

Kenzingen -- Monasteries, Castles, Churches In The Sweet Breisgau

Kenzingen, right within the medieval [Breisgau](#), has four (yes, four) old monasteries AND three castles. That's quite a lot for a small town of just over 9,000 people. Man, some people just like keeping all the good stuff to themselves. ;-)

Before I get to the monasteries and castles, there is Kenzingen's beautiful Baroque church with its two towers from 1275 that have survived countless wars. Then there's the *Schwabentor* (Swabia Gate) from the 19th century with timber-framed complements and the *Üsenbergbrunnen* or Usenberg Fountain from the 11th century. Very nice!

The other church to see is the Church & Monastery of St. Barbara. Parts of the church date to the 15th century with additions added on in 1760 and again in 1914.

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Kenzingen's Franciscan Monastery and monastic church wasn't built until 1659 and used as a hospital from 1889 until 1982. Even older is the Wonnental Monastery, that was a women's kloster when it was built in 1220. Throughout the centuries it was destroyed in the Farmers War, the [Thirty Years' War](#), and lastly by the French in 1676.

The Pauliner Monastery was founded in 1360 and was used for that purpose until 1806; and is now used as a retirement home. Now the Johanniter Monastery is the one place you don't want to see the inside, as much as you'd probably want to see this 15th century monastery. But, it's a prison today. So the only way you're getting in is if you're very, very naughty! ;-)

With the monasteries out of the way, it's time for the castles. There's the former castle Hecklingen

(built 1776), then there is Kirn Castle, which has been around since 1203 before it was destroyed in 1638; and restored in 1978.

However, it's the Lichteneck Castle that you'll really want to see. It was built in the 11th century, destroyed in 1433 and rebuilt again in 1500, only to lie in ruins today. Better do it quick though, the ruins are private property!

It's a good thing I'm around to tell you about great places like Kenzingen so they don't keep all this good stuff to themselves. ;-)