



Mergentheim Residential Palace

SEAT OF THE GRAND MASTERS
OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER



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Baden-Württemberg
State Palaces and
Gardens



The impressive residential palace is situated in the idyllic Tauber Valley

A jewel of the Renaissance and Baroque with an idyllic landscape garden

Mergentheim Palace was the *headquarters for the Teutonic Order* of Central Europe between 1527 and 1809, after they had lost their territory in Prussia. From Mergentheim, the Teutonic Order ruled over their many scattered estates across the southwest, such as Kapfenburg Castle, Mainau Island, and other properties in Heilbronn, as well as some in present-day Belgium, Austria, and South Tyrol. The Hospital and Knights Order had been sponsored by the House of Staufen in the 13th century and, through an excellent network of German nobility, had acquired a wealth of property and extensive privileges. The *order's importance* is expressed in the palace complex as well as the adjacent park.

From the outer palace courtyard, an *impressive avenue of 200-year-old sycamores* leads to the palace park, established in 1791 and located east of the palace. It nestles itself into the riparian meadows of the Tauber. At the center lies the lake, with its "Schneckenbuggele"—an island of poplars—and majestic weeping willows, surrounded by wide meadows and winding paths. The *natural landscape garden* of stately solitary trees, beautiful groves, copses, and little woods was planted 200 years ago using American and native species. A kitchen garden abuts the park, in which the garden parterre has been restored and a diversity of heirloom apple tree varieties make quite an impression. The "Halbmondhäuschen," or little crescent house, and the "Schellenhäuschen," or little bell house, emphasize oriental inspirations. Visitors can stroll these gardens any time of year, far from the hustle and bustle of the world.

For centuries, the palace in Bad Mergentheim (Residenzschloss Mergentheim) was the residence of the Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order. The monumental complex still fascinates to this day. An exhibition presents over 825 years of Teutonic Order history.

Bad Mergentheim reflects the special atmosphere of an old residence town. The mighty 12th-century palace in the town center is a great testament to this. The image of the palace complex, with its inner and outer courtyard, is still heavily influenced by the Renaissance period. The surrounding *palace grounds* have been designed in the style of English landscape gardens.

From a castle in the possession of the Hohenlohe family to the seat of the Teutonic Order

The Hohenlohe family joined the Teutonic Order, founded in 1190, and gifted them property in Mergentheim in 1219. The moated castle became the seat of a commander. A chapel, a prestigious Staufian

The palace church's Baroque towers characterize the exterior palace courtyard



Climbing the Berwart spiral staircase offers unique perspectives

palas, and the first Gothic chapter house were added to the building. Around 1525/27, Mergentheim became the seat of the Grand Masters and German Masters, and thus the headquarters of the Teutonic Order. The medieval castle was then converted into a residence. The freestanding *artistic spiral staircase* was built in 1574 and designed by Stuttgart-based architect Blasius Berwart. It is an outstanding example of architecture from this period.

Grand Masters and Master Builders shape the image of the palace

The palace was modernized throughout the reign of two Grand Masters: Franz Ludwig von Pfalz-Neuburg (1694–1732) and Clemens August von Bayern (1732–1761). The Old Prince's Quarters was converted and adorned with magnificent stucco work. Architect Franz Joseph Roth designed the New Prince's Apartment with decorative

The coat of arms of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, with eagle shield and lily staff





Site of important decisions: The last General Chapters of the Mergentheim era were held in the chapter house

stuccoed ceilings. The highlight of the residence is the *Baroque palace church*, which was constructed between 1730 and 1736. Franz Joseph Roth had it built in place of the previous Gothic building, and *Balthasar Neumann and François de Cuvilliés the Elder* consulted on the edifice. The last major construction work of the Teutonic Order took place between 1780 and 1782, with the erection of the elegant *Classical chapter house* designed by Franz Anton Bagnato. To this day, the importance and power of the Teutonic Order in the Christian realm can still be seen in the rooms of the palace. The lives and work of a religious order is not the only aspect on display in this 3,000 m² space. The museum showcases the town's history and features the Adelsheim's antiquities collection, the dollhouse collection, the Mörike cabinet, an exhibition on the Neolithic Age in the Tauber Valley with a touching family burial plot, and an array of temporary exhibits. Always worth a visit!

A towering avenue of poplars runs between palace and park



Visitor information

Opening hours and guided tours

Residential Palace Open all year round;
Visits possible with or without a guided tour

Palace garden Open free of charge all year round during the day;
Visits possible with or without a guided tour

Please check our website or call our hotline on +49 7251 74-27 70 before your visit to find out current opening and closing times.

Our website also provides information on accessibility, discounts, special tours and other important details relevant to your visit.

Current information



At a glance

For details of our current opening times, tours, events, admission prices and catering, see:
www.schloss-mergentheim.de/en/visitor-information

Contact and information

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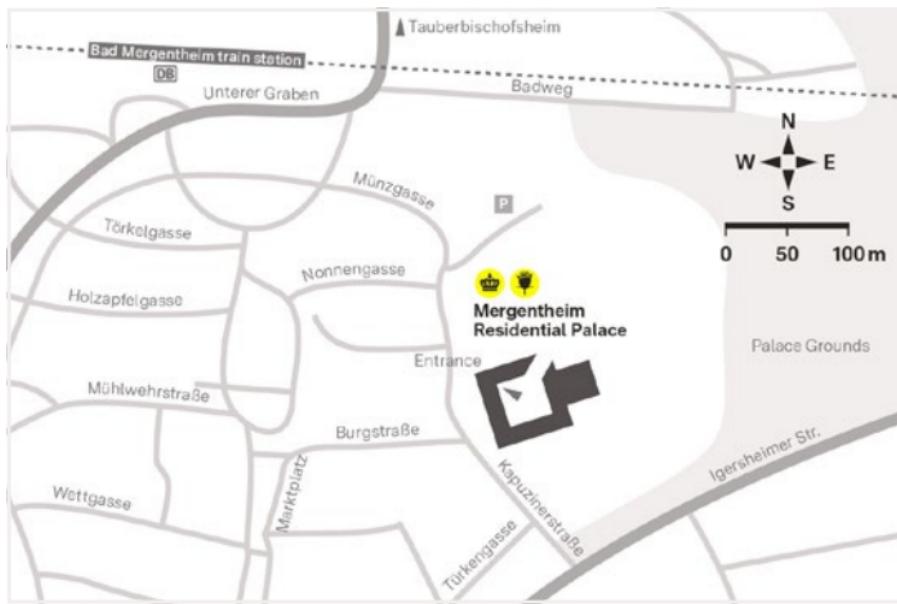
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How to find us



Please follow the signs at the monument, parking available (for a fee). The palace is a 5- to 7-minute walk from the train station. The entrance to the palace and the Museum of the Teutonic Order is in the palace's inner courtyard. Further information, including on charging stations, can be found online.

Information about all our monuments

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