

Ortenburg -- Knight Games And Medieval Markets In Lower Bavaria

Two towns over from the Austrian border is Ortenburg. No ordinary place, mind you, but a town that is made up of over fifty villages. Call 'em shires or hamlets, if you will? No, [Lower Bavaria](#) just simply doesn't do simple. ;-)

Even its royal residents from the past didn't do simple. One Imperial Count (Frederick Casimir) was a well-known artist. Easy to understand once you've seen this part of the country. Another Duke was solely responsible for bringing the [Protestant Reformation](#) to Ortenburg.

These counts and dukes lived in Schloss Ortenburg. The new one, not the old one. Confused? Don't be 'cause it's simple enough to explain. The original Ortenburg Castle was built in 1120, and destroyed in 1504 in the Landshut War of Succession.

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A new one was built (albeit in the Renaissance style this time, not medieval), with the Counts of Ortenburg living here until 1805. Yes, that's just about 700 years of one family ruling over these lands (there's a museum here to explain a lot of it).

One thing they did over at the castle was travel by private access to Ortenburg's Market Church, which used to be just a simple chapel when it was built in 1381. Sometime in the 16th century it was rebuilt much bigger, making it an official "church."

While the Market Church is now Evangelical, the St. Lawrence Church (known as St. Laurentius here) is still a Catholic Parish from when it was built in 1241. Inside you'll find a number of epitaphs (that might seem a bit morbid) that are extraordinarily beautiful.

Back to the castle for minute. While holding all sorts of events and concerts throughout the year, it is really known for its *Ritterspiele* and Medieval Markets held every two years. You'll find lots of people dressed in period clothing, and holding jousting and other tournaments.

Again, nothing simple here, is there? ;-)

And at least you don't have to wait every two years for the Ortenburger Festival, held in the early part of every August.

While Ortenburg and Lower Bavaria might not be simple, know this — it's just simply fun to be here.