

Odenthal -- Enchanting Fairy Forest And Witches' Well

Odenthal lulls you into complacency with its tall trees, winding cobblestone streets, and Gothic buildings. Yet when you hear the sound of the drums, you'll know that you haven't stumbled on just any corner of Germany.

This corner is a bewitched bit of fairy tale land that is somehow also inhabited with rock music addicts.

The odd mix makes the town a bit of a thrill for visitors of all ages, because you can really choose how tame or wild your adventures are here.

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For quieter pursuits, you can take children on a stroll through the enchanted forest, as it is known. It is a wooded path that is decorated with 20 little houses featuring life size characters from the Grimm's Fairy Tale book.

Easing back into adventure, you can walk back through the streets of Odenthal to the *Hexenbrunnen* (Witches' Well). This unique bubbling fountain in the main square is decorated with five mythical creatures and an inscription explaining the path to the stake for wicked witches. Nestled in the midst of the old town area, you can almost believe everything it promises.

From the bubbling cauldron, you can turn and visit the largest stained glass window north of the Alps in the local Gothic cathedral. Then you will want to stop for a snack, and get ready for a night of theater or rock music.

The town is known for both, with the high point for theater being the May performance festival.

Shows tend to sell out, so if you want any kind of good seat you will have to book tickets in advance.

For rock shows, you can time your visit to hit the “Rock in the Valley” summer festival, or just keep an eye peeled for local acts — they keep the volume loud and the drums thumping all year round. ;-)