

Seelbach (Schutter) -- Castles Hidden In The Ortenau

Today it's all about the town of Seelbach (Schutter) in the wonderful [Ortenau](#), which is also a known health resort town. Call it whatever you want, I'll just call it utterly fantastic — but that's probably also because of the all the old castles around.

Yes, for those of you who don't know, I love old castles; doesn't matter what century they come from, if they're fully intact, or laying there in a crumbly ruin.

Now that I think about it, there's probably a castle here in Seelbach that fits those descriptions.

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Alt-Geroldseck is one of the oldest, built in the 12th or 13th century (no one's exactly sure). A 400-foot section of the castle is about all that's left of this grand structure — only because it was abandoned because someone built another one just up the road.

I know, that makes no sense to me either. Really, it's not like these massive fortifications could be built overnight, right? Anyway, Hohengeroldseck Castle came along in the middle of the 13th century, and the ruins have been owned by the same family since the 1600s.

Another ruin is the Burg Lützelhardt. Even though not all that much is still standing, you can still marvel at its old Romanesque styled windows and medieval cistern from the 12th century.

Take solace in knowing there is an intact castle to be found, the Wasserschloss Dautenstein. The original castle is more than 700 years old — but you can't tell from looking at these days.

As you're meandering around the countryside looking at castles (or ruins), make sure you take

time to just appreciate the natural beauty of the region. One route that comes through Seelbach is the *Schwarzwald-Querweg Rottweil-Lahr*. Yes, it's a looong name, but the 99km hiking route is just heavenly. Oh, and you're awfully close to the Triberg Waterfall, so c'mon over to see it!

A quicker way to make your way around town is join in the Seelbacher Marathon every June. No, not for me, I'll take a leisurely walk around the *Katharinenmarkt* instead — and I've got plenty of time to enjoy it every November (since 1455), as it's a weeklong affair.

This is probably the one thing that could make me forget about visiting a castle.

Nah, I love them too much. So thanks Seelbach, it makes me love you even more for having them.
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