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MAINZ | RHEINHESSEN

GERMANY



10 HIGHLIGHTS IN
MAINZ &
RHEINHESSEN

Insiders'guide

Photo : Robert Dieth

- MAINZ | RHEINHESSEN / GERMANY -

Experiencing Mainz & Rheinhessen like a local: a guide for city and countryside, culture and nature, festivals and customs. Ten top activities – sometimes loud, sometimes quiet, sometimes active, sometimes contemplative, but always enjoyable. The wine connects everything and everyone.

1. Culture - Discover the landmarks of Mainz on a walk

For more than 1,000 years, the majestic landmark in the center of the city has towered majestically: "Dom St. Martin". Seven kings were crowned in the red sandstone sacral building. Just a few minutes away, through small old town streets and past half-timbered houses, the gothic church "St. Stephan" stands out majestically. Visitors from all over the world marvel at the blue glass windows of the French artist Marc Chagall. The master of colors thus set a lasting sign for international understanding and joy in life. Johannes Gutenberg also contributed to global communication. A wine press inspired the citizen of Mainz around 1440 to invent book printing - you can experience it today at the "Gutenberg Museum" with printing workshop.



2. Party - Celebrate with a glass of Riesling in the city or on the river

The 50th degree north latitude stretches across Mainz - making Rheinhessen up in the north one of the most wine-growing areas in the world. No other grape variety thrives here as unique and wonderful as the Riesling - an elegant white grape that smells of apple, apricot or citrus and invigorates in the mouth. It tastes best enjoying it in company: the winemakers from Mainz regularly invite you to a lively "market breakfast" on the weekend. On the banks of the Rhine, the young winegrowers of the region celebrate the after-work party "Weinsalon." Numerous wine treats lure you during the "Weintage" in May into the city or in late summer into the "Weinmarkt" in the romantic city park.



3. View - Enjoy the most beautiful view over the "Red Slope"

Rheinhessens most famous vineyard rises steeply into the sky: the "Red Slope," an unusually red glowing slope between Nierstein and Nackenheim, located directly on the Rhine. Iron oxide discolored the clay and sandstone of the approximately 280-million-year-old formation. Numerous hiking trails wind their way between the top locations "Pettenthal", "Orbel" or "Ölberg", including the award-winning "RheinTerrassenWeg." Here you have beautiful views: in the north-east to the skyscrapers of the metropolis Frankfurt and the Odenwald; in the southeast - following the bend in the Rhine - to the Oppenheim Katharinenkirche.

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4. History - Explore the cellar labyrinth beneath Oppenheim

Between Mainz and Worms lies the medieval town of Oppenheim. Deep under the old town sleeps the "city under the city." The inhabitants dug up with a pickaxe and shovel from the 12th to the 17th century, a closely intertwined cellar system through the hill of loose loess and clay. The approximately 40-kilometer-long trails wind chaotically up and down each other, the cavities are up to five levels deep. The residents of Oppenheim once used the rooms as a wine cellar and storage room or leased them to dealers. Today 600 meters of cellar paths are touristically developed, colorfully illuminated and accessible all year round.



Top Photo : Carsten Costard

Middle Photo : Dieth & Schröder Fotografie,
Rheinhessenwein

Bottom Photo : Achim Meurer

5. Nature - Hiking through vineyards in Flonheim and resting at the Trullo

Gently curved vineyards, called "Hiwwel"; villages nestled on the slopes; a broad horizon - this is how Rheinhessens landscape typically presents itself. From time to time, a whitewashed, tapered vineyard cottage towers like a sugarloaf through the rows of vines, the "Trullo". Built as shelters by Italian migrant workers around 1750, the cottages are unusually Mediterranean - and are unique in all of Germany. One of the most beautiful Trullo stands on the "Adelberg" in Flonheim, a vibrant wine-growing village, where the small Trullo hiking trail or the longer "Hiwweltour Aulheim Valley" starts. Tables and benches at the Trullo invite you to linger.

6. Mystique - Listen to the knowledge of a saint in Bingen

High above Bingen the Abbess Hildegard founded a monastery around 1150 on Rupertsberg. The theological visionary, who was later canonized, is still admired today for her natural and healing knowledge. She created more than 30 herbal recipes with wine and documented that the vine juice had numerous medical benefits. A visit to the "Museum am Strom" brings your life to life. Many centuries later, in 1882, the "ice wine" was accidentally discovered in a suburb of Bingen. Even today, German winemakers harvest and crush frozen grapes in winter - a rare, very sweet and unusually finesse-rich wine is produced.

7. Theater - Cheer for the Nibelungen Festival in Worms

The heroic epic "Die Nibelungen" - with heroes and anti-heroes, love and betrayal, family ties and enmities - offers manifold material for interpretation. In front of the Worms Cathedral Kriemhild and Brünhild allegedly have fought the legendary queens dispute. In late summer, this place turns into one of Germany's largest open-air theater festivals. Every year, well-known actors from theater, film and television are on stage. Not far from there, the Hagen statue reminds that here the Nibelungen treasure was sunk into the Rhine. The treasure has disappeared to this day - but many people claim that it is found in the gold of the wine.



Photo : Martin Kämper



8. Drinking - Tasting red wines at the "Imperial Palace" (Kaiserpfalz) in Ingelheim

Rheinhessen is white wine country: More than two-thirds of the vineyards include Riesling, Silvaner, or Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc. The city of Ingelheim, however, may proudly call itself "Red Wine Town." Here the stars are called Spät- und Frühburgunder - red rubies in a glass. But why just here? Emperor Charlemagne resided around 800 AD in the city. Even then he realized how good the soil and how warm the climate was - and had the first burgundy vines planted. The people of Ingelheim have been celebrating the traditional "Red-Wine Festival" in the fall for many years and since late in the summer, DJ beats are coming down from the vineyards at "Burgberg Under Vibes."

9. Geology - Marvel at the primeval sea in Alzey-Weinheim

Shark teeth, fossilized shells and crustaceans. Where vines roam for many years, once subtropical sea surged. And about 30 million years ago, in the age of the Tertiary. The "Weinheimer Trift," a 150 meters wide and weathered sand and rock wall at Alzey gives an exciting insight into this period. The most important natural history museums in the world have fossils from this locality. The resident museum in Alzey, a romantic town in the heart of Rhine-Hesse, houses, among other things, the fossil bones of a manatee. Many winegrowers still find traces of the sea between the rows of vines.

10. Architecture - Dine in a Rhine-Hessian wine vault

Artfully, the stone ceilings bent over the former cowsheds. In the past, wooden ceilings caught fire too quickly, and in 1850 around 300 Rhine-Hessian cross vaults were created for the dear cattle. Today, the winemakers bring this special architecture back to life as stylish event locations for concerts or lectures, as a wine tavern and so-called "bouquet pubs." Incidentally, there are numerous bouquet pubs in Rheinhessen: a bouquet of flowers or wreaths indicates when the winemaker's family distributes their wine to guests and offers them small dishes. Traditional dishes include: "Spundekäs" (hearty paprika and onion quark), "Backesgrumbeere" (potato casserole with wine) or "Dippe Has" (hare in a pot).

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Photo : ISAWORKS/Isabelle Niefer