

Zwinger Palace -- Dresden's Exquisite Royal Residence

The Zwinger Palace (*Dresdner Zwinger*) is a landmark building featuring fine architecture, interesting museums, lovely gardens, gorgeous pavilions and picturesque fountains.

Following the firebombing of the city in 1945, the Zwinger Palace was in ruins. Lucky for us, a city referendum voted to restore the palace in its original form, rather than begin anew in a Socialist Realist style.

About The Zwinger Palace And Its History

Construction began in 1710 on this lovely royal residence and was completed by 1728.

The Zwinger Palace was built for Augustus the Strong, an elector of Saxony and the future king of Poland. Augustus wanted his own palace to rival that of Louis XIV's Versailles, which he had visited during a tour of France. The architect Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann designed the palace and courtyard complex in the German Baroque style.

The Zwinger was a wedding venue in 1719 (before its completion) for the nuptials of Friedrich August and the Hapsburg Emperor's daughter Maria Josepha.

Zwinger Palace Highlights And Features

The Glockenspiel

This Zwinger Palace highlight did not arrive at the Palace until 1933, almost 200 years after its construction. Now, it is hard to imagine the palace without it. The *Glockenspiel* is famous for playing different melodies every day at noon.

Unfortunately, this beloved clock did not escape the incredible devastation of Dresden during the war years. Reconstruction took almost twenty years to complete.

Now, the Glockenspiel is in tip-top shape and you can hear its lovely chimes four times each hour, at the full hour, the half hour and the quarters after and to the next hour. The melodies even change with the seasons!

Zwinger Museums

The Zwinger Palace is also home to a large number of museums. No matter what your interest may be, you're sure to find a place of interest among the wide variety of topics in these museums.

Explore the Old Masters in the *Alte Meister* Picture gallery. Check out the war instruments of history at the Armory. Discover the intricacies of fine art at the Porcelain collection. Marvel at the handmade creations in the Sculpture Gallery. The Mathematics-Physics Salon (closed indefinitely) also offers more knowledge and exhibits of clocks, sextants and globes.

The Crown Gate and Nymphenbad

The favorite photo op of the Zwinger is unquestionably its exquisite Crown Gate. Known as *Kronentor* in German, this highlight features statues in the gate niches, representing the four seasons.

While appreciating this lovely gate, don't miss the *Nymphenbad*. This Zwinger highlight is a closed courtyard and a large fountain featuring mythical sea gods and other legendary creatures of the deep.

Zwinger Palace Location And Opening Hours

The Zwinger Palace can be found in the city of [Dresden](#), located in the state of [Saxony](#). Its street address is Theaterplatz 1 (just plug it in your GPS for anyone bringing the latest technology with them!).

The Zwinger can be reached via any of the major highways that circle Dresden. Just get off at the exits for the city center. Parking is available, for a fee, at the Semperoper or Altmarkt car parks, as well as the hotel parking lots at the Kempinski Hotel Taschenbergpalais and the Hilton Dresden.

But if you don't have a vehicle, you can still get here quite easily. The Main Railroad station (*Hauptbahnhof*) or the Mitte station are your best bets for long-distance trains and public transport. From there, you can hop on a local tram to Postplatz or Theaterplatz.

Plan your door to door trip at [Dresden's public transport website](#).

Zwinger Palace Opening Hours

The Zwinger is open every day from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. However, the Palace Museums are closed on Mondays.