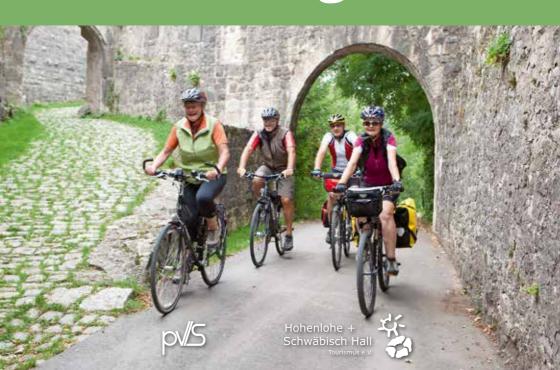


Hohenlohe and ataglance















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Welcome to the district of Schwäbisch Hall! One thing we can guarantee is that you have made the right decision when choosing to visit us. I always say, "The district of Schwäbisch Hall is the most beautiful of its kind in Germany."

Those who have taken the Hohenlohe region into their hearts will forever be fascinated by its charm. Do you wonder why? Well, perhaps it is because of the top-class cuisine. Those who like to wine and dine will love the district of Schwäbisch Hall. Or maybe it is the untouched environment with its deep valleys, gentle hills and romantic rivers that attracts visitors.

The region is a haven for those who want to relax body and mind amid pristine nature. In addition to that, you may also look forward to a wide range of first-class cultural events: theatre plays, concerts, art exhibitions and many more attractions are waiting to be discovered. This magazine provides a brief overview of the region. We promise you will not regret your choice.

Have fun exploring Hohenlohe!

Gerhard Bauer

District Administrator



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discover Hohenlohe is by bike. photographs: Andreas Scholz, Farmers Association

Schwäbisch Hall. Hohenlohe + Schwäbisch Hall Tourismus e. V./Michael Schultz

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There are several specialities, e.g. the pork of the Swabian-Hall Swine.



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HOHENLOHE - WHAT ELSE?

What is typical for the people in Hohenlohe? And what distinguishes them from the Swabians? That seems to be a sensitive issue. Let us set off in search of the typical characteristics of people from Hohenlohe

riendly but stubborn. Tradition-conscious. Yes, they are also hard-working. Their favourite drink: wine or "Most", a cider. No need to worry, you have not landed in a lonely hearts column. The only purpose of this list is to give an insight into the typical characteristic traits of the people from Hohenlohe, since all these descriptions apply to them. And, in fact, there are even many more characteristics that are typical. However, there is one thing they particularly insist on: "We are no Swabians!" But let us put it plainly: what is really typical for the people in Hohenlohe?

In order to answer this question, it is sufficient to have a brief glance at the every-day life in Hohenlohe, that is, right at the centre of the scene. Visitors and locals alike are cordially welcomed. Regardless of whether they meet in one of the many wine taverns and restaurants, or at one of the numerous festivals in the region, the people from Hohenlohe love sitting together. Thanks to the relaxed atmosphere and the openness of the locals, everyone



The "Kehrwoche" imposed duties on individual households regarding order and cleanliness inside the common property. It is practiced in Swabia and Hohenlohe.

feels welcome. And if you are out on the road on a Saturday, you will notice a large number of vehicles with a trailer. It is "Hängerlesdag", the day of the week when people work like dogs at home or in their garden. Their motivation for doing a lot of hard work mainly derives from the fact that the Hohenlohe region has long been dominated by the agricultural sector. People simply had to work hard in order to make a living – a trait that is still present in many minds. Thus, many locals

are satisfied with what they have and are sparing with their belongings, although they are not stingy, as the Swabians are usually rumoured to be.

In addition to that, the people from Hohenlohe are also said to be quite neutral. This rather passive attitude can also be seen in the way how the locals qualify their statements wherever possible in order to escape the situation. Just indicate something and keep the rest to yourself – this is the name of the game. The Swabians, on the other hand, are very different, since they speak out their thoughts quite bluntly.

However, regardless of being stingy or economical, reserved or frank – both the people from Hohenlohe and Swabia are surely attached to their roots. And this is not the only thing they have in common.

For even if the dialect border is obvious, the geographic border is much harder to localise. The two regions are linked by the Swabian Forest, which covers a large area in the east of Baden-Württemberg. So, a glance at the map shows that both regions have a common history, and their inhabitants get on very well with each other, despite their, sometimes, contrary characters.



OLD-TOWN ATMOSPHERE AT ITS BEST

Searching for large cities in Hohenlohe will be in vain. However, the towns in the region are real little gems full of medieval charm and dovetail seamlessly into the picturesque scenery around the Rivers Jagst and Kocher. Here is an overview of the three main regional centres.

Despite its relatively small size, the town of Schwäbisch Hall is well-known to almost every German – and this is not only because of the building society bearing the same name and its catchy TV advertising. Schwäbisch Hall attracts visitors from around the world to Hohenlohe and it is considered one of the most beautiful towns in southern Germany. In medieval times, the city became famous for being an important centre for salt boil-



The River Jagst at Crailsheim with the town hall in the background. photograph: town council of Crailsheim

ing. Even today, you can still experience this tradition in many places, especially during the traditional "Kuchen- und Brunnenfest" (the Salter Festival), which takes place in early summer and for which the town centre of Schwäbisch Hall provides the perfect location. This is because a large part of the historic centre is still in its original state. With its narrow alleys, roofed wooden bridges, and old towers, the exceptional medieval flair of the town can be felt everywhere.

A highlight is the historic marketplace, which combines a variety of architectural styles right in the heart of the town and is, thus, second to none in Germany. The St Michael's Church was consecrated in 1156 and towers majestically over the marketplace. The church was built in Romanesque-Gothic style, and it is the secret landmark of Schwäbisch Hall. The vast staircase that leads up to the church has a total width of 48 meters. Every summer, the staircase turns into a stage for the annual open-air theatre in Schwäbisch Hall – an incomparable experience for theatre lovers from far and wide.

The second largest town of the district is situated only about 30 kilometres east of Schwäbisch Hall and is very close to the border of Bavaria: welcome to Crailsheim! A walk through the partly pre-

served historic centre, which is crossed by the other large river in the region - the River Jagst – is equally worthwhile. From the top of the town hall tower, which was built in 1717, you can enjoy a stunning bird's eve view of the town and of large parts of the scenic Hohenlohe Plateau. During your walk through Crailsheim, you will also notice several historic buildings. The "Liebfrauenkapelle" (the Chapel of Our Lady), the "Johanneskirche" (St John's Church) and the "Heilig-Geist-Spital" (the Old Hospital) with its integrated town museum were built in the 14th and 15th centuries, and will make you dream of times gone by.

In the southern part of the region, life is a little bit more tranquil than in the towns of Schwäbisch Hall and Crailsheim. With a population of around 12 000 inhabitants. the town of Gaildorf has retained its rural atmosphere. The townscape is dominated by the impressive and splendid 14thcentury Old Castle, which is situated in the town centre on the banks of the large River Kocher, as well as by many picturesque half-timbered houses. The New Castle, on the other hand, was built in the middle of the 19th century, and now houses the town hall. The idyllic castle grounds are directly joined to the building.





The Langenburg Castle is situated high above the Jagsttal Valley. photograph: Schloss Langenburg

idyllic town encloses the historic building, which forms the heart of the scene. So, it is not surprising that the castle has been used for cultural events since 1967. The current castle originated from a prior fortress that is believed to have been built in 1265. In the years after 1590, the medieval castle was remodelled as a Renaissance palace.

In the town of Gaildorf, visitors can admire even two castles. The 15th-century Old Castle is particularly impressive. The four-wing half-timbered complex is situated directly on the banks of the River Kocher. The New Castle, on the other hand,

was built in 1846 and is, thus, an example of a more modern architectural style. It is surrounded by an extensive park and has served as town hall since 1967.

Now let us take a journey into the past. The town of Vellberg has a lot of history waiting to be explored. The same-named 12th-century castle is one of the oldest castles in the region and was built above the village, in the eastern part of the district of Schwäbisch Hall. In 1523, the castle was destroyed by robber knights and rebuilt afterwards. Today, an impressive town wall surrounds both the castle and the town

MAGICAL RELICS

Castles have something magical about them, as they are relics from bygone eras. Many of the historic buildings tower high above the rooftops of the towns in Hohenlohe. Let us set off to take a wander through the wide variety of castles the region has to offer.

The origins of Langenburg Castle, which is situated in the district of Schwäbisch Hall, date back to 1226 – the Hohenstaufen period. Since then, it has been owned by the Hohenlohe dynasty. The current castle owners are Prince Philipp of Hohenlohe-Langenburg and his wife, Saskia of Hohenlohe-Langenburg.

The couple is mainly known for its family relation to the British royal family. In 1965, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philipp, who is the brother of Princess Margarita of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, visited the small town on the River Jagst. Today, part of the castle as well as the adjacent car museum are open to visitors, who can also enjoy delicious coffee and cake at the lovely castle café. In early September, the Langenburg Castle Garden becomes the venue for the "Fürstliche Gartentage" Festival – an annual garden fair.

Although Kirchberg Castle, which is situated in the same-named town on the River Jagst, is not quite as big as Langenburg Castle, it is more centrally located. The



A SYMBIOSIS OF TWO ERAS

The monasteries of Grosscomburg and Gnadental are welcoming their visitors with a unique atmosphere, where past and present idyllically merge.

Rochertal valley. Overlooking the area are the three magnificent and majestic towers of the Romanesque abbey. Grosscomburg Monastery was founded in 1078 and is situated in Steinbach, a district of Schwäbisch Hall. Trees line the way between the car park and the entrance. Benedictine monks already used this picturesque avenue in the 11th century. Today – more than 900 years later – the major part of the complex is still very well-preserved. The different architectural styles definitely deserve a closer look. While the church

towers still show the typical features of the Romanesque era, the church of St Nicholas was modernised during the Baroque era in the 18th century. The powerful curtain wall with its chemin de ronde was built under Provost Erasmus Neustetter in the 16th century. As a result, the monastery almost appears like a fortress, although the wall was not built for the purpose of military defence.

Make sure you do not miss out on the chemin de ronde. It is fully accessible and offers gorgeous views. But there are also several well-preserved treasures inside the church, such as a huge wheel chandelier. With its size of five metres in diameter and 16 metres in circumference, the chandelier belongs to the most precious cultural treasures of Baden-Württemberg. In fact, it is almost a miracle that it is still so well-preserved today, since it survived

the German Peasants' War, the demolition of the Romanesque church as well as its reconstruction, a fall in the 19th century, and World War II. No less impressive is the antependium inside the church. It is made of gold, silver, enamel as well as polished stones, and depicts the Last Judgement. The monastery complex and the chemin de ronde are freely accessible during the day. However, the interior of the buildings can only be viewed as part of a guided tour. Those who want to stay overnight in order to enjoy this unique ambience are welcome to rent a holiday apartment.

This special historical atmosphere is also still present at the Cistercian nunnery in Gnadental, which was built as a squared-stone masonry – a typical architectural style of the order.

Of the entire complex founded in the 13th century, only the western building and the three-nave church, which is considered one of the most important regional works of the early Gothic era, have survived until this day. And if you want to experience past first-hand in Gnadental, spend some time wandering about the remains of the former cloister.



A REGION FULL OF MYSTERIES

There is never a dull moment in the Hohenlohe region. And this is not only because of the excellent cycling and hiking routes, but also because of the wide range of unusual sights Hohenlohe has to offer.



tanding there all alone, the Anhausen Wall, which rises 18 metres into the sky, is surely one of the most unusual sights in Hohenlohe. Today, all that is left of the monastery complex, which was overlooking this site in the 14th century, are the above-ground remnants of a single wall, which still stands there forlorn in the midst of a field close to the town of Satteldorf. In 1344, a Lady Chapel was built here at this place, while Anhausen Monastery was founded in 1403. However, in 1700, the properties of the monastery were sold and, finally, the monastery building was torn down. A large part of the beautiful church was still intact at the beginning of the 19th century. But its building stones were much sought-after and there was no one who protected the former monastery. So. the ruins decayed and the site became a quarry. It was only in 1925 when the remnants of the abbey were declared a historic monument, and about 70 years later, the wall was finally restored. Thus, a lone piece of history rises up to the sky near Satteldorf today.

The small village of Unterregenbach seems to be far less impressive at first glance, and yet there is something rather mysterious about it. Today, about 100 people live in this calm and peaceful little village. It is hard to imagine that the situation is supposed to have been completely different around 1000 years ago. It is believed that a religious centre of pan-European significance existed at the site in the 11th century. However, this is not really clear. Although the accounts

that we have of the village's past are vague, a small crypt, which was part of a no-longer-existing basilica and which is still accessible through its rectory, has withstood the test of time. It was probably built in the 10th century and is therefore one of the oldest accessible buildings in Baden-Württemberg, However, the old crypt is not even the only one of its kind in the small village. Inside the little church of St Veit. which is situated right next to the rectory, there is a kind of trap door below the gallery. An iron staircase descends around three metres into the basement. Down there are the wall fragments of a predecessor church

from the Carolingian period, which was built in the 8th century and is by far the oldest stone church in Hohenlohe. But the remnants of the building raise a lot of questions, since the former church has several special features. There are, for instance, two large cross-channels filling the small nave. It is believed that they were used as a depository for relics, as known from the Byzantine area. Unterregenbach - once a pilgrimage site for believers from all over Europe? And why was the crypt below the rectory not used as a burial vault? These are just two of the many mysteries that you can look into in Unterregenbach.





The cycling track runs through Schwäbisch Hall. photograph: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kocher-Jagst-Radweg/Jan Bürgermeister

TWO RIVERS AND AN ABUNDANCE OF SCENERY

The Kocher-Jagst cycling track is one of the most beautiful tracks in Hohenlohe and is very popular beyond the region's borders. Every year, many cyclists enjoy this circular track that leads through the regions of Hohenlohe, Ostalb and Heilbronn.

Close to Leofels Castle, the Kocher-Jagst cycling track demands a great deal of muscle power. At this part of the track, the cyclists start to realise what lies ahead: a steep uphill ride to the historic site. Some start to curse, others just have a drink of water or "dope" themselves by having a banana before they tackle the hill. Having reached the top of the hill, the beautiful views make up for any previous

torture. However, this is by far not the only interesting point the 332-kilometre circular track has to offer. Experienced cyclists usually ride this route along the Rivers Kocher and Jagst in five to seven days. Of course, you are free to choose your preferred starting point. There are also several places that allow you to take some short cuts if you want to reduce the length of the circular track. Apart from only about seven kilometres of well-surfaced gravel paths, the cycling track is perfectly paved.

Following the River Kocher downstream, the track continues over mainly flat ground. The scenically varied route follows the river from Aalen via Gaildorf, Schwäbisch Hall, Künzelsau, Forchtenberg and Neuenstadt until the River Kocher flows into the River Neckar close to Bad Friedrichshall. Here, in the Neckartal Valley, you could use the opportunity to make a detour to Bad Wimpfen or Heilbronn. Vineyards and areas of untouched nature alternate with castles and palaces. There are only a few gentle uphill rides along this route.

While the hills are more demanding at the central part of the track along the River Jagst, the scenery becomes even more charming, too. Gradually ascending from the particularly romantic part of the deep valley of the Jagsttal, the track continues

to the vast Hohenlohe Plateau. Those who want to visit the residential town of Langenburg have to leave the circular track and prepare for a three-kilometre uphill ride. Continuing the regular route towards Aalen, the valley widens and slowly forms the gentler landscape of the Keuper Uplands. As the signposting along the Kocher-Jagst cycling track has further enhanced in recent years, the circular track was again awarded four stars in 2018. Thus, the long-distance cycling track has become a member of the exclusive club of now 52 renowned high-quality cycling tracks surveyed by the German Cyclists' Association (ADFC).



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CASTLES, VALLEYS AND UNSPOILED COUNTRYSIDE

It does not always have to be the 332-kilometre Kocher-Jagst cycling track. There are also several shorter routes and one-day tours that allow you to pedal through Hohenlohe. Let us have a look at two very popular tracks that are perfectly suitable for avid cyclists.

■ he name "OberamtsTour" - which literally translates to "district authority tour" - makes you probably think of complicated administrative procedures: but in fact, it is a very picturesque cycling track. In Hohenlohe, however, life proceeds at a different pace. The track got its name from the town of Gerabronn, which was an administrative centre of Württemberg between 1811 and 1938 and, thus, held the status of an "Oberamtsstadt" - a district authority town. The cycling tour starts in the neighbouring village of Blaufelden and takes around five hours to complete. which makes it a perfect tour for a relaxed one-day trip. The 73-kilometre track is mainly asphalted and the entire route is thoroughly signposted. The track does not only offer some scenic views of the lovely landscape of the Hohenlohe Plateau with its fields and meadows, but cyclists will also pass some very interesting places that are worth a short stop.



There are several routes beside the Kocher–Jagst cycling track. photograph: Hohenlohe + Schwäbisch Hall Tourismus e, V./Michael Schultz

Close to Satteldorf, which marks the southeastern point of the track, the Anhausen Wall – a relic of a former monastery – rises into the sky. Passing through the idyllic valley of Gronachtal, cyclists can pay a visit to Gröningen Palace and to the historic hammer mill.

From there, the "OberamtsTour" mainly continues through the romantic Jagsttal Valley. Some parts of the route run directly along the picturesque River Jagst. The sections towards the medieval towns of Kirchberg and, later, towards Langenburg are particularly beautiful. After a three-kilometre uphill ride in Langenburg, the

magnificent castle and the car museum provide an ideal opportunity for a rest.

The "BühlerTour" is a real insider's tip among the cycling tracks in southern Germany. The route was named after the Bühlertal Valley. The valley owes its name to the River Bühler, which is where the trail runs along after passing the starting point in the town of Geislingen on the Kocher. The following part of the route offers a very scenic ride through the almost untouched countryside of Hohenlohe. Although the section includes some gravel paths, the track is mostly very well-developed. The River Bühler, which

repeatedly crosses the cycling track, is by far not the only highlight for nature lovers. The second half of the "BühlerTour" track is characterised by the nature reserve "Tal der Blinden Rot" – a beautiful valley known for its diverse habitats, which exist in even the smallest of spaces. After a total distance of 46 kilometres, which can be completed in around three hours, the tour ends close to Abtsgmünd. There, the "BühlerTour" track is directly linked with the Kocher-Jagst cycling track. Those who wish to extend the tour can cycle back to Geislingen, which will add another 66 kilometres and make it a two-day circular track.





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OVER HILL AND DALE

Since 2010, Hohenlohe has its own long-distance circular trail: the Kocher-Jagst Trail. The ten one-day stages allow hiking enthusiasts to enjoy the Hohenlohe region in all its beauty.

The around 200-kilometre Kocher-Jagst long-distance circular trail consists of three sections: Jagststeig, Bühler-steig and Kochersteig. The route divides into ten one-day stages, and passes through Hohenlohe as well as the hills of Ellwangen. The trail combines nature and culture in a unique way and, thus, provides a very special view on Hohenlohe. Besides, there are numerous castles, palaces, ruins and churches with valuable art treasures along the route.

There is so much waiting to be discovered along the Jagststeig route. The first sight is situated directly at the starting point in Blaufelden. The medieval fortified St Ulrich Church was built in 1423. The small church features a massive fortified tower with an accessible outer ring wall, which offers some fabulous views of the Hohenlohe Plateau. Another highlight along the route is the town of Kirchberg with its beautiful castle. The former palace, situated on a hill above the River Jagst, is a real gem. In the course of the walk, you can enjoy some fantastic views of the



Along the trail you get to know Hohenlohe from its most beautiful side. photograph: Hohenlohe + Schwäbisch Hall

town of Crailsheim from the top of the Kreckelberg Hill.

The Bühlersteig connects seamlessly to the Jagststeig. After passing the starting point in Ellwangen, the trail ascends to the Benzenruhe, a popular wooded hill. The Benzenruhe provides

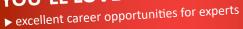
a last breathtaking view of Ellwangen Castle and of the pilgrimage church of Schönenberg. With a bit of luck, you can even see the Swabian Jura. The gullies in the woods along the Bühlersteig have a special charm of their own. They make clear how steep the Hohenlohe hills can be. Shortly before, we reach Hessental, the trail leads up to the Einkorn, the local hill of Schwäbisch Hall. The views from there are beautiful, and they are only topped by the views from the tower on the hill.

The Bühlersteig ends in Hessental, which is where the Kochersteig begins.

Along the way, the historic marketplace in Schwäbisch Hall, as well as the impressive St Michael's Church, provide a great opportunity for a photo stop. It is considered one of the most beautiful marketplaces in southern Germany. In Geislingen, the trail runs along an embankment, which runs parallel to the River Kocher. With its lush meadows and thick forests, this part of the section is a real paradise for nature lovers. Another highlight on this section is the historic crypt below the rectory in the village of Unterregenbach. The trail returns to the starting point in Blaufelden through the valley of Rötelbachtal.

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A PERFECT CHALLENGE FOR BODY AND MIND

Whether you want to meditate, enjoy a touch of magic, or do some workout – the adventure trails in Hohenlohe offer a wide choice of activities suitable for all age groups and interests.

N estled in the picturesque landscape of the Swabian Forest and situated at the southern tip of Hohenlohe, right at the border to the district of Ostalbkreis, the "Weiterweg" trail in Gschwend-Rotenhar provides the opportunity to reconnect to oneself amidst untouched nature. The woodland path does not only have a

beautiful natural setting, but it is also an art exhibition as well as a reflection trail. Ten stations along the five-kilometre trail are designed to inspire visitors and encourage them to think about the central questions of our own lives. Each station welcomes the walkers with a specific artwork and two text panels, which are supposed to give them food for thought and encourage meditation. A large part of the gravel forest trail is also suitable for prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs. The total walking time is about 90 minutes. However, it is recommended to take time and let the silence, nature and the impulses given by the stations sink in.

Those who want to do something good for both their bodies and minds should make a detour to Fichtenau. Just like the "Weiterwea", the village of Fichtenau is situated on the edge of the Hohenlohe region, southeast of Crailsheim and very close to the Bayarian border. In the district of Wildenstein, a three-kilometre fitness trail can be used for hiking as well as for light and intensive training sessions. The trail starts at a scenic forest car park and includes about 21 fitness stations, which provide a wide variety of exercises for sports enthusiasts. And, of course, it can be used for both easy jogging and targeted workouts.

In the same forest area and only a stone's throw away from the fitness trail, an enchanted forest - the "Zauberwald" opens to young visitors in particular. It takes about one hour including stops at the various stations to walk through this magical covert. Along the way, several attractions such as giant plants, enchanted creatures and a huge dwarf slide provide lots of fun for everyone. If you cross the intersecting fitness trail on the edge of the enchanted forest, you reach the "playground of the giants". Due to the wide range of interactive equipment, even grown-up wizards are frequently charmed.



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Those who prefer a more relaxed atmosphere, but still want to spend an exciting day in the lovely countryside, should pay a visit to Gröningen, which is not too far away from the railway station in Laufen. Gröningen is a district of the town of Satteldorf and is around 45 minutes away by car from Laufen. There is a car park just a few metres after leaving the town towards Bölgental. You can leave the car there and follow the downhill trail into the picturesque Gronachtal Valley. The hammer mill in Gröningen is situated directly on the banks of the River Gronach - far away from the noise of the town - and is surrounded by a sea of ▶



The historic oil mill was installed afterwards in the museum. photograph: Alexander Liedtke

TIME FOR ADVENTURES AND EXPLORATION

Hohenlohe is a haven for families. Whether you want to ride along the railway tracks, admire some handcrafted tools or go hiking with llamas - the region offers many attractions for both the young and the young at heart.

Those who seek a special adventure can enjoy an exciting ride along the railway tracks between Sulzbach-Laufen and Untergröningen, which is a district of the town of Abtsgmünd. However, we do not mean a ride by train, but a ride on a rail-cycle draisine – a human-

propelled rail vehicle. In order to set the vehicle in motion, you will have to use the pedals. Riding along the original railway tracks of the former Kochertalbahn Railway, where you have to operate the gates yourself, will surely take you right back to the golden age of rail travel. After four kilometres, the draisine is turned around for your ride back to the starting point in Laufen. The ride there and back takes around one hour at normal pace. The experience ensures you will have a lot of fun while burning some calories. In addition to that, the tour offers many beautiful views of the lovely scenery.





The well-being of their animals is a top priority for the owners of the "Jagsttalranch" Farm. photograph: archive

meadows and forests. The mill was built at this place in 1804. It was mainly used to manufacture numerous tools such as agricultural and forestry tools. A special feature of the beautifully situated cultural monument is the water-driven trip hammer, which means that the mill can be operated without electricity. The mill had been in operation until 1948. Today, visitors can explore the mill, the former home of the blacksmith, and a historic oil mill. which was installed afterwards in the museum. It is also possible to attend a live show, in which volunteer master smiths demonstrate how the tools were produced. On the museum's event days, visitors will even have the opportunity to try their hands at manufacturing tools.

Let us leave the business of hard tools behind and turn towards the world of

fluffy fur and feathers. If you come to the farm of the Bauer Family in Großforst. which is situated close to Gerabronn, you will immediately notice that their "Jagsttalranch" Farm is run with much love and passion. Innumerable details, lovely decorations and the friendly hosts make sure vou will immediately feel comfortable - just like the ostriches living on their farm. In 1993, the family brought the first chicks to Großforst. As the lifespan of these birds is up to 70 years, they will probably stay there for a longer time. However, they are not the only exotic creatures living on the "Jagsttalranch" Farm. There are also about 30 llamas living there now. Visitors can enjoy a guided llama trekking tour, which leads them through the picturesque Jagsttal Valley. In addition to that, there are about 60 head of Angus cattle as well as several

domestic animals such as geese, a dog and a cat. The well-being of their animals is a top priority for the Bauer Family. In

the summer season, the cattle graze on the vast pastures — together with the llamas and the ostriches, which is not a problem at all in Großforst. Besides, the llamas can be perfectly used for landscape conservation. Apart from their animals, the Bauer Family runs a café in

Visitors of the farm can enjoy a guided llama trekking tour. photograph: archive

their spare time. The coffee counter has been hand-crafted, the lampshades are made from little coffee cups, and the

tables are decorated with naturalcoloured flowers. Every Sunday afternoon, the café serves coffee and waffles – from ostrich eggs – with ice cream. Every second Saturday, there is a cocktail night in the old.

quaint barn. In addition to that, the guests can join a guided farm tour and learn about the exotic animals living in the Jagsttal Valley. It is also possible to buy beef and cold meat made from Angus beef or llama.

RESORT

take a break relax unwind

The lovely town of Ilshofen belongs to the district of Schwäbisch Hall and is situated on the Hohenlohe Plateau between the river valleys of Bühler, Jagst and Kocher. However, Ilshofen is not only characterised by its beautiful landscape. The town and its surroundings also offer a wide variety of leisure activities and

a balanced relationship between tradition and modernity. Numerous clubs and societies as well as an excellent infrastructure ensure a vibrant sense of community.



- ✓ interesting tourist attractions and beautiful hiking trails
- ✓ outdoor swimming pool; cycling tracks; fishing
- ✓ theatre; exhibitions; markets; craftwork displayed in the foyer of the town hall
- ✓ Leofels Castle ruins



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A TIME BEFORE NETFLIX

Museums are places where art and the past come to life. In Hohenlohe, visitors may not only explore the interesting exhibits shown in the numerous exhibitions, but they can also enjoy the lovely scenery while learning about the region. Come and enjoy the great variety the galleries and museums have to offer.

ight in the historic centre of Schwä-Right in the historic centre of Schwäbisch Hall, a three-storey building made of reinforced concrete and glass rises above the rooftops. The "Kunsthalle Würth" – an art gallery, which opened in 2001 and was designed by a Danish architect - houses regularly changing exhibits from the Würth collection. The gallery spans three floors and covers more than 2500 square metres. Today, the collection consists of around 17000 objects. The focus is on painting, sculpture and graphic arts dating from the late 19th century to the present. Admission to the museum is free. In addition to the exhibit rooms, the "Kunsthalle Würth" includes a shop, a café and numerous event rooms.

In Wackershofen, visitors can travel even further back in time. The open air museum, which was opened in 1983 and is one of seven of its kind in Baden-Württemberg, welcomes around 100 000 visitors per year on average and is very popular among families with children. The



The "Kunsthalle Würth" Gallery in Schwäbisch Hall houses yearly changing exhibits from the Würth collection, photograph: Ufuk Arslan

museum aims to give insight into the everyday life of people in the past decades and centuries – a time before smartphones and Netflix. The museum area covers 40 hectares and houses more than 70 domestic, agricultural, industrial and other types of historic buildings such as taverns and workshops. All buildings have been relocated from their original places – including Hohenlohe, Heilbronn and even Ludwigsburg – and reerected on the museum site. The oldest buildings at the open air museum are nearly 500 years old, while the most recent ones

were built in the 20th century. They form five ensembles that merge into each other, which allows a smooth transition.

Another must-see for history lovers is the "Hällisch-Fränkische Museum" in Schwäbisch Hall. Covering an area of 3000 square metres, the museum focuses on the art and cultural history of the former imperial town and its surroundings. The collection was started in Künzelsau – the former seat of the association – in 1851. In 1872, however, the collection moved to Schwäbisch Hall. Since 1936, the objects have been kept in the residential tower of the Keckenburg, which was built in the

Hohenstaufen era and is situated in the historic centre of the town. In the older part of the building, where the exhibition spans several floors, the focus is on the history of the town, on medieval piety, the Baroque period and the rural life in the region. A special highlight is the historic treadwheel crane in the basement of the tower. In medieval times, the crane was used for lifting massive stone blocks. On the other floors of the museum, visitors can learn about the history of the 20th century, particularly about the Jewish life in the region. Apart from the permanent exhibitions, the museum hosts three or four special exhibitions each year.





FOOD FOR YOUR EARS AND SOUL

Come and enjoy an earful of music! The "Hohenloher Kultursommer" and the "JazzArt" Festivals in Schwäbisch Hall are absolute must-go events for music lovers from Hohenlohe - and from far beyond its borders.

The "Hohenloher Kultursommer" is a top highlight in the region's annual event calendar. The festival is a unique combination of historic venues and classical music, and attracts thousands of visitors to Hohenlohe every year. The series of events is very popular, even far

beyond the region's borders. The festival provides a fascinating variety of musical events, which take place at several historic sites. The summer festival hosts a variety of different concerts. Some of them focus on a singer's voice, others on violins, harps, or pianos. The festival usually takes place between June and September and makes the hearts of music enthusiasts beat faster. During the "Hohenloher Kultursommer", classical music, the landscape of Hohenlohe, the region's history and the locations of the historic venues merge into a unity. Thus, the concerts are not only very popular among locals, but they also attract music lovers

living far beyond the borders of Hohenlohe. The main venues include for example Weikersheim Castle, Schöntal Monastery and Grosscomburg Monastery in Schwäbisch Hall.

While the Kultursommer Festival spreads over several districts, the "JazzArtFestival" takes place right in the heart of Schwäbisch Hall. Every year on five days in March, the festival provides best entertainment and attracts numerous well-known experts of jazz music to the town on the banks of the River Kocher. In addition to that, jazz enthusiasts may look forward to top-class international artists.

Apart from well-known regional musicians, there are many outstanding artists from countries such as Norway, Great Britain and Cuba, who annually gather in Schwäbisch Hall. In spite of the international flair, visitors especially appreciate the friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The concerts take place at the Old Hospital, a beautiful Baroque building, as well as at the "Kunsthalle Würth" Gallery. Both venues are located in the heart of the historic centre of Schwäbisch Hall, However, apart from the choice of locations. the festival follows another tradition: an artist aged over 70 usually performs the opening concert.

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TIME TO CELEBRATE

A German proverb says, "One should celebrate the parties as they come" – and many festivals are celebrated in Hohenlohe throughout the year. Several traditional events provide a lot of amusement throughout the entire region.



Performers present medieval traditions at the "Kuchen- und Brunnenfest", photograph: Ufuk Arslan

The "Kuchen- und Brunnenfest" in Schwäbisch Hall has been known since the 14th century. It is also called the Salter Festival. Its origin may have been the cleaning of the brine spring, which established the wealth of Schwäbisch Hall in the medieval period. The municipality rewarded the hard work with a feast. Today, more than 500 performers and volunteers present a mix of medieval traditions and music during the four-day event, which takes place in early summer.

During five days in the second week of October, the "Muswiese" – situated in the rather tranquil hamlet of Musdorf – is a great venue for thousands of visitors. It is obvious that the festival is no longer a regional insider's tip. Throughout the entire region, the oldest fair in Hohenlohe is commonly called the fifth season. The "Muswiese" is always opened on Saturday with a ceremonial keg tapping carried out by the Mayor, followed by the trade and agricultural exhibition on Sunday. And then it is about time to join the hustle and bustle.

However, it is not only the "Muswiese" that is considered as a fifth season. The "Crailsheimer Volksfest", which takes place on four days in September, is also highly popular. It is the second largest folk festival in Baden-Württemberg and attracts over 200000 visitors each year. Among the many attractions are several

pageants, a comprehensive event programme and a diverse theme park. About 90 fun fair rides and other attractions, three marquees, a trade exhibition as well as a street market add to the enjoyment.

Horse fairs have a long tradition in the Hohenlohe region. Although the horses are more and more fading into the background at most fairs today, they are still in the focus at the "Gaildorfer Pferdemarkt", which is the largest horse fair in the region and attracts between 20 000 to 30 000 visitors each year. In the early years of its existence, the event took place on the second Monday in February. Today horse

lovers from the Hohenlohe region already start gathering on Friday evening.

In the southeastern part of Hohenlohe, however, the focus is on wine. Since 1968, Vellberg has been the venue for the annual "Weinbrunnenfest", which takes place at the first weekend in July. And its name lives up to its promise. Right in the heart of the beautiful market town and between historic half-timbered houses, there is the market fountain, which dates back to 1720. During the two festival days, it is actually real wine that gushes from the fountain. Saturday traditionally marks the highlight of the festival.























DELICIOUS REGIONAL SPECIALITIES

Whether sweet or savoury, the Hohenlohe specialities will tickle your palate and are hardly available anywhere else. Welcome to the home of "Blooz", "Wibele", and pigs with black heads.

■ n the early 1980s, the Swabian-Hall swine - an old breed of domestic pig, whose head is black in colour - was on the brink of extinction. Today, the high-quality pork of the Hall swine with its distinctive nutty flavour has become a best-seller of the Farmers Association Schwäbisch Hall (BESH), which was founded in 1988

- also in order to preserve the breed from extinction. The farmers' association pays attention to farm animal welfare and only uses GMO-free feed in the rearing of the Swabian-Hall swine. The product range of BESH also includes "Boeuf de Hohenlohe", a tender type of beef, as well as regional products from member companies. such as potatoes, honey or oil.

Some of the ingredients offered by BESH can also be used to bake a "Blooz", as the cake is commonly called. Once considered as "poor man's food", it tickles the taste buds of both locals and tourists today. There are numerous variations of these flat cakes, which might taste sweet or savoury, depending on the ingredients used. Usually, no elaborate ingredients are needed, and yet the variants are virtually endless.

Another speciality are "Wibele", which are traditional sweet biscuits originating from Langenburg. The shape of "Wibele" biscuits is just as special as their place of origin. They consist of two dough balls joined together, which makes them look like a bone. And their total length is only about two centimetres. For seven generations, the Meidlinger family has been producing this popular speciality in their

"Café Bauer" - where the "Wibele" biscuits were invented. The secret recipe is only passed on within the family.

Much more widespread is the secret "national drink" of the people in Hohenlohe: "Most" - a cider made from squeezed fruit, which is already fermented and therefore alcoholic. In its pure form, it is made exclusively from apples and pears. In many places in Baden-Württemberg, the "Most" has recently been living in the shadows - except in Hohenlohe, where both the production and consumption of cider is a centuries-old tradition that is still upheld.









Welcome to the Hotel Rose in Bitzfeld!

Our hotel is located directly in the heart of the village, close to St Lawrence's Church, and has been family-run since 1909. The hotel is surrounded by vineyards, orchards with fruit trees as well as fields and meadows, and yet it is very easily accessible by city railway S4 (station Bitzfeld). Enjoy a variety of regional classics, seasonal cuisine and fresh fish as well as venison specialities in our restaurant. In the summer season, you can relax on our patio in the inner courtyard. Our comfortable and cosy rooms are available in different categories and are easily accessible by lift. All rooms are equipped with telephone, TV, minibar and hairdryer, and provide free WiFi. Our swimming pool with sauna offers a great opportunity to relax both body and mind. We look forward to your visit! The signposted hiking and cycling trails around Bitzfeld as well as along the picturesque Brettach valley provide another perfect opportunity for those who are looking for a relaxing day out.

The Carle Family and their team.

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LIQUID PLEASURE

In order to experience Hohenlohe with all your senses, you should reward yourself after having enjoyed some of the numerous activities the idyllic countryside has to offer. And what could be better than a fruity wine or a fresh draught beer from the region.



In Hohenlohe you enjoy a fresh beer together with family and friends. photograph: Haller Löwenbrauerei

Wine growing has a long tradition in Hohenlohe. After the phylloxera infestation in the 1860s, which had affected all wine-growing regions in Europe, the vineyards in the Kochertal Valley were replanted. Additionally, the vines were grafted, which means that native scions were grafted onto the roots of resistant stocks. And it was only the best slopes

of the Kocher Valley that were replanted. But what are the typical characteristics of the Hohenlohe wine? Generally, it is rather lighter wines stored in steel tanks that are grown in the region, while the share of wines aged in oak barrels is below ten per cent. According to the sales figures, the semi-dry wine from Hohenlohe is particularly popular. For reasons of taste, local wine growers make sure that the acid level is not too high. But tastes differ, as you know. So, in the end, everyone has to decide for themselves what makes a "typical wine of Hohenlohe".

A common German proverb says: "If vou have a friend, buy them a beer. But if you really love them, teach them how to brew!" And in Hohenlohe, brewing is a skill that is commanded by both the big and the small companies. One of the big companies is "Haller Löwenbräu" in Schwäbisch Hall, whose brewing tradition dates back to 1724. The original brewery was once situated directly on the River Kocher. While the brewery pub "Zum Löwen" is still located on the same spot, the company itself has moved outside the city centre. There, a variety of different beers is produced, all of which are brewed with the water of the company-owned well of its subsidiary, Haller Wildbadguelle. Since the brewers at Haller take their time to produce their golden liquid, they are regularly awarded the "golden snail" - a quality seal for slowly

brewed beer, because taking time is essential to create an outstanding flavour. In addition to the classics (Pils and wheat beer), there are some special types such as "Mohrenköpfle", an amber-coloured, malty beer. And those who prefer a stronger flavour should try a pint of "Böckle", a dark beer with a higher alcohol content.

In the town of Gaildorf in the south of Hohenlohe, where people have been drinking the beer from the brewery Häberlen since 1875, the atmosphere is a little more tranquil. All the malt used for production comes from regional malt houses. And during the brewing process,

only untreated spring water from the nearby Limpurg Mountains is used.

Those who want to know what else is important when it comes to brewing beer – apart from the appropriate ingredients – should visit the brewery "Engel" in Crailsheim. The regularly offered brewing courses provide the opportunity to take part in the beer production process, and to learn about the single steps, starting with the barley grain right through to the final product. Finally, the visitors may test six to eight types of beer during a sensory test under the guidance of a beer sommelier.



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MASTHEAD

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