

## Breisgau -- Soaring Mountains, Splendid Lakes, Delicious Wine



### [Breisgau Map](#)

At the southern end of the wonderful [Black Forest](#) lies one of Germany's sunniest and most inviting areas, the Breisgau. Extending east from the [Kaiserstuhl](#) region (Emperor's Chair), a group of hills formed from a now-extinct volcano all the way to the German/French and German/Swiss borders.

Parts of the Breisgau are blessed with Germany's warmest climate. Its sunny days and cool nights make it an ideal wine-growing country, and vineyards are abundant on the slopes of the Kaiserstuhl.

The more than 5 square miles (14 sq km) of vineyards in [Vogtsburg](#), in fact, make it the largest wine-growing town in Germany. The winegrowers, however, are not alone in their appreciation of the Breisgau climate.

A springtime visit to this region is fragrant with the scent of blooming cherry and almond trees. The half-timbered houses are made even more picturesque with fig, apricot, and peach trees and neat beds of the bright green spears which make [Baden-Württemberg](#) one of the world's great asparagus producing areas.

During autumn, the Kaiserstuhl brims with wine festivals, and between mid-January and Ash Wednesday, it bursts with the exuberance of carnival. Deciding to spend your vacation in the Breisgau will probably be far less difficult than choosing exactly how to spend it once you arrive!

You won't go wrong, however, by beginning at its southern end in its 12th-century capital, the

university city of [Freiburg im Breisgau](#). The 380-foot (116m) spire of its strikingly red brick 15th-century Gothic cathedral is visible for miles.

The Freiburg Münsterplatz, where a daily open-air market is still held, is surrounded by the medieval marvels of the Old Quarter. Here cobblestone lanes and waterways meander past picture-perfect architecture. The Freiburg cable car annually carries thousands of winter sports enthusiasts to Breisgau's highest peak (and Freiburg's "house mountain"), the 4200-foot (1300m) **Schauinsland**.

Breisgau's second tallest peak, Kandel Mountain, stands just northeast of Freiburg. Scaling its heights will reward you with views of both the Swiss Alps and the Vosges Mountains of France. Kandel looms over the Elztal Valley's lovely hiking country.

Here is [Waldkirch](#), which prospered as a silver mining town — until a massive 1258 flood destroyed all the mines. Kids love Waldkirch's Black Forest Zoo, where endangered animals are bred in natural surroundings, and adults love Elztal's five breweries!

No mountains are complete without mountain lakes, and the peaks of Breisgau have their share. Lake Titisee, created during the last Ice Age, has a scenery unmatched by any other lake in the entire Black Forest. Its heavily wooded surroundings make ideal biking terrain, and the Black Forest cake served at its lakeside cafes is surpassed only by the views you'll enjoy while you're eating it!

Seven miles or 12 km south of Lake Titisee is the winter and summer playground of Lake Schluchsee. A reservoir lake, it is the largest contiguous stretch of water in the Black Forest, bordered on the north by the mighty Feldberg yet remarkable for its mild climate.

With approximately 90 miles (144km) of marked trails passing through open flower-filled meadows and dense forests, Lake Schluchsee is ideal for horseback riding and hiking as well as every conceivable water sport. The surrounding villages of Faulenfürst, Blasiwald, and Fischbach provide concerts and live theater.

Vineyards; [cuckoo clocks](#); sinfully delicious meals of Black Forest ham with asparagus or knockwurst with potato salad, followed by sinfully rich Black Forest cake; mountain lakes; soaring steeples; and half-timbered houses in ancient villages — Breisgau has them all! :-)