

Birkenfeld (Nahe) -- Historical Town With Heart And Nature

Being a “city slicker” and all, there are virtues to living and visiting big cities. But, there’s also something to be said for small towns. Gorgeous places like Birkenfeld (Nahe) in [Rhineland-Palatinate](#).

OK, so maybe towns like this, a place with just over 6,000 people, doesn’t have a gazillion museums or hundreds of nightclubs. What Birkenfeld does have is a castle ruin. The Burgruine Birkenfeld, to be exact.

When that Frenchman Napoleon came calling the medieval/Renaissance castle had already been kinda destroyed — but that didn’t stop the French from claiming it for its own.

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Birkenfeld has a castle too (not the same thing as a Burg, but close). This is a beautiful pink 19th century building that’s not someone’s house anymore, but a culture center and wedding venue.

Over by the Schloss at Schneewiesenstraße 22 is an old Barracks building, from when the area belonged to [Prussia](#). Its pale-yellow appearance and ornate doorway make it look more like a library or someone’s manor house than some military building. Now it’s an administration building.

What is it with yellow around here? The *Alte Stadthaus*, or Old Town House, is also yellow — and was once a local 19th century doctor’s home. Now this is where Birkenfeld’s Mayor gets to come to work everyday.

Whewww, I think I’ll run for office if I can work in such fabulous surroundings everyday. Nevermind, I get to experience all of Germany by doing this instead. Isn’t that better? :-)

Anyway, if I was stuck in the office I wouldn't get to cycle my way around the 180 km of Birkenfeld's bike trails. Who am I kidding, I'm not biking that far — but it looks good in print. ;-)

I will, however, ride over to the Kirchplatz to see the Evangelical Church; built in the 1750s. And I'll ride over to the former Marktplatz to see the *Schellenmann*, where the sculpture vibrates.

One last stop: the *Heimatmuseum* (Local History Museum, Friedrich-August-Straße 17). Birkenfeld (Nahe) has seen the likes of Celts, Romans, Franks, and a whole bunch of other folks in history — so it's no wonder they've got some 2,500 years of the area's history all under one roof.

I don't know how they did it, though it's definitely worth seeing. So are some more of those bicycle trails — so I better get a move on. ;-)