

Reichelsheim (Odenwald) -- Smack Dab In The Oden Forest

Smack dab in the middle of the [Odenwald](#) is a town where fairytales are not only told, but celebrated. Smack dab in the middle of the Odenwald is the town of Reichelsheim, where it all happens and a heck of a lot more.

There's something magical about fairytales. Stories where everyone lives happily ever after, the girl gets her prince charming, or the mean "beast" is tamed by love. Don't we all wish this was for real?

Well, on the last weekend in October it can be during the *Reichelsheimer Märchen- und Sagentage*, or simply the Fairytale Days. It's where everyone is dressed up in costume and sets are constructed to make it more authentic.

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No set is needed at Germany's oldest framework Town Hall — this building totally embodies the fairytale look. Now it's a Regional Museum with exhibits on mining, gingerbread baking, and wood carving.

Funny how most of those fairytales involve a castle (where else is Prince Charming going to live). Reichelsheim has one, making those fairytales all the more a reality. OK, one of the them is in ruins, but it doesn't take much imagination to bring the 13th century Burg Rodenstein back to its former glory.

Schloss Reichenberg is still intact, also dating back to the 13th century. Today it's a meeting & conference center, but it was the birthplace of German poet Johann Goethe's friend Christian Gottfried Daniel Nees von Esenbeck (wow, that's a LONG name).

So, why is he important enough to mention? Because he was a German botanist and zoologist who co-founded the Bonn Botanical Gardens. Living this close to nature in the Odenwald, it's no wonder he grew up to love it, helping to identify over 7,000 species of plants.

You might not be able to identify that many as you hike or cycle your way around the Oden Forest, but why not go ahead and give it a good try? ;-)

Last up is the *Keilvelterhof*, part of the *UNESCO-Geopark Odenwald-Bergstraße*. It's a farm (more nature!) that's quite the happening spot for festivals. Isn't it grand to be smack dab in the middle of the Odenwald?