

Cochem -- The Bright Jewel On The Moselle

I must have tried thirty times to start this page on the grand town of Cochem, only to delete sentence after sentence. Why the difficulty? Probably because no matter what I write, there's no way on God's green Earth that I'd ever be able to fully convey how absolutely stunning this place really is.

Located on the [Moselle](#), Cochem is a town popular for those sailing along on those river cruises that are so popular these days. Lucky stiffs, it's a grand way to come upon the place.

Anyway, whether you're sailing, driving, or biking your way to town — the place is dominated by the [Cochem Castle](#), a.k.a. Reichsburg. The castle might not look like it once did back in the 12th century — its history can be learned along one of its guided tours if you want to know why.

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The region is full of castles, Reichsburg isn't the only one. Another must see place is the ruins of Winneburg Castle, blown up by the neighboring French three hundred years ago in 1689.

At least all the half-timbered houses along the Marktplatz in the *Altstadt* (Old Town) are in one piece. They really give Cochem the quintessential Old World feel everyone wants when visiting.

Nah, they come for Cochem's many festivals. Just about every time you turn around, something awesome is going on. One of the town's highlights is the *Weinwoche* (Wine Week), held in mid-June. Then there's the Vineyard Festival at the end of the same month, followed by the *Burgfest* in early August, then ending with the *Heimat und Weinfest*.

Don't sit down yet, the fun's not over. The nightly entertainment during the *Quetschefest* (2nd

weekend of September) is really popular, as are the *Tage des Roten Mosel-Moselweinbergpfirsichs*. Look, don't try to pronounce it — just know it's all about the jellies, jams, liquor, and whatever else you can make with peaches.

Forget fruit, Cochem's Oktoberfest (that's really in October) is beer tent after beer tent, sausages, and ladies in their dirndls. And what's an Old World German town without a Christmas Market. Ha-ha, Cochem's got two — one of them at the castle every year on the third weekend of Advent.

Guess what? I'm not even done yet. Let's see, what have I missed...

Ahh, yes, the Blossom Festival in early April, then there's the Arts & Crafts Market in early-May. In between all the events, are vineyard walks, ghost tours of the castle (Sundays, from May to October), Night Watchman Tours (Saturdays), and guided city tours on Mondays and Saturdays.

Any tour of Cochem should include visiting the *Enderttor*, part of the old city gate from the 14th century. And if you're walking along the pedestrian only zone, you won't miss it. You also shouldn't miss the *Kapelle Zu den drei Kreuzen*, a pretty chapel built more than three centuries ago; plus you should visit the St. Roch's Plague Chapel, too.

Wait — I thought I was done, but I haven't mentioned the gondola ride up the *Pinnerkeuzbahn*, where the views from the *PinnerKreuz* have to be the best way to see the landscape. Ok, the folks who hike to the nearby [Hunsrück](#) and/or [Eifel](#) might say hiking or cycling is the best way — and I'll have to take their word for it. Too many glasses of Cochem's outstanding wine do all that. ;-)