

## Maulbronn -- Its UNESCO Abbey Steals The Show

Legend says that sometime in the Middle Ages a bunch of monks followed a donkey out into the [Black Forest](#); and built a monastery on the very spot where the animal stopped. Today, it is known as the Kloster Maulbronn, or the Maulbronn Abbey.

But, this isn't about just the [UNESCO site](#). No, this is about the town of Maulbronn itself. All right, you caught me — maybe some of this is about one of the best preserved medieval monasteries in Germany.

Where exactly *is* Maulbronn?

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If I said along the [Northern Black Forest Monasteries Route](#) and the Württemberg Wine Road, just skirting the [German Framework Road](#), would that help? No? OK, how about in [Baden-Württemberg](#) within the wonderful [Kraichgau](#)?

Good, so long as we all know where we are. ;-)

I would be lying if I said that the monastery doesn't dominate much of the sightseeing around here. How could it not? I mean, besides having said to be where [Swabian](#) Ravioli was invented — it has a stunning church and a Paradise (a vestibule type area) that's a medieval wonder, and half-timbered buildings for its Mill, Bakery, and Guardhouse.

From May to December the Maulbronn Abbey holds a series of concerts — and a venue this pretty doesn't come along every day, ya know. Just don't go confusing these with Maulbronn's Outdoor Theater that holds different types of performances throughout the summer.

The vineyards surrounding the monastery are just as famous as the buildings themselves; adding even more color to the surrounding countryside. Go ahead, take a look — there are some 29 cycling routes though the region. There are a number of walking paths as well, ranging from a mere 2km to 8km with names like the *Klosterweinweg* and *Klosterseenweg*.

Only slightly less in number than the town's marked trails are Maulbronn's festivals. If I miss any, I apologize. Let's see if I can get them all in with one breath...

Here goes (deep breath): There's the May Day on May 1st, both the *Johannesfest* and Horse Festival are in June, the *Steinbruchfest* and Summer Festival in July, the *Herbstfest* and *Erntemarkt* in September, as well as the Bakery & Wine Festival. October shuffles in with its own Swabian Oktoberfest, and the year ends with Maulbronn's Christmas Market.

Let me check to see if I missed something... ;-)

Drats, I left one out: The Medieval Fair that's held every April at the Maulbronn Abbey.

Need a rest? Go to the Tiefer See, a swimming lake where you can also try rowing or go boating. The Land-lubber in you might prefer to see the Museum on the *Schafhof*, a history museum of sort that used to be a sheep barn at one time. And the *Dorfmuseum* (set in a half-timbered building from 1568) has all kinds of photographs and exhibits on what life used to look like around here.

Who knew a jackass could lead you to such a wonderful place?