

Sightseeing Tour I

From the Main Market Square to the medieval Imperial Castle, through a pleasant green oasis and the most beautiful lane of half-timbered houses in Nuremberg, over the oldest suspension bridge in Germany, past a former dormitory for lepers and back to the market square.

Beautiful Fountain

Turn the ring and your wish will come true!

The Beautiful Fountain (from the 14th century) rises like a Gothic church tower from its eight-sided basin on the Main Market Square. The 40 figures represent the world view of the Holy Roman Empire.

On the southwest side of the fountain, in the metal latticework of the fence, you'll find the famous golden ring. According to legend, the ring was made by a blacksmith's assistant, who had unsuccessfully tried to win the hand of his master's daughter. To prove his skill, one night the apprentice created the golden ring and placed it in the lattice of the fountain, leaving no visible seam.

Today it is said that if you turn the golden ring three times and wish to have a child, this wish will come true – but other wishes are welcome too. After you have turned the ring and made your wish, you should head north up the Burgstraße to reach your next destination.

The Imperial Castle

Where Epelein jumped to freedom ...

To reach the Imperial Castle, go straight up the Burgstraße and then follow the steps on the right until you are standing in front of the former Imperial Stables. Turn left in the direction of the Five-Cornered Tower. In the castle wall just beyond the tower, you'll find two horseshoe prints which are shrouded in legend. An ancient tale tells us there was an errant knight named Epelein, who stole from the citizens of Nuremberg. Once he attacked a wealthy patrician bride on her wedding day – and even kissed her! He was captured and shortly before his execution was granted one last wish: Epelein wanted to sit one more time upon his faithful steed. But he didn't stay in one place: With a foolhardy leap of his horse, Epelein sprang over the moat of the Nuremberg castle and escaped – leaving the hoof prints of his horse in the castle wall ...

If you walk through the gate on the left and turn left, you'll be rewarded with a one-of-a-kind view over the Old Town! You should also take a look at the inner courtyard of the castle, which was reserved for the Emperor himself during his Imperial Diet. Today, you can visit the Imperial Castle Museum and the former living quarters of the castle, see the Deep Well or climb the Sinwell Tower.



Castle Garden & Tiergärtnertorplatz

Wonderful places to relax in the Old Town

From the heart of the castle, you should return to the wall with the hoof prints. If you turn left, you can pass through a gate which leads to the castle garden. In the summer, this is truly a green oasis. This idyllic garden is located in and on top of the former fortifications of the Imperial City. It is open from April to October.

The path through the garden will lead you down to the Tiergärtnertor bastion, where you can walk on a short stretch of the battlements. From there you have a fantastic view of the Tiergärtnertorplatz and the Albrecht Dürer House.

After you have recovered from the walk so far and enjoyed the view, you can continue on to Tiergärtnertorplatz. To do so, retrace your path for ca. 50 m until you come to a large gateway. Exit it to leave the castle garden. Immediately to the right, a steep staircase will take you directly to Tiergärtnertorplatz. On a warm summer evening this picturesque square is a favorite meeting place for young people.

In front of the Pilatushaus – a typical example of a home of a prosperous artisan from the 15th century – you'll find an oversized bronze sculpture: The "Dürer Hare". The artwork, which was created by the artist Jürgen Goertz in 1984, references Albrecht Dürer's famous watercolor "Young Hare".



Weißgerbergasse

Half-timbered houses wherever you look

To get to the Weißgerbergasse, turn left at the Albrecht Dürer House and follow the Albrecht-Dürer-Gasse down the hill. After taking the staircase at the bottom of the hill, turn right and you'll have reached the next station: Weißgerbergasse, one of the most beautiful lanes in Nuremberg!

Here, almost 20 historical homes survived the war and give us an idea of the original appearance of the streets of the Old Town. As the name says, the “Weißgerber” – tanners who used alum (potassium aluminum sulfate) to create fine leather – once lived in this lane.

After the hides were soaked and beaten to softness with a rammer, one scraped off the tallow with a curved blade and then dried the leather on frames on the city wall. A depiction of a rammer and knife, as used by the tanners in their trade, can be seen on House Nr. 24.

Today, the Weißgerbergasse is a favorite spot for bars and clubs.



Kettensteg

Cross the oldest suspension bridge in Germany

Continue through the lane and cross the main road, heading for the River Pegnitz. On the right you will soon spot the Kettensteg. This footbridge was built in 1824 as the first free-floating suspension bridge in Germany. In 1930, extra iron beams and wooden supports were added to give it more stability.

After you have crossed the bridge, turn left into the Untere Kreuzgasse, heading for the next square: Unschlittplatz. When you see the street sign “Unschlittplatz”, turn right to reach the square.



Unschlittplatz

The “Office of Tallow” and discovery of a mysterious foundling

The name of the square and the impressive “Unschlitt” house on its eastern side goes back to 1562, as the city’s “Office of Tallow” was set up in its lower story. Unschlitt is an old-fashioned name for tallow. The office enforced the city’s monopoly on this inedible fat. All butchers in the city had to give up their tallow, which was sold by the town to other artisans at a set price. Until the 19th century, tallow was an important raw material for creating candles and soap and was also used to grease wagon wheels.

The Unschlittplatz gained historical importance and recognition through the mysterious foundling Kaspar Hauser. This 16-year-old boy first appeared in 1828 on the corner of House Nr. 8 (A plaque will help you find it). There, he spoke to two citizens of Nuremberg with a faltering voice. The many enigmas surrounding this young man, who claimed he was raised without any human contact and was murdered in Ansbach in 1833, still fascinate people today.

7 Henkersteg & Weinstadel

Home of the executioner and dormitory for lepers

Leave the Unschlittplatz and head back to the Pegnitz. Cross over the wooden, roofed “Henkersteg” – called in English “Hangman’s Bridge”. From the 16th to the 19th centuries, the executioner of Nuremberg lived in the tower and covered battlements over the Pegnitz. It was the fear of those living in Nuremberg, who believed that contact with the executioner would make them “dishonorable”, that forced him to live in relative isolation.

From the Henkersteg, you can enjoy a beautiful view across the river to the Weinstadel. The Henkerhaus at the end of the bridge contains a museum which is worth a visit.

With its half-timbered upper stories and wooden balconies with their metal water spouts, the Weinstadel is one of the most beautiful buildings in Nuremberg. This dormitory for lepers was created in the middle of the 15th century. Lepers were only allowed inside the city walls once a year, for three days during Holy Week. Later, the Weinstadel served the city as a storage place for its wine, a work and spinning house and as housing for poor families. Today it is student housing for the university.

8 Trödelmarkt

Time to stroll and an enjoy the shops

When you leave the Henkersteg, you come directly to the Trödelmarkt – the German word for a flea market. Originally, this small island in the Pegnitz hosted a market for second-hand goods. Today, you’ll find small pleasant shops lining the 1000-m²-large square, which are known for their personalized offerings and very special charm. If you are looking for something unusual, you’re sure to find it here.

9 An den Fleischbänken

By the ox on the Fleischbrücke

Cross the Karlstraße, which runs through the middle of the Trödelmarkt, and continue on to the other end of the island. Cross the Schleifersteg foot bridge over the river and turn immediately to the right to look at the Fleischbrücke.

Design of the Fleischbrücke – known in English as the “Butchers’ Bridge” – is based on the Ponte di Rialto in Venice. Today, the Butchers’ Bridge still stands on its original foundation of more than 2000 oaken piles. In its day, this bridge with its single arch was considered a technical masterpiece.

On the north side of the bridge, the so-called “meat benches” were located, where butchers sold their wares. Only the outer walls of the municipal meat market remain. They go back to 1571. The ox portal at the top of the stairs served as the entrance gate. The Latin inscription says “Everything has a source and beginning, but look, the ox that you see here was never a calf.”

Now follow your way back to the starting point on the Main Market Square, where we have our last station.



Church of Our Lady

Famous “Männleinlaufen” with its chorus of bells

If you start the tour early enough in the morning, you can reach the Main Market Square by 12 noon and experience the famous glockenspiel on the Church of Our Lady. Its name is “Männleinlaufen” – little men walking around. This is a reminder of the proclamation of the “Golden Bull” in 1356. The seven prince electors circle the Emperor Charles IV, who sits in their midst on his throne. A chorus of bells provides musical accompaniment. The globe above the clock shows the current phase of the moon.

The Church of Our Lady was the first Gothic hall church in Franconia. It was built in the 14th century on the foundations of the former synagogue after the pogrom of 1349. Each year before Christmas, the Nuremberg Christkind opens the world-famous Christkindlesmarkt from the balcony of this church.

Have any questions? We’d be happy to help:

Tourist Information at the Main Market Square

Hauptmarkt 18
90403 Nuremberg

Opening Hours at:

tourismus.nuernberg.de/en

