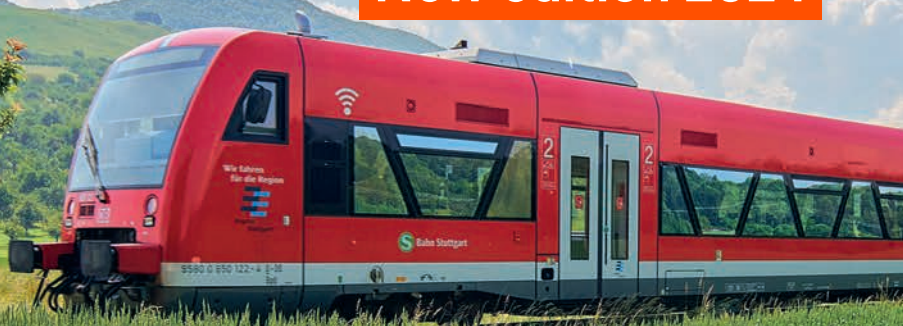


40 Favourite Destinations with the

VVS

New edition 2024



40

Dear VVS passengers,

With the very reasonably priced Deutschland-Ticket, our trains and buses don't just take you to work, to school, to the doctor or to the shops. The region also has plenty to offer in terms of leisure activities too! The VVS transport system is also a wonderful way to go place for hiking, swimming, or to dine out or party.

In 2018, to celebrate our 40th anniversary, we asked our passengers to tell us about their favourite destinations in the region. From the vast number of submissions, we selected 40 destinations to present to you in this brochure. They include scenic viewpoints, historical town centres, walking routes, lakes for swimming and much, much more.

You're now holding the revised version, with updated bus and train connections to take you to your chosen destination. However, we always recommend taking a look at our app "VVS Mobil" before you set off. For more information about the individual destinations, please visit vvs.de/freizeit.

We hope you enjoy reading about and discovering the 40 top destinations!

Best wishes, the VVS

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E-bike route

Travel through the Stuttgart region by bike



The e-bike route covers around 400 kilometres and circles round all five districts of the Stuttgart region. You can complete the route easily in ten stages, each between 30 and 50 kilometres. In addition to the very well signposted main route, there are also some secondary routes that you can use as short-cuts. The electrical support is really advantageous with the hilly region's many ups and downs! If you don't have your own pedelec, you can hire an electric bike from one of 45 networked bike hire points. There are more than 100 charging stations along the route in case you run out of battery – or breath – while you're out. If you're fit enough, you can also try to conquer the 4,000-metre total elevation gain with a normal bicycle.

You can visit many sights directly on the e-bike route itself, or with just a short detour from the cycle route, such as Teck Castle in the Lennin-

gen valley, the historical company town in the district of Göppingen, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Limes, Schloss Dätzingen in Grafenau or the prehistoric Urmensch Museum in Steinheim an der Murr. You pass through beautiful towns such as Bietigheim or Weil der Stadt, but you mainly travel across magnificent countryside such as Heckengäu, Schönbuch, Oberes Filstal or the Swabian Forest.

The start and finish of each stage is always at a train station, and therefore convenient to reach by city or regional trains. If you're planning a trip over several days, you will find all kinds of accommodation along the route.

> e-bike-region-stuttgart.de



© Rems-Murr Kreis/Ralph Steinemann

Freilichtmuseum Beuren / Beuren Open Air Museum

Immerse yourself in Swabian history



Step into the past – At the Beuren Open Air Museum, visitors can travel back in time to past centuries in the historical buildings. Here you will find a weaver's house, carpenter's workshop, village hall, bakery and wash house, among others, with each building telling the story of its Swabian residents. The 11-hectare grounds are surrounded by fields, meadows and pastures which are active farmland today. The arable crops in the small gardens are a real highlight. You can browse in the "Tante Helene Laden" – an authentic corner shop with goods from your grandmother's era. Children can also let off steam in a play area by the water and in a little half-timbered playhouse. If you start to feel a little peckish, museum guests have the opportunity to stop for a bite to eat in a farmer's cottage from 1726 or, if the weather permits, to enjoy some food in the garden café.

Visitors can also discover the open air museum as part of a guided tour or participate in the numerous hands-on activities. The museum is open from the end of March until the beginning of November.

Address: Freilichtmuseum Beuren, In den Herbstwiesen, 72660 Beuren
> freilichtmuseum-beuren.de

Connection: On the MEX12/18 to Tübingen, get off at Nürtingen and transfer to the RB65 heading to Neuffen, continue with bus 179/199 with destination Oberlenningen/Beuren and get off at Beuren Brühl (Freilichtmuseum), every half-hour to one hour; Sundays from May – October "Blaue Mauer" Rad- und Wanderbus 191



© Freilichtmuseum Beuren

Esslingen a.N. old town

The former free imperial city on the Neckar river



Esslingen's historical old town is beautiful and varied in equal measure. Medieval half-timbered houses, gothic churches, crooked cobbled alleys, resplendent palaces from the Baroque era, vineyards and the oldest sparkling wine manufacturer in Germany – you can find all this and more in Esslingen! As the town is situated directly on the Neckar, visitors have the opportunity to take a boat or canoe through the centre of the town in summer, or to participate in one of the many tours and learn how the town developed around the river over the centuries. It was practically a miracle that Esslingen remained almost intact through all the wartime destruction. In the old town, you will discover architecture and history from twelve different centuries.

The castle is one of the landmarks the town. It is a remnant of the medieval town fortifications which sit enthroned above today's town centre. Esslingen's castle is certainly worth a visit. Here you will find beautiful castle grounds, restaurants and, not least, the vast and marvellous view.

Another highlight is the town hall, which was built in 1422 and then embellished by court architect Heinrich Schickhardt a good 160 years later. It was originally used as a marketplace and tax office; today the "Alte Rathaus" is home to the town's register office. Visitors can listen to the Glockenspiel – the only one of its kind in southern Germany – each day at 8 am, 12 pm, 3 pm, 6 pm and 7.30 pm.

> esslingen.de

Connection: Take the S1, RE5 or MEX16 to Esslingen (N), transfer to bus 110 to Esslingen (N) Burg, several buses per hour



© Das Foto, Esslingen (all images on this page)

Bissingen See lake

Family friendly bathing lake promising relaxation

Bissingen an der Teck is nestled in an idyllic location at the foot of the Swabian Jura mountains. The location is one of the best starting points in the region for hiking the Albtrauf (Alp escarpment). You need around one hour to get from Bissingen to Breitenstein, which situated over 800 metres above it. Once you've reached the summit, you are treated to a marvellous view of the other mountains in the Swabian Jura and down into the valley as far as the state capital. It also isn't far to get to Teck Castle. It's even better when you end your walk in Bissingen and can jump into the lake to refresh yourself after the difficult hike.

American swimmer Gertrude Ederle, who wasn't just a world record holder and Olympic champion, but also the first woman to swim across the English Channel, is said to have learned to swim in the Bissingen See lake. Ederle was the daughter of German emigrants and spent some time in Bissingen an der Teck while visiting relatives in 1914.

The bathing lake in the greater Stuttgart area is up to four metres in depth and, thankfully, still relatively unknown. This is surprising, as it has a well maintained sunbathing area, a beach volleyball court, good water quality and is also suitable for families with children, especially as it is supervised by the German Life Saving Association during the summer. The lake is excellently situated for those travelling with the VVS: directly at the final stop of bus line 175, which connects with the city train from Kirchheim/Teck and runs every half an hour. Between May and October, the Rad-Wanderbus "Schopflocher Alb" (line 176) with bicycle trailer also stops there.

Connection: S1 to Kirchheim (T), continue with bus 175, (Mon–Fri every half-hour or bus 176, Sat/Sun hourly) to Bissingen See; Sundays from May – October "Schopflocher Alb" Rad- und Wanderbus 176



© Gemeinde Bissingen/Teck

Merkel'sches Bad pool

Art Nouveau swimming pool with thermal mineral water



© Martin Kögl

The Merkel'sche swimming pool first opened its doors in 1907 and is one of the most beautiful Art Nouveau style swimming pools far and wide. It combines history and modernity, and is well known in the town and beyond as a wellness oasis and a family and sports pool. In a listed historical building near Esslingen's old town, this modern thermal mineral pool with its spacious sauna landscape and extensive wellness offering appeals to relaxation seekers and athletes alike, and keen swimmers from near and far.

Visitors say that the thermal mineral water in the Merkel'sche swimming pool regenerates and revitalises you. It softens your skin, boosts your circulatory system and relaxes your muscles. It does this thanks to the mix of various minerals in the water which springs from 200 metres underground and invites you to bathe in a relaxing, Art Nouveau atmosphere at a comfortable 34 degrees.

Athletes can swim lengths in the 25 metre pool in the adjacent building, which is designed in a trendy, 60s retro style. The 1-metre and 3-metre diving boards and 5-metre tower round off the swimming pool nicely. One level down, there is a pool for families with children which is open on weekends for swimming lessons. With a water temperature of 30 degrees, it promises plenty of bathing fun for the whole family.

Address: Mühlstraße 6, 73728 Esslingen am Neckar

> swe.de/merkelsches-schwimmbad

Connection: Take the S1, RE5 or MEX16 to Esslingen (N), continue on bus 101 to Esslingen Schwimmbad, every 15 minutes, or in 10 minutes on foot from the train station directly to the pool

Hohenneuffen fortress ruins

Hike from Owen to Neuffen via the fortress



The eleven kilometre hike starts with a challenging climb. Hikers are rewarded, however, with breathtaking views along the Albtrauf. From Owen train station, the route starts with the red triangle (HW1, Schwäbischer Albverein) at the main street heading towards Beuren, along the railway tracks and through the Braike industrial estate. There you will find the beginning of a route along the meadow orchard, a path into the forest with some steep ascents in parts. Once at the top of the Brucker Fels, the 330 metres of elevation is done and most hikers find themselves out of breath, but can enjoy the beautiful views towards Beuren and Teck. There are no more significant climbs after this point.

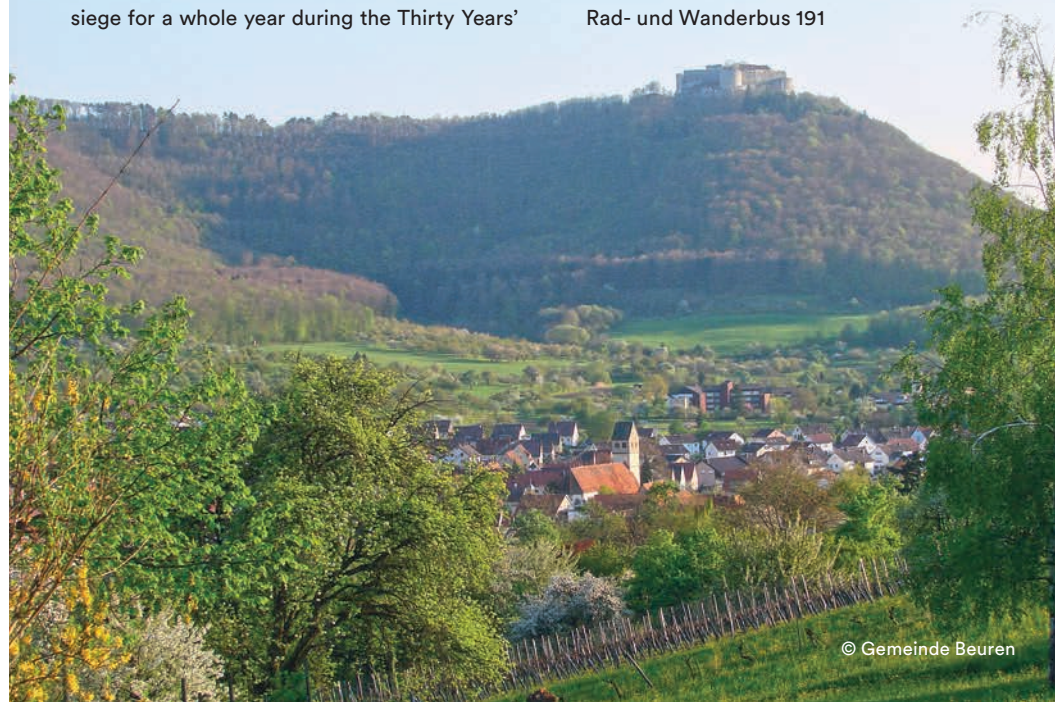
As you enter Erkenbrechtsweiler, the route leads you a little through the residential area before you reach the mountains once more. There, a fantastic panorama awaits. Once you pass the starting point for hang-gliding and paragliding and the Wilhelmsfels – with a fantastic view of Hohenneuffen – the route continues to the fortress ruins. For a long time, Hohenneuffen was believed to be impregnable and was kept under siege for a whole year during the Thirty Years'

War. According to legend, the fortress residents threw their last provisions into the enemy camp, causing the besiegers to believe that there were still plenty of provisions in the fortress and they withdrew. Hohenneuffen also hosted the memorable Drei-Länder-Konferenz in 1948, where preparations were made for the founding of Baden-Württemberg as a state in 1952.

After some refreshments at the kiosk in the fortress courtyard or something more substantial in the restaurant, hikers undertake a steep downhill walk through the vineyards with a gorgeous view. A good three kilometres later, you reach Neuffen train station and the "Tälesbahn" railway line to return towards Nürtingen and Stuttgart.

> hohenneuffen.de

Connection: Arrival: S1 to Kirchheim (T), continue with the R81 or bus 177 to Owen; Return: R82 to Nürtingen, continue with MEX18 towards Stuttgart; both connections Mon-Fri every half-hour, Sat/Sun every hour; Sundays from May – October "Blaue Mauer" Rad- und Wanderbus 191



© Gemeinde Beuren

Schopflocher Moor

Over the Randecker Maar to Mörikefelsen



© GeoPark Schwäbische Alb

Schopflocher Moor, a peat bog on the Swabian Jura mountains which stretches across the remnants of a volcanic vent, was still a peat extraction site up until the start of the 20th century. Today, thanks to its diverse flora and fauna, the area is a real El Dorado for hikers. One of the best ways to discover the Swabian Jura mountains is on a ten kilometre circular route around the mountain village of Ochsenwang. The most convenient way to get up into the Swabian Jura mountains is by bus.

The hike starts at the “Schopfloch Torfgrube” bus stop, next to the “Albengel” guesthouse (formerly Otto-Hofmeister-Haus). Not far behind the beer garden, you will find the start of the Bohlenweg trail which leads you through Schopflocher Moor. At the end of the Bohlenweg, the route continues towards Ochsenwang. Once there, you keep left to get onto Bissinger Straße street which takes you back out of the village. The hike continues to Breitenstein, with an elevation gain of 811 metres. On nice days, visitors are treated to a marvellous view of the Teck Castle ruins opposite, and into the foothills of the Swabian Jura mountains. The route continues on the Albtrauf (Alp escarpment) along to the “Auchert”

viewpoint, then downhill to Kreisstraße (K-road) and to the start of the Randecker Maar which, one million years ago, was a crater filled with water measuring one kilometre in diameter. From there, you can go straight back to the starting point, the “Schopfloch Torfgrube” bus stop, or you can take a detour to the organic farm “Ziegelhütte” and enjoy some refreshments or pick something up in the shop.

And by the way, if you have a head for heights, you should strike out from “Auchert” to “Mörikefels” as well. The viewpoint is named after the writer Eduard Mörike, who is sure to have swung his legs out over the one square metre cliff fairly often during his two-year stay in Ochsenwang.

> schwaebischealb.de

Connection: Take the S1 to Kirchheim (T), Mon–Fri with bus 175 to Bissingen, continue with bus 176 to Schopfloch Torfgrube, every hour, Sat/Sun with bus 176 from Kirchheim/Teck, every two hours; Sundays from May – October “Schopflocher Alb” Rad- und Wanderbus 176

Siebenmühlental

Get to know historical mills and the miller craft



The Siebenmühlental (seven mills valley) route between Leinfelden-Echterdingen and Waldenbuch is characterised by valley meadows filled with flowers and Romantic spots. The Reichenbach meanders through the idyllic valley and opens out into the Aich river below the Burkhardtsmühle mill. The entire route from the Eselsmühle mill to Waldenbuch along the Reichenbach stream is around seven kilometres. The route has not just seven mills in store for you to discover, as the name would suggest, but eleven mills in total. Four of these were built only after 1383, when the name of the valley was first mentioned in documented evidence, but the name was retained. A good place to take a break is the Mäulesmühle mill with its own museum, where visitors are given some insight into the miller craft.

The track takes hikers along the Bundeswanderweg for a while. This route is also very popular with cyclists and inline skaters. It leads you over the former tracks of the Siebenmühlentalbahn railway line which brought passengers from Leinfelden to Waldenbuch via Steinen-

bronn. From here you can see many majestic views of the landscape and the old mills, some of which are now restaurants and are great places to rest and eat.

Behind the former Steinenbronn railway station there is just one little street. Below and to the left, you can see the Schlösslesmühle mill. Here, the hiking route leads to the right and runs parallel to the road. It leads to Glashütte, past the Bachenmühle mill and finally to Waldenbuch, where hikers can explore the historical old town to round off the tour.

> leinfelden-echterdingen.de

Connection: Arrival: Take the S2 or S3 to Leinfelden, continue with bus 826 to Eselsmühle, every half-hour; Return: from Waldenbuch Postamt, take bus 826 to Echterdingen train station or bus 826 to Leinfelden train station, every half-hour, continue with S2 or S3 towards Stuttgart



© Adobe Stock

Schlossberg hill in Herrenberg

Through the old town and up the Schlossberg hill with its Stiftskirche collegiate church



The townscape of the old count palatine and “Oberamt” town of Herrenberg is dominated by the striking Stiftskirche church, which towers over the town at half the height of the Schlossberg hill. With its Baroque onion-shaped roof, it is the emblem of the town and the Gäu region. The “Gäuglucke” tower is home to the only bell museum in Europe with 30 bells from different parts of Europe.

From the train station in Herrenberg, it takes around 20 minutes to walk through the old town to the Schlossberg castle ruins. Once up the tower, you are rewarded with a marvellous view of Herrenberg, the Ammertal valley, the Swabian Jura mountains and the Heckengäu. Of the castle itself, which was first documented in 1228, only modest remnants can be seen today. At the start of the 19th century, most of it was demolished for construction materials. Today, you can still see a part of the

north defensive wall on the Schlossberg hill. Today’s viewing tower was built on the site of the former powder tower. In its time, the castle also included a functional building with two cellars, a typical hall and extensive circular walls and a keep, which was mainly unoccupied.

Underneath the castle, you can find the Schlosskeller, a traditional bar and restaurant with excellent views and plenty of culinary delights. It is made up of an arched cellar, a small annex with large windows and a terrace with room for around 170 guests.

> [herrenberg.de](https://www.herrenberg.de)

Connection: Take the S1 or RB14 to Herrenberg, every 15 minutes, from there, around 20 minutes on foot through the old town until you reach the Schlossberg hill



© Stuttgart Marketing

Burg Teck / Teck Castle

A challenging ascent to the ruins with a phenomenal view



Teck Castle is known for its fantastic view. If you hike from the train station in Owen (pronounced: Auen) via Bölle or from Bissingen/Teck via Hörnle on one of the various routes to the castle courtyard at 773 metres of elevation, you are rewarded with an unforgettable panorama of the foothills of the Swabian Jura mountains. On one side, you can see from the tower to the next castle along, Hohenneuffen. In the other direction, you can see Limburg in Weilheim and behind it, the three Kaiserberge in the district of Göppingen. On clear days, you can see out to the edges of the Black Forest, sometimes even the Alps.

There isn’t much left of the original castle. It was destroyed in the German Peasants’ War in 1525. A whole 250 years later, today’s viewing tower was built on the foundations of the keep. At the end of the 19th century, the Mörikehalle, today’s restaurant, was built next to it. Here you can enjoy a comfortable break and, just like the beautiful inner courtyard of the castle, it’s a beautiful spot to spend some time. Before the descent, you should definitely take a look into the “Sibyllenloch”. The hollow is directly underneath the castle walls when you walk in a counterclockwise

direction starting from the gate. Countless bones were discovered in this hollow, including those from cave lions, rhinos and mammoths.

According to legend, the hollow was home to a charitable woman. But her three sons were cut from a different cloth entirely. They built three castles in close proximity to each other and harassed the peasants and merchants from their castles: Rauber, Diepoldsborg and Wielandstein. The kind mother was ashamed and drove her fiery carriage, drawn by wild cats, away from there, so that she would never have to be near her sons anymore. If you look into the valley from Teck Castle today, you can sometimes see the marks that the carriage left behind as it slammed into the ground. They say that the grain grows particularly well in that spot.

> [burg-teck-alb.de](https://www.burg-teck-alb.de)

Connection: Take the S1 to Kirchheim (T), continue with R81 or bus 177 to Owen; alternatively from Kirchheim with bus 175 or 176 to Bissingen (T) Rathaus, both every half-hour, Sat/Sun every hour; from Owen or Bissingen, one hour’s hiking



Waldenbuch

The chocolate town

Not many people know this, But as well as the world famous chocolate manufacturer Ritter Sport and the Ritter Museum, Waldenbuch also has a historical old town that is definitely worth a visit. With its half-timbered houses, fountains and stairways in the historical old town centre, Waldenbuch exudes a very special charm. There are 22 information boards scattered throughout the historical town centre from the town hall to the Ritter Museum, which tell a little of the 700-year history of the town. Arranged in this way, they bring the history to life for the visitors, who feel like they've taken a step back in time, visiting the idyllic little town just as Schiller, Goethe and Uhland once did. There is a public town tour which takes place every first Sunday of the month at 11 o'clock between May and October. This tour is sure to entertain and amuse. The meeting point is the market fountain.

Before visitors strike out for home, they definitely need to pay a visit to the Ritter Museum. There are three to four alternating exhibitions each year, and they all have something in common: they combine the passion of the collector and museum founder Marli Hoppe-Ritter, the love of geometry – and the square shape, above all.

Just next door, every chocaholic is sure to get their money's worth at the Ritter Sport chocolate exhibition. You can round off your day in the museum café or on the spacious outdoor terrace.

- > waldenbuch.de
- > museum-ritter.de

Connection: Take the S2 to Echterdingen, continue with bus 828 to Waldenbuch Postamt; alternatively, take the S3 to Leinfelden, continue with bus 826 to Waldenbuch Postamt, every half-hour)



Pomeranzengarten

A piece of renaissance in Leonberg

The elegance, beauty and history of a garden world from the past await visitors in the Pomeranzengarten in Leonberg. Situated below the castle, it was designed in the 17th century by renowned court architect Heinrich Schickhard for Duchess Sibylla of Württemberg and, after many years of neglect, it was restored in 1980 based on the original plans. It is the only terraced garden from this period that remains in all of Germany.

When designing the garden, Schickhard drew inspiration from Italian garden design. Design elements such as railings, fountains and pavilions were arranged following a strict geometric pattern. To ensure these shapes are maintained in perpetuity, they were bordered with natural stone.

The Pomeranzen, or bitter oranges, were grown in tubs which stood in the centre line of the garden during the summer. They were overwintered in an orangery which stood where the pergola stands today.

Visitors can explore the garden all year round with its varied, colourful flowers and its aromatic plants, spice plants and medicinal plants. The Pomeranzengarten got its name from the bitter orange – Pomeranze is the alternative German name. At the time of Duchess Sibylla, owning such exotic plants was a demonstration of status and wealth.

- > leonberg.de

Connection: Take the S6/S60 to Leonberg, every 15 minutes, around 10 minutes on foot



Weil der Stadt

History as far as the eye can see

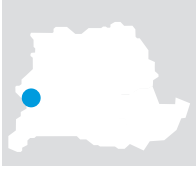


© Stuttgart-Marketing

The former “free imperial city” Weil der Stadt is picturesquely situated in Würmtal valley between Strohgäu and Heckengäu and the foreland of the Black Forest. The medieval townscape is characterised by the prominent town church of St. Peter and Paul, and the town wall with defensive towers which are largely still in good condition.



Brunnenfigur Kaiser Karls V. © wikimediacommons



Schönbuch Nature Reserve

From Holzgerlingen to Weil im Schönbuch

If you're looking to relax in nature, you're in the right place at the Schönbuch Nature Reserve. The well-signposted network of paths has a suitable route for every visitor, whether they're cycling, hiking or enjoying a stroll.

Dense forests, meadow orchards, moor areas and vineyards are the hallmarks of this natural idyll, situated between Herrenberg, Holzgerlingen and Tübingen. Schönbuch is not merely an oasis of flora and fauna, it's also a stretch of land with plenty of educational trails where you can learn many interesting facts about the forest's history, local history and geology.

You can discover nature on a pleasant hike from Holzgerlingen to Weil im Schönbuch, for instance. The 13-kilometre “Natura Trail” starts at the train station in Holzgerlingen and takes you via the Brühlweg trail to the Naturfreundehaus (house for nature lovers), via the Fraunehölzle woods to Breitenstein,

then to Weil im Schönbuch in the idyllic Totenbach valley with the Totenbachmühle mill and, from there, back to the train station in Weil im Schönbuch.

You can stop for a break in the Holzgerlingen train station, which has a restaurant with beer garden – a real hidden gem in the old station building. Out there on the trail, hikers can stop at the Stadtcafé Holzgerlingen, in the Naturfreundehaus in Holzgerlingen or in the Schützenhaus in Breitenstein.

> naturpark-schoenbuch.de

Connection: Arrival: Take the S1 to Böblingen, continue with the Schönbuchbahn R72 to Holzgerlingen Return: From Weil im Schönbuch, take the Untere Halde R72 to Böblingen, continue with S1 towards Stuttgart; both connections every half-hour Mon-Sat, Sun every hour

The pretty little town is not only known as the birthplace of astronomist and mathematician Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) and Protestant reformer Johannes Brenz (1499–1570). The town is also a stronghold of the traditional carnival, where elements of the Rhineland “Karneval” and the Alemannic “Fasnet” are combined. The large parade on the Sunday of Fasnet attracts tens of thousands of visitors each year.

It's also worth visiting Weil der Stadt at other times, however: the beautiful old town with the Narrenbrunnen, or fools' fountain, the square by the town hall and the Kepler Museum are certainly worth seeing.



Planetenweg, Venus © Ulrike Klumpp

If you enjoy a good walk, you shouldn't miss out on the Johannes-Kepler-Planetenweg: a beautiful walking route in northern Würmtal that takes you to a miniature scale model of our solar system. At around ten kilometres, it is one of the longest planet trails in Europe.

> weil-der-stadt.de

Connection: Take the S6 to Weil der Stadt, every 15 minutes



Marbach am Neckar

Schiller's picturesque town by the water



Surrounded by vineyards and orchards, the charming little town Marbach am Neckar is situated in the north of the VVS region. It isn't just known for its idyllic location on the Neckar river and its historical old town, the town is also known for its famous son – Friedrich Schiller. The writer was born on a house on Niklastorstraße – a place of pilgrimage for literature fans from near and far. Marbach rounds off its profile as a town of literature with the Schiller-Nationalmuseum, which opened in 1903, and the Museum of Modern Literature, which was built in 2006 according to plans by renowned English architect David Chipperfield.

You can explore the beauty of Schiller's birthplace on foot. The Alexanderkirche church is also worth visiting, as it is one of the most beautiful late gothic churches in southern Germany. From the Oberer Torturm, the town's former gate to the east, visitors have a fantastic view of the Neckar Valley and can also enjoy

the exhibition about the Oberer Torturm's history, and the history of Marbach's town fortifications.

If you are interested in learning about the town with the aid of a knowledgeable tour guide, the town of Marbach administration offers tours of the town on Sundays. And, if you haven't seen enough after the tour, you can discover Marbach's vineyards on foot, and enjoy the view from there.

> schillerstadt-marbach.de

Connection: Take the S4 to Marbach (N), around 5 minutes on foot to the old town; continue to the Schiller-Nationalmuseum with bus 457 to Schillerhöhe, Mon–Fri every 15 minutes, Sat/Sun every hour or around 15 minutes on foot



Schillerhöhe © Corinna Jacobs

Hohenasperg fortress

Prison with a view



The Hohenasperg fortress on the Zeugenberg is a popular day trip destination in the district of Ludwigsburg. At 360 metres of elevation, visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of the region and the surrounding vineyards. But there is also a dark side to this beauty – as the fortress was used as a prison for several centuries. Today, you can find the Hohenasperg prison hospital on the site, as well as the Baden-Württemberg social-therapeutic institution at Hohenasperg. You can reach the fortress, a former princely seat, on foot via the “Schwitzgässle” path. Visitors can immerse themselves in the history of Hohenasperg during a walk on the signposted circular route, or by visiting the museum “Hohenasperg – Ein Deutsches Gefängnis” (A German Prison). You can rest and recover in a rustic and historical atmosphere with traditional Swabian cuisine at the Schubart Stube.



> hdgbw.de/ausstellungen/hohenasperg

Connection: Take the S5 to Asperg, every half-hour, around 25 minutes on foot to Hohenasperg



© Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg

Wunnenstein hill

Marvellous view over the Bottwar and Neckar valleys



The Berggaststätte Wunnenstein comes highly recommended. It has a beer garden and features a spectacular view over to Lichtenberg Castle in Oberstenfeld.

A short detour on the way to Wunnenstein hill is especially worthwhile for keen hikers and wine lovers: the WeinErlebnisWeg Wunnenstein (Wunnenstein hill wine experience trail) offers a great deal of information, a beautiful hiking route, excellent refreshment options and unique views. You can also reach it via the Rad- und Wanderbus WeinKulTourer bus from the start of May to the end of October. This bus on line 464 operates on Sundays and public holidays, and is fitted with a trailer to take bicycles free of charge.

> grossbottwar.de

Connection: Take the S4 to Marbach (N), then bus 460 to Großbottwar Bachstraße, every half-hour, around one hour's hike to Wunnenstein

The view from Wunnenstein hill stretches over the Bottwar and Neckar valleys all the way to the Löwenstein Hills. It's therefore not surprising that the hill, with its 400 metres of elevation above Winterhausen, is one of the most popular day trip destinations in the region.

Under the protection of the Franconian royal court, the first Christian primitive and mission church was built on Wunnenstein hill in the 8th or 9th century. There is nothing left of it today, however: on the spot where the little church, dedicated to Saint Michael, once stood, there is now an imposing viewing tower. The Schwäbischer Albverein (Swabian Alpine association) arranged for three orientation boards to be affixed to the tower.

Blooming Baroque

A fairy-tale garden



The Blooming Baroque in Ludwigsburg is the oldest permanent horticultural show in Germany and attracts more than 500,000 visitors from all around the world each year. There are around 30 hectares of horticultural delights to discover around the residential palace, which was built at the start of the 18th century at the behest of Eberhard Louis, Duke of Württemberg, and the legendary fairy-tale garden. Here, visitors can stroll around in a Romantic setting forgotten by time, between curved gardens and the seemingly wild yearning for nature. Enchanting hidden gems and the Baroque sensuality of past times offer guests a relaxing experience. If you want more than just a walk around the grounds, there are guided tours all year round in which you can find out more about the horticultural challenges and the historical background of the gardens.

The fairy-tale garden located behind the palace is especially delightful for children.

On the journey by boat across the fairy-tale stream, they can experience the stories of "Clever Elsie", "The Brave Little Tailor" and "Pinocchio". The Fairy-tale Express also offers an exciting trip around the enchanting fairy-tale world.

The gardens at the front and rear of the palace invite you to relax with their colourful flowerbeds and water fountains.

If you buy your tickets online, they include a VVS Kombi-Ticket for the round trip (outbound and return) without any additional charge.

> blueba.de



Connection: Take the S4/S5 or RE8 to Ludwigsburg train station, continue with bus 422, 425 or 431 to Blühendes Barock, several times per hour, or around 20 minutes on foot to the palace



© Adobe Stock

Felsengärten Hessigheim / Hessigheim Rock Gardens

“Swabian Dolomites” in the nature reserve

Whether on foot, by bike, on water or on a rope – the Hessigheim Rock Gardens, the nature reserve on the Neckar that is visible from far afield, are always worth a trip. The unique shell limestone rocks are famous for the magnificent view that they offer from their imposing and rugged location above the water. Anyone who comes here will also find many rare plant and animal species.

The rock garden’s winery has established a circular hiking route that provides many interesting facts about wine cultivation on steep slopes. Visitors should definitely not miss a wine tasting. If you prefer to cycle, you can tackle one of the most beautiful parts of the Neckar Valley cycle path. The fantastic route below the rock garden winery leads over the Neckar and then left of the river to Besigheim. The section is also ideally suited to cyclists or inline skaters, who can expect an unforgettable experience in nature here: vineyards, orchards, gardens, fields and mixed forests – and all of

this against the impressive backdrop of the rocks.

Sports climbers can climb up high in the rock gardens. The dizzying rock formations are a paradise for both beginners and experienced climbers, because they offer routes of all levels of difficulty. And everyone gets to enjoy, including hikers and walkers, who can spectate with both feet safely on the ground. On the water, you can either take the Neckar boat trip past the nature reserve or travel by canoe.

> hessigheim.de

Connection: Take the S4 to Freiberg (N), continue with bus 459 to Hessigheim Gartenstraße. Alternatively, take the MEX12, MEX18, RE8 to Besigheim, continue with bus 459 to Hessigheim Gartenstraße, all hourly



© Landratsamt Ludwigsburg

Neckar beach at Remseck

A beach on your doorstep



© Stadt Remseck

Just past the city limits of Stuttgart, near the final stop of tram line U12, visitors will find the Neckar beach in Remseck. The sandy beach stretches out for around 100 metres and is located at the point where the Neckar and Rems rivers meet. The roughly 350 cubic metres of pure, natural sand – which contribute to the unique atmosphere – were not dumped there by lorry; they were actually washed up there by the two rivers. A game of volleyball by the water or a cosy sunbather in the sand: not a problem on the Neckar beach in Neckarremms. Above the sandy beach, visitors can get comfortable on low walls, and the vast meadow is also a great place for families to play and chill directly by the water.

The beach isn’t just a good place for sunbathers to relax and unwind; the area is also popular with walkers, hikers and cyclists. With the Neckar Valley cycle path, the Alb-Neckar cycle path, the Rems valley cycle route and the Würtemmberger wine cycle path,

four long-distance cycle paths lead directly past the Neckar beach. From the final stop of the U12 in Neckargröningen, a 13-kilometre themed trail leads to Ludwigsburg to the district boundary in Benningen. More than 30 information boards provide information about the flora and fauna on the river and on the banks.

The restaurant with beer garden “Bootshaus am Hechtkopf” invites you to stay a while in an idyllic location on the Hechtkopf headland.

> stadt-remseck.de

Connection: Take the U12 to Remseck. Alternatively, take the S3 to Waiblingen, continue with bus 432 to Neckargr. Stadtbahn, Mon–Fri every half-hour

Punting

Explore “Swabian Tuscany” by water

Vaihingen an der Enz is situated around 30 kilometres outside of Stuttgart, between the Enz valley and the Stromberg-Heuchelberg nature reserve. Surrounded by rolling hills, meadows and forests, winegrowing and wine culture have a long tradition in this “International Town of Vines and Wine”. It’s not for nothing that the landscape is also referred to as “Swabian Tuscany”. Picturesque half-timbered houses and narrow alleyways with dreamy corners characterise the medieval town centre with its very prominent landmark, Kaltenstein Castle.

On a punting trip, visitors can sit back in the boat and enjoy the calm beauty of the town from the water. And as the town passes before your eyes, the punter talks through some of its interesting history: for instance how the Enz

between Lohmühle mill and the tanneries was used as a transport route for ground bark, which was used to process the leather. The Enz also supplied the necessary water for the tannery.

The banks of the Enz were redesigned in 2014. The large platform overlooking the Enz is an inviting spot to spend some time enjoying the view. The punting trips start from a small wooden platform. A trip takes around an hour and a half and offers magnificent views of the Enz wetlands, historical buildings and, of course, plenty of nature.

> vaihingen.de

Connection: Take the IRE1 to Vaihingen (E), continue with bus 592 to Enzbrücke, every half-hour



Hohenbeilstein Castle

Birds of prey and wine

The town of Beilstein is situated in the far north of the network region. Until the mid-1960s, it was possible to take the Bottwar valley railway from Marbach to Beilstein. Today they are considering reactivating the route. But visitors can easily reach the town without the train.

An interesting destination is Hohenbeilstein Castle which towers above the town and dates from the 13th century. It consists of the “Langhans” – a five-sided keep 28 metres in height which you can climb and use as a viewing tower, a thick defensive wall and several ancillary buildings. From the tower, you have a marvellous view of the town, the surrounding vineyards and forests and the entire Bottwar valley. In the area below the castle, you can find a restaurant and a falconry today. The castle falconry is a private birds of prey centre and

breeding station for around 100 birds of prey from around the world: buzzards, falcons, eagles, vultures and nocturnal birds such as true owls, eagle owls and barn owls. The highlight is the flying demonstrations of the birds which takes place daily (apart from Mondays) at the castle.

Hohensteilbein is also the perfect starting or end point for hikes into the Bottwar valley or Löwenstein hills. Not far from the castle is a special quality winery for the region, the Schlossgut Hohenbeilstein.

> beilstein.de

Connection: Take the S4 to Marbach (N), continue with bus 460 to Beilstein Langhans, Mon–Sat every half-hour, Sun every hour



© Beilstein

Sculpture trail

Art among the vineyards of Strümpfelbach



“Art has broken out of the museum and into the great outdoors”, is how one of the town’s tours describes the sculpture trail in Strümpfelbach. On the almost three-kilometre trail among the vineyards above the town, you can find 43 sculptures made of bronze and stone. These are pieces created by three generations of the artist family Nuss.

The bronze lute player by the community hall signals the start of the trail. Before going up into the vineyards, Bacchus, the god of wine, greets you at the bottom of the slopes. The sculptures spread over various exposed locations along the entire trail invite you to daydream and contemplate. They depict people in everyday situations and positions. The visitors are called upon to have a think about what they themselves see in the figures.

The person who first had the idea, and initiator of the exhibition, is the artist Karl Ulrich Nuss from Strümpfelbach who, in 1971, also designed the head relief of former German Federal President Heuss which could be found on the old two-mark coin. There are also bronze works by his father Professor Fritz Nuss and stone sculptures by his grandchildren Christoph Traub and Felix Engelhardt.

Karl Ulrich Nuss lives in his estate right at the entrance to the path, easy to recognise by the many sculptures around the house.

> weinstadt.de

Connection: Take the S2 to Endersbach, continue with bus 202 to Strümpfelbach Rathaus, Mon–Fri every half-hour, Sat/Sun every hour



© Stuttgart-Marketing

Schorndorf

Historical old town with rail connection



The town of Schorndorf is renowned across the state as the birthplace of the inventor Gottlieb Daimler, who was born almost 200 years ago. This is why Schorndorf is also referred to as “Daimlerstadt”, or Daimler town. The house in the Höllgasse where he was born is open to guests as a museum. However, the town’s famous son is not the only thing that makes the town on the Rems special; it’s also the town’s historical flair, above all. The town, with its 40,000 strong population, boasts many well-preserved half-timbered houses. The market square in particular with its Baroque town hall is a noteworthy gem.

At the centre of Schorndorf, right next to the gothic town church, you can find two 350-year-old charming and recently renovated half-timbered houses: the former Latin school and the German school. These buildings house the town’s museum, which covers 900 square metres of exhibition space and provides

insights into the town and cultural history of Schorndorf and its surrounding area.

The market square is a mere stone’s throw from the train station – Schorndorf has an old town with a rail connection! Our tip: near the station, the TAS OS Skybar is located on the upper two floors of the Postturm tower. From above, you have a fantastic view of the historical town centre and the Rems valley. A detour to Schorndorf is worthwhile for this reason alone. If you’re interested in art and culture, “Club Manufaktur” has just the right programme for you – since the 1970s, the venue has played host to nationally acclaimed concerts and a diverse range of films, workshops and courses.

> schorndorf.de

Connection: Take the S2 or MEX13 to Schorndorf



© Stadt Schorndorf

Schwäbische Waldbahn / Swabian Forest Railway

Full steam ahead in the Swabian Forest!



One of the steepest railway lines in Baden-Württemberg is located in the VVS region and runs from Schorndorf via Rudersberg and Oberndorf to Welzheim.

On the approximately 23-kilometre journey, passengers can enjoy the wild and Romantic scenery of the Swabian Forest. The old vehicles are operated by a group of railway enthusiasts, the association DBK Historische Bahn e.V., on a voluntary basis and they run the service on all Sundays and public holidays between May and October, as well as on the first two Sundays of Advent. On half of the days of operation, a steam locomotive huffs and puffs its way up the mountain; on other days, the historical car is pulled by a diesel locomotive. The soundtrack is a real treat: 15 episodes of interesting facts and stories by "Schaffner Schnauffer", the train's conductor. You can listen to all the sound files by calling a number on your mobile, or by downloading them from schwaebischerwald.com. You can also bring bicycles on board free of charge. There's even space for wheelchairs or walking frames.

Hiking enthusiasts can expect a very special tour on the train experience trail: on the one hand, it is an educational trail about the history of the more than 100-year-old heritage-listed railway line between Schorndorf, Rudersberg and Welzheim, on the other hand, it is one of the most beautiful hiking trails in the Swabian Forest. If you're interested, you can enjoy the hike without any baggage and with a guide. The train experience trail is a service trail in the Swabian Forest hiking region.

> schwaebischerwald.com

> schwaebische-waldbahn.de

Connection: Take the S2 or MEX13 to Schorndorf, every half-hour, continue with the Swabian Forest Railway, 3 journeys on Sundays and on public holidays



© DBKEV

UNESCO World Heritage Site Limes

Experience Roman history from the 2nd century



The Limes marks the border of the Roman Empire of antiquity from the Rhine to the Danube and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2005. In the VVS region, it starts at Mainhardt, runs straight over the unique Limes visualisation at Großlarch, which gives visitors a good idea of where the border was, via Murrhardt, Kaisersbach, Welzheim and Alfdorf.

The forts, watchtowers, walls and palisades, which the Romans once used to guard their empire against the "barbarians", are still worth seeing today. With its reconstructions and stone sculptures, the Ostkastelle, or east fort, in Welzheim is the ideal place for a journey through time into Roman history. From May to October, the Limes-Cicerones lead visitors through the archaeological park on Sundays and public holidays and give an impression of Roman everyday life.

In the museum, visitors can even travel through antiquity in three dimensions with the virtual Limes worlds.

If you want to see even more of the Limes, you can hike along the Limes hiking trail – one of the service hiking trails in the Swabian Forest hiking region.

> schwaebischerwald.com

> limes-cicerones.de

> welzheim.de

Connection: Take the S2 or MEX13 to Schorndorf, continue with bus 263 to Welzheim Bethel, Mon–Fri every hour, or approx. 15 minutes on foot to Welzheim Kirchplatz, Saturdays every hour, approx. 10 minutes on foot or with bus 263 to Welzheim Brunnenstraße, Sundays every 1–2 hours, approx. 15 minutes on foot, Sundays from May – October Waldbus 265



Ostkastell © Welzheim

Ebnisee

Relaxation for the whole family



© Stuttgart Marketing

Idyllic landscapes, vast forests and fresh, clean water invite you to relax. The Ebnisee in Kaisersbach is the largest lake in the Swabian Forest – and in summer it is a popular destination for bathers, hikers and those seeking relaxation. The almost seven-hectare former rafting lake with excellent water quality is not just the perfect leisure destination for swimmers. Families can hire pedalos, play in the playground or relax in the sunbathing areas, or enjoy a picnic at one of the barbecue areas. The path around the lake is suitable for wheelchair users.

The surrounding forests are also perfect for a stroll. Anyone who wants to be a bit more active can go on one of the many hikes around the lake. For example, the 14-kilometre tour from the hiking car park via the hamlet of Hägerhof and down into the Strümpfelbach valley is highly recommended. Continue through the Romantic forest valley and on the Brunnen- and Bächlesweg trail with its many springs. The path leads partly over wooden

planks and bridges, past picturesque waterfalls to Rotenmad.

On the way back to the lake, you can find the natural monument Gallengrotte hidden at the end of a gully near the Sommerbach river. The backs of the rocks, which are up to seven metres high, are coloured black-green in places because of algae growth. Water sometimes trickles down the rock faces, creating a mystical atmosphere.

> schwaebischerwald.com
> kaisersbach.de

Connection: Take the S2 or MEX13 to Schorndorf, continue with the bus 263 to Kaisersbach Ebnisee, Mon–Sat every hour, Sundays from May – October Waldbus 265

Hörschbachschlucht / Hörschbach Gorge

Just like a primordial forest: natural spectacles



© Stuttgart Marketing

The wild and Romantic Hörschbach Gorge with its waterfalls offers an impressive experience in nature, especially for children. The roughly 10-kilometre circular hike from the train station in Murrhardt takes you to Hörschbach Gorge via the nature reserve centre and the Walterichskirche church.

It takes about one hour to get from the first waterfall to the last waterfall, which falls as a cascade for a total of 12 metres. Here, there is a narrow path which leads up to a small reservoir where the lock can be opened. When the water pours down the steps of the waterfall with great force, anyone watching will get to see an extraordinary, albeit brief, spectacle.

Along the way, hikers pass steep slopes and jungle-like spots with rough and slippery terrain. Sturdy footwear is therefore a must. You can stop for a rest and something to eat at the inn “Zum Wasserfall”.

Hörschbach Gorge is situated on the Swabian Forest path – one of the service routes in the Swabian Forest hiking region.

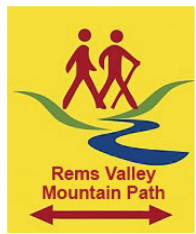
> schwaebischerwald.com
> murrhardt.de

Connection: Take the MEX19 to Murrhardt, Sundays from May – October Limesbus 372 and 375



Remstal-Höhenweg / Rems Valley Mountain Path

With stages on both sides of the Rems



© Tourismusverein Remstal-Route

Extensive winegrowing areas, meadow orchards, historical small towns, fields and forest – the 226-kilometre Rems Valley Mountain Path is a great opportunity for hikers to experience the varied landscape. The hiking route winds at half elevation south of the Rems from Fellbach in the Rems-Murr district to the source of the Rems in Esslingen in the Swabian Jura mountains. From there, it leads north of the Rems again towards the mouth of the Neckar. Hikers can stop at numerous tourist destinations along the route, such as the sculpture trail in Strümpfelbach, Korber Kopf hill or Lorch Abbey.

The trail is made up of twelve stages, about half of which lead through the VVS region. There are routes to access the mountain path from the stations of the Rems railway. The VVS travel fare applies until Lorch.

On the first stage from Fellbach to Strümpfelbach, for example, the Kernenturm tower on the high Schurwald is definitely worth

a visit. This tower offers a wonderful panoramic view of the Swabian lowlands. Heading downhill towards Kern in the Rems valley, a beautiful view of the district of Stetten awaits with Yburg Castle, the historic landmark of the wine village. From Yburg Castle, the route continues to Strümpfelbach. From there, tired hikers can take the bus for the return journey.

> remstalweg.de

Connection: Arrival: Take the S2 or S3 to Fellbach. Alternatively, take the U1 to Fellbach Lutherkirche; Return: From Strümpfelbach Rathaus, take bus 202 to Endersbach, continue with the S2 heading to Stuttgart, Mon–Fri every half-hour, Sat/Sun every hour

Korber Kopf hill

Marvellous starting point for the sculpture circuit



At 458 metres high, Korber Kopf is much more than just a beautiful place offering a great view of the vineyards, Korb itself, the Rems valley and, on clear days, the Swabian Jura mountains.

Korber Kopf is also the starting point for the now widely known sculpture circular trail “Köpfe am Korber Kopf”. Established in 2007, the circular trail allows you to experience art in the great outdoors, in the most beautiful nature and against a backdrop of changing seasons. Every year, the sculpture trail presents ten new works of art. Most are created by professional artists and always relate to the theme “head” (“Kopf” in German). Some sites are reserved for pieces by schools and local clubs.

Not far from Korber Kopf there are other viewpoints high above the Rems valley, such as Hörnleskopf and Kleinheppacher Kopf. All three “Köpfe”, or “heads”, are located one after the other on a section of the Rems

valley mountain path. At Kleinheppacher Kopf, you will find a large rest area with a mountain hut, benches, children’s playground and barbecue facilities. Visitors can also watch the hang-gliders, who start their flight above the Rems valley from there.

It is also highly recommended to take a detour to the Schützenhaus beer garden, a few minutes from Korber Kopf – a quiet and very idyllic place for stressed city dwellers and of course a rest stop for hikers on the Rems valley mountain path.

> korb.de

Connection: Take the S2 or S3 to Waiblingen, continue with bus 209 to Korb Seeplatz, from there approx. 20 minutes on foot through the vineyards (Mon–Sat every half-hour, Sundays take bus 209 or 210 every hour)

© Christoph Schütz, Gemeinde Korb



Märklineum

Famous model trains delight guests both young and old



Around 200,000 visitors per year explore the exciting history of the company and its world-famous model trains on a tour of the Märklin Museum in Göppingen. Visitors can look forward to valuable treasures from the company's 150-year history: from toys for girls to digitally controlled model trains, the wide range of historical and current Märklin products is documented and presented.

Another focus of the experience is the large Märklin Store, where you can find the entire Märklin product range – locomotives, accessories and first-hand specialist advice. The fan shop has many special products for enthusiasts. Here, collectors will find the coveted museum cars, which are reserved only for visitors to the museum.

The Märklin days take place every two years in September: this is a big family event where everything revolves around trains big and small. Numerous exhibitors display

their lovingly designed model train systems, while the originals can be admired at the station.

The town of Göppingen also offers a variety of opportunities to explore the city: visitors can learn more about the town's history on a historical tour of the town on foot or by e-bike.

> maerklineum.de

Connection: Take the RE5 or MEX16 to Göppingen, continue with bus 6 to Ulmer/Reutlinger Straße, Mon–Sat every hour, Sundays every 2 hours



© Märklin

“Sinneswandel” Adventure Path

Slowing down on the nature experience trail in Bad Boll



The “Sinneswandel” in Bad Boll is one of the top destinations in the region for nature-loving families. Just one thing before we start: flip-flops and high heels have no place on the nature trail, which is just under two kilometres long. Even if it hasn't rained for a long while, there's still plenty of mud, to the great delight of kids, as shown by past experience. If you're properly dressed, you can visit and enjoy the trail in any weather. Time, space, the chance to slow down and pure nature await.

Visitors follow the Pappelweg way near the Evangelical Academy in Bad Boll until they reach the start of the path below the playground. There they will find a board with an overview and a map. The route is also well signposted, though. Right at the beginning, nature lovers pass by the Badbächle stream. This is followed by eleven stations for the visitors to enjoy, such as the oak tree labyrinth, the pasture thicket or the pendulum and the forest bridge. The trail then goes deeper into

the forest to the treetop mat or into the forest of sound. If you're brave, you can abseil into a gully. Otherwise you can take the path next to it. This is where it gets really sticky. In places, the mud reaches ankle height and you might even get stuck – this is lots of fun for adults as well as children, provided you're dressed appropriately. If you'd prefer not to get muddy, just stick to the path, but then you will also miss out on the nature experience.

At the end there are even more highlights, such as the washing system for shoes, and the excellent playground with swings, a see-saw, ropeway and more, as well as a barbecue area and a football pitch. Don't forget your picnic blanket and let go of your cares for an hour or two.

> raus-mit-uns.de/sinneswandel-bad-boll

Connection: Take the RE5 or MEX16, continue with bus 20/21 to Bad Boll Ev. Akademie/Reha-Klinik, every hour



© Tourismusbüro Bad Boll

Filsursprung / Source of the Fils

An insider tip for beautiful family hikes



Anyone who comes from the Kitchheim/ Teck or Göppingen areas will surely know the “Filsursprung”, the origin of the Fils river, in the picturesque town of Wiesensteig from their childhood. For most others though, this is more of an insider tip. Visitors both young and old flock there, especially on hot days. The Filsursprung is not just a beautiful destination for a family hike; you can enjoy fantastic barbecues and splash around in the ankle-high water. If you want to extend your hike, you can walk through the idyllic Hasental valley to Schertelshöhle (Westerheim), continue via the little train station to Reußenstein and then walk back to Wiesensteig.

From the centre, the route leads through the picturesque town nestled in the steep slopes 2.5 kilometres to the west towards Papiermühle. From there, visitors can choose between two different paths: either a well-trodden path west of the Fils or the gravelled

path that runs east of the river. Both routes take you to the tranquil spot after 1.5 kilometres without a car. There awaits you the small, picturesque green valley where the river springs up and splashes peacefully along. Steps lead down to the shallow water. A public barbecue area and sunny meadows invite you to play and spend a bit of time. From its source, the Fils winds its way for about two kilometres through the narrow valley to Wiesensteig, and flows via Geislingen and Göppingen as a larger river until it reaches Plochingen 63 kilometres later where it joins the Neckar.

> wiesensteig.de

> schwaebischealb.de

Connection: Take the RE5 or MEX16 to Geislingen, continue with bus 966A or 981 to Wiesensteig Rathaus, Mon–Fri, every half-hour, Sat/Sun every hour



Hohenstaufen

From Lorch to Hohenstaufen via Wäscherschloss



Our starting point is Lorch, which is part of the Ostalbkreis district but which is integrated into the VVS region in terms of public transport. From the station, you head up to the famous Lorch Abbey, which can be seen from far and wide thanks to its prominent height above the Rems valley. Our hike does not take you to the Abbey, however, but rather from the station along the main hiking route of the Schwäbischer Albverein association, which is well signposted with a red bar and black lettering HW 7. It starts with a steep ascent towards Oberkirneck and on to Wäscherhof and the castle, Wäscherschloss.

From there, the route leads through the idyllic valley of the small stream Beutenbach, then up to Maitis and onwards to Hohenstaufen. The ascent is an elevation gain of 684 metres and it will take some effort to get up there – but you are rewarded with an excellent view. Once at the top, hikers stand among the ruins of the famous ancestral castle of the Staufers, the former Hohenstaufen Castle. Now you're

here, it's probably time for something to eat. The renovated mountain restaurant “himmel und erde” invites you to stop for a while.

After that, a steep descent begins. In the village of Hohenstaufen, right on the way down from the summit, you should definitely visit the Barbarossakirche church, which was built at the end of the 15th century. At this point, you have hiked ten kilometres. If you've had enough, you can easily take the bus down to Göppingen. Everyone else can continue on the Jakobsweg and Glaubensweg to the centre of Hohenstaufen, where numerous cafés and restaurants in the pedestrianised area await tired hikers. The complete tour to Göppingen is 20 kilometres long.

> burgruine-hohenstaufen.de

> burg-waescherschloss.de

Connection: Arrival: Take the MEX13 or MEX16 to Lorch; Return: From Göppingen, take the RE5 or MEX16 towards Stuttgart



© Stuttgart-Marketing GmbH, A. Mende

Mineral baths

Healing springs pamper bathers in three baths

Stuttgart has the greatest number of mineral water sources in Western Europe. A total of 19 springs spout 22 million litres of water with different minerals every day – some with carbon dioxide. 13 of the springs are recognised as healing springs. All these springs pamper bathers with swimming and saunas at the LEUZE mineral bath, Cannstatt salt water bath and Berg mineral bath, or their water is used for various therapies.

At LEUZE, the nine swimming and bathing pools are filled with healing water containing carbon dioxide, a water area of almost 1,700 square metres with temperatures from fresh 20 degrees to a pleasant 34 degrees. There is an impressive sauna area with 3,300 square metres and 13 different offers – not to mention the sun terraces and panoramic sauna. There's a very good reason why the LEUZE was awarded four stars by the German

Spa Association as a "Wellness Stars Therme" and given five stars as a premium sauna by the Sauna-Bund sauna association.

In the Cannstatt salt bath, everything revolves around the balance of body, mind and soul. The combination of swimming in mineral water and architecture with plenty of natural light and the different water attractions delight the many guests looking to relax. Visitors can dive and relax in eight different pools and four saunas as well as a steam bath.

> stuttgarterbaeder.de/leuze

> stuttgarterbaeder.de/solebadcannstatt

> stuttgarterbaeder.de/mineralbadberg

Connection: LEUZE: Take the U1, U2 or U14 to Mineralbäder; Solebad Cannstatt: Take the U2 to Kursaal



© MineralBad Cannstatt

Hoppenlaufriedhof cemetery

A historical monument directly in the city

The Hoppenlaufriedhof is a cemetery not far from Stuttgart's Liederhalle conference centre, and it can truly be described as a museum of stone. It has already served as a venue for artistic productions. The cemetery was established in the north west of Stuttgart in 1626, while the plague ravaged the city. It is now one of the oldest surviving burial sites in Stuttgart. Over a period just about 250 years, around 70,000 people were laid to rest here.

Today the Hoppenlaufriedhof is a listed site. No more people have been interred here

since 1880. With the important tombstone art, it is part of the Schwäbische Dichterstraße, or Swabian poet's road, which has existed since 1976, and invites you to search for traces of the city's past or to remove yourself from the city bustle. Among those buried here are Stuttgart poets and writers Gustav Schwab and Wilhelm Hauff.

> hoppenlaufriedhof.info

Connection: Take bus 42 or 43 to Rosenberg-/Seidenstraße



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Waldheime / Forest clubhouses

Refreshments after a challenging walk in the forest



The Waldheime, or forest clubhouses, are extremely popular destinations for the people of Stuttgart, especially in summer when they want to escape the warm air of the city. They were founded in the early 20th century in several districts by Waldheim associations, which came from the workers' movement. The Nazis disbanded the associations and confiscated the clubhouses. After the war, the Waldheim associations started back up and reopened the popular day trip locations, which also served as meeting rooms for various organisations from the workers' movement.

Later, religious forest clubhouses were also founded, which offer recreation activities for city children during the summer holidays. As the name suggests, most of the forest clubhouses are situated in idyllic places in the forest, where they offer something to eat and drink, beautiful spaces outside under a canopy of trees, and generous play facilities for children.

Two of the most popular shelters in the state capital are the Clara-Zetkin-Haus in Sillenbuch and the Waldheim Heslach. Both are nestled in paradisaical locations surrounded by orchards on the edge of the forest, with large play areas and good and affordable refreshments. Waldheim

Heslach is especially known for its Maultaschen, a Swabian delicacy similar to large ravioli. Both forest clubhouses are great places to serve as the end stop for a walk to rest and maybe have something to eat. Today, the forest clubhouses are usually operated by a third-party leaseholder and are open to everyone.

Clara-Zetkin-Haus in Sillenbuch
Gorch-Fock-Straße 26, 70619 Stuttgart
Open from Tuesday to Sunday (in winter:
Wednesday to Sunday)
> waldheim-stuttgart.de

Connection: Take the U7 to the Silberwald stop, around 10 minutes on foot to Waldheim

Waldheim Heslach
Dachswaldweg 180, 70569 Stuttgart
Open daily (September to April, closed on Wednesdays)
> waldheim-heslach.de

Connection: Take the S1, S2 or S3 to Universität, continue with bus 82 to Dachswald (every 20 minutes), around 5 minutes on foot to the Waldheim clubhouse



Art Nouveau Tea House

Café with a view in Weißenburg Park



© Stuttgart-Marketing GmbH

The Tea House in Weißenburg Park is located on the beautiful heights of the Weinsteige to the south east of the state capital. Here, families, day trippers and celebrities all come to enjoy coffee and cake in the Art Nouveau roundhouse or in the spacious beer garden. From here, you have an excellent view of Stuttgart. The café also serves wine, beer and savoury dishes.

The industrialist Dr Ernst von Sieglin had the tea house built in 1913, including a marble hall, a villa and a tennis court. The Tea House was built as a gift for his wife, who was able to entertain guests there over a pot of tea. Weißenburg Park was given new paths and viewing terraces – with a panoramic view of the city – as part of the Bundesgartenschau in 1961.

The tea house is open every day from 11 am and 11 pm between March and October. Before the season starts, it is only open at weekends and during the week depending on the weather.

A stone's throw away, incidentally, is the Schiller oak tree, which was planted in memory of the national poet Friedrich Schiller. In his day, he performed his drama "The Robbers" in the park to his freedom-loving companions. The 170-year-old oak tree decorates the Schillerhöhe viewpoint, which offers a fantastic view of the west and Birkenkopf.

> teehaus-stuttgart.de

Connection: Take the U5, U6, U7 or U12 to the Bopser stop, from there, approx. 15 minutes on foot to the Tea House

Bärenschlössle

Meeting point at the Stuttgart Bärenseen lakes



The Bärensee lakes (Bärensee, Neuer See and Pfaffensee) and the Bärenschlössle, a former princely hunting lodge, are among the most popular day trip destinations for Stuttgart residents today; a meeting point for walkers, joggers, cyclists and anglers.

The Pfaffensee lake was artificially dammed by order of Duke Christoph in 1566, later followed by the Bärensee and the Neuer See lakes, to safeguard Stuttgart's drinking water supply.

The Bärenschlössle was carefully and lovingly reconstructed in a historically accurate manner following a fire. It is located in the Rot- und Schwarzwildpark near Solitude Palace. Surrounded by playgrounds and barbecue facilities, the little hunting lodge castle is open all year round. Here, both young and old meet over a cold glass of beer and hearty Swabian food.

From Bärenschlössle, visitors have a marvellous view of the Hirschwiese opposite and the long lakes. You can enjoy a nice walk around the promenade and watch the waterfowl. Here you will find a pure idyll in a natural paradise created by man.

> baerenschloessle-stuttgart.de/de

Connection: Take the S1, S2 or S3 to Universität, continue with bus 92 to Schattengrund (every half-hour), around 15 minutes on foot to the Bärenschlössle



Blaustrümpflerweg trail

The classic with cable car and "Zacke"



The 7.5 km Blaustrümpflerweg, or "blue stockings trail", is a classic among hiking trails in the state capital. It offers fantastic views of the city and a ride up by the cable car and down by "Zacke", the cogwheel train. Both tracks are integrated into the VVS public transport fare system.

The Blaustrümpflerweg starts from trendy Marienplatz with an initial ascent to Karlshöhe. From there, the route continues via the ascent on the Hasenbergsteige on the renowned Blaue Weg way and down towards Heslach. Your next ascent is made much easier by the cable car. Two well-known graveyards of the city, the Waldfriedhof and the Dornhaldenfriedhof, line the way over to Haigst, one of the more genteel residential areas with many city villas. At Santiago-de-Chile-Platz you have a beautiful view of the city, before the comfortable descent with Zacke to return to the starting point at Marienplatz.

And what do the blue stockings have to do with anything? According to legend, the people of Heslach were given the name "Blaustrümpfler" because they were forced to wear blue stockings to church in the 16th century as a punishment for betraying their duke.

> ssb-ag.de/erleben/wandern-mit-der-ssb/heslacher-blastruemppflerweg/

Connection: Take the U1 or U9 to Marienplatz. From Südheimer Platz, continue with the cable car (every 20 minutes). From Haigst, back to Marienplatz with cogwheel train 10 (every 15 minutes)



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