Two magnificent witnesses to an eventful past await you in Brühl - Augustusburg Palace and Falkenlust Hunting Lodge. The two palaces and their gardens and parklands have held **UNESCO World Heritage** status since 1984. Augustusburg Palace was built by Elector and Archbishop of Cologne Clemens August (1700 -1761). He commissioned artists such as François de Cuvilliés the Elder and Balthasar Neumann, who between them created a great work of art encompassing architecture, sculpture, painting and garden art between 1725 and 1768. From 1725, Dominique Girard was responsible for the design of the famous baroque gardens in the French style. Peter Joseph Lenné added an English landscape garden in 1840. Just a short stroll away is the delightful Falkenlust Hunting Lodge, one of the most exquisite examples of German rococo in existence. It was built by François de Cuvilliés the Elder between 1729 and 1737, also for Elector Clemens August.

[www.schlossbruehl.de](http://www.schlossbruehl.de)





© Dr. Thomas Mauersberg, Universität Bonn

Your route to the palace



# Poppelsdorf Palace

## and Electoral Palace

 **Stop:** Bonn Hbf

**How to get there:** Walk from the station towards the city centre and Bonn Minster, and then on towards the University or Hofgarten Park.

The Electoral Palace has been used by the University since 1818. The palace as it stands today dates back to the turreted four-wing building constructed by Munich court architect Enrico Zuccalli in 1697–1705. Robert de Cotte laid out the court garden to the south in 1715–1723. In 1777, the palace was completely destroyed by fire and was reconstructed in a simplified form. In the 1920s it was restored, only to be destroyed again in 1944. It acquired its present appearance after reconstruction post-1951, in which students also took part. An avenue of chestnut trees leads from the Electoral Palace to Poppelsdorf Palace.



© Dr. Thomas Mauersberg, Universität Bonn – Poppelsdorf

Your route to the palace




Amongst other things, the palace houses a mineralogical collection, and the botanical garden in the palace grounds is one of the oldest and most diverse in the world. Poppelsdorf Palace, which was built in the 18th century to plans by Robert de Cotte, was extended by Balthasar Neumann. It was rebuilt in the 1950s after being destroyed in the Second World War.

[www.botgart.uni-bonn.de](http://www.botgart.uni-bonn.de)



# Drachenburg Castle and Drachenfels Castle Ruins



 **Stop:** Bonn-Mehlem

**How to get there:** Ferry terminals are at the end of Austrasse. After crossing the river, go along Drachenfelsstrasse and then take the steep footpath or the rack railway up to Drachenburg Castle and Drachenfels Castle Ruins.

You will come across Drachenburg Castle halfway up to Drachenfels. The imposing residence in the historicist style was built for banker (and later Baron) Stephan von Sarter, a native of Bonn, between 1882 and 1884. Von Sarter had no children, and so the castle was used for a variety of purposes in the decades that followed. Amongst other things, it was a hotel, a convalescent home for women and a boarding school before it slowly fell into disrepair. In 1971 the complex was acquired by a wealthy private owner who saved the castle. After renovating it, he transformed it into a public museum focusing on the life and culture of the time.

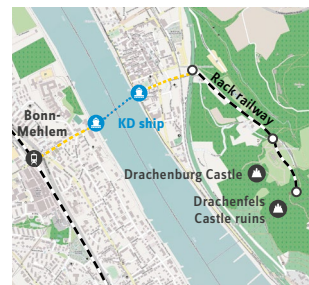
Today the castle and its grounds are listed monuments. Take a walk around the restored rooms and admire the historical furniture from the time the castle was built.

Among the striking landmarks of the Siebengebirge is the 312 m Drachenfels hill. At the top of the hill you will find the picturesque ruins of the castle of the same name – along with magnificent views. Archbishop Arnold I of Cologne had the castle built in 1138 for the purpose of fortification. However, it quickly lost its original function when the Bonn city walls were built in the mid-13th century. The castle was largely destroyed in the Thirty Years' War, and any parts that remained collapsed in 1788 due to subterranean mining of valuable trachyte, used in the construction of churches. All that remains today of the castle's grandeur is a few ruins, including of the former great hall and the castle keep.

**Our tip:** Climb the steep hill on foot and take the historical rack railway back down.

[www.der-drachenfels.de](http://www.der-drachenfels.de)

[www.schloss-drachenburg.de](http://www.schloss-drachenburg.de)







# Romanticum *and* Ehrenbreitstein *Fortress*

 **Stop:** Koblenz Stadtmitte (city centre)

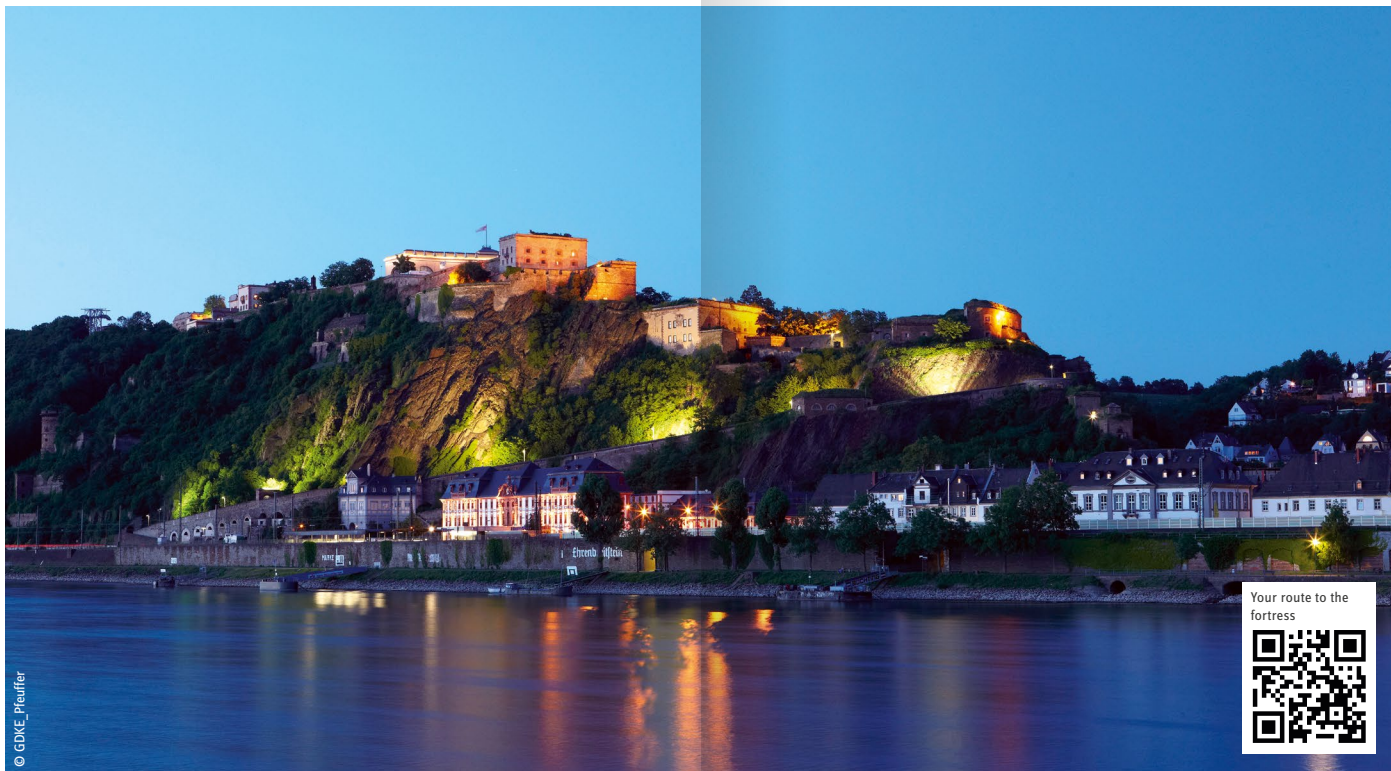
**How to get there:** Go along Schloßstrasse and then turn left into Viktoriastrasse.

A striking building and ground-breaking architecture await you in the heart of Koblenz city centre – the Forum Confluentes cultural centre. This masterpiece of modern architecture was designed by Dutch architecture firm Benthem Crouwel. The building's bold and undulating façade and light-flooded interior are home to the Middle Rhine Museum, Koblenz City Library, tourist information and the Romanticum. The Romanticum is an interactive exhibition experience that presents the picturesque Middle Rhine Valley in all its facets over an area of 800 m<sup>2</sup>.



**Special feature:** Go on a virtual journey down the Rhine on an imaginary steamship. You'll encounter the beauty of the Rhine as you experience nature and watch the projection, and get to know the legends and fairy tales of the river. You'll also discover fascinating facts about the castles and buildings, crags shrouded in legend, superb views of the Rhine and the river's most famous travellers.

[www.romanticum.de](http://www.romanticum.de)



**To continue on to Ehrenbreitstein Fortress:** Walk along the Rhine as far as the ferry landing or the spectacular cable car.

From Ehrenbreitstein Fortress you get a unique and beautiful view of Koblenz and the confluence of the Rhine and Mosel rivers at the Deutsches Eck. The complex on the opposite river bank, sitting regally 118 m above the Rhine, emerged in its present form between 1817 and 1828. Majestic with its metre-thick walls – and moats, tunnels, bridges and gates – it is one of the largest fortresses in Europe. Today, the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress Cultural Centre, together with the Koblenz State Museum, invites visitors to explore exhibitions on archaeology, photography or wine and cultural history, as well as special exhibitions. With around 600 events and guided tours, this cultural centre is a popular place to visit in northern Rhineland-Palatinate and offers beautiful views over the Rhine and Mosel rivers. You can easily reach Ehrenbreitstein Fortress from the city centre by taking the Koblenz cable car.

[www.tor-zum-welterbe.de](http://www.tor-zum-welterbe.de)





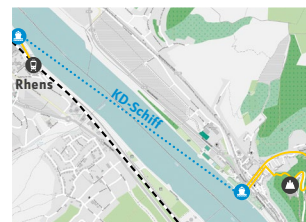


# Marksburg Castle

 **Stop:** Rhens


**How to get there:** After crossing the river on one of the KD ships, follow the signposted Rheinsteig path.

Marksburg Castle, located above Braubach, holds many fascinations. Its elevated position means it is visible from far off – and is also the only hill castle in the Middle Rhine never to have been destroyed. The first mention of the castle is in 1231, when it was in the ownership of the Lords of Eppstein, one of the region's most powerful families. From 1283 it belonged to the Counts of Katzenelnbogen who, in the 15th century, extended the original Roman-style, triangular-shaped castle to create a mountain stronghold, giving it the imposing appearance it has today. But this did not prevent the mighty edifice from falling into disrepair over the following centuries. In 1900 the castle was acquired by the German Castles Association, who renovated it. Castles expert and architect Bodo Ebhardt reconstructed the rooms including the knights' hall, castle kitchen, ladies' chambers and chapel. Today, the Castles Association uses the buildings as its headquarters and displays a remarkable exhibition of figures of warriors from the Bronze Age to the 17th century in the castle's Rheinbau (Rhine Wing). A walk through the medieval botanical garden is an experience that should not be reserved for nature lovers.



[www.marksburg.de](http://www.marksburg.de)

## Stolzenfels Castle

 **Stop:** Koblenz Hbf

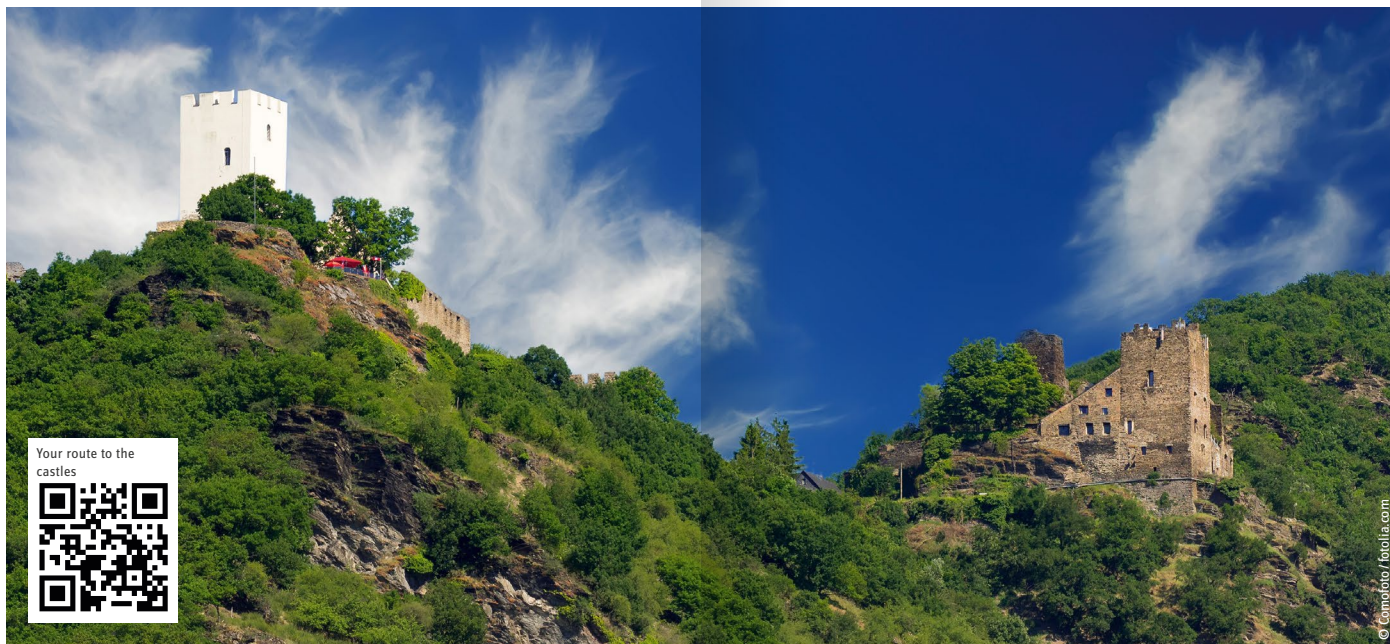
**How to get there:** From Koblenz Hbf (Hauptbahnhof, central station), take the 670 bus towards Boppard as far as the stop Stolzenfels-Schlossweg and from there follow the signposted footpath. **Alternatively**, you can arrive by boat from Koblenz.




Stolzenfels Castle, one of the most important examples of Rhine Romanticism, is situated high above the Rhine, south of Koblenz. Its fairy-tale appearance will make you want to pay a visit, but it also has an interesting history. A castle originally built on the same spot in the 13th century was destroyed in 1689 during the Nine Years' War. In 1823, the people of Koblenz gifted the ruins to the Prussian Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm who, after his succession, had a neo-Gothic castle based on the English Tudor style built here in 1847 by Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Peter Joseph Lenné's wonderful country park was the perfect complement. The crenellated buildings and their gardens and grounds were restored to their former glory in 2011. Be equally amazed by the enchanting castle with its proud keep, the height at which it sits, and the amazing views from the terrace overlooking the Rhine.

[www.tor-zum-welterbe.de](http://www.tor-zum-welterbe.de)





# Sterrenberg *and* Liebenstein Castles

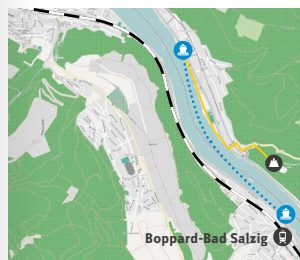
 **Stop:** Boppard-Bad Salzig

**How to get there:** Cross by ferry to Kamp-Bornhofen and hike along the Rheinsteig trail from there.

Take a trip to the Middle Ages with a visit to Sterrenberg and Liebenstein Castles, also known as “the hostile brothers”. One of the most popular legends of the Middle Rhine is interwoven with these castles. It tells of how two sons of the Burggrave of Sterrenberg and Liebenstein quarrelled so badly that it ended in fratricide. Sterrenberg Castle dates back to the 11th century and was extended as time went on. It is recorded as being dilapidated as early as 1456 and then as uninhabited in 1568. After appropriate safety measures were taken, the derelict site was partly rebuilt starting in 1970. Liebenstein Castle was probably built in the 13th century as an outer bailey of Sterrenberg Castle. After initial expansion between 1284 and 1290, the gate tower, fortified tower and main residence tower



were finally added in the 14th century. By 1529, Liebenstein Castle had also fallen into disrepair and was no longer inhabited. After extensive restoration work in 1977 and 1978, the main residence tower and annexe were opened as a hotel and restaurant with a viewing terrace, where they will be happy to welcome you.



[www.burg-sterrenberg.com](http://www.burg-sterrenberg.com)

[www.castle-liebenstein.com](http://www.castle-liebenstein.com)



# Bismarckturm

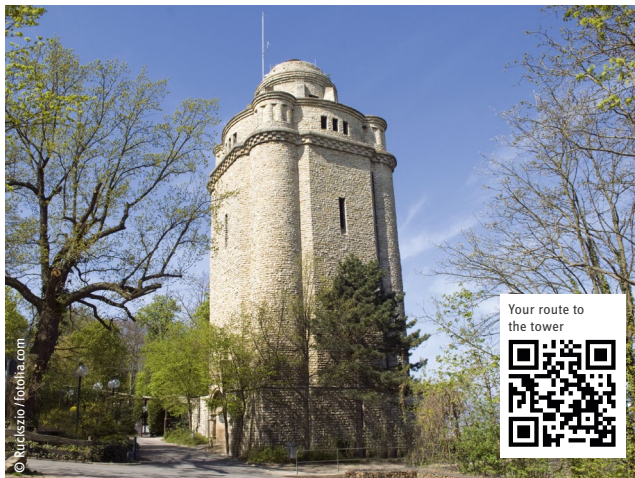
(Bismarck Tower)

 **Stop:** Ingelheim or Gau-Algesheim

**How to get there:** The Ingelheim Bismarck Tower can be reached via Ingelheim and Gau-Algesheim railway stations. From there, the paths signposted Hiwweltour Bismarckturm lead to the monument.

The town of Ingelheim am Rhein has an imposing landmark reaching skywards – the Bismarck memorial on the Westerberg. The observation tower provides stunning views into the Rheingau. The tower was built in honour of Prince Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), the first Imperial Chancellor of Germany. The structure was designed by architect Wilhelm Kreis (1873–1955). The foundations of the bossage-walled, neo-Romantic tower were laid in 1902, but construction work did not actually begin until 1907. In 1910, when it was almost finished, the construction underwent various changes for reasons of cost. It had swallowed up an enormous total of 65,000 gold marks prior to its grand opening in 1912. Only a stone's throw from the Bismarckturm tower you can come face to face with animals that are as beautiful as they are rare: in the Waldeck Tiger Garden, a group of endangered Bengal tigers awaits you, kept in a species-appropriate manner in a spacious outdoor enclosure that includes a small swimming pool.

[www.ingelheim-erleben.de](http://www.ingelheim-erleben.de)



# Rheinfels Castle



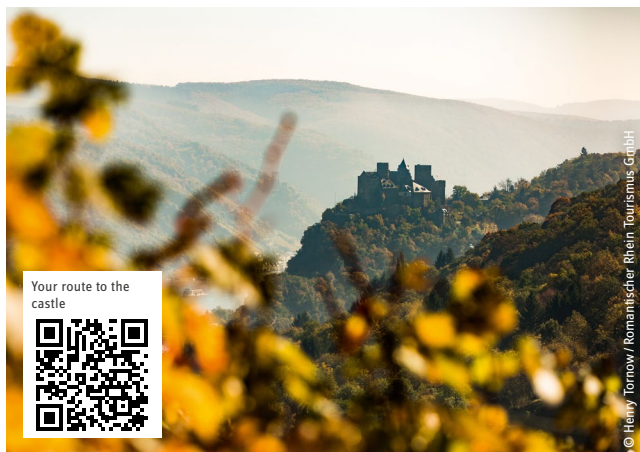
 **Stop:** St. Goar

**How to get there:** Follow the signposted footpath from the market square in St. Goar, or travel with the Rheinfels Shuttle (May – October).




Learn about Rheinfels Castle, one of the largest fortifications of its time. Immerse yourself in the times of the Counts of Katzenelnbogen, who were responsible for the castle's construction in 1245. Discover how, over the course of time, the castle's appearance changed under the Counts of Hesse into a Renaissance palace and later into a fortress. Explore the historical background to the demise of Rheinfels Castle when it was blown up by French occupiers in 1796/1797. Even today, the ruins of Rheinfels fortress still amaze visitors with their immense size and many unique structural features. The newly renovated castle museum is a wonderful addition to an exploration of the fortress complex. Here you will find special exhibits and historic tales from almost 800 years of castle and town history. Afterwards, you have the option of exploring your surroundings on various hiking trails or taking a short walk along the banks of the Rhine and enjoying the rest of your day in the town over a cup of coffee.

[www.stadt-st-goar.de](http://www.stadt-st-goar.de)



# Schönburg Castle


 **Stop:** Oberwesel

**How to get there:** From Oberwesel station, walk along Liebfrauenstrasse towards the town centre, and after a few metres turn left into Kirchstrasse; from there, after about 100 m, a narrow path leads to the rocky Elfenley path, which will take you to Schönburg Castle.

Probably dating back to the early 10th century, Schönburg Castle has had an extremely eventful history. It suffered in particular from frequent armed conflicts until the 17th century. The House of Schönburg, which resided there from the 12th century, had the right to levy customs on the Rhine, among other privileges. They also ruled over Oberwesel at times as imperial bailiffs. During the Nine Years' War, French troops burned Oberwesel and the castle to the ground in 1689. It survived the following two centuries as a ruin – praised by Victor Hugo as one of the most magnificent works of rubble in Europe. After the Schönburgs died out and the castle changed hands several times, the German-American T. I. Oakley Rhinelandier acquired the crumbling ruins. By 1914, he had invested over two million gold marks in restoring the castle to its former glory. In 1950, the town of Oberwesel acquired the castle from his son – and leased it to the Hüttl family in 1957. Today, the third generation of the family runs this inviting, historic castle hotel.

[www.hotel-schoenburg.com](http://www.hotel-schoenburg.com)

# Stahleck Castle

 **Stop:** Bacharach

**How to get there:** From Bacharach Railway Station, walk to the old town, then turn left into Blücherstrasse heading towards the Steeg district. After about 100 m, turn left through the Malerwinkel ("Painters' Corner"). The path is signposted.

From a small hill in Bacharach, Stahleck Castle greets you from afar. It was once surrounded by a moat filled with water. Built in the 11th century, the castle was initially the seat of the bailiffs of the Archbishops of Cologne. From around 1100, the Counts Palatine of the House of Wittelsbach resided in it for over 500 years. Several attacks during the Thirty Years' War caused severe damage to the castle on a number of occasions. In the late 17th century, it was almost completely destroyed by the French. In the early 20th century, the Rheinischer Verein für Denkmalpflege und Heimatschutz (Rhenish Association for the Preservation of Monuments and the Protection of Local History) took over the ruins and rebuilt the castle in 1925 true to its historical form. The ensemble, which has since been used as a youth hostel, was renovated and further expanded in the 1960s. The 25-minute climb to the castle from Bacharach is a rewarding hike – with great views over vineyards and the Rhine valley. The castle courtyard with its free-standing keep is open to visitors at all times. The castle itself can be visited only by prior arrangement.

[www.jugendherberge.de](http://www.jugendherberge.de)



Your route to the castle



© Henry Tornow / Romantischer Rhein Tourismus GmbH





# Reichenstein *and* Rheinstein Castles

 **Stop:** Trechtingshausen

**How to get there:** Hike along the signposted RheinBurgenWeg. The castles are located on Stage 1 (South - North). For further information, visit [www.rheinburgenweg.com](http://www.rheinburgenweg.com)

According to late medieval sources, Rheinstein Castle was originally known as Vaitzburg or Fautsburg Castle. The latest research into its architectural history indicates that its construction was begun in 1316/17, probably under Archbishop of Mainz Peter von Aspelt (1306 - 1320). The castle was probably constructed to enforce the prohibition on rebuilding the Reichenstein ruins. The castle was further extended around 1330 and again in the late 15th century, before gradually falling into disrepair at the end of the 16th century. In 1816 the famous Prussian architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel developed an interest in the dilapidated castle. He drew up plans for its reconstruction in the Romantic style and encouraged Prince Friedrich of Prussia to buy the castle in 1823. By 1829, Prince Friedrich had had the castle reconstructed in line with Schinkel's plans - the first of the derelict or destroyed Rhine castles to be



restored. Only after its redesign in 1829 did it become known by its current name, Rheinstein Castle. The castle laid the foundations for the Romantic reconstruction of all the Rhine castles in the 19th century. Today, the Kleiner Weinprinz restaurant welcomes visitors to the castle.

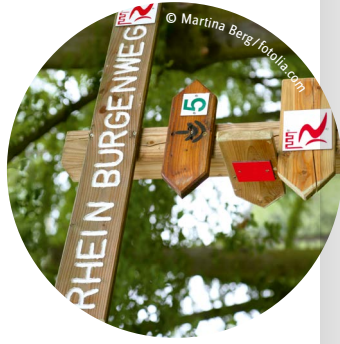
**Reichenstein Castle** was built in the early 11th century and destroyed for the first time in 1282. After reconstruction in the mid-14th century, it was definitively destroyed in 1689 during the Nine Years' War. Its current form dates back to 1900, when new owner Baron Nikolaus von Kirsch-Puricelli had a neo-Gothic English-style residence built. Today the castle museum's collection of weapons and armour, and a hotel and restaurant are open to visitors here.

[www.burg-reichenstein.com](http://www.burg-reichenstein.com)

[www.burg-rheinstein.de](http://www.burg-rheinstein.de)

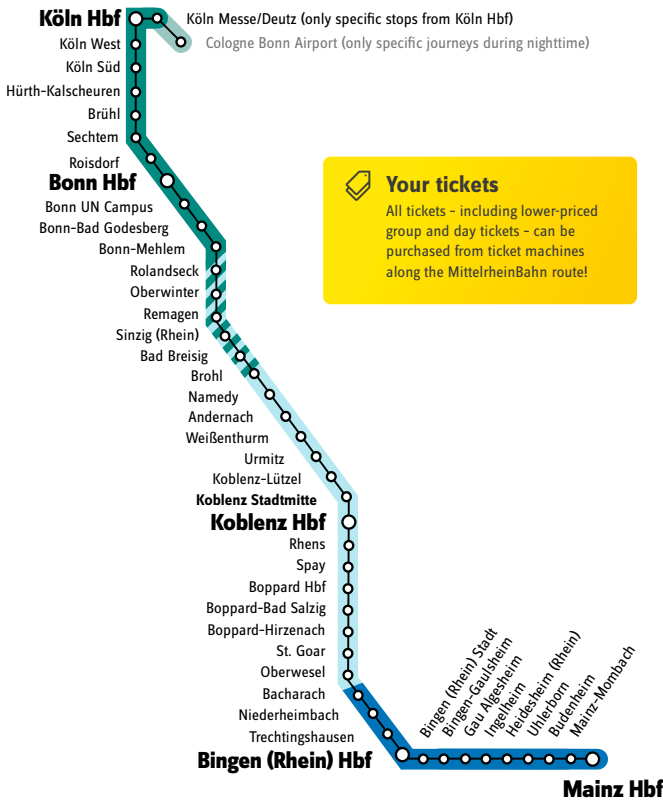


The Rheinsteig premium hiking trail and the equally beautiful RheinBurgenWeg lead you to a multitude of castles and palaces. And a hike along these popular routes gives you the chance to explore these imposing structures. The 320 km Rheinsteig trail runs between Bonn, Koblenz and Wiesbaden, mainly on narrow paths with steep climbs and descents through side valleys. The 200 km RheinBurgenWeg runs from Rolandsbogen near Remagen to the Mäuseturm (Mouse Tower) at Bingen. It winds through the heights and wooded valleys - with some challenging stretches. Both hiking trails offer you impressive sites, spectacular views and lots of inviting places to stop off along the way. And with the MittelrheinBahn, you can take your hiking trip in easy stages: just get off the train at the start of your trail and catch the train back from your destination!





# Out and about with great value tickets



Between Cologne and Bonn-Mehlem:  
Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Sieg (VRS) transport network

The VRS tariff applies to connecting services as far as Brohl. When using season tickets or tickets for discounted fares (JobTickets, Großkunden-Tickets, SemesterTickets or SchülerTickets), special VRS tariff regulations apply.

Between Rolandseck and Oberwesel:  
Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Mosel (VRM) transport network

Between Bacharach and Mainz:  
Rhein-Nahe Nahverkehrsverbund (RNN) transport network

**Your tickets**  
All tickets - including lower-priced group and day tickets - can be purchased from ticket machines along the MittelrheinBahn route!

# Top tips for tickets

- Whether you're travelling with the MittelrheinBahn as an **individual** or as a **group** - we have the right ticket for every journey.
- You can get tickets for regional transport by RegionalExpress, RegionalBahn, S-Bahn, city and regional buses as well as Deutsche Bahn local services - even across different networks - easily, quickly and conveniently from the **yellow ticket machines**. These can be found at all stations along the Cologne - Mainz route.
- Of course, you can also get MittelrheinBahn tickets from all Deutsche Bahn ticket machines and ticket counters.
- When you buy tickets, you benefit from the low-price transport-association tariffs.**

**You can reach us at:**

**Hotline: +49 (0)261 98 88 70 70**

Mon - Sat: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

(excluding public holidays)

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**[www.mittelrheinbahn.de](http://www.mittelrheinbahn.de)**