

Bad Kissingen Thrives By Getting You To Drink For Your Health

Bad Kissingen should never be considered to be “just another German spa town.” Just south of the [Rhön mountains](#), with the Franconian Saale running through it, this charmer considers itself **THE** spa town. The generations of royals, nobles and notables who swore by its cures certainly attest to its status.

These days common people are welcomed to the spas once reserved just for the creme de la creme. More than 1 million (!) people come annually to the spas, which are certified by *WellVital*. The current center for leisure guests is the *KissSalis Therme*, opened in 2004. It is a modern relaxation spa, although there are still many classical spas throughout the old town.

There are mud packs, massage services, hot sand treatments, sprays... but their real fun is the drinking.

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Bad Kissingen has offered drinking water cures since the 800's. The magnesium sulfate and sodium in the spring waters are digestive aids, so toasting your health is a mainstay of the curative industry here.

Curative adventures aren't the only attractions, however. The town is also a major soccer center. The 2006 World Cup allowed the town to host the Ecuadorian team and upgrade their training facilities. The Chinese Olympic team trained here in 2008, and the German-Chinese football association is based here.

The Bavarian championship shooting team is also a mainstay in Bad Kissingen. If you want to take

to the hills for some skeet shooting the facilities are excellent. Horseback riders may also be interested in doing the course of the *Rakoczy* riding championship in the Au valley, which is a jumping and tricks course.

Seeing the Au Valley or just getting out in the hills is also a good use of time. The hiking is quite good, and the Bodenlaube Castle ruins are a popular destination for Nordic walkers and recreational trekkers alike. The castle is nearly 1,000 years old, and a September reenactment weekend celebrates its history.

The other big reenactment weekend is the last weekend of July. The *Rákóczi-Fest* in Bad Kissingen celebrates the famous people associated with the town by getting locals out in full costume for three solid days. There are parades, amusement rides and a number of musical acts for the whole family.

One part of the festival you won't want to miss is at the end of the first day. More than 1,000 candles are lit and sent floating down the Saale River, making it look like the river is burning. The photos are sure to make your friends back home green with envy. ;-)

You can toast your own good fortune at having seen the event in person with a stop at the *Kurgarten Café*. It is in the town center and is known for both its wines and the desserts. The local wines come mainly from nearby Wirmsthal and Ramsthal, but the desserts are all baked fresh on site daily. Yum!