

Lower Franconia -- Where Celebrating Is A Way of Life



[Lower Franconia Map](#)

Summertime is festival time in Lower Franconia (German: *Unterfranken*). No matter where in this most wine-centered of [Germany's regions](#) you find yourself, if it's summer, there will be a folk festival, or a wine festival, or a festival celebrating an historical event occurring nearby.

With its quaint half-timbered villages, sunlit wine tasting rooms, and welcoming wine and beer gardens, Lower Franconia is the romantic setting for festivals of all kinds. If you plan to visit this German region, summer is definitely *the* time!

At festival time you'll be invited to share in legendary [Franconia](#) cuisine. Local asparagus will appear on your plate next to a marvelous onion concoction known as a *Zwiebelbloutz*. If you've spent the day cycling along the Red Wine Route from [Würzburg](#) to [Wertheim](#) (and you really must!) your appetite might demand the more substantial butcher's platter a.k.a. *Schweinfurter Schlachtschüssel*.

Work off your supper the following day with a hike through the [Steigerwald](#) or the [Rhön Mountains](#), or along the River [Main](#). Be sure to bring a camera, because no matter where you wander in Lower Franconia, you're sure to encounter majestic castles, fascinating ruins, and monasteries crumbling with age.

Journey through the Steigerwald and up the slopes of the 1600-foot/ 489m Zabelstein, marking the Steigerwald-Main Valley's northwestern boundary. Take in the panoramic view of the Steigerwald at your feet, and the castle ruins at the northern end of the ridge.

If it's festival time in the Steigerwald expect to find the Lower Franconians decked out in their

traditional best. The men will be sporting tri-cornered hats and knickerbockers, while the women's garments will be flowing with bright ribbons.

Heritage is everything in Lower Franconia!

In Lower Franconia's capital, [Würzburg](#), the ruins of a flagpole base from which a Nazi flag large enough to be seen up and down River Main Valley still remain, although nearly 90% of the city was destroyed in [World War II](#). Much of Würzburg's history, which is presented in great detail at the *Fürstenbau Museum*, unfolded at the [Würzburg Residence](#).

The Main-Franconian Museum in the Marienburg Citadel contains, in addition to collections of work by Ruemenschneider, Tietz, and Neumann, Dr. Berger's infamous "lying stones." The story behind the *Lügensteine* is more than worth the price of admission!

Just 15miles/25km from Würzburg along the River Main Triangle Cycling Route is [Volkach](#), in the heart of Lower Franconia's wine-growing country. Within the *Volkacher Meinschliefe* (roughly translated as "the Volkach Curves"), the seasons are measured according the crops being harvested. From late spring until early July, asparagus is king, and from July to mid-autumn, all thoughts turn to health of the grape crops (and those wine festivals!).

Then comes the wine harvest, lovingly watched over by St. Mary-of-the-Vineyard's Riemenschneider Madonna. Within the walled town itself is the Church of St. Veit, built between the 15th and 17th centuries. At the *Hinterhöfle* wine and beer garden on the Hauptstrasse, try some fried bratwurst with bread and sauerkraut. Wash it down with Volkach wine poured from a Franconian Bocksbeutel, the unmistakable shape of which the EU has protected for use with a very limited number of wines!

If you're tired of hiking and biking, why not grab a spot on one of the local cruising ships for a 90-minute sail along the curves of the River Main? You'll arrive back where you began, in this charming "Rothenberg without the tourists" feeling refreshed and relaxed, and more than ready to continue your Lower Franconia adventures!