

Rauenberg -- Hidden Town With 30 Million Year Old Fossils

One highlight of the (probably unknown) town of Rauenberg is the 30 million year old fossils (hummingbirds, actually) found here.

The bones of ancient animals aren't the only ones found in Rauenberg. You'll find a zoo (it has donkeys, deer, goats, etc), which is part of the Wietalbad Water Park in nearby [Wiesloch](#), with a natural lake AND an 80 meter waterslide, a children's area, a playground, and volleyball court.

The Angelbachtal Animal Park is another good stop. It too has a large pond with ducks and swans. Even though admission is free, it is best to leave a generous donation — since the entire facility runs entirely from them.

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Rauenberg's outdoor activities aren't limited to only the animal parks and swimming adventures. Golf is always a good bet, as well as horseback riding and tennis.

Also with 40 kilometers of hiking trails plus a bazillion cycling paths, you most certainly won't be bored.

Then again, a visit to the *Winzermuseum* or Winegrower Museum might be a better idea. The museum itself is housed in a former bishop's palace (built almost 600 years ago) with exhibits on viticulture and rural history.

As with any wine town it seems to flow a plenty during a festival — like the *Portugieserfest* in September, the *Kerwe* on the 2nd weekend of October, and the obligatory Christmas Market on the first weekend of Advent.

I hope you don't mind if I go back to the *Kerwe* thing for a moment. Rauenberg's Kerwe is a church festival — which means it has to have one, right? In this case there are two. The landmark of the town is the Church of Saints Peter and Paul — that isn't as old as it looks; it's just a tad over a century old. It's the Church of St. Nicholas that's the older of the two in town (this one's two hundred years old).

Neither of these churches are as old as the three half-timbered houses found in Rauenberg — one cornerstone dates a building to 1713.

Did I mention that Rauenberg is only 15km south of the city of [Heidelberg](#)? No? It's OK, you'll like it enough here that you won't even want to bother with its big city neighbor. You'll be just fine right here.