

## Bretten Is Not Just For Commuters Anymore

Bretten locals always make a point of letting you know when and where the next trains are going to be. As one corner of a manufacturing rectangle with [Karlsruhe](#), [Mannheim](#) and [Stuttgart](#), the town is an affordable and pleasant retreat for legions of commuters.

Many live in town but commute out and back each day to another city for work. If you visit during the week you will enjoy the absence — no lines and fast service at the restaurants. :-)

Weekends can be busy, as the locals try to cram in as much as they can before the Monday morning commute strikes again.

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In the summer months the stone lip of the fountain in the marketplace will be crowded with weekenders relaxing as hard as they can. The fountain also forms the centerpiece of a half-timber framed square, so it makes a good place to get in a lot of sightseeing and culture in short order.

Taking a page from the local book, you'll want to use the square as a base to explore out in a businesslike fashion. Bretten has many half-timber houses around the square, so those can be seen first. Be sure to get a good look at the overdone front of the Melanchthon house — it almost can't be described, it is so Roccoco'd.

Next, you will want to see *Tierpark Bretten*, Germany's largest petting zoo. Then move back to still stones, and see the many churches which are Protestant, Lutheran, and Catholic. Take pictures, but save room on your camera for the visual overstimulation that is the summer Peter & Paul festival.

The festival is again a Bretten efficiency. They celebrate three events, two military victories and a shepherding contest, all at the same time, but all in distinctive costumes. Over here is a juggler from the Middle Ages, there a Renaissance shepherd, yonder a drummer and fife pair.

The locals practice all year to pull off the event in period gear, even if they are mixing the periods like crazy. It's a bit much at times, but you can't help but have a good time — there's so much culture to choose from, so you can find whatever suits you!