

Wartburg Castle Is Where Martin Luther Dealt With The Devil

“Warte, Berg — du sollst mir eine Burg werden!”

With this famous wordplay of *Berg* (mountain) and *Burg* (castle), the Wartburg Castle (*Schloss Wartburg*) was founded by Count Ludwig der Springer. In English, this means “Wait, mountain — you shall become a castle for me!”

Today, this grant Mountain-Castle is a recognized UNESCO World Heritage Site.

About The Wartburg Castle And Its History

Wartburg Castle has a rich history filled with legends and interesting tales. After its founding in 1067, it was the seat of the Thuringian landgraves until 1440. During this time, one of its enduring stories had its beginnings. The *Sängerkrieg* or Minstrels’ Contest was allegedly started in 1206.

Famous minstrels such as Albrecht von Halberstadt, the renowned translator of Ovid, flocked to the castle to recite poems and other tales. Such scenes of life in the Thuringian court were brought to romanticized life in Richard Wagner’s *Tannhäuser*.

Schloss Wartburg also hosted several famous residents. One of these was Elizabeth of Hungary, the wife of Ludwig IV. After his death, she gave up her charmed royal life for poverty and chastity. She was later canonized by the Catholic church, becoming Saint Elizabeth. Ironically, the great enemy of the Catholic church also lived at Wartburg Castle.

Martin Luther spent several months here under protection of the castle, having been excommunicated by Pope Leo X. During this time, he translated the New Testament into German, a monumental achievement. It was the first time the Bible had been translated into another language in over a millennium.

And the castle also played host to one more pillar of [German culture](#). Johann Wolfgang von Goethe spent five weeks here, immortalizing the time in a series of priceless sketches.

Wartburg Castle Highlights And Features

Lutherstube

The *Lutherstube* is the room where Martin Luther lived for just ten months, translating the New Testament. There is a large hole behind the stove in the room. This is, according to legend, where Luther threw an inkpot at the devil.

Today, there is no ink left to be seen, most of it chipped away by overzealous tourists. Only the hole remains.

Knights' House

The Knights' House is a lovely half-timbered residence just to the western side of the castle drawbridge. It once housed not only knights but also servants and guards.

Palas

The Romanesque beauty of the *Palas* and main hall is surely not to be missed. Here you will see a beautiful chapel, Wagner's inspirational *Sängersaal* (Hall of the Minstrels) and two hundred carved capitals.

Wartburg Castle Location And Opening Hours

The impressive Wartburg Castle is situated in the town of [Eisenach](#), in the German state of [Thuringia](#). You'll see Wartburg Castle sitting precariously atop a 410 m (1,230 ft) hill.

The street address for the castle is *Auf der Wartburg 1* in *Eisenach* — a useful bit of information for those of you bringing your GPS device with you (like I would)!

The city of Eisenach is surrounded by several [Autobahns](#), making it quick and convenient to reach. The closest ones to the city are the Autobahns A4, A7, A9, A44, A49 and A71. As you can see, there is no shortage of ways to arrive here! As you get closer, you can use the Bundesstraße routes B84 or B19 and follow the signs to the castle.

You can park your car at the base of the castle, about 500 ft away, for a nominal fee. There's a shuttle bus for this short distance for the physically impaired and the elderly.

Wartburg Castle is also well-served by public transportation. The Eisenach train station is centrally-located and well-connected to the rest of the [German Rail network](#).

The station is about 4 km (2.4 mi) from the castle by car, and a 3 km (1.8 mi) trek through the woods on foot. There are shuttle buses that link the Eisenach train station directly to the castle. Use line numbers 10 or 13.

A more novel way to climb up to the castle is a donkey ride. However, these are mainly used as entertainment for the kiddies (or the kiddies in us!). :-)

Wartburg Castle Opening Hours

From April to October, Wartburg Castle is open daily with guided tours from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The castle gate, however, stays open until 8:00 p.m. From November to March, opening hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with the gate closing at 5:00 p.m. There are shortened hours on the eves of Christmas and New Year's.

Wartburg Castle Web site: <http://www.wartburg-eisenach.de>