



OCHSENFURT  WORTH SEEING

Walking tour through the
**Ochsenfurt
Old Town**



The Ochsenfurt Old Town

A walk through the Old Town



Our walk starts at the tour meeting point in front of the New Town Hall.

1 The New Town Hall

The year 1497 is carved above the entrance to the Town Hall, and a Madonna with Child was installed on the south-west corner of the building in 1499. The building was only completed in 1513 and extended just two years later.



Nowadays it still serves as the seat of the mayor. Below the Town Hall steps, you will find the so-called Narrenhäuschen (fool's cottage). Inside the New Town Hall, you find the historic boardroom with a large oil painting of the Last Judgement and the Kauzenbecher (special mug from the local Kauzen Brewery).

The Lance Turret

The Lance Turret can be found on the gabled roof of the New Town Hall, a landmark of the town. The clock shows the ox of the town crest. Above you see the astronomical clock that shows the day of the month and the current phase of the moon. Beside the town crest, you can see the embodiment of youth, old age and death in the form of a virgin, a group of councillors, and a skeleton.



2 Half-Timbered Houses on the Main Street

The Long Market Street did get its look not coincidental. It was formed by the markets, which were already well-known in the 14th century. To this day, the markets shape the face of the town four times a year, surrounded by re-plastered and well-preserved half-timbered houses.



3 St. Andrews Parish Church

The St. Andrews Parish Church in Ochsenfurt is first mentioned in a document from the year 1276. Its late Romanesque church tower dominates all other buildings in the old town. Inside the Church, to the right hand side, you can see a wooden figure of St. Nikolaus, crafted by the great sculptor of the 15th century – Tilmann Riemenschneider. During the Christmas season, you can admire a unique nativity scene.



4 Chapel of St. Michael

The Chapel of St. Michael initially served as a graveyard chapel. In 1426 it was talked about building a graveyard chapel. The building, south of the town parish church, itself, was built in 1440. The Chapel of St. Michael is, like most medieval graveyard chapels, a two-storey construction with an ossuary. Its richly-coloured glass windows were designed by the local artist Karl Clobes.



5 Old Town Hall

The Old Town Hall was built in the second half of the 15th century, but was only used for town administration purposes until the beginning of the 16th century. The building was used as building authority, meeting place for citizens, armoury, an indoor market and fruit storage space. The pillory on the south face shows that the Centgericht (a medieval court of justice of 100 judges, usually noblemen) took place here. Today, the Old Town Hall houses the town library.



6 Kastenhof

For hundreds of years, the Kastenhof served as a Zehnthof (yard where tithes were to be delivered for taxation purposes) to the St. Burkhard zu Würzburg Knight's Foundation. In 1809, Johann Gehring founded a civil beer brewery in that place. He built the former Monastery Brewery here, known today as Kauzen-Bräu.

7 Spital/Hospital Chapel (today Church of the Holy Cross)

The building of the hospital was intended to accommodate elderly and vulnerable people. After getting the approval of the cathedral chapter, the hospital was built in 1431 and the previously-standing buildings were redesigned. The Church of the Holy Cross was built in 1413 in the Carolingian style. Today, the Spital is used mainly for concerts and events.



8 Greising House and Traditional Costume Museum

The Greising House, named after its Baroque architect Joseph Greising, now serves as the town's Traditional Costume Museum. The valuable and opulent regional dress is multi-layered and fitted with rich adornments. In the Museum, this traditional costume can not only be admired at, but also tried on in the dressing room.



9 Schlössle (Little Castle)

This building was originally built with a moat and walls. Nowadays, only the inner house is left and the name serves as a reminder to the small size of the building. The Schlössle was a couple of times the setting for military operations. For example, in 1440, the unsuccessful storming of the town via the gates ended in the Schlössle being climbed instead. The high-water levels from the flooding of the river Main are signed on the outer walls.



10 Rampart and Dove Turret (Tower)

Originally, a town wall joined the Schlössle with the Rampart, but the building of the railway broke this connection. This medieval fortification shows the defensive strength of the town of Ochsenfurt. Between the Rampart and the Dove Turret, there is an authentic open-air forge and a women's' memorial reminding the defence of the town of Ochsenfurt. On



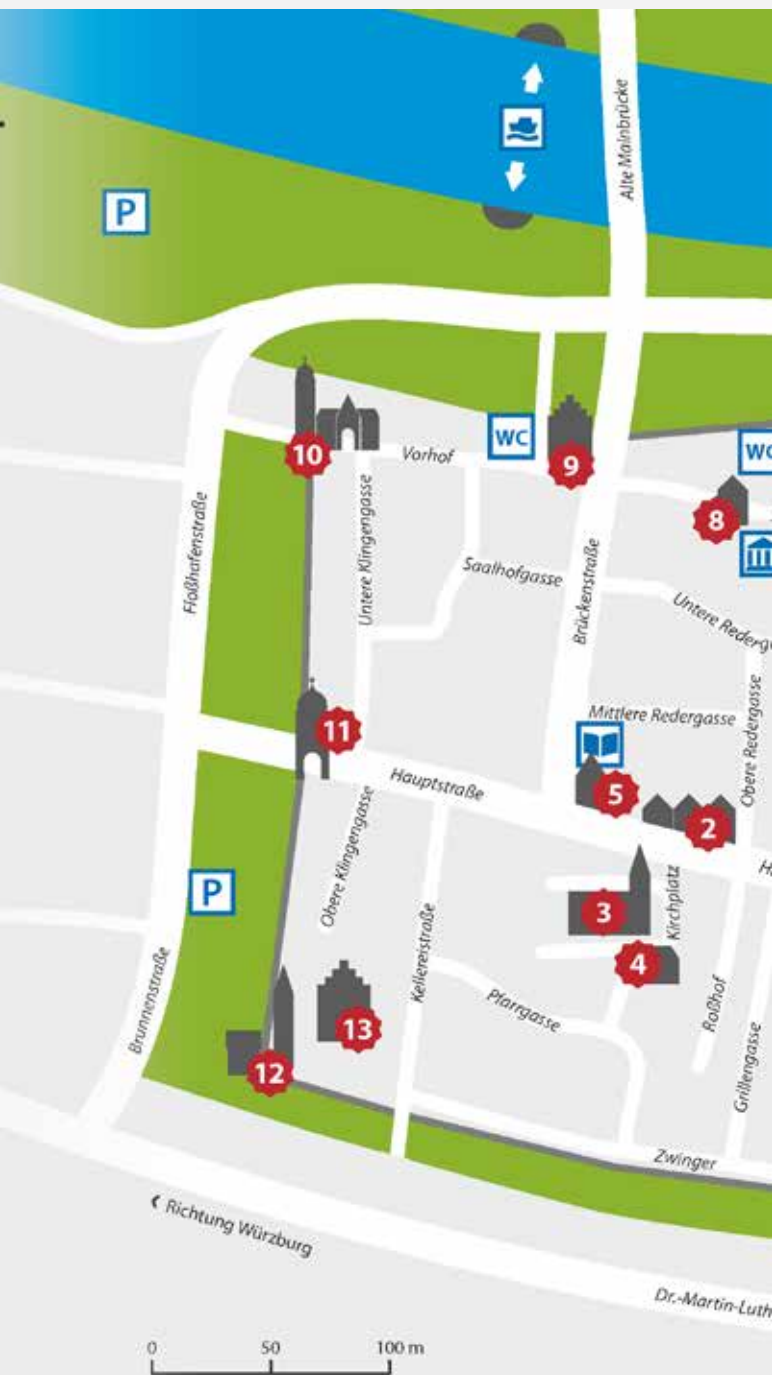
March 29th, 1945, close to the end of the 2nd world war, some courageous women were determined and altruistically enough to make sure that the city remains undestroyed. They expected the Americans to retreat with massive fire. But to guarantee a peaceful invasion of the US-Troops, the women and their children clear away the barricades.

13 Palatium

The Palatium (from the Latin word for 'palace') dates to the 14th/15th century and was the former official residence and wine cellar of the Würzburg cathedral chapter, before then serving as district office building and district administration. It is made of limestone with a gabled roof, a stepped gable with figures, a stair tower, and a cross vaulted entrance hall.



The Ochsenfurt Old Town





Neue Mainbrücke



Mainuferstraße

16

7
Spitalgasse

Untere Badgasse

Untere Boxgasse

6

Mangstraße

Boxgasse

Mittlere Badgasse

Mittlere Boxgasse

Badgasse

B 13 Richtung Würzburg

Hauptstraße

1

Kolpingstraße



Obere Manggasse

Obere Boxgasse

Langgasse



Roßmühlgasse

Wagstraße

Hauptstraße

Sternngasse

15

14



Bahnhof

er-Straße

Richtung Kitzingen/Marktbreit

The Towers of Ochsenfurt

A walk around the Old Town



The Tower Tour begins at the north-west corner of the Old Town by the slender **Dovecote Tower** with its narrow domed roof, also known as the 'welsche Haube' (the Latin hood). True to style, an open-air forge can be found in the archway between the tower and the rampart in front. This rampart is one of the oldest and strongest fortifications of the town. The renovated timbered facade and the gables above the gate passage complete the picturesque general impression.



Heading south through the park, you reach the imposing **Klingentorturm** (Klingen Gate Tower), which was also called the 'Schnellerturm' (Quicker Tower) in 1525, as a plank bridge could be lowered down for pedestrians. Its current name is derived from its location on the Clingen (local dialect for 'stream').

Nowhere else can you so clearly feel the former defensive power of this town as in the town moat, with its ivy-covered stone wall built from massive hewn stones, with intermittent old tower ruins protecting the old, huddled-together houses.



Resisting power also resonates through the **Dicke Turm** (Thick Tower) as it stands in all its glory in sight, where a staircase is supposed to lead to deep vaults and an underground passage. As a heavy defensive turret, which also served as a powder magazine with walls over 1 metre thick, it was impervious to cannon fire and shielded the south-westerly corner of the town along with the **Nikolausturm** (Nicolaus Tower) behind it, which shows clear traces of shelling from the Seven-Year War.

This rounded and slendertower with its pavilion roof rises up in front of the former palatium of the cathedral chapter.



Passing the shady town moat with its partly inhabited turrets and the well-preserved kennel, we find the oldest tower of our tour: the **Pulverturm** (Powder Tower), which marks the south-east corner of the enclosed Old Town complex. The square defensive tower, built from irregularly-hewn stones and with a gabled roof, served as a munitions storage and prison. The prisoners would receive their meals via a turning device, which is still to be recognised to some extent to the left of the entrance.

A small round tower above two stone arches can be seen in front of the Powder Tower in the kennel walls.



To the north, the old town moat meets the modern road network. The massive **Obere Tor** (Upper Town Gate) towers up on the left-hand side, a guardian of tradition and peace. Of the once strong barbican with bulwark and portcullis, only the claw stones for the portcullis remain. The five-storey gate tower rises up above the archway, ending in a narrow domed roof.



Carrying along in the direction of the river Main, we pass under the approach road to the Neue Mainbrücke (New Main Bridge) towards a stout-looking white tower. This rectangular building with half-timbered gables and a half-hipped roof is situated in the middle of the inner wall and is named the Hirtenhäuschen (Herders' Cottage) after its previous residents, who were geese herders.

Crossing the train tracks, we head left onto Kastanienallee. Here at the north-east corner of the town, the rounded **Centurm** (Centgericht Tower) with its pavilion roof stretches towards the sky. Three smaller towers also manage to push their way through the dense scrub on the other side of the railway line on the way towards the Spital.



With a glance towards the town-facing bridgehead formerly protected by the Schlössle, now home to the Museum of Local History, we come to the end of our Tower Tour. The strong fortifications of Ochsenfurt give proof of its significance in earlier times. Not least the massive building blocks, made from bulky limestone from nearby quarries, convey the impression of impregnability.

The fortification complex consists of the surrounding wall, the kennels and the town moat in their to some extent well-kept conditions, along with the three town gates:

Upper Town Gate; Lower Town Gate = rampart;

Klingen Gate Tower and the town towers:

Dovecot, Nicolaus Tower and the Thick Tower; Powder Tower;

Centgericht Tower



Indeed, Ochsenfurt was already described as a “fortified town” in 1295, when it only had protective walls at its disposal. The kennels and town moat were first mentioned in the bill for the cathedral chapter wine cellar in 1390. In 1392, we have the first historical mention of the Powder Tower, and by 1397 most of the other gates and towers are also mentioned. In the 16th century, almost all fortifications were extended, with the addition of a second storey; the exact year is to this day still easily found on sandstone slabs on the outer walls of the towers.

The then threefold protection of the rampart ensured that Ochsenfurt was well-defended against uninvited guests, with an additional 10m tall protective wall behind it.

Keys were entrusted to the authorities of the town. The mayor had the key to the Upper Town Gate, the provost the key to the Lower Town Gate. During the night, no access through the gates was allowed to anybody without the city mayor to know. He was also keyholder of the no-longer standing Bridge Gate.

The citizens themselves were responsible to guard the town gates until 1660. Thereafter special gatekeepers were employed. Likewise, the main towers along the town wall were also manned with their own sentinels. Citizens rotate to guard the kennels. An enemy could be spotted from a far distance as, thanks to colourful tassels, fire signals and shots from the Country Tower near St. Wolfgang, the guard in the Upper Gate Tower could be warned of any danger in a timely manner.

We know that many towers were not only used as military fortifications, but also as prisons, from their former and still common names. In the early 17th century, the Klingen Gate Tower was also called the “Geigenturm” (Fiddle Tower) after the so-called shrew’s fiddle – a torture device. The Centgericht Tower built in 1411 was initially called the “Schinderturm” (Flaying Tower), but in 1713 got its new name of the Centgericht Tower for housing those sentenced by the Centgericht, who were probably brought here to be executed.

The guards of the Powder Tower and the Dovecot also occasionally had to take care of those imprisoned there.

We hope you enjoyed the short tour around and through the town and had a pleasant time in our historic medieval Old Town.



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Tourist Information

Hauptstraße 39
97199 Ochsenfurt
Telefon 09331 5855
tourismus@stadt-ochsenfurt.de



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Weinland
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Deutsche
Fachwerk
Straße