

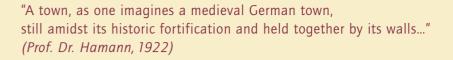


### WELCOME TO BÜDINGEN

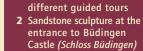
Those who think of stones as more than just historical remnants and of half-timbered frames as more than just wooden beams are sure to fall under the spell of Büdingen's charms.

We would like to invite you to get to know more about this perfect example of a historic German town. Let us take you on a journey through time, beginning with the medieval castle, through the centuries-old alleyways to the town walls, ending at the neatly planned "Foretown" (Vorstadt) of 1725.

Büdingen's motto, "History *lives* here" is fitting for a town which is so proud of its great historic inheritance and so conscious of its duty to preserve this inheritance for the enjoyment of its guests – whether this takes the form of individual tours, exciting theme tours, celebrations, exhibitions, or festivities.







1/5/9 Scenes from

3 View from the Witches' Tower (Hexenturm) onto Büdingen's roofs









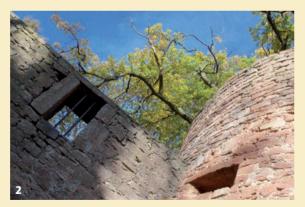
- 4 Half-timbered houses at Castle Lane (Schlossgasse)
- 6 "Ysenburg" family crest above the entry gate of Schloss Büdingen
- 8 Jerusalem Gate

## LITTLE PIECE OF THE MIDDLE AGES, SHOWN FROM ITS MOST ENCHANTING SIDE

Anyone is interested in seeing and experiencing how a community has developed organically, over the centuries, is in the right place in this town. It is situated between the outer reaches of the Wetterau (the valley of the Wetter River area) and the hills of the Vogelsberg (a volcanic

mountain range). Only a rare few towns, such as Büdingen, have survived the turmoil of previous times and remained relatively unscathed to the present day. Today the safely preserved half-timbered buildings and stone oriel windows, the gables and dormers, the defiant walls and towers, all allow the visitor to experience the spirit of the past. Visitors can experience how an aspiring civic society emerged under the protection of the moated castle of the House of Ysenburg. The town emerged out of residences for courtiers and servants outside the castle protected by privileges making it able to afford

a grand town hall, the artistically decorated Church of Our Lady (Marienkirche), as well as prestigious half-timbered houses. In the late Middle Ages, at the high point of Büdingen's period of growth, the early 14th century wall surrounding the town was replaced by a mighty new fortification. This bastion is more than two kilometers (1.3 miles) long, has 22 towers and half-round towers, and is regarded nowadays as one of the best examples of the way defensive architecture changed as a result of the advent of firearms.



These are the words used by Albert Einstein, no less, to describe Büdingen following his visit to the town in May 1952. If this great scholar could see the historic town today, he would find little has changed. Although the historical center of the town is actually in better condition now, thanks to the extensive restoration work carried out over the last few decades.

- 1 Janus face at Oberhof (Upper Courtyard)
- 2 Pulverturm (Gunpowder Tower)
- 3 Altstadt
- 4 Steinernes Haus (graced by double-story bays)
- **5** Frog Fountain at *Neustadt*

















- 6 Church of Our Lady (Marienkirche)
  7 Freyhaus (opposite
- 7 Freyhaus (opposite Marienkirche)
- 8 Oberhof (Upper Courtyard) 9 Schlossgasse (Castle Lane)

## EFENSE AND DESIGN

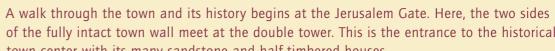
The Jerusalem Gate (or Lower Gate) is the town's landmark with its combination of superb fortification and unsurpassed artistry. The late Gothic gate (its parapet decorated with filigree tracery), provides a good westerly starting point for a tour of the town. Even better is to start with a walk around the long circuit of the town walls.

The great walls of sandstone with their embrasures (the lateral slits for shooting firearms) which guard the town may appear threatening and awe inspiring. How peaceful everything seems, in contrast, once you have walked through one of the town gates into the historical center

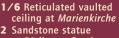
of Büdingen. Half-timbered houses and houses constructed of stone (dating from a period of six centuries) alternate along the sides of the cobbled streets. Some of the buildings crowd together in small side alleys, others self-consciously occupy pride of place, such as the "Luckische Hof" (dating from 1510) or the "Steinernes Haus" (graced by double-story

bays) built in stone slightly earlier. The Old Town Hall, built in the 15th century, is a powerful expression of the civic pride of the time; nowadays it houses the town's museum, the "Heuson *Museum*". The stepped gables of the Old Town Hall (Historisches Rathaus) are nearly as high as the neighboring building, the Church of Our Lady (Marienkirche). This late-Gothic hall church features a splendid reticulated vaulted ceiling.

of the fully intact town wall meet at the double tower. This is the entrance to the historical town center with its many sandstone and half-timbered houses.

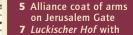






- 2 Sandstone statue at Büdingen Castle
- 3 Western Defense Wall
- 4 Old Town Hall (Historisches Rathaus)





- "Wild Man" truss figure 8 Former Mill Gate (Mühltor) and today's
- **Butchers Museum** (Metzgermuseum)
  9 Glass window by M. Bauss









## CONNECTING OLD AND NEW

Büdingen dates back to the moated castle constructed in the 12th century. The civic community developed out of the settlement of castle servants which grew up outside the castle walls. In 1330, this community was granted the right to hold markets and, shortly afterwards, was granted its Statute of Liberty (the Freiheitsbrief), too, by the House of Ysenburg. In return, the town inhabitants agreed to build a protective wall around the town which would help to secure it against attack. After the completion of the city wall in 1350, the New Town (Neustadt) developed on the other side. Three hundred years later the ditches and ramparts between the two halves of the town were dismantled. Enough space was created at the most important juncture between the Old and New Towns to create a new market square: this square, surrounded by half-timbered houses, remains the town center today. Parts of the original city wall still remained standing after the construction of the new fortification which surrounded the Old and New Towns. The longest stretch of original wall can be seen in the "Kölsch Garden", where plants and bushes accentuate the red color of the stone. Here, there is also an exhibition of massive boulders which date back hundreds of millions of years. These provide visitors with an insight into the geological formations of the area around Büdingen and further afield than Vogelsberg and Wetterau.



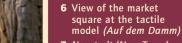
Büdingen's historic center consists of the Old Town and the New Town. For a long time, both parts of the town were separated by walls before the division was overcome by the construction of the market square with its half-timbered houses, so creating a common local center.

- Sandstone figure at the market square fountain
   Castle Lane
  - (Schlossgasse)
  - 3 Altstadt
  - 4 Garten Kölsch
  - 5 Oberhof (Upper Courtyard)









- 7 Neustadt (New Town)
- 8 Geological stone gallery

# PEYOND THE WALLS

For a long time, the residents of Büdingen were forbidden to reside outside of the town, that is, outside of their town's fortification. That changed, however, when the sturdy walls (up to four meters or 13 feet thick in some places) could no longer offer defense against

the firepower of mighty cannons. In the early eighteenth century, the area gained outside the Jerusalem Gate was developed and half-timbered houses were constructed according to a long term, unified plan.

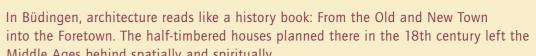
However, these houses deserve our attention not only because they are so orderly and well-preserved. They also stand for freedom and enlightenment. This is where the refugees, fleeing from religious persecution, were allowed to settle under the so-called "Edict of Tolerance", granted by Count Ernst Casimir of Ysenburg in 1712. With this

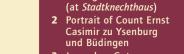
edict, for the first time in Germany, all those who were persecuted for religious beliefs were protected. No wonder that the Anabaptists, the Inspirationalists, and the Moravians after years of long hardship were attracted to the fertile Wetterau valley and thought that Büdingen was a Jerusalem on Earth. Its gate, the late Gothic Lower Gate (Untertor), was christened after the Holy City.





into the Foretown. The half-timbered houses planned there in the 18th century left the Middle Ages behind spatially and spiritually.





3 Jerusalem Gate. 19th century (rear view)

1 Büdingen's coat of arms

4 Jerusalem Gate, today (front view)





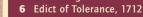
PRIVILEGIA und Frageatan/ Der hoch - gebohrne Wraf und Berr / Giraf zu Wenbura und Allen benjemgen / welche fich in ber Stabt unb











8 Herrnhaag, about 1835

9 Vorstadt

10 Gargoyle at Jerusalem Gate



### ROM THE MOATED CASTLE TO THE PALACE

Nothing could be more surprising than the impression visitors receive, having wandered through the dainty world of the Old Town, upon entering the expansive Castle Square with its impressive double ring of buildings. The generously pro-

portioned outer bailey contains the

service buildings and stalls; the curtain

wall with its smooth towers encloses the center of the castle. The ground plan of a thirteen-sided polygon indicates the origin of the building as a moated castle, founded by the first lords of Büdingen in the twelfth century, and situated between the two branches of the Seemenbach Creek. An independent county then developed under the Ysenburg dynasty which came to power in 1258. Few of the subsequent counts have missed the chance to update this now more substantial castle to fit the stylistic expectations of the time, from Romanesque to Baroque. Although the castle is still inhabited by the twenty-third generation of the Ysenburg dynasty, it is also open to the public. Visitors may well have the impression that the noble owners have only just got up from the festively decorated tables, or

have only just left the castle chapel (famous for its carved choir stalls) or have only just walked out of the impressive rooms decorated with sixteenth-century frescoes.

Under the low-hanging weeping willows swim the water-fowl, and don't forget the frogs. In the damp hollows one can hear the cheerful croaking of the frogs that has always featured in the background sounds of Büdingen. So that early on the residents of Büdingen became known by the nickname *Beuringer Frääsch* (Büdinger Frogs). The Büdingers celebrate their unofficial heraldic symbol every spring with a Frog Parade and by decorating their building facades with frog images and figures.



Be a guest of nobility: Visitors can enjoy the grounds of the castle. Exploring the private rooms is possible by appointment only. On display are original fittings including frescoes, furniture, and hunting gear which are all up to five hundred years old.

1 Alliance coat of arms

2 Castle courtyard

3 Aerial view of Büdingen Castle

4 Painted room















- 6 Choir stalls at the chapel inside Schloss Büdingen
- 7 Castle grounds
- 8 Sandstone statue at Schloss Büdingen
  - 9 Garden festival Landpartie at Schloss Büdingen

### ELL PRESERVED

Visitors to the Heuson Museum gain an insight into 1200 years of Büdingen's history; especially the history of Büdingen's farmers and craftsmen, which complements the courtly culture on display in the castle.

The Museum, itself housed in the original, fifteenth-century Town Hall, draws on the rich archaeological evidence of the

area around Büdingen to offer a prehistory of the town itself. Visitors can see a model of an early Celtic settlement on display here.

Butchers have their own museum in Büdingen, as is fitting for a profession with such a rich historical tradition. For over 400 years, until 1895, the butchers of Büdingen had a collective slaughterhouse (Schlaghaus) in one of the towers of the "Mühltorbrücke". This tower is still standing and contains the original fittings and fixtures of the slaughterhouse.

The "Museum of the 1950s" captures the spirit of this exciting decade marked by post-war economic recovery and rock 'n roll. There's plenty for the visitor to discover (or rediscover) here. Who doesn't remember kidney-shaped coffee tables and standard lamps, Vespa scooters and music from the jukebox?

The fertile soils of the Wetterau harbor a geological treasure underground: sand roses, also known as desert roses. These crystallized formations of sand and mineral, dating back at least 10 million years give the impression of being fossilized roses. The curator, Lothar Keil, collected the most beautiful examples of these barite roses and his collection is now housed, most appropriately, in the sandstone towers of the Jerusalem Gate.

Büdingen's Model Making Museum is also well worth a visit. The collection of over 150 precision models of ships, cars and trains, are found in the "Oberhof" (Upper Courtyard), built in 1569. This townhouse, with its enclosed courtyard, was the first of Büdingen's Renaissance buildings and also served for a time as a residence for noble widows of the Ysenburg dynasty.

Büdingen is a town of museums: no less than four institutions are dedicated to the life and culture of the past. Büdingen also hosts a significant geological collection and a large exhibition of model making.

- 3 Tiles at the Heuson-Museum 4 Desert rose
- 5 Model Making Museum

1/2 Museum of the 1950s



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- 7 Loom at the Heuson-Museum
- 8 Milk bar at the Museum of the 1950s

### EXPERIENCE HISTORY



"We better move on otherwise we won't finish our beat." The Nightwatchman of Büdingen has much to tell on his two hour patrol of the old alleyways. This is what he says to himself at every stop so he does not exceed the town's curfew. The nightwatchman – dressed in authentic clothes and carrying a halberd and a lantern – is one of many actors who bring history closer for visitors to Büdingen through live history tours.

Those taking the tour will learn what the people of Büdingen thought and felt, what they ate and drank, how they lived their lives with their hopes of heaven and their fears of hell, experiences of war and

sickness, and also the flow of life between work and pleasure. All are entertainingly presented by actors within the walls of historic Büdingen. Separate from the regularly scheduled historical experience tours it is possible to book a guided tour (in English) through the Tourist Information Office.

Experiencing history in Büdingen is fun: Right in the center of historic scenery guides dressed in historic costumes know how to inform and entertain with wit and wisdom.











## ORESTS FOR WALKING AND CYCLING

It is not by chance that Büdingen has so many halftimbered houses and buildings. The town owns one of the most extensive areas of continuous forest land in Hessen. But it is not just the size that makes this former noble hunting ground a special area: hardwood trees and coniferous trees are found in the right mix here. Rich forest vegetation grows under the oaks and beech trees, and the whole forest area has something of a magical atmosphere. Abundant varieties of ground vegetation flourish here.

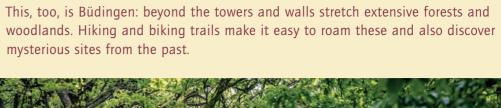
There are many discoveries to be made between the trees on the extensive networks of paths which crisscross the forest. West of the town the ruins of the "enchanted" castle of Hardeck are to be found; to the north, near

Dudenrod, are many prehistoric burial mounds. Who knows the secrets buried in these overgrown mounds? Could there be a connection between these mounds and the Celts of the Glau-

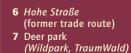
berg, as the information plaque on this part of the "Cultural and Historical Circular Path" suggests? Information about the special attractions of the eleven-hectare deer park, in the "Tal der Sieben Bäche", ("The Valley of the Seven Streams"), is also found on childfriendly panels. There is an "Experience Nature" pathway which extends over three kilometers (1.9 miles) around herds of mouflon (wild sheep), red deer and fallow deer. This deer park is surrounded by the "Dream Forest" of Büdingen: a special area, spread over 300 hectares, in which original forest land is protected from the incursions of modern forestry. There are many observation areas here, as well as a rope canopy area among the trees. There is a longer route which extends over 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) through Büdingen's forest called the "Ysenburg-Route" and marked out by a special Y sign. This route includes the idyllic pond, the "Thiergartenweiher", and the "Wilden Stein" (Wild Stone) where a magnificent view of the castle and town of Büdingen opens up from these mighty volcanic stone craqs.



woodlands. Hiking and biking trails make it easy to roam these and also discover mysterious sites from the past.







Mouflon at deer park (Wildpark, TraumWald) 2/3 Iron hand and sacred grove (Ysenburg-Route, local hiking trail)

4 Volcanic vent "Wilder Stein"

**5** Thiergartenweiher (Ysenburg-Route)









# XPLORING FURTHER AFIELD

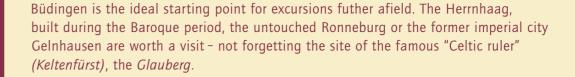
There are many surprises for visitors to discover in the area around Büdingen. The places of interest in this area all have some connection, albeit not always visible, with Büdingen itself. Were it not for the "Edict of Tolerance", for example, which was granted by Count Ernst Casimir in 1712, the "Free Church of the Herrnhuter", a Moravian community from Saxony, would not have settled on the hill then known as the "Herrnhaaq". Two of the seventeen original eighteenth-century Baroquestyle buildings, with their distinctive Mansard roofs, are still standing to the south of the town. Some members of this Moravian community, along with members of other persecuted Protestant communities, found shelter in the neighboring castle of Ronneburg. There they were safe, albeit rather cramped since the buildings and their protective wall had hardly changed since their construction in the sixteenth century. This remains the case today. Ronneburg offers its modern visitors the experience of a perfectly preserved sixteenth century castle. Its tower is open to the public too. Early on, the Celts settled in the Wetterau Valley. One

of their most important settlements was on the Glauberg as evidenced by the discovery of the famous sandstone figure of the "Celtic ruler" in 1994. The statue and other finds are housed in the museum dedicated

to the Keltenwelt (Celtic World) on Glauberg. The route through this exhibition guides the visitor to the extraordinary burial objects of the Celtic ruler and gives an overview of the first ancient civilizations north of the Alps. Directly near the museum is a 50 meter (164 feet) wide reconstructed burial mound, where the sandstone statue of the Celtic ruler was found.

From Büdingen, visitors can easily reach Glauberg along a cycle path, the "Keltenradweg", which follows the tracks of former railway lines to the Vogelsberg. The "Bonifatiusroute", a long-distance footpath, also passes through the area near Büdingen. This footpath which stretches from Mainz to Fulda, follows the route of St. Boniface (known as "the Apostle of the Germans").





- I Sandstone statue of the Celtic ruler (Keltenfürst)
- 2 Museum Keltenwelt (Glauberg)
- 3 Ronneburg Castle











- **4** Herrnhaaa
- 5 Hohe Straße (former trade route)
- 6 Market square in Gelnhausen



Dear visitor. Welcome to Büdingen!

The fortified city offers an abundance of opportunities to spend entertaining, enjoyable and exciting moments. We offer the right tour for every interest: classic old town tours, exciting themed tours, entertaining guided tours, or culinary tours. There are some special tours that you should not miss.

During the "Ran an den Speck" ("Get the Bacon") culinary tour, a herdsman quides visitors through the historic city to the Butchers' Museum, after which visitors are invited to enjoy a hearty "butchers' dinner".

Or perhaps you might enjoy the medieval "Burgmannenschmaus" (Courtiers Feast) in the historic "Bleffe" inn? These and other quided tours, information about the museums, and cycling and hiking trails can be found at www.buedingen.info

Our tourist information staff will be happy to help you create your perfect itinerary - send an e-mail with your preferences and ideas to mail@buedingen.info or call us on 0049 (0) 6042 - 96370.

We are looking forward to your visit! Your team at Tourist Information Büdingen



- 3 Wine Festival
- 5 Frog Parade
- 7 Heritage Day
- 9 Gardeners' Market
- 10 Garden Festival at Schloss Büdingen
- 13 Christmas Market
- 12/14 Night of Culture



Büdingen is more than just an idyllic place on the eastern edge of the Wetterau Valley. It is also a charming little city which loves to celebrate fabulous festivals.



















### SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

Storming of the Jerusalem Gate (by the Knaves and Jesters of Büdingen followed by the Carnival Procession)

### **END OF APRIL**

Frog Parade, Gardeners' Market and Children's Festival

### MAY / JUNE

Wine Festival

### SECOND WEEKEND IN JULY

Night of Culture (Kulturnacht) which alternates annually with the Medieval Festival (Mittelalterfest)

### **END OF AUGUST / BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER**

Garden Festival (Landpartie) at Schloss Büdingen (Thursday through Sunday) and Heritage Day (second Sunday in September)

### LAST WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER

Gallusmarket - traditional country fair and flea market in the Altstadt and Vorstadt

### **SECOND WEEK IN ADVENT**

Christmas Market (Weihnachtszauber) in the historical old town (Wednesday through Sunday)













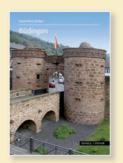
# LEARN MORE

If you would like to explore Büdingen on your own, these two books make the perfect companion.

ILLUSTRATED BOOK Bildschönes Büdingen €49 English and French translation available as booklets € 3,50

TRAVEL GUIDE

Büdingen – Mittelalterliche Residenz und Festungsstadt Dr. Klaus-Peter Decker. Schnell & Steiner · € 7 Available only in German





and of course: www.buedingen.info

- PHOTOS Cover large: V.Holland
  Cover small, top down: Büdinger Tourismus und Marketing GmbH, D.Wetzestein, B.Leo
  P. 2-3 / photo 1: S.Schneider, 2: B.Leo, 3/4: T.Appel, 5: B.Leo, 6: BTM, 7: P.Jost,
  B: BTM, 9: Fotowerk Büdingen
  P. 4-5 / photo 1: BTM, 2: P.Musch, 3: V.Holland, 4: T.Appel, 5: V.Holland,
  6: C.Braunwarth, 7: T.Appel, 8/9: BTM

- P. 6-7 / photo 1: H.J.Keck, 2: BTM, 3: V.Holland, 4/5: BTM, 6: H.J.Keck,
- 7: D.Wetzestein, 8: V.Holland, 9: glass window made by Martin Bauss / photo: H.Protz P. 8-9 / photo 1/2/3/4: BTM, 5: V.Holland, 6/7/8: BTM
- P. 10-11 / photo 1: BTM, 2: Dr. K.-P. Decker, 3: B. Siebig (19th century) / Repro Fotowerk Büdingen, 4: BTM, 5: V.Holland, 6/7: BTM, 8: Historische Ortsansichten / www.lagis-hessen.de, 9: BTM, 10: B.Leo
- P. 12-13 / photo 1: BTM, 2: P.Loeb, 3: V.Holland, 4/5/6/7: BTM, 8: B.Leo, 9: BTM
- P. 14-15 / photo 1: 50er-Jahre-Museum Büdingen, 2/3/4/5/6: S.Schneider, 7: A.Cott / Geschichtsverein Büdingen, 8: BTM P. 16-17 / photo 1: BTM, 2: S.Schneider, 3: BTM, 4: Fotowerk Büdingen, 5: S.Schneider,

- P. 18-19 / photo 1/2: BTM, 3: V.Holland, 4: V.Dippel, 5: V.Holland, 6: BTM, 7/8: V.Holland, 9: BTM
- P. 20-21 / photo 1/2: Keltenwelt am Glauberg, 3/4: D.Turner, 5: BTM, 6: Stadt Gelnhausen
  P. 22-23 / photo 1: Jürgen Frisch / Fotoclub Büdingen, 2: Gerhard Günther / Fotoclub
  3: BTM, 4: Henning Bruns / Fotoclub, 5: BTM, 6: B.Leo, 7: BTM, 8: B.Leo, 9/10: BTM,
  11: Jürgen Frisch / Fotoclub, 12/13: BTM, 14: P.Jost
- P. 25 / photo 1: Victor Melior (1856) / Repro Fotowerk Büdingen, 2/3: BTM, 4: B.Leo, 5: V.Holland, 6: S.Schneider, 7: BTM
  - Back cover: Braun-Hogenberg (1617)

(Vom Fels zum Meer 18/16)

- "Büdingen a treasure chest of medieval romance and architecture."



1 Büdingen

**3** Garten Kölsch

by Victor Melior (1856)

2 Southern Defense Wall







6 Carved chair (Rathausstuhl)

7 Wooden stonemason at "Am Gebück"

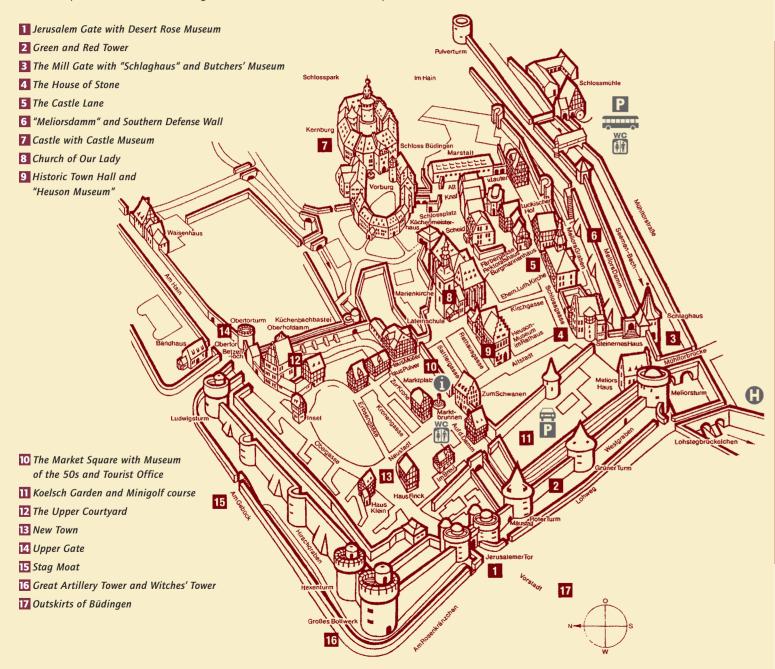








Follow the discovery trail from Büdingen's "Old Town" (*Altstadt*) through the "New Town" (*Neustadt*) to the development beyond the city walls (*Vorstadt*). All the important historical buildings and sites are marked on the map.



### Getting to Büdingen by car or bus:

- A45 motorway: Take the "Altenstadt" exit and follow the signs for Büdingen (B521) or take "Hammersbach" exit and follow the signs for Büdingen (L3195)
- A3 / A66 motorway: Take the exit "Gründau/Lieblos" and follow the signs for Büdingen (B457)
- A7 motorway: At the "Dreieck Fulda" interchange exit onto the A-66 motorway until as far as the "Gründau/Lieblos" exit and follow the signs for Büdingen (B457).



### Getting to Büdingen by train:

■ Regional trains run regularly from Frankfurt / Gelnhausen or Gießen / Gelnhausen

Public toilets (also wheelchair accessible)

■ at the market square and at the coach park in "Mühltorstraße"







### BÜDINGER TOURISMUS UND MARKETING GMBH

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