

Fortress Town Büdingen



In the north of Büdingen an early Celtic settlement of the region is attested by burial mounds. The original settlement of Büdingen was founded by the Franks around the Remigius Church, the oldest sacred building in the Wetterau.

The Lords of Büdingen, followers of the Staufers, appeared from 1130 onwards. Their castle was built further east to protect the imperial forest (Büdingen Forest) against the expansion of the landgraves of Hesse, the prince-abbey of Fulda and the archbishopric of Mainz. The old town of Büdingen developed as a settlement to the west of the moated castle and received its first town wall. The family of Isenburg permanently established itself in the Castle of Büdingen. However, the prospering town soon became too small. The New Town (Neustadt) was built from the middle of the 14th century. In 1422, Emperor Friedrich III declared the territory of the Counts of Ysenburg an imperial county.

During the long reign (1461-1511) of Ludwig II of Ysenburg-Büdingen, Büdingen's townscape, which is still characteristic today, was created. The count ensured the architectural security of the town. He made the proud citizens of Büdingen themselves responsible for its protection. The county was divided among the heirs of the count. As early as 1543, the Büdingen line and its subjects became Protestant.

Calvinism finally prevailed. With Calvinism began a long and dark period of witch trials. More than 400 executions are documented between 1532 and 1699. It became necessary to counteract the depopulation and economic decline caused by war, epidemics and persecution.

The Fore Town (Vorstadt) in front of the Jerusalem Gate was laid out in 1712 on the basis of Ernst Casimir I von Ysenburg's edict of tolerance. Religious refugees of different origins and denominations settled there. Mostly Inspirationists came to Büdingen, while Huguenots, Waldensians and Moravians also came to the surrounding area, bringing their crafts and trades with them. The religious refugees who were rescued from persecution and freed, gave the Lower Gate (also called the Cross Gate) the name „Jerusalem Gate“, which they named after the heavenly Jerusalem.

Event highlights in the Fortress Town Büdingen

CARNIVAL SUNDAY

Storming of the Jerusalem Gate by the Büdingen Jesters and subsequent parade

APRIL/MAY

Frog Parade, Gardeners' Market and Children's Festival

MAY/JUNE

Wine Festival

EVERY 2nd WEEKEND IN JULY

Night of Culture (even years) in annual rotation with the **Middle Ages Festival in Büdingen** (odd years)

END OF AUGUST / BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER

Countryside Party at Büdingen Castle (Thursday through Sunday) and **Open Monument Day** (Sunday)

LAST WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER

Gallus Market – traditional market in the Old Town and Fore Town

2nd ADVENT

Christmas Magic in the historic Old Town (Wednesday through Sunday)

Discover the fortress town with all its stories, anecdotes and unique architecture on an **entertaining guided tour**.
More information at:

www.buedingen.info

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Instagram: [buedingen_hier.lebt.geschichte](https://www.instagram.com/buedingen_hier.lebt.geschichte)



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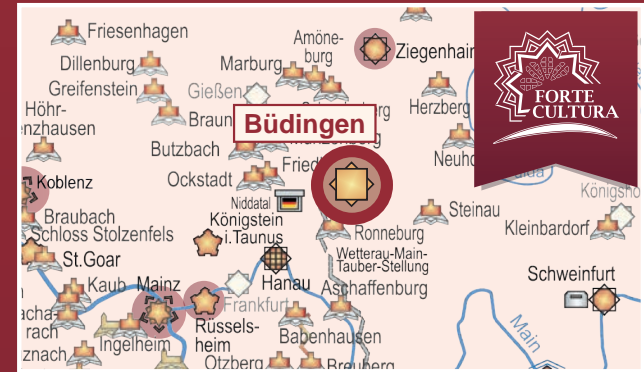
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History *lives* here



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Fortress History

Today's Büdingen Castle emerged from a moated castle dating back to the 12th century. To the west of the castle, a settlement developed which was later called the old town of Büdingen. In the middle of the 14th century, the settlement was secured by a town fortification consisting of a town wall, gate towers, ramparts and ditches.

A new part of the town arose north of the Old Town because of immigration. This new town was also enclosed by a fortification around 1390. The streets of both settlements were laid out at right angles and there was an undeveloped area between the two parts.

In 1428, the political merger to form the town of Büdingen took place, and from 1490 onwards, a new, double-skinned ring of walls with massive ramparts and a moat was built around the town as a joint fortification for the old and new town. For this purpose, the Seemenbach stream was also moved to the south. As a result, the front gate (Schlaghaus) became part of the outer ring of walls and the former stream bed became the outer bailey.

When it was completed, the characteristic Lower Gate (Jerusalem Gate) formed the new main access. Later forced settlements took place in the suburbs outside the town walls from the early 18th century.

As Büdingen's fortifications suffered no significant damage from military conflicts, they were preserved as a self-contained historical complex. In the Red Tower there is a model depicting the fortified town in the first half of the 17th century.

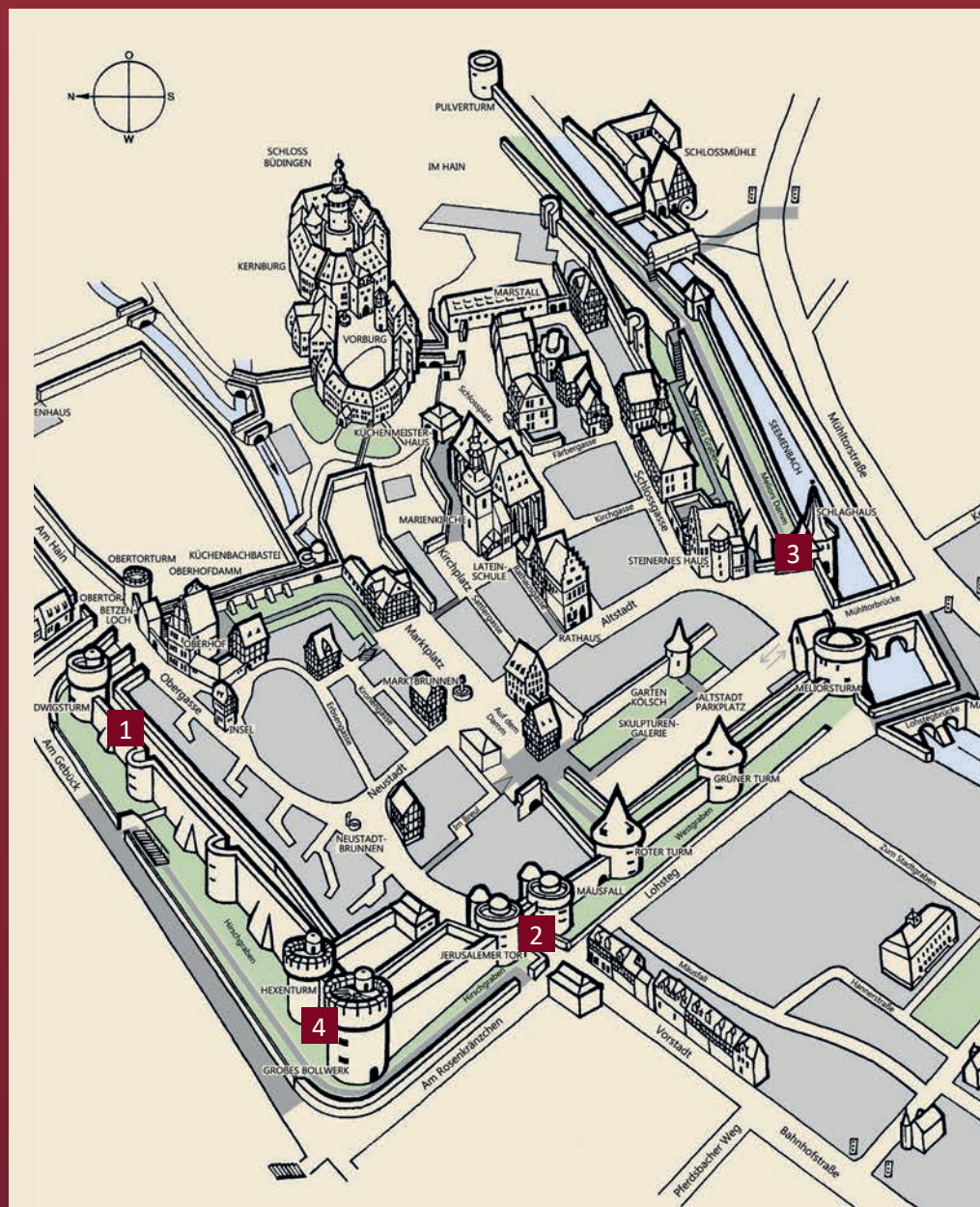
While many fortified towns dismantled their fortifications to promote industrial and urban development, around 1850 Ernst Casimir II of Ysenburg-Büdingen and his court architect Victor Melior decided against this.

Today, the entire historic town of Büdingen is now a protected historical monument. Büdingen is considered a prime example of changing fortress construction since the advent of firearms. Extensive renovations are helping piece by piece to preserve this unique treasure of fortified cultural heritage.

So, Büdingen is today one of the best-preserved historic towns in Germany. After a visit in May 1952, Albert Einstein ennobled it with the words: „A little peace of the Middle Ages, shown from its most enchanting side.“

Fortress Town Büdingen

500 Years of Fortress Construction in the County of Ysenburg-Büdingen



Fortress Highlights

1 TOWN FORTIFICATION

Impressive fortress walls with a total of 22 sandstone towers shape the face of Büdingen since the reign of Ludwig II of Ysenburg in Büdingen (1461-1511). Some of the town walls, which are more than two kilometres long, can be walked on. The southern part of the town fortifications can be discovered on foot at „Meliors Damm“ and „Meliors Graben“.

The „Gebück“ on the north side, and along the „Rosenkränzchen“ on the west side with the Jerusalem Gate and the bulwark offer great views of the towers, half-towers and walls.

2 JERUSALEM GATE

The Jerusalem Gate from 1503 is the most imposing, double-towered main entrance to the new town of Büdingen and to the two-kilometre-long fortress wall. Both gate towers have three levels, each with three embrasures.

Sightseeing tour is possible together with a visit to the Sandrose Museum (+49 160 91355473).

3 SCHLAGHAUS

The Schlaghaus was part of the old town's fortifications as a gateway until 1494. At that time, this gateway with drawbridge and tollgate was located as a bridgehead on the other side of the Seemenbach. From 1777 to 1895 it was used by the Büdingen butchers as a slaughterhouse.

Visits possible with a visit to the butcher's museum (info@metzgermuseum.de; www.metzgermuseum.de).

4 GREAT BULWARK AND WITCHES' TOWER

The large bulwark from 1491 has a diameter of 17 metres and walls four metres thick. The 16-gun chambers were accessible on four wooden floors. This makes it one of the largest gun towers in Europe. The so-called Witches' Tower was originally a defence tower. Extensive conversion work under Count Ludwig II turned it into a prison tower, which could only be reached from above via a hatch. The towers can be visited as part of a guided tour of the city.

Visits possible as part of guided tours of the Old Town (Tourist-Information: mail@buedingen.info; +49 6042 96370; www.buedingen.info).