

## **Black Forest Spa Route -- I Think I Need Another Massage**

Let me start right out and say if you see any typos or the errant, ahhhhh, it's because I'm on the Black Forest Spa Route — otherwise known as the *Schwarzwald-Bäderstrasse* — and I've found my happy place, my zen, or whatever else you want to call it.

I'm a sucker for a good spa and an even bigger sucker for a great spa. So, imagine how giddy I am right now, traveling all 270km (168mi) of this circular route through the best of what [Baden-Württemberg](#) has to offer, smack within the northern half of the mystic [Black Forest](#).

Now, for those of you who are just like me, the spas within the Black Forest are utterly divine; and a great place to spend every waking minute being massaged, pampered, plucked, soaked, and saunaed (is that even a word? who cares...).

But, for those of you who are traveling with anyone who doesn't care one iota about these things — there are plenty things to do & see along the way. Or, you could leave them home and just take me along with you instead. ;-)

### **Start of the Black Forest Spa Route**

The Black Forest Spa Route officially comprises of more towns and stops than my virtual tour here on this page. But don't sweat... simply follow the link at the bottom to take a peek at the others.

My trip starts in [Pforzheim](#), a town better known as the *Goldstadt* (or Gold City) with its jewelry making. It's also a popular stop on the [Bertha Benz Memorial Route](#). Believe it or not, I have no time for spa services because with all the other sightseeing, there's no time left.

Pforzheim's totally amazing with an arts center, jewelry museum, a wildlife park, and an Alpine Garden that's open from April to October. There's also the Wallberg hill to climb — quite the romantic spot for you & a loved one. Hey, don't look at me, I only had thoughts of a deep tissue massage on the brain. :-)

The same was true of [Calw](#) and [Nagold](#). Between all the half-timbered houses and the Vischer

Palace (that's now the Town Museum), then the Celtic royal burial mound and Castle Hohennagold — I almost (ALMOST) forgot why I was here. For which I quickly remembered when I pulled into Freudenstadt.

[Freudenstadt](#) reads like a lifestyles of the 19th century rich & famous. Mark Twain, John Rockefeller, England's King George V, and the Queen of Sweden have come all the way to this Black Forest town to soak in its curative waters.

Over at the *Panorama-Bad*, you don't have to do anything other than lay on bubble beds, swim til your fingers look like raisins, park yourself inside a sauna, or have some wonderful masseuse beat the ever-lovin' stress right out of you. Oh, sorry, that's what I did!

After feelin' like Jell-O pudding, I had my choice of a hot-air balloon ride, mountain biking, or a visit to Freudenstadt's local history museum or the Black Forest Nature Park. Decisions, decisions — now I'm stressed — gonna have to go get another massage.

[Baiersbronn](#) was my next stop. This is a lovely town with a Kneipp Health Resort, a 15th century monastery, and farm holidays for the kids. It also has 500km of hiking trails, cross country skiing, (regular skiing, too), and boasts six Michelin star restaurants.

I didn't want to leave, but I had more spas to occupy and sights to see!

Places like [Altensteig](#), where the Black Forest Spa Route meets up with the *Deutsche Fachwerkstrasse*. The Fachwhat? That would be the [German Framework Road](#) — and Altensteig has framework houses that are about 550 years old. It's also got moorlands, vineyards, and 700,000 years of human history.

By the time I got to [Baden-Baden](#) I was ready to be pampered yet again. Little did I know how well it would be done in Baden-Baden. The soap & brush massage at the *Friedrichsbad* (the Roman-Irish Bath) was heavenly and the water ritual (it's 16 steps to it) is blissfully designed to soak life's stresses away. Hey, even just looking at the frescoes was a treat for the eyes!

Then it was time to see the Caracalla Spa, 3,000 square feet of pure aqua elegance. You'll be the proverbial kid in a candy store, alternating between the whirlpools, waterfalls, saunas, and hot & cold rock grottos.

With a spa of this caliber, it'd be easy to forget that Baden-Baden has one of the largest concert halls in Europe, a casino that Bond would be happy to visit, and Chanel & Prada stores. Thank heaven for credit cards!

Things are a bit simpler over in [Bad Herrenalb](#). But, I didn't say boring. Bad Herrenalb was (is) known for its 12th century Cistercian Monastery that was dissolved when the [Protestant](#)

[Reformation](#) came to the area; and there's something magical about the ruins.

The town also has a 9-hole golf course, and its *Siebentäler Therme* (Seven Valleys Thermal Spa) is surrounded by sandstone cliffs.

My trip ends in [Bad Wildbad](#), a town that's been a resort village since the 15th century. Yes, the 15th century — meaning, they're doing something right. The first thing you'll probably notice is the big pinkish building. That's the *Palais Thermal*, built in the 19th century and welcoming guests from all over the world.

After the hot springs, how about a visit to the Local History Museum or Bad Wildbad's 18th and 19th century churches?

Oh, no... not again. Decisions, decisions. I think I need yet another massage. Oh, maybe a facial this time... ;-)

## **Black Forest Spa Route Web Site**

Unfortunately, there's no dedicated web site yet, though here's one that shows the [Black Forest Spa Route](#) with more dots. ;-)