

Willich -- A Carnival Town That Keeps You Entertained

Willich is only 30 kms from the Netherlands — so needless to say, this is a very flat region.

Formed from the merger of several old villages and surrounded by fields, you would be forgiven for thinking of this as a backwater. It is, however, a hotbed of carnival. The town doesn't sleep during *Fasching* time! :-)

The *Schützenfest* sees massive parades through the streets, with period costumes a necessity. Many marching bands wear full regalia and even horseback riders pass by.

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In summer you may find yourself witness to the folk festivals in Willich — where everyone gets involved. Other ancient marches include the still popular pilgrimage to the 17th century Klein Jerusalem wayside chapel.

The Schloss Neersen in town has 13th century origins and was heavily rebuilt in the 17th century to resemble the amazing building and grounds you see today. The huge 3 winged palatial mansion is certainly a sight to behold and has a moat. The landscaped gardens will further amaze.

With waterways, exotic trees, an Italian garden, orangery, tea house and hedge maze, the grounds will certainly keep you entertained for some time. As if you needed more — there is also an open-air theater here, with performances scheduled throughout the year.

Back in Willich, there is a busy pedestrian zone for your shopping and coffee drinking pleasure. Many restaurants and cafes can be found here to help you indulge in the local menus and try some traditional dishes. If you want to eat with a view, then dine waterside by the leisure center, or picnic

by the ornate water fountains in *Park am Freizeitzentrum*.

To keep the family entertained, there is also an open air pool for those hot summer months and a skateboard park for whatever the weather.

Just to the north, if you don't mind a short drive, is the well loved Krefeld zoo — filled with all the family favorites. And frankly, a day trip to Holland wouldn't be out of the question from this location either. :-)