

## Hofgeismar -- Huguenots On The German Fairy Tale Road

At the crossroads of the historic [German Framework Road](#) and the [German Fairy Tale Road](#) lies probably one of the most beautiful [German cities](#), Hofgeismar.

It won't take but a moment to realize why the area around this thousand year old city in the Reinhard Forest has been inhabited for some 7000 years.

It was officially recognized in 1082, has seen its fair share of love and war though the centuries, yet today retains an air a long bygone day.

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The medieval days have made such an indelible mark on Hofgeismar. Many of the buildings of that time still exist. For example, the 12th century Altstädter Church, one of the most influential Hesse churches, has Roman arcades and Gothic portals. It has remained a Protestant Church since 1535.

The Neustädter Church is only a few hundred years younger (built in the 14th century) and was once the lecture church of the Huguenots.

Since Hofgeismar is located on the German Framework Road you'll stumble upon plenty of half timbered buildings. For instance, the Protestant Kekanat had its first floor built in 1329 with the second added in the 16th century. Then the House Malzfeld which has remained pretty much unchanged for more than 300 years, while the Urban Guild and Wedding House has been around since 1620.

Now let's give thanks to two Wilhelms...

Thanks to Wilhelm IV, Hofgeismar is home to the *Tierpark Sababurg* (one of the oldest animal parks in Europe) and home for sheep, goats, donkeys, cattle, wild pigs, deer, and children's zoo.

Thanks to another Wilhelm (this time to Wilhelm IX), you can visit his 18th century castle and gardens (now a conference center for the Protestant Academy). Also thanks to the same Wilhelm for the health spa and the Health Well, said to help the blind see and the deaf to hear!

Last but not least, the City Museum is a wonderful way to learn about Hofgeismar's history and geography, including the many Wilhelms and other aristocrats that have shaped the history of the area. Besides housing a remnants of medieval pottery, the museum is dedicated to preserving Jewish Culture in Hesse. There are over 2000 volumes of Judaic literature in there.

Even the local Forest and Hunting Museum is housed in a 350 year old farmhouse dedicated to teaching about the forest's ecology.