

Rodalben -- Comfy Shoes Required In The Palatinate

There ain't nothing in the world like a comfy, perfect fittin' pair of shoes. How many of you out there come home from a hard day's work, not wanting to do anything but kick your footwear? I'm guessing a pretty big number of you do.

What's this all got to do with Rodalben?

Like you didn't see me leading in to the German Shoe Route (or the *Deutsche Schuhstraße*) with all that talk about, uh, shoes?

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Regardless of Rodalben's location along the Shoe Route (at one point there were over 60 shoe making factories around here), I will tell you this much — you better gosh-darn well better bring your most comfortable pair while you're here.

Because if you don't, you'll be moanin', groanin', complainin', and kvetchin' the entire time you're on the 43km *Felsenwanderweg* — which is a hiking trail along some really interesting natural rock formations in this part of the [Palatinate](#).

Plus, getting to 447-meters above sea-level to see the Burg Gräfenstein ruins (sorry, it's partially restored) won't be a cake walk. You'll really want to see this 13th century castle, (it's believed the "keep" is actually a century older than the rest of the Burg) that once belonged to the Hohenstaufens — and was destroyed during the [Thirty Years' War](#).

Burg Gräfenstein might be old, but it isn't as old as the 11th century (OK, maybe 12th century — no one's too sure) Romanesque Church of St. Mary; although the tower wasn't built until the 18th

century — and the church underwent Gothic architecture “remodeling” in the 14th century.

Feet hurt yet? Can't say I didn't warn you what to wear. ;-)

Don't worry if your feet are achin', you're almost done moseying along Rodalben.

You just can't call it quits before you've seen the old Jewish cemetery (a culturally protected area that dates back to the late 19th century), finding at least one hiking trail within the [Palatinate Forest](#), and visiting the *Johann-Peter-Frank-Haus* (he was Napoleon's and a Russian Tsar's doctor who founded the Vienna Institute of Hygiene).

That's quite a journey from Rodalben's Celtic origins, I would say. And I also said you'd need comfy shoes to enjoy the place — and I was right about that, wasn't I?