



Landsberg

Romanticism on the Lech





Row of houses on the
Main Square in Landsberg

*Welcome to the town
where life is enjoyable*

Many visitors to Landsberg have said how impressed they are by the high quality of life the town offers. An opinion poll carried out by Stern magazine supports this. According to the Stern survey, Landsberg qualifies as one of the two towns, in two regions of Germany, which offers the highest quality of life.

What are the reasons?

Landsberg's mix of old and new. The old town with its art treasures and the historical buildings which are kept in immaculate condition with love, care and expertise, contrasts well with the interesting modern buildings and gives the town its special flair.

No matter what time of the year it is, life in Landsberg is never boring. The many cultural events, the various, big and small festivities and the wide choice of leisure facilities all contribute to making life in Landsberg varied and interesting. For those who enjoy shopping, there is a large range of shops and boutiques to choose from.

If you want to relax, it's important to be able to find somewhere where you can "stop by", as they say in Bavaria, for something to eat and drink. In Landsberg you can find cosy old inns and cafés where you can spend a quiet hour or two or meet up with friends in one of the many bars and pubs. In summer both residents and visitors enjoy sitting outside in the shade of the old town wall or under the tall horse chestnut trees which line the banks of the river Lech.

If you are looking for peace and quiet, why not go for a leisurely walk or a hike and enjoy the Lech valley countryside with its secluded woods and lakes.

The other big advantage of Landsberg is that Munich and Augsburg are not far away and the Alps and Lake Ammer are practically on the doorstep. It goes without saying that a town where life is so enjoyable for the people who live there must also be a good place to spend a holiday.



“Those who have an eye for beauty,
can see beauty in everything”

Gustav Freytag

Town on a river



Over four hundred years ago, a scholar from Rostock was on his way to Italy. As he was approaching Landsberg, he caught a glimpse of the town in the distance and wrote in his diary: *On the other side of the Lech which separates Swabia from Bavaria, the walls and towers of the town of Landsberg can be seen and in the distance beyond, the shimmering, snow-capped Alps.*

This fascinating view is still enjoyed by travellers today, especially when there is 'Föhn', a warm wind which blows away all the clouds, leaving a clear blue sky. Beyond the wide river with the over 600-year-old cascading weir you can see Landsberg's church towers and the old town wall surrounded by ancient trees and a steep, rocky hillside.

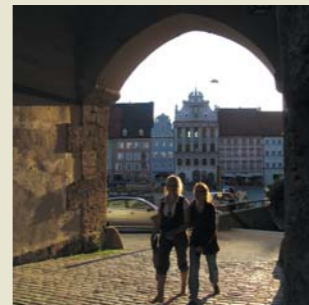
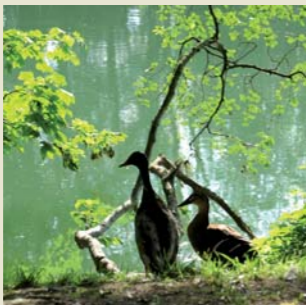
A unique, triangular-shaped square forms the heart of Landsberg's historical town centre. The three main streets of the old town meet here, two coming from the river Lech bridges and one down from the steep hill. Right in the middle of the square you can hear the splashing water of the marble, baroque fountain adorned with a graceful Madonna statue.

From the main square, look around and take in the rich history of the town. On one side you can see the imposing tower and gateway of the town's east entrance, on the other side, the many houses built during the Middle Ages. The ornamental rococo façade of the magnificent Town Hall and the richly painted walls of the Ursuline convent tell us about a period when Landsberg had regained its former wealth and repute after the sufferings of the Thirty Years War.

The town boasts of more than 500 historical buildings. A few steps away from the Main Square, stands the Gothic parish church with its baroque onion towers.

In the distance you can see the two towers of the magnificent church of the former Jesuit Theological College rising above the roofs of the town like a crown.

The medieval town wall, separating the old town from the newer parts, has stayed nearly complete until today. The most impressive way to enter the town is from the east, through the Gothic Bayertor gateway. Experts say it is one of the most famous and intact town walls of its type.





The most beautiful Gothic town gateway in Upper Bavaria – the Bayertor

Imagine this scene: Excited Landsberg citizens are shouting: “The duke is coming!” Full of excitement they run up the hill to the Bayertor gateway where the mayor and the town councillors, clothed in their official robes, are already waiting. The county magistrate has ridden over from the castle and the town’s soldiers are standing in position with their spears pointing upwards. The sound of trumpets and the pounding of the drums can be

heard while the blue and white flags with the Bavarian diamond shapes are being swung from side to side. At last Duke Ernst, the ruler of the town, arrives accompanied by his beautiful and wealthy wife Elisabeth, daughter of the Viscount of Milan. They are followed by a magnificent entourage. With a benign bow of his head, Duke Ernst greets his beloved Landsberg citizens.

*Meeting up
with the past*



Frescoes in the assembly room of the Town Hall

Peter Candid
Detail of 'Ascension
of Mary', 1593



Dukes, electors and Bavarian kings entered the town through the Bayertor gateway when they paid a visit to the western border town of Landsberg. Until 1803, the town was responsible for guarding the border formed by the River Lech. This is why it was so strongly fortified when it was founded in the late 13th century. One of the oldest parts of the town wall is the Schmalzturm gateway on the Main Square. The large *town wall* (1) with its fortress-like towers goes back to the 15th century and still surrounds the old town today. The date 1425 is inscribed on the tower of the Bayertor gateway which is when it was built and it counts as the most impressive, Gothic gateway in Bavaria. In those days, the citizens of Landsberg built high, insurmountable towers to demonstrate to visitors how influential and wealthy the town was. Also the bright colours, the intricate patterns and the crucifixion scene painted on the tower with the Duke's coat of arms underneath were a sign of Landsberg's affluence. Duke Ernst gave the town of Landsberg

to his bride, Elisabeth Visconti, as a wedding present and that is why you can see her coat of arms painted on the tower. Landsberg's wealth was famous throughout Bavaria. If anyone wanted to settle down in Bavaria, Landsberg was the town where, according to a century-old saying, 'the streets are paved with gold'. This was due to the taxes collected from the salt trade and the lucrative textile trade. Over a century before Landsberg was founded, Henry the Lion, the most powerful duke of the kingdom, had already had a bridge built for the new Salt Route and a fortress to protect it. The two large *salt storage buildings* (2) where the 'white gold' was stored, remind us of those times.

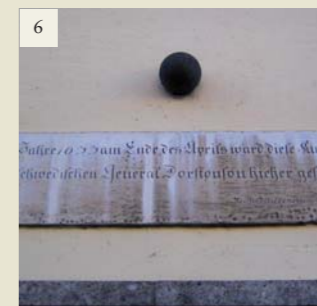
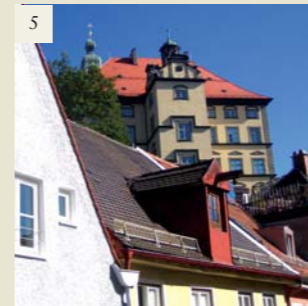
The exemplary renovation of the *Färberhof* (3) with its picturesque arcades, is a monument to the textile trade from which most of Landsberg's citizens earned their living. The Färberhof was where the long fabric panels were dyed and dried.

In the 16th century the trading town of Landsberg became a centre of religious fervour. *The new Jesuit order had a college* (4) built for novices from the southern parts of the realm which had remained Roman Catholic. The building with its beautiful arcade courtyard, the church and the former grammar school emanate a special atmosphere even today. The impressive baroque school building now houses the *New Town Museum* (5). It holds a treasure trove of historical exhibits and works of art from the region including a portrait of Ignaz Kögler, the son of a Landsberg merchant, wearing the typical clothes of a Chinese mandarin. He was a Jesuit monk who travelled from the little town of Landsberg in Upper Bavaria all the way to Peking where he became the head of the Chinese Emperor's observatory.

The attentive visitor to Landsberg will notice two canon balls stuck into two different buildings on the Main Square. They are a reminder of the many *periods of war* (6) that Landsberg

had to suffer under. The Thirty Years War saw the end of Landsberg's long period of wealth. Over and over again the town was besieged, conquered, plundered and destroyed. The plague or 'Black Death' as it was known, decimated the population of the town. Terrible tortures took place and the young girls and women of the town were easy prey for the soldiers. It is said that in their desperation to get away, they jumped from their windows into the River Lech. The name of one of the fortress towers is a reminder of those times. It is called the "*Jungfernsprung*" (7) "*Virgins' Leap*". Today, you can look out from its platform and have a fantastic view of the old town.

The many baroque buildings in Landsberg are evidence of the better times which came later. One superb example is the historical Town Hall in front of which there is a beautiful fountain. Other impressive buildings are Landsberg's baroque and rococo churches.





8

*Sacred treasure chambers –
the two largest churches*



10

The most dominant building in Landsberg is the Gothic basilica of the *Parish Church (8)* which towers above the houses making them look smaller and more humble than they really are. Over 500 years ago, at the request of the town, one of the most famous architects of the late Middle Ages, Matthäus von Ensingen was asked by the town of Landsberg to come from Ulm to build the Parish Church. One of his best-known buildings is the Bern cathedral in Switzerland. As you enter the church and look upwards you realize that you have left the Middle Ages behind you and are now in the magnificent baroque age. Surrounded by the brightly coloured glass-stained, Gothic windows, the shimmering gold of the main altar rises up with its larger than life angels and saints which were carved by the Landsberg sculptor, Lorenz Luidl. Here you can also admire Landsberg's most emotive and valuable work of art, the statue *'Madonna with Christ Child' (9)* also carved by Lorenz Luidl in 1430. At Christmas time the many figures of the baroque crib are on display. It is one of the largest and most beautiful in Bavaria.



8

Up on the hill, away from the hustle and bustle of the town, is the Jesuit church *Heilig-Kreuz (10)* with its vaults and baroque frescoes.

Of special interest is a much-admired painting depicting the deeply religious symbol of the victory cross which appeared to Emperor Constantine and his cavalry after the battle on the Ponte Milvio in Rome. As you move your position, you get the impression that the cross is following you so that wherever you stand, the cross is right in front of you.



9

10

The former *Ursuline church* with its valuable rococo décor is also well worth a visit. A famous painter from Augsburg, painted an unusual and interesting portrayal of the Holy Trinity for the high altar.



Two artists –
brilliant and versatile



11

You can encounter two famous artists in Landsberg. These are Dominikus Zimmermann and Hubert von Herkomer. The architect and plasterer *Dominikus Zimmermann* was a citizen, councillor and several times the mayor of the town. Nearly all his works were created in Landsberg including the most magnificent façade in the town which he created for the new *Town Hall (11)* in 1719. The ornamental stucco work and the gentle colours make it one of the most important historical façades of its kind in Bavaria.

The unique marble altar in the tiny *Johanniskirche (12)* is also embellished with stucco work and is another of Dominikus Zimmermann's works of art. In the peaceful *pilgrim church in Pöding (13)* next to the idyllic castle above the River Lech you can find Dominikus Zimmermann's signature on the ceiling fresco. If you visit the famous Wieskirche, you will notice that the magnificent interior is similar to that of Dominikus Zimmermann's two Landsberg churches.



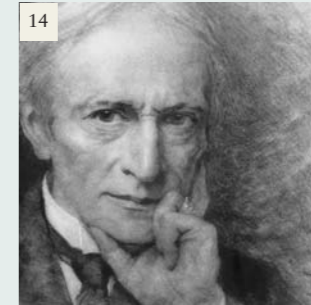
11



13



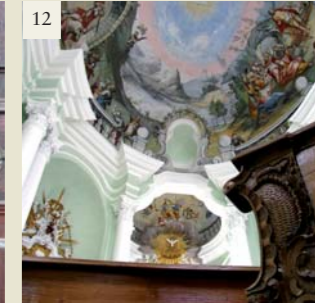
13



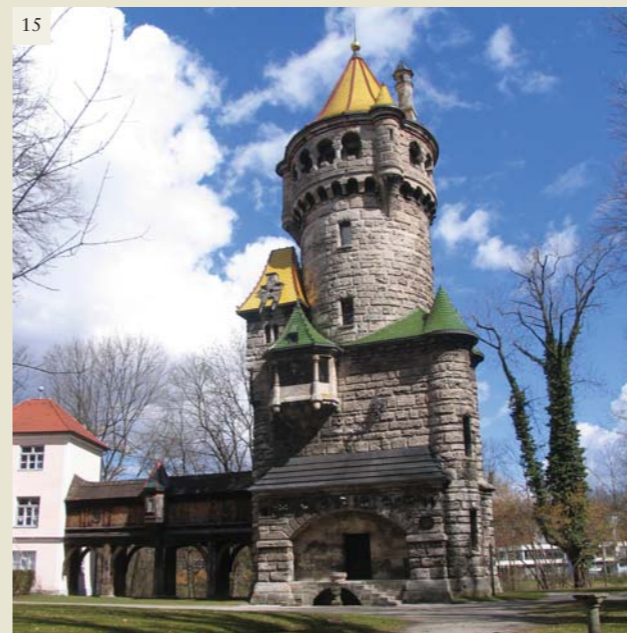
14



12



12



15

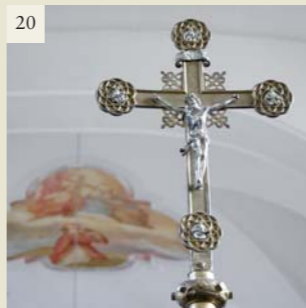
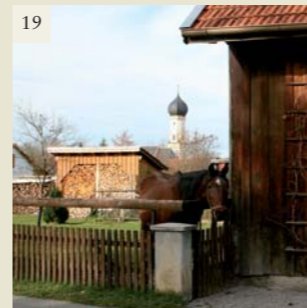
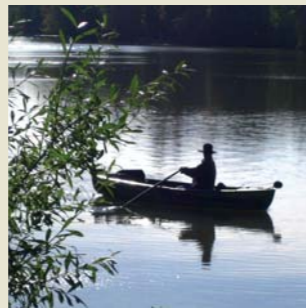
About two hundred years later, *Hubert von Herkomer (14)*, the internationally successful and extremely wealthy portrait artist came to Landsberg from England and became a citizen of the town. He was not only a talented artist but also an enthusiastic motor sport sponsor.

Hubert von Herkomer had a tower built with a romantic flair. *Mutterturm (15)* stands on the other side of the old town on the banks of the River Lech and the artist used it as his studio. Next to the tower is where Herkomer lived and today houses the Herkomer museum. Other Herkomer paintings, which are well worth seeing, can be found in the assembly hall of the historical Town Hall. The visitor to Landsberg has the opportunity of re-discovering the paintings of an artist who during his life was greatly admired but on the whole was forgotten after his death.





Contemporary history



There is also a lot to discover outside the historical town centre. Hidden away on a small terrace in *Sandau (16)* there is a tiny, solitary church. It is not only one of the oldest churches in Bavaria but also a last relic of a Jesuit monastery which was destroyed over a thousand years ago. Go inside and experience the unique atmosphere. When you come out of the church, follow the path on the steep hill above the fast-flowing waters of the Lech and enjoy one of the best walks in the area around the town.

If you are interested in modern architecture, you should visit the *parish church, Pfarrkirche zu den Heiligen Engeln* with its pavilion roof towering over the west of the town.

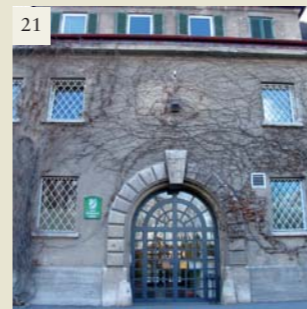
Across the river from the old town is the protestant *Christuskirche* with its art nouveau architectural style. Go inside and admire the original frescoes from this period.



South of Landsberg is the picturesque village of *Pitzling (17)* – (*Coat of Arms in the parish church*). Here you can visit Pöring castle which dates back to the late medieval period. Countless pilgrims have found help and comfort when praying to the Virgin Mary in the church next to the castle. The many pictures of praise and thanksgiving show their gratitude. This beautifully restored church is also one of Dominikus Zimmermann's works of art.

The other villages belonging to the town, *Reisch (18)*, *Erpfting (19)* and *Ellighofen (20)* are also worth an outing. Cycle paths make them easily accessible by bike and there are some lovely old farmhouses and churches. Why not have something to eat and drink in one of the cosy guest houses.

One of the oldest farmhouses in the region stands in Ellighofen. It has a unique collection of furniture, household objects and tools which tell the story of the hard, unpretentious life people led in the last century.



The town of Landsberg has made a big effort to come to terms with the darkest period of its history. After his attempted putsch in Munich in 1923, *Adolf Hitler was imprisoned in Landsberg (21)*. It was during this period of imprisonment that he wrote down the criminal and anti-democratic ideology of National Socialism in the first issue of his book, "Mein Kampf". After 1933, Hitler's cell became a cult place due to NSDAP propaganda and in 1937 and 1938 Landsberg was the scene of Hitler Youth mass rallies and was declared as the "Town of Youth".

In 1944/45 a large arms project began west of Landsberg with the building of bunkers to produce fighter jets. Landsberg became a holocaust town. Concentration camp prisoners were forced to work on the building sites under inhumane conditions. The concentration camp in Dachau had external camps specially built. Nearly half of the 30,000 prisoners died in these camps. The remains of one of them and several cemeteries serve as a memorial to those who lost their lives. Another memorial, erected by the town of Landsberg just outside the town, is a *reminder of the "Death March" (22)* of concentration camp prisoners who walked past this spot shortly before the end of the war.

After the prisoners had been released from the concentration camps by the US army, the biggest camp for displaced persons in the US-Zone was set up in one of Landsberg's barracks. Here many of the concentration camp survivors prepared themselves for a life of freedom in Israel. Under American occupation, Landsberg's prison became a place of reckoning and atonement in the post-war period and approximately 300 prisoners were sentenced to death for war crimes.



Unbelievable tales



Until long after the automobile had been invented, the *Alte Bergstraße* (23) was the only street in Germany with left hand drive. Why?

Were there really witches living in a part of the town beneath the castle called the *Hexenviertel* (24)? And were they maybe imprisoned in the gloomy Hexenturm (witches' tower)?

Why can you find house number 1 only on the Main Square and in no other street in the historical old town?

Where is the well belonging to the Brunnenkircherl and which cave on the Schloßberg (castle hill) does the Madonna of Mercy originate from?

Was it possible for the Landsberg maidens, persecuted by Swedish soldiers, to jump into the River Lech which is more than a hundred metres away from the tower they jumped from?

Is the *unusual back to back position of the gables of two extremely old houses on the Main Square* (25) really due to two brothers' feud?

There are many unusual and exciting stories to be heard in an old town. Some of them are true and some simply made up. Why not take part in one of the interesting and entertaining guided walks and find out the truth behind the stories.

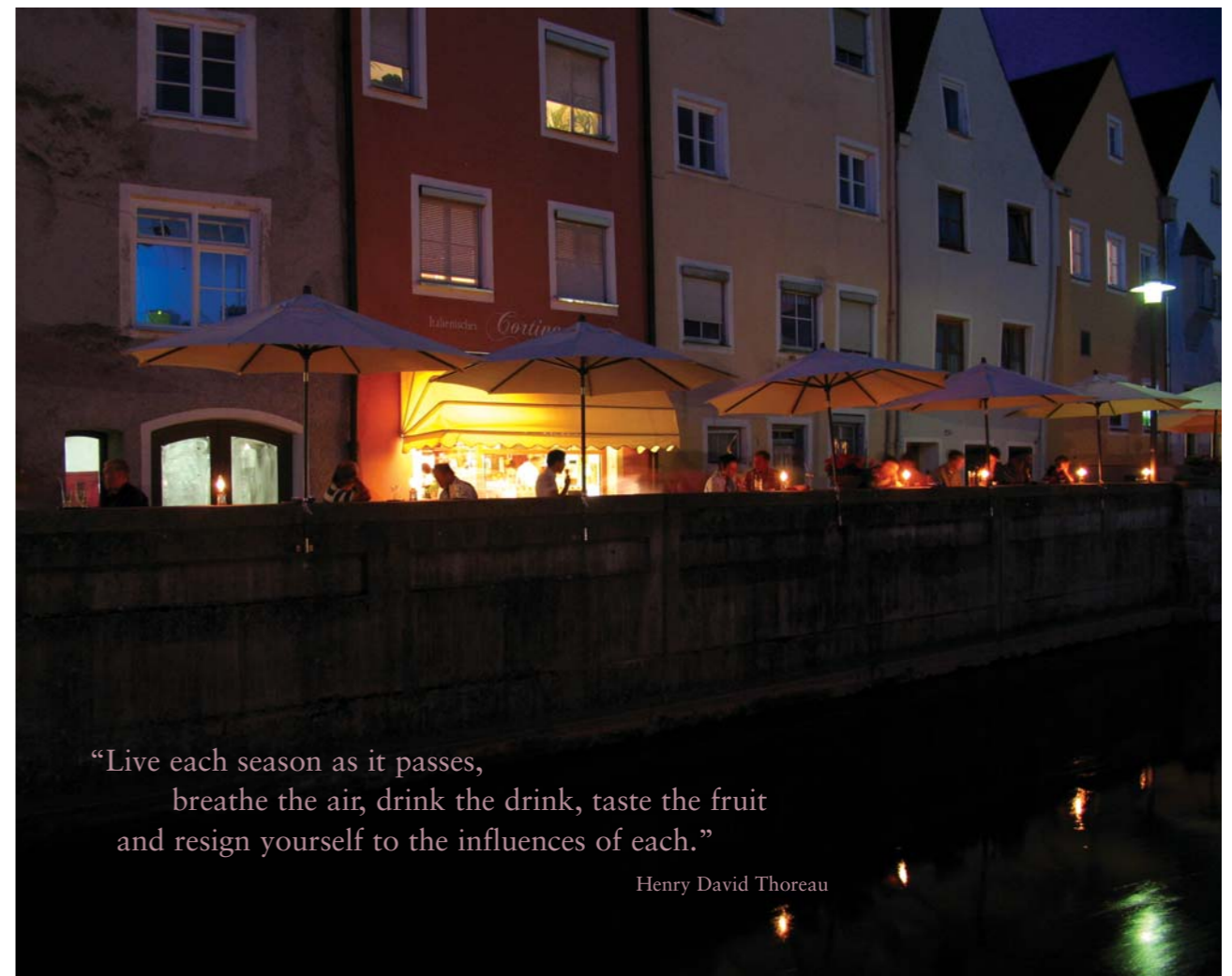
***** ARTIST ***** PHILOSOPHER **
***** PAINTER *****



Cosy atmosphere within historical walls

Visitors to Landsberg can enjoy the cosy atmosphere of traditional Bavarian restaurants and guest houses. Choose from typical Bavarian specialities such as knuckle of pork with dumplings or stuffed cabbage leaves, cafés offering a delicious selection of homemade cakes and pastries, wine bars in historical localities or unusual pubs with their cheerful atmosphere. You will soon discover how quickly the burdens of daily life disappear.

A row of houses
on the River Lech weir



“Live each season as it passes,
breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit
and resign yourself to the influences of each.”

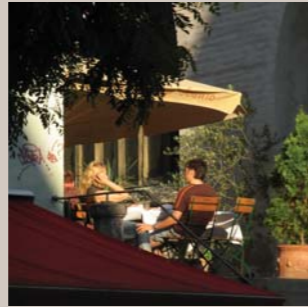
Henry David Thoreau



Variety and a touch of luxury



26



27



In summer, sit outside at one of the tables set up by the restaurants on the town squares or go to the river Lech *beer garden on the refreshing River Lech* (26) and experience the sunset, the on-coming dusk and the reflection of the town's lights or perhaps the full moon in the dark water while enjoying a snack and a cool beer.

A bit further away, outside the town, there are other places you can go to for a meal. A very popular destination for walkers is the architecturally impressive "Teufelsküche" (27) with its terrace overlooking the Lech or why not try the 'Waldgasthof' in Sandau.

Finding hotels and guesthouses where visitors are given a warm welcome is no problem in Landsberg. There are several in the old town and it is also possible to rent a holiday flat. The camping site offers excellent facilities and is situated south of the town in a secluded, idyllic spot on the high banks of the river.

What would you like to try? Home-made chocolates created in a small confectioner's, tips from a connoisseur on the best wines to buy or more simple pleasures such as typical Bavarian sausages from local butchers and fresh bread just out of the baker's oven.

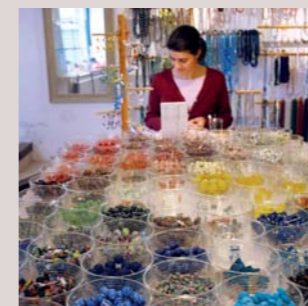
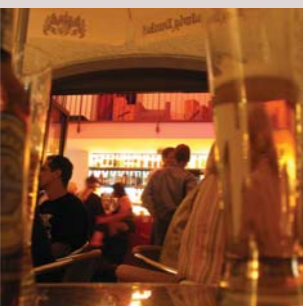
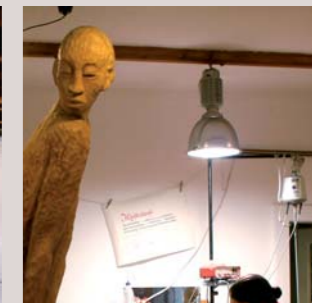
The small shops of the old town make every effort to win customers by offering a wide choice and excellent quality products. Shopping in Landsberg is an insiders' tip and customers come from as far away as Augsburg or Munich to enjoy Landsberg's atmosphere and flair. Apart from clothes shops where you can find good bargains there are also fashionable boutiques. Goldsmiths sell jewellery they have designed and produced themselves and you can even watch craftspeople at work as many have their workrooms next to their shops.

Culture plays an important role in a town with tradition like Landsberg. That's why you can find galleries with works by

well-known local and regional artists, antique dealers and a second-hand bookshop with valuable old books.

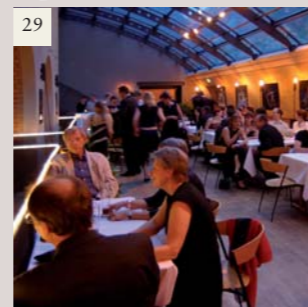
An old town wouldn't be the same without its markets. There's an open air market twice a week in Landsberg. A lot of the fresh fruit and vegetables are organically grown. At the weekly 'farmer's market' you can buy local produce from the region around Landsberg.

Two fairs have taken place here every year since the Middle Ages and today they are still crowded with buyers looking for bargains amongst the stalls offering everything from braces, gingerbread, the latest craze (whatever it happens to be) to the universal remedy that will cure everything. Amongst the crowds making their way through the narrow streets are many shoppers from the villages around Landsberg.



Festivities, big and small

Living culture



From exciting to classical, from provoking to popular. The cultural life of Landsberg offers all of this. The most beautiful concert hall in the town can be found in the *assembly hall of the historical town hall (28)* where large frescoes help create the right atmosphere for a chamber music concert.

Church music of the highest standard can often be heard in the town's churches and not only during the important celebrations of the church year. Every summer, famous organists from all over the world play on the Parish Church organ, the biggest in Bavaria. The pop concerts which take place at the sports centre attract thousands of enthusiastic fans. Even in the pubs, singing can be heard – in Bavarian dialect of course.

Theatre groups from all over Germany give interesting performances in the *town theatre (29)*. The original theatre was given a facelift with an impressive foyer where offbeat music and cabaret can be enjoyed.

Next to the theatre is an old vault with magnificent pillars. Here, local and regional artists can hold exhibitions of their works. The new town museum and private art galleries regularly use the vault to exhibit present day works of art. Private initiative also has an important influence on the cultural life of a town. There is a 'Night of Art' in the old town and literary readings in a tiny former shop in Alte Bergstraße.

Duke Ernst, attired in blue and white robes led the most beautiful ladies of Landsberg in a ceremonial dance which took place in the Town Hall. That was over five hundred years ago. The affluent Landsberg was his favourite town and the people of Landsberg are still proud of that fact, today. A large painting of Duke Ernst dancing with the ladies in their shimmering silk robes can be seen in the assembly hall of the Town Hall. Every four years, this scene is the focus of Landsberg's biggest festival, the *Ruethenfest pageant (30)*. The children of Landsberg dress up in historical costumes and, with great enthusiasm, take part in a pageant which brings the history of the town to life. Duke Ernst dances with his ladies on the Main Square as he did in those days. A long and colourful procession makes its way along the main street of the festively decorated old town. Magnificent horses pulling wagons and groups of riders all contribute to making the historical events of the town come

alive again. The whole town is full of children dressed up as emperors and dukes, citizens and foot soldiers, falconers and medieval schoolchildren waving rods cut down from trees in the nearby wood. The name of the festival originates from the spring festival which pupils and their tutors in the Middle Ages celebrated every year.

The residents of Landsberg and their guests love celebrations. In summer, the Main Square is the focus of the annual *town party (31)* with plenty of beer and traditional brass band music. Street parties in the steep Alte Bergstraße with its unusual shops and pubs attract many people, especially art-lovers. The *south German pottery market (32)* is extremely popular and draws many visitors and exhibitors. It takes place in the car park near the Mutterturm. A further highlight in the year is the *Christmas market (33)* which takes place on the square in front of the Parish Church shortly before Christmas.

Live actively – find tranquillity



Relaxation means being active but also having time to rest and get away from it all. It's especially nice if you can combine the two without too much effort: The idyllic outdoor swimming pool *Inselbad* (34) is situated right in the middle of the town, on the river Lech and attracts not only those who want to swim but also sunbathers who on a hot day, just want to have a dip in the cascading waters of the Lech weir to cool down and simply lie in the sun and listen to the soothing sound of the river.

A short walk away is the secluded woodland of the *Anwälder am Lech* (35). The network of trails and cycle paths begins on the edge of the old town. If you allow yourself enough time, you can discover rare orchids, ancient trees, beaver dams or little egret herons that live on the banks of the Lech.

The *Lechpark* (36) is popular all year round, especially with families. At the bottom of a steep slope is the Kneippbad where you can walk barefoot through the icy spring water or further on you can go to the *water adventure playground* (37) which is great fun for the children. For animal lovers the wild pig enclosure is always worth a visit and on the way you might spot a fallow deer with its fawn.

Enjoy a ride in a horse-drawn coach through the Lech Park to the *Teufelsküche* restaurant and to the village of Pitzling. According to a folk tale written down by Freiherr von Leoprechting from the nearby Pöring castle, whoever dared to climb up the gloomy Teufelsküche ravine at dusk or even at night would come across witches dancing with the devil and would be doomed to meet an early death.



Munich, the royal castles and the Pfaffenwinkel region

Within an hour's car journey from Landsberg there is so much to see and discover. You can also use public transport to reach the world famous Munich, see the art treasures of Augsburg or get to the foothills of the Alps with their beautiful lakes and magnificent mountains.

Here, you will find the romantic castles of Neuschwanstein and Linderhof which belonged to the so-called 'Fairy Tale King', Ludwig II. The Andechs monastery, famous for its brewery and the Wies church, a masterpiece of rococo art, full of light, gold and colours are also not far away. The Wies pilgrim church is situated near the mountains and was Dominkus Zimmerman's last masterpiece.

The Pfaffenwinkel (Parsons' Corner) area offers a wealth of cultural gems to discover, ranging from old monasteries to medieval and baroque buildings.

You can also explore all this by bike as there is an excellent network of cycle paths leading to all the important cultural sights and to picturesque villages with charming guest houses. Why not cycle along the river Lech or around Lake Ammer. Discover secluded, warm lakes and the fairy-tale-like yew forest, the only one existing in Germany. Climb high up to Hohenpeißenberg with its unique panorama of the Alpine foothills and the Alps mountain range.



Contents

Editorial
Town of Landsberg am Lech
86899 Landsberg am Lech
Deutschland
Tel.: 0 049 (0) 8191 128 246
Fax: 0 049 (0) 8191 128 160
info@landsberg.de
www.landsberg.de

Graphics
ais GmbH, Kaufering
ais@hauff-medien.de

Text
Anton Lichtenstern, Landsberg

Translation
Gillian Zieger

Photography
© Sabine Hauff, Anton Lichtenstern,
Foto-Tanner / Schwangau Tourismus,
Tourist Information Office LL

Printing
Hauff DruckArt GmbH, Kaufering
info@hauff-medien.de

The information contained in this brochure has been published in good faith. No responsibility can be accepted for any errors or misrepresentation and all liability is hereby excluded.

© 2007 Tourist Information Office LL



Landsberg am Lech lies on the Romantic Route in the south of Bavaria. The cities of Munich, Augsburg and Garmisch-Partenkirchen are only an hour's journey away.



Tourist Information Office

Town Hall / Hauptplatz 152 · 86899 Landsberg am Lech · Deutschland

Telefon: 0 049 (0) 8191 128 246 · Fax: 0 049 (0) 8191 128 160

Internet: www.landsberg.de · E-Mail: info@landsberg.de

