

Blaichach -- Upper Swabian Through And Through

At first thought I believed the only thing I was going to see in the town of Blaichach was going to a whole bunch of churches and chapels. Really, how could I not, there are like a million-gazillion little hamlets that make up the place, each as old as the next.

Then I realized I was sitting right in the [Oberallgäu](#). Um, this is no place to be indoors, that's for sure.

That's not to take away anything from the chapels and churches that dot this [Upper Swabian](#) landscape. Heck no, places like the St. Wendelin Chapel and the Chapel of St. Florian have been around for centuries — like the 17th and 18th respectively. So, if you don't mind spending a few minutes outdoors, I'd suggest you come on by.

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A good way to combine both history and the love of nature is to visit the ruins of Burg Ettensberg. The views from this castle are impressive, to say the least, and with a bit of imagination you can get a good idea of how this 13th century fortification might've looked.

Once you've managed to square all that away, it's time to experience what being in the Gunzesrieder Tal is all about. Right, that means doing things like mountain biking, or regular old bicycling (like the Iller Bike Path).

Your own two feet can get you around quite nicely; and every June the whole town gears up for German Hiking Day. If you can't make it for that, try the 13 km and 8 km Nature Experience hiking trails — a good way to kill 3-6 hours in the sunshine.

Too much work for you? No problem, go on over to the Große Alpsee, a big lake that's surrounded by forests and meadows, and a totally relaxing beach area.

And if you think this is quite enough to do, I haven't even gotten to the winter sports yet. This town doesn't roll up its sidewalks when the frigid season comes around. No way, Blaichach opens its toboggan run, gets its cross-country ski trails in top shape, and marks out its snow shoeing paths. Ski tours are even available for anyone interested.

Wanna know something else? We haven't even gotten to Blaichach's festivals and cultural events yet — and I'm already tired. One of the more unique events is the *Klausentreiben*, a noisy December event — but loads of fun. I like the *Martinritt* that starts with a blessing of the horses — an event that's been going on for almost 400 years.

However, if you like to eat, the *Käse-Kräuter-Sommer* (Cheese Herbs Summer) is perfect. This is a summer long festival of sorts from July to September with garden parties, workshops, and wine & cheese events. Yummy.

Cheese, by the way, is big business here. 1872 symbolized the start of the Emmentaler cheese production outside of Switzerland (commenced by the Swiss man, Johann Althaus), spreading through the [Allgäu](#) and beyond.

Wow, was I wrong about what Blaichach was all about — and this time, I didn't mind not being right. ;-)