

Tourismus & Congress GmbH

Region Bonn / Rhein-Sieg / Ahrweiler

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media information

Bonn's Sights and Temples of the Muses

Castra Bonnensia, the Roman camp founded between nine and thirteen years B.C., marks the beginning of Bonn's city history. Over the graves of the Roman legionaries Cassius and Florentius, who died a martyr's death, today's **Minster Basilica**, a masterpiece of the Rhenish Late Romanesque period, grew on top of a very little Cella Memoriae. With the pilgrims streaming to the martyr's graves the settlement centre for the medieval Bonn came into being in the 8th century. Since 1244 it had been a fortified city.

Bonn and the Godesburg towering above today's Bad Godesberg, which was erected in 1210, belonged to the territory of the archbishops and electors of Cologne, who stayed in Bonn more often and often. In 1601, Bonn became their capital. Above all the electors Joseph Clemens and Clemens August, who were keen of constructing buildings, left Baroque splendour here: the former residential castle, which is today's main building of the **university**, and **Poppelsdorf castle** including the Botanical Gardens are connected by a wide alley of chestnut trees, which marks the city picture. In 1737, Clemens August laid the foundation stone of the **old town hall** with its charming Rococo façade, which was designed by the French architect Michel Leveilly. The Hapsburg Max Franz founded the beginnings of today's university and extended Bad Godesberg to become a health resort – a further attraction for the noble world, for whom the romantic Rhine was part of their favourite landscapes.

In the 19th century, splendid villas came into being at the Rhine bank; millionaires erected their places to retire here and made Bonn become the richest city of Prussia temporarily. The **Villa Hammerschmidt** and the **Palais Schaumburg** advanced to the position of the official residence of the federal president and the federal chancellor after 1949 – Bonn's architectural wealth contributed to its suitability to become the capital.

For decades great policy has been made in the little capital at the Rhine. Then the Wall fell and Berlin became the capital of the reunited Germany. Since then Bonn has been in the process of changing, still being aware of its old strengths: its 2000-year-old history and its rich architectural heritage, its renowned university which has been existing since the 19th century and the fact that it has always been the favourite destination of poets and thinkers in times of the Rhine Romanticism and still is one of the favourite destination of noble tourists (more information can be obtained under www.bonn-region.de).

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Today, the city's supporting columns are science and research, future-oriented economy with the main focus on telecommunication and the settlement of international organisations. Bonn is the only UN city of Germany (more information on the international Bonn can be obtained under www.bonn.de). The tourism, which was mostly motivated in a political way in former times, got a new rating as well. With its capital heritage Bonn presents itself as an ideal conference location. Where else can you meet in a parliamentary building (see www.bonn-region.de) Bonn also gains more and more importance as a cultural destination worth visiting.

Eventually, one of the most famous composers was born here. **Ludwig van Beethoven**, whose 9th symphony belongs to the cultural treasures of mankind, was born in Bonn at the Bonngasse in December 1770 as the child of a Flemish family of musicians. His house of birth is a place of pilgrimage for music lovers. Built at the beginning of the 18th century the house was rescued from demolition by twelve citizens of Bonn and was transformed into a museum.

About 150 exhibits – pictures, autographs, notes, instruments, furniture and things from the famous composer's everyday life -, which can be seen here, form the main focus of this biggest **Beethoven collection** in the world. In addition, individual aspects from Beethoven's life and work are presented in special exhibitions. Right next door at the house "Im Mohren" one will find the new stage for musical visualisation, which interprets parts of Beethoven's opera "Fidelio" with media means from the 21st century in a world-wide unique way. Visitors can influence the production via four inter-active devices. The second new sector is formed by the studio for digital collections, in which music lovers can explore Beethoven's heritage on the screen. The digital archive is accessible in the internet and is accepted with lots of enthusiasm by virtual users from the whole world (www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de).

Part of the Beethoven-House is a beautiful chamber music hall, in which Beethoven's works and performed, but not only Bonn's greatest son still sets the tone here, above all in autumn, when the **Beethoven Festival** is celebrated. Renowned soloists and international orchestras perform next to young talents, whether it is in the chamber music hall, the Beethoven Hall, in churches, in castles and at other charming venues in and around Bonn. In 2009, the Beethoven Festival will take place from September 7 until October 7 (information on the programme can be obtained under www.beethovenfest.de, tickets under www.bonnticket.de). The Beethoven Orchestra Bonn plays an important role as well, not only in Bonn, but also in the whole world, where it performs as the ambassador of the music city at the Rhine.

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Music lovers can take advantage of the Beethoven Audio Guide (in German or English) and take a walk through the city on the traces of Beethoven individually. His monument on the Münsterplatz, his baptismal font in the Remigius Church or the old cemetery with his mother's grave are as worth visiting as places, where he played music, or restaurants, which he visited. The Tourismus & Congress GmbH Region Bonn offers all-inclusive packages and programme components around the subject of Beethoven, also for individual travellers (www.bonn-region.de).

Friends of other musical categories will also find something adequate in Bonn. As hardly any other German city, Bonn has made the summer become full of music, mostly open-air, mostly free of charge. People from the most different cultures get together at Bonn's market place in order to make music together. Sound worlds between Jazz, Samba, Bossa and modern music make people move and swing.

Bonn's opera with its 1,037 places located right at the Rhine bank, which was officially opened in 1965, is lovingly called the "Scala at the Rhine" by its citizens. Its studio theatre is shared by the musical theatre and the "Schauspiel Bonn". The "Schauspiel Bonn" performs in a theatre with 473 places in Bad Godesberg. The "Halle Beuel" and further venues are used during the demanding "Theater-Biennale", which has made a name for Bonn in the past years. The private theatre scene is also worth mentioning: the "Contra-Kreis-Theater" located right next to the university, the "Kleines Theater" in the Godesberg park. The "Eurotheater Central" right in the pedestrian precinct or the "Jugendtheater" in Beuel and the "Theater im Keller", supplemented by the cabaret and comedy theatres "Pantheon" at the Bundeskanzlerplatz and the improvisation theatre "Haus der Springmaus" in Enderich complete the programme.

For lovers of fine arts the first-class exhibitions at the "Museumsmile" (Museumsmeile) are definitely an attraction. More than 2 million national and international visitors annually come to the five museums belonging to the "Museumsmile". The "**Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany**", in which up to five different exhibition highlights can be seen sometimes (www.bundeskunsthalle.de), the "**Art Museum Bonn**" with the Rhenish Expressionists and German art after 1945 (www.bonn.de/Kunstmuseum) and the "**House of the History of the Federal Republic of Germany**" (Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland) with its exciting productions of the recent past (www.hdg.de) made a name for themselves also due to their architecture. The "**German Museum Bonn**" (Deutsches Museum Bonn), the first museum for temporary research and technology in Germany with original exhibits ranging from a Transrapid up to a Nobel-Prize awarded ionic trap (www.deutsches-museum-bonn.de), and the newly designed "**Museum Koenig**", one of the most famous natural history museums of Germany with the exciting production "Savannah – the varied paradise" (www.museum-koenig.de), also attract young visitors. All of these museums, however, are not the only ones belonging to the pallet of Bonn's Temples

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of the Muses: In the centre of Bonn further city museums located quite close to each other invite for a visit. Next to the world-wide known Beethoven-House, there is the **"City Museum Bonn"** (Stadtmuseum Bonn) at the Franziskanerstrasse with its collection featuring the 2,000-year-old city history, the **"Academic Art Museum"** (Akademisches Kunstmuseum) with one of the largest and oldest antique cast collections, the **"Egypt Museum"** (Ägyptisches Museum) of the University of Bonn as well as the memorial site of the **"Society at the Synagogue"** (Verein an der Synagoge). Quite close to the main train station the **"Rhenish National Museum"** (Rheinisches Landesmuseum) presents valuable testimonies of Rhenish history, art and culture (ranging from a Neanderthal skull up to modern wooden sculptures representing famous people like Konrad Adenauer or Heinrich Böll) in a subject-related building which was newly constructed. At the edge of the "Hofgarten" one will find the **"Arithmeum"** with its unique collection of mechanical calculators.

In the North of the city there are further attractions, such as the Europe-wide unique **"Women's Museum"** (Frauenmuseum) celebrating its 25-year anniversary in 2006, or the **"August Macke House"** (August-Macke-Haus) in which the Expressionist worked and lived from 1911 – 1914. The wealth of Temples of the Muses is very impressive for a city like Bonn with just 314,000 inhabitants.

Near to the university and the "Hofgarten" there is the **"Alter Zoll" (old customs)**, remains of the urban bastion. The view you have from here over the big stream to the "Siebengebirge" was called "the eighth Wonder of the World" by Alexander von Humboldt. The Rhine still has a special charm.

With a length of 29 kilometres on both banks, Bonn's Rhine promenade is the longest connected one at the biggest Central-European stream. Quiet walks, a stop at an inn in the chestnut gardens with a glass of wine and a view to the **"Siebengebirge"** – these are typical leisure pleasures, not only for guests, but also for the locals. Bonn is said to be the **"Gate to the Romantic Rhine"**, as from here up the river towards Bingen one will find that special part of the Rhine with plenty of vineyards, hills, castles, fortresses and idyllic villages, which has always been captivating travellers. Pleasure boats for tourists cruise up and down the river from Easter until the end of October. A very spectacular event can be experienced every first Saturday in May on the occasion of **"Rhine in Flames"** (Rhein in Flammen am Siebengebirge). For further information see: www.rhein-in-flammen-am-siebengebirge.de.

Inquiries for packages or hotel reservation:

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