

Foundation of the City

Nuremberg appears in history with a pleasing event: On July 16, 1050, the Emperor Henry III made the bondswoman Sigena free. In the document recording this act, the word “Norenberc”, which means rocky hill, appears for the first time. The castle hill of sandstone rose high above the forested countryside below, through which the Pegnitz River flows. On the top of the hill, the [Imperial Castle](#) was built, the famous symbol of Nuremberg. The city grew. The part of the town which takes its name from the Church of St. Sebald became too small. South of the Pegnitz River, a second magnificent Gothic church, St. Lawrence, was built. It gives its name to this part of the city. A city wall, which is in large part still intact, enclosed the town. Through many privileges which Nuremberg received from German Emperors in the 13th and 14th centuries, the city gained the title of “Free Imperial City”. In 1356, the Emperor Charles IV proclaimed a basic constitutional law, the “Golden Bull”, in the city. It said that every future king should hold his first imperial diet in the Free Imperial City of Nuremberg.

In the permanent exhibits “A Crown – Power – History” and “Nuremberg. A Moving History” in the [City Museum at Fembo House](#), Nuremberg’s history can be experienced at a glance. In several exhibit rooms, the entire spectrum of Nuremberg’s changing past is presented in all its variety: From its rapid rise to its role as one of the greatest European centers for politics, trade and art in the Renaissance to its difficult reconstruction after the Second World War.