

## Dornhan -- A Delightful Neighbor In The Black Forest

What's great about Dornhan is that besides being close to the former Benedictine Monastery (built in 1095) and its *Klosterbräu*, is that it's near three castles. Sorry, it's located near what used to be three castles. ;-)

The most famous is probably Burg Lichtenfels, a castle that's been in ruins longer than it stood. How do I know? Um, it was built around the year 1100 — and totally destroyed in the 1400s; that's only 300 years. Still, a formidable castle of its day.

Burg Brandeck is also in ruins, thought to have been built a century before Lichtenfels. It towers above the countryside at 640 meters above sea level — offering a great view for anyone interested.

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The last castle in the area is Burg Leinstetten, the youngest of Dornhan's three castles — constructed around 1298. This castle has been around the longest, as it was here until 1838.

Your time here in Dornhan doesn't end when you're done with the ruins. You should stick around for one of its six annual Markets, like the one on Whit Monday. Of course, Germany's Christmas Markets are world famous — and the ones held in places like Dornhan are the reason why.

The rest of Dornhan is dotted with little chapels and medieval churches, like St. Conrad's that been a staple around here since 1089; and the (now) Evangelical Church of St. Mary that's located along Dornhan's *Stadtmauer*.

That's not entirely true, the rest of Dornhan has also got recreational areas, such as its swimming pool (with beach volleyball court), playgrounds, hiking & biking trails, golfing, tennis courts, and

cross-country ski trails, and outdoor concerts.

Ahhh, deep breath — that was a lot, wasn't it?

To enjoy the outside and the historical, take a walk over by the Marschalkenzimmern, they used to be the gallows, by the way. There's a memorial cross that commemorates the Battle of Leinstetten, where two Dukes decided to fight it out in 1298.

All this makes me hungry, so off to the Weekly Market (Wednesdays 9am-1pm) for something to nibble on. I'm so glad I decided to take a trek away from Alpirsbach — I wonder what I'll find next.