

## Bad Karlshafen -- A Healing Pilgrimage Site

Just when I think there's no possible way to find a more perfectly wonderful German town, into Bad Karlshafen I went.

Oh, you know that feeling, right? The sigh of total contentment? The sense of calm that makes you feel like you're home? How was I to know this medieval/Baroque blended town would have this effect?

Maybe it shouldn't have come as a shock, but it's a welcome one at that.

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History lovers, like me, will definitely fall in love with the medieval Kloster Helmarshausen. This 10th century (former Benedictine) monastery was famous for its books (like the Gospel of Henry the Lion in 1173), and also became a healing pilgrimage site.

Another medieval marvel found in Bad Karlshafen is the Krukenburg, a castle ruin of gray stone from the early 13th century. While technically centuries younger than Kloster Helmarshausen, its church is roughly the same age — although the area around the Krukenburg is believed to have been used for Pagan worship.

By the way, it's here in Helmarshausen that you'll find a good number of half-timbered houses — so keep your camera handy.

If you don't mind jumping a few centuries, the Baroque part of this [Hessian](#) town is equally beautiful. The *Rathaus* (Town Hall) is a fine example of this ornate architecture. And I wouldn't miss a visit to the old cigar factory, which does double-duty as a museum detailing the town's

“founding” by the Huguenots. Guided tours are available in German, French, and English.

As much as Bad Karlshafen’s architecture and history have me (almost) speechless, it’s the enchanting countryside that’s also won me over (as it will you). Found where the Diemel River meets the [Weser River](#), Bad Karlshafen also connects with both the Hessian *Radfernweg R1* and *R4*.

Cycling routes aren’t the only outdoor recreational enticement — add to your bucket list plenty of hiking and Nordic Walking trails, even miniature golfing. Another excellent way of taking in the Rheinharswald countryside is the Weser Skywalk, offering up views of the valley.

At this point it’s fair to say it’s time for a spa treatment. Places like the *Weser-Therme* will have you rejuvenated with its moonlight swims, black mud, massages, salt scrubs, and even wine-tastings.

Events like wine tastings aren’t the only ones found here in Bad Karlshafen. You’re in for treats like Poetry Nights, its City Culture Festival (August), and Salt Festival (September). The helpful people at the Tourist Office (Hafenplatz 8) are best able to keep you updated on other events taking place in and around town.

If I stick around long enough, do you think they’d hire me? Why not, I already feel like I’m home. ;-)