

## Furth im Wald -- City Of Dragons Within The Bavarian Forest

Furth im Wald, also known as *Drachenstadt* (City Of Dragons), is exquisitely out of touch with modernity and that's probably its best attraction. It's like you have entered a town lost in time and existing in the pages of a history book; a big, fat, gilt-edged history book with lots and lots of pictures.

The history of this little town is laden with legends and rituals that will give Harry Potter a run for his money. More about that later; for now let's check out its main sights.

Furth im Wald is laid out in picture-perfect order and you may have trouble wondering where to start. Each and every building seems to beckon with alluring facades and gorgeous interiors.

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Perhaps it would be a good idea to start at the town square with its historic ambience and quaint cobblestone paving. Close at hand are the Baroque parish church, and the *Zum Heiland auf der Rast* pilgrimage Church, both testimonies to medieval artistic grandeur. Then there's the relatively modern Protestant Parish Church dating back to the early 1900s and sporting a Neo-Romanesque façade.

Furth im Wald has a lovely Japanese garden which comes as a bit of a surprise in this otherwise medieval surroundings. It is indeed a great place to stroll around and enjoy the various arrangements of blooms and water features so typical to Oriental gardens.

For a change of pace, visit the historic Hammer Mill from the early 19th century, or the *Felsengänge* which is a maze of underground passages deep below ground.

Furth im Wald's greatest attraction, though, would have to be the Dragon Museum. Once again, Furth's fascination with dragons does appear a bit out of character for a German town, but then there you go.

They even have a Slaying of the Dragon festival (called *Drachenstich*) to drive home the point. To see this spectacular event, you have to get here in August. The evil looking dragon is paraded around and then stabbed to death symbolizing the victory of good over evil.