

## Margraves' Land (Markgräflerland) -- The Tuscany Of Germany



### [Margraves' Land Map](#)

Where in Germany does the sun shine more often than anywhere else? In a small corner of land which follows the curve of the [Rhine River](#) as it passes along France to the west and Switzerland to the South.

This bit of land is called Margraves' Land, or *Markgräflerland* in German. It encompasses parts of the southern [Black Forest](#) and extends north to the ancient university town of [Freiburg im Breisgau](#).

Just a short distance not only from Switzerland but also from the Alsace area of France, *Markgräflerland* is sometimes called the "three-country corner" or *Dreiländereck* (**not** to be mixed up with the *Dreiländereck* in [Koblenz!](#)), and is a region of delightful diversity.

The warm ocean winds which blow over the Rhine Valley also help make the Margraves' Land, and especially the little foothills which descend from the western edge of the Black Forest, an ideal region for vineyards and fruit orchards. The lime-rich soils of this region produce abundant crops of *Gutedel* grapes (a.k.a. Chasselas), from which is made a lovely and delicate white wine which pairs beautifully with Margrave's Land cuisine! Every May, all of this region celebrates these grapes with the *Markgräfler Gutedelfest!*

One of the best ways to enjoy all the flavors of this precious region is to follow the 74 km or 45 mile Wii-Wegli Wine Route from [Lörrach](#) in the south to Freiburg in the north, where it converges with the [Baden Wine Route](#). Along the way you'll pass through village after village with its own wine-tasting room, or perhaps even a wine growers' co-operative.

Before you head out along the Wii-Wegli, however, Lörrach has a few attractions of its own. Not the least of them is the Milka chocolate factory (just look for the purple cow ;-)! Also take the time to visit the ruins of 13th-century Burg Rötteln (Rötteln Castle) which stands watch over the town from their perch on a nearly 422 meter or 1400-foot wooded hillside. As the 3rd largest castle compound in [Baden-Württemberg](#), it's well worth a visit!

Situated on a round hilltop about 26 km or 16 miles north of Lörrach is the spa resort of Badenweiler, where the Romans were enjoying the baths as long ago as the 1st century. No cars are allowed in there, so you'll be assured of a restful stay, and you can see what remains of those ancient Roman baths in the spa gardens! You can also experience the *Gutedel* grape in an entirely new way by having a massage with grapeseed oil! :-)

Traveling another 13 km or 8 miles north will take you to the village of Staufen im Breisgau. This tiny town achieved fame in 1539 as the home of the Lion Inn (*Gasthaus zum Löwen*), where a devil murdered the alchemist Dr. Faustus. Were the truth actually known, it would almost certainly reveal that Faustus, in his attempt to produce gold for a local nobleman, actually blew himself up!

Follow the Wii-Wegli another 20 km or 12 miles, and you'll be in Margrave's Land largest city, Freiburg. Its University dates back to 1457 and its students still give Freiburg a lively spirit over 550 years later!

The cobbled streets and *Bächle* (medieval sewage canals) of Freiburg all seem to lead to the *Münsterplatz* and the 13th century Gothic Münster, with an elaborately carved 116 meter or 38 foot spire widely regarded as the most beautiful in all of Christendom. The Münster sits in a delightful open-air market.

On a Saturday morning you'll find yourself wandering among other CEOs stalls selling everything from flowers, fruit, and vegetables to bread and marvelous grilled sausages. Within Freiburg's Old City, I recommend a visit to the Red Bear Inn (*Zum Roten Bären*) which claims to be Germany's oldest.

Often called the "Tuscany of Germany," Margraves' Land at any time of the year is a wine-lover's, hiker's, or cyclist's fantasy destination!