

## Famous European Citadels

Massive strongholds of the „Architectura Militaris“ of contemporary fortifications in Germany, France and Italy

Cultural life in mighty bastions where once batallions holed up



European Culture Route  
Fortified Monuments



Citadel Dömitz  
©AV TEAM PRESS



Citadel Alessandria  
Italy

### Our Travel Recommendation

#### Citadels - last retreats during combats

Since the 16th century, famous fortress engineers such as the Frenchman **Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban**, the Italian man **Giuseppe Ignazio Bertola** but also the German clergy used citadels as a form for fortress construction.

Just like the Italian word '**citadella**' reveals, these constructions formed little self-contained '**fortified islands**' and where mostly located at the edge of a bigger fortress. A citadel served as a place of retreat for the batallions and was a town's last core of resistance.

Direct on the Elbe river lies the impressive **Citadel Dömitz**. In the **gardening city Erfurt**, you will be welcomed by two outstanding citadels: the **Cyriaksburg** and the **Citadel Petersberg**. Today, the **Cyriaksburg** is part of the **famous garden show exhibition 'egapark'**.

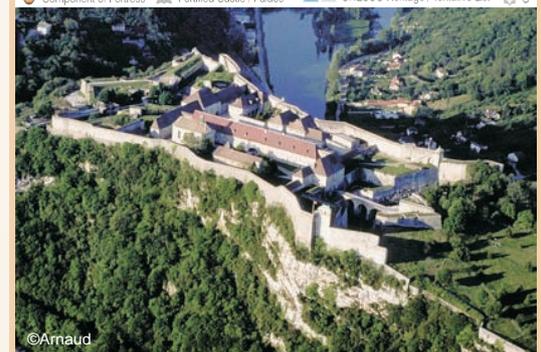
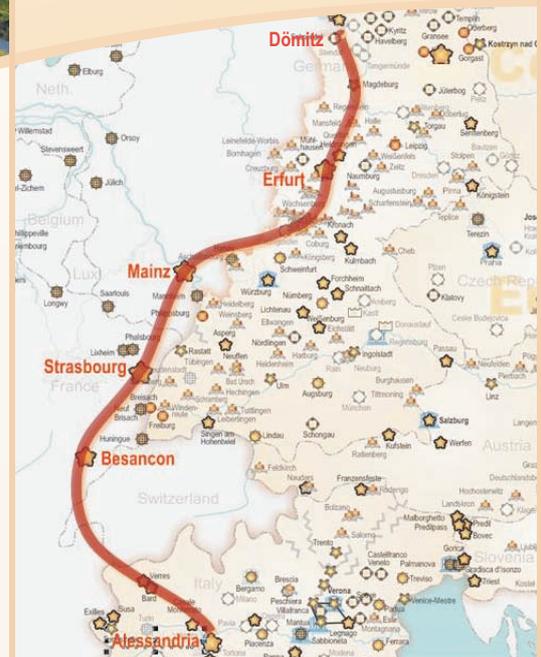
The citadel on the **Jakob hill** in **Mainz** is a central part of the town's fortress system and hosts a museum about Mainz fortress history.

In the Alsatian town **Strasbourg**, you can find remains of Vauban's citadel with casemated walls in the **Parc de la Citadelle**. In contrast, Vauban's masterpiece, the **Citadel Besancon**, is a well-preserved and UNESCO-awarded fortified monument with a diversified entertainment programme for old and young.

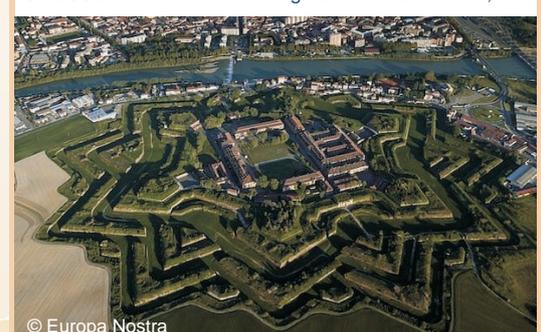
Finally, the **citadel of Alessandria**, built by the fortress engineer **Giuseppe Ignazio Bertola**, awaits those people who are interested in the Italian interpretation of a citadel.

Discover this extraordinary form of fortress construction art along the culture route thurgh central Europe starting from Germany, over France to Italy.

[www.forte-cultura.eu](http://www.forte-cultura.eu)



©Arnaud  
UNESCO World cultural heritage Zitadelle Besancon, FR



© Europa Nostra  
Citadel Alessandria in the heart of Piemont, IT

*Monuments of Power - full of Life*

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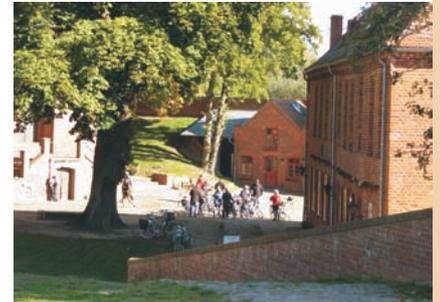


**Dömitz**  
Citadel Dömitz

At the Mecklenburg bank of the River Elbe the **citadel Dömitz** is situated. A magnificent **Renaissance building** from the 16th Century, built to order for John Albert I. of Mecklenburg. Its architect was Francesco Borno.

With its pentagonal form, furnished with casemates and bastions, the impressive defence architecture secured the borders of Mecklenburg and the collection of Elb customs. Today it is very well preserved. The citadel accommodates a **museum** about the history of the beautiful Elb region and the city of Dömitz.

[www.doemitz.de](http://www.doemitz.de)



Citadel Dömitz



**Erfurt**  
Citadel  
Petersberg

The former fortified city **Erfurt** equipped with two of those pearls: Built at the Benedictine monastery, the **citadel Petersberg** served as a bulwark against the Protestants and as protection of their subjects to the **Electors** of Mainz. More than **one hundred Diets** took place here.

The citadel **Cyriaksburg**, originally a monastery, was rebuilt to a citadel by Gustav Adolf II. of Sweden. Today the the fortification offers the **Egapark Erfurt** and the **German horticultural museum**.

[www.erfurt-tourismus.de](http://www.erfurt-tourismus.de)



Citadel Petersberg Erfurt



**Mainz**  
Citadel

Elector John Philipp of Schönborn began to rebuild the Benedictine monastery to a **citadel** on the Jacobs Mountain in Mainz in 1655.

In the course of the fortification the circumvallation of the city Mainz with bastions of French architecture were built.

You can experience the fortification history of Mainz on a **guided walk** "Over the walls to the citadel" and in the **City Historic Museum**. As a multi-faceted city it also offers historically interesting sights like the **electoral castle** or the **Gutenberg museum**.

[www.mainz.de](http://www.mainz.de)  
[www.zitadelle-mainz.de](http://www.zitadelle-mainz.de)



Citadel Mainz



**Strasbourg**  
Citadel

At the edge of the Strasbourg city centre „**Grand Ile**“, which was declared an **UNESCO** World Heritage, the **citadel** of the French architect **Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban** is situated.

The rest of the pentagonal bastion fortification, which was built in 1681, can today be found in the **Parc de la Citadelle**. A walk through the park connects culture and recreation in a perfect way. Discover the casemate wall arts, the deployment area and the **Torbogen** citadel.

[www.otstrasbourg.de](http://www.otstrasbourg.de)



Bastion in the Strasbourg „Parc de la Citadelle“



**Besançon**  
Citadel

The citadel of **Besançon**, which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage, is a masterpiece of **Vauban** from the 17th century.

**Defensive walls** surround the fortification. Connected to these are **round aisles** with **wachtowers** and an impressive panorama of the old city of Besançon. On an area of around eleven hectare visitors can take part in walking tours with museum guides in costumes, see a museum about the history of Franche-Comté and moreover a zoological garden, insectarium, aquarium and a little farm.

[www.citadelle.com](http://www.citadelle.com)



Historic map of Alessandria



**Alessandria**  
Citadel

The citadel of Alessandria, built in the heart of Piemonts from 1728 and only finished in the middle of the 19th century, is one of best-preserved original fortifications of the Europe of the 18th century.

European wide it is one of the few of its kind, still embedded in its original surroundings. It has a **hexagonal star form** with **bastion fronts** surrounded by **six ditches**. The Italian national hero **Giuseppe Garibaldi** lived here. Until 2007 the citadel was used by the military. Now it is open for tourists.

[www.alexala.it](http://www.alexala.it)