

## Witzenhausen Is The Joke And Cherry City

You have to love a place that literally translates to Joke-Live, thinking maybe it won't take things so seriously and you're bound to have a grand time!

This university city in [Hesse](#) was once in the viticulture (that's the wine business) back when the city was founded in 1225. Witzenhausen is now known for the cultivation of the cherry (instead of the grape) and the yearly cherry festival in July even crowns a Cherry Queen.

There are hiking and biking paths along the "Cherry Route" for those looking to enjoy the countryside. And, a variety of other festivals to celebrate like the Harvest Festival held on the 4th weekend in August.

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While there's no cherry museum, there are a few others in town worth the trip. The Tropical Plant Greenhouse goes back to the day when the University of [Kassel](#) (which is only about 20 km or 12 mi away) opened a school here in 1898. Its hope was to teach agriculture of tropical plants to those who would go on to farm in the German colonies.

There's also the Local Folk Museum, the tobacco factory and museum (ironically, it's a nonsmoking facility), and the Automuseum in the Ziegenhagen District.

Since Witzenhausen dates back a few centuries, it has its fair share of half timbered buildings, many of which are in the historical town center. There's also the *Liebfrauenkirche*, the Thief & Owl Towers along with the remaining *Stadtmauer* (fortification wall) from when Witzenhausen did have to take things a bit more seriously.

Somehow it wouldn't seem fitting if Witzenhausen DIDN'T have its very own castle. Thankfully it does, and Burg Ludwigstein, once a formidable castle, was built in 1415 close to the intersection to the borders (how convenient) of Hesse, [Thuringia](#), and [Lower Saxony](#).

Besides its late medieval history, Castle Ludwigstein was once the training facility for the German Youth Movement in 1933 (that's the Hitler Youth) and houses the German Youth Movement's archives. It's now a youth hostel that offers period garb reenactments, folklore, and dancing, especially during family week (the week before Easter).