

Rastatt Features Dazzling Baroque Architecture

The Margrave of Baden had the town of Rastatt re-built beginning in 1689 (after French soldiers completely destroyed it) to serve as his headquarters.

Known as *Türkenlouis* because of his success in leading armies against the Turks, the Margrave envisioned his town as a replica of the elegant city of Versailles.

If you visit there today, you will be enchanted with its well-preserved architecture and many historic sights. The town has a *Marktplatz* (Market Square) with an elliptical shape that is dotted with fountains.

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Be sure to plan a tour of the Rastatt Castle. It was erected between 1700 and 1707 according to a design drawn by the famous Italian master architect Domenico Egidio Rossi and served as the Margrave's residence.

Guided tours of the red sandstone building are offered every day but Monday and you can purchase a ticket that includes a visit to the famous Favorite Castle as well.

The grounds contain two museums. One has displays of weapons, which date from medieval times through the present. The other chronicles the history of Liberalism in Germany.

In one corner of the garden you can see the *Einsiedelner Kapelle*, which is a chapel built as a replica of the Swiss church with the same name. It is said that the Margrave's wife, Augusta Sibylla, went there often to pray for healing for her son who could not speak by the age of six.

Schloss Favorite was the summer residence of Augusta Sibylla. It can be found about 5 km from the center of Rastatt. Many of the rooms are extremely ornate, including one that contains 330 mirrors and another that was built with rare woods, colored marble, and gemstones!

You will also want to see several more examples of Baroque architecture in Rastatt such as the *Pagodenburg* (a playhouse built for the princes of the court) and the Town Hall.

The *Heimatmuseum* is located in one of many nicely restored courtiers' houses in the town. It contains artifacts dating back to the glory days of *Türkenlouis* and traces the long history of the town with items from the Middle Ages.