

Germania -- The Roman Side Of Germany

Have you ever wondered why Germany is called Germany (in English, while other countries have some variations of the word), while we Germans ourselves call it *Deutschland*? I think perhaps we have to go back to the Romans, who called the area **Germania**.

Not just Germania, but Germania Magna (an area to the east of the [Rhine](#)) and Lesser Germania (to the south). Each had another area, known as Germania Inferior (Lower Germania, not because it wasn't a nice place) and Germania Superior (Upper Germania).

It is believed that none other than the most famous Roman of all time, Julius Caesar, gave rise to the name back in 51 B.C. I hope you're not thinking, so what's the big deal?

It is a very big deal.

This was the same guy who said the [Germanic Tribes](#) that lived in the area were, shall we say, promiscuous? Yeah, because Rome was the pillar of virtue, weren't they?

Whatever, that's irrelevant to my story here.

One thing's for sure, the Romans were smart enough to realize the Germanic Tribes were quite a bit different from the Celts (who also lived in parts of modern day Germany) and the Gauls (who lived in neighboring France).

Rome's Germania extended through most of modern day Germany. Upper Germania (again, Germania Superior) included a border along the River Rhine along the town of Rheinbrohl, to the [River Main](#), the [Taunus Mountains](#), to Lorch; whereas Germania Inferior went all the way to the [North Sea](#), stretching to the present day Netherlands. That's a lot of real estate.

The Romans fiercely guarded their little slice of Heaven (that would be Germany in my eyes) when, constructing more than 900 watchtowers and 60 forts along what's called the Limes Germanicus.

It had something to do with the Romans fighting against the warring factions of the Germanic Tribes in 9 A.D. Augustus decided his Germania needed a defense wall after they lost in the Battle of the [Teutoburg Forest](#).

For quite some time these same tribes gave the Romans a run for the money. These guys weren't going quietly into the night while the leaders in Rome tried a hostile takeover of Germania Magna.

Just so you know, some of the areas conquered by the Romans were ruled over by Tiberius and Germanicus (two more famous names in Roman history).

Sometimes it's hard to place historical dates and locations on maps, just as it is to just hear names in history spouted at you. Good thing Germany's history of Germania is alive and well.

Yes, I realize this is a history article. But, wouldn't you non-history loving people out there appreciate it better if you could see it live?

Now, you know I'm not suggesting there are real Ancient Romans running around Deutschland (Germania, I mean) today. But it does have two [German scenic routes](#) that detail the long and illustrious history of Julius and his buddies.

The German Limes Road follows along the border built by Augustus. It travels for more than 550km (900km if you follow the bicycle route) along Bad Ems, Holzhausen, Bad Homburg, and Regensburg (that has a Roman Museum). It's also a UNESCO World Heritage area, so that goes to show you Germania was a very big deal.

Along the [Neckar-Alb-Aare Roman Route](#), the theme is a bit different. This goes for 400km, passing along viaducts and other Roman buildings through the Swabian Mountains and beyond. Consider it a chance to follow the footsteps of Germanicus through Germania. ;-)

I think it's a good excuse to see [Sulz am Neckar](#), [Rosenfeld](#), [Rottweil](#), [Köngen](#), [Pliezhausen](#), and [Rottenburg am Neckar](#) in Germany, Germania, or Deutschland (or whatever you want to call it). Don't you?