

Fortress Frontlines in Franconia resulting from Reformation and Counter-Reformation

Bastions and Canons under the Holy Cross - Fortresses of the Roman Clergy



European Culture Route
Fortified Monuments



© Hajo Dietz

Fortress Rosenberg
Kronach



Martin Luther

Our Travel Recommendation

The great cultural heritage of Franconian fortifications mainly aroused as a result of religious wars raging at the end of the middle age.

With Martin Luther's founded liberalisation of faith in the time of Reformation, the Holy Roman Empire underwent its biggest shock. More and more feudal houses converted to the Protestant Church and turned their back on the Catholic Church.

Subsequently, differences in faith were fought with armed force. This hostility all across Franconia lasted over centuries and splitted the region. The margrave wars as well as the wars of the Schmalkaldic League devastated the land.

Under the holy cross, opposing camps upgraded and built mighty fortresses for the protection of their territories and properties. Nowhere else in Europe, is fortress construction that close and directly targeted against one another.

FORTE CULTURA enables interesting insights in this special Franconian history. Under the banner of Roman emperors, catholic prince-bishops constructed the fortress Marienberg in Würzburg, fortress Rosenberg in Kronach, the fortified town Forchheim, a fortress relict close to Schnaittach and the Willibaldsburg in Eichstätt, a wonderful example of a fortified castle.

Under the banner of reformation, fortress construction began in the imperial city Nürnberg, in the royal cities Kulmbach and Coburg as well as in Lichtenau and in Weißenburg.

Today, the former strongholds of the clergy and of noble houses are places of culture, leisure and an attractive touristic offer. Discover Franconian strongholds - full of surprises and exciting experienes.

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Fortress Marienberg in Würzburg

Monuments of Power - full of Life

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 Aschaffenburg Fortified Palace	The renaissance palace Johannsburg dates back to 1605 – 1614 and was later extended with fortifications partly around the castle following plans of Ridinger. Until 1803 the fortification served as a second seat of government of the Mainz electors, who were the superiors of the Holy Roman Empire. In 1539 archbishop Albert of Brandenburg retreated into the fortified palace due to the coming Reformation. Some art treasures he brought to the castle are now a part of the state gallery Aschaffenburg. The castle's chapel, the chimes and the electoral living spaces of archbishop Karl Joseph of Erthal are worth a visit. <p style="text-align: right;">www.aschaffenburg.de</p>
 Würzburg Fortress	Almost for half a century (1253 to 1719) the fortress Marienberg was the residence of the prince bishops of Würzburg. In the course of the Reformation the burnt down fortress was rebuilt as a renaissance palace under prince bishop Julius Echter of Mespelbrunn from 1573. Later prince bishop Johann Philipp of Schönbrunn NN (reign 1642-1673) had a ring of fortress walls built. Also the Würzburg residence served as a seat of Würzburg prince bishops until the clerical territories were resolved. Today it is a UNESCO World Heritage. Discover the special fortification and gaze in amazement at the abundance of artworks of Franconian artists in the Main-Franconian museum on the fortress Marienberg. <p style="text-align: right;">www.wuerzburg.de www.mainfraenkisches-museum.de</p>
 Kronach Fortress	High above Kronach towers the castle and palace complex of the Bamberg prince bishops on the Rosenberg. This complex was built in the course of more than 500 years. In a final step it was extended to a baroque bastion fortress. Experience the unexpected cultural contrasts in the Lucas-Cranach-City. Follow Cranach's traces, the painter and friend of Martin Luther, who visualised the epoch change with impressive paintings. Discover the interesting fortress history and special works of Franconian art on tours through the fortress Rosenberg and its Franconian Gallery. <p style="text-align: right;">www.kronach.de</p>
 Forchheim Fortified City	The short term capture of Forchheim by margrave Albrecht Alkibiades in 1552, who was introducing the Reformation by this time, was the reason for Bamberg prince bishop Weigand of Redwitz to enlarge Forchheim to a rural fortress. He began with an old Italian bastion and finished in 1698 with the marvellous Nuremberg Gate. Today the middle aged Saltor tower and the prince bishop castle built as a water castle are fortified heritage. The adventure museum „Red Wall“ addresses the fortress history of Forchheim. <p style="text-align: right;">www.forchheim.de</p>
 Schnaittach Fortress	A big baroque fortress with high ramparts, bastions and underground casemates is situated on mountain Schnaittach. This was built later in the 18th century by the arch bishop of Bavaria and the German emperor Karl VII. following a French model. On the fortress ruins, also called the „pole in the flesh of Nuremberg“, casern buildings, armoury, commandant's office and a church could be found. Today concerts, theater and vernissages take place here. <p style="text-align: right;">www.schnaittach.de www.festung-rothenberg.de</p>
 Eichstätt Fortified Palace	The Willibaldsburg is a spur castle built around 1353 and was the seat of the Eichstätt prince bishops until the 18th century. As stronghold of the Catholicism, the Reformation met with little response in Eichstätt, as the castle veste was reinforced significantly by the bishops Albert II. Of Hohenrechberg and Martin of Schaumberg. Today the veste offers a natural history and jura museum. <p style="text-align: right;">www.eichstaett.de</p>



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Fortified water castle Johannsburg in Aschaffenburg



© Achim Bühler

Franconian Gallery on fortress Rosenberg



© Dark Avenger

St.Veit bastion in Forchheim



© Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung

Fortress ruin Rothenberg near Schnaittach



© Martin Geisler

Fortified Palace Willibaldsburg, Eichstätt

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