

Press release

En route to inner balance

Reflective routes and pilgrim trails in SouthWest Germany

STUTTGART – Every year, all around the world, lots of people embark on pilgrimages in search of the meaning of life. But the best is often much closer to home. It's worth remembering that the Camino de Santiago, which has been so popular over the centuries, began with St. James setting off from his own front door. SouthWest Germany also has plenty of pilgrims who take on the famous "camino". But this region has plenty of its own trails which promote reflection, a slower pace, and internal contemplation.

Tranquillity trails in the Jagst valley

New perspectives and beneficial experiences are promised by the tranquillity trails in the Jagst valley. These lead to five communities in especially revitalising locations: places that offer a surprising and moving meditative tranquillity as well as a tangible spirituality. Examples include natural monuments such as a 1000-year-old lime tree, a cold-store cave, and a lake that only forms occasionally. The trails also link monasteries, chapels, and pilgrimage sites such as the Lourdes grotto in Zaisenhausen. Pilgrims and walkers are encouraged to pause and reflect on the impact of these regional treasures. You might like to take a trip back in time, or immerse yourself in nature, or engage in silent meditation: everyone will be left to themselves.
pfade-der-stille.de

Huguenot and Waldensian Trail

The Huguenot and Waldensian Trail is a European Cultural Route running through Germany, France, Italy and Switzerland over a distance of about 1,800 km. It follows the historical escape route of French and Italian protestants, commemorating their cultural legacy with the aim of strengthening the European sense of community. Those who walk along the trail are invited to reflect on the topics of exile, migration, and integration and to combine movement with meeting and discovery. In SouthWest Germany, this long-distance trail runs from the southern Black Forest via the Waldensian municipality of Neuhengstett near Calw in Kraichgau and, from there, on into the Odenwald region.
hugenotten-waldenserpfad.eu

Spiritual trips in the Black Forest national park

With its dark fir trees, unfathomable lakes and mist-covered hills, many people regard the Black Forest as a mystical place. If you are looking specifically for spiritual options here, you are also in luck. For instance, in the national park there are lots of tours of the churches and chapels along the Black Forest High Road. Two "faith routes" provide a chance to walk "In heavenly peace" and "Close to heaven". Another option is to follow the spiritual circuit around Lake Mummelsee. If you prefer to walk with a group, you

can join one of the outdoor activities offered by the ecumenical network of churches in the Black Forest National Park.

kirche-nationalpark-schwarzwald.de

Monastery route in the Northern Black Forest

Three significant medieval monastery sites have survived the centuries in the valleys of the Northern Black Forest. In addition to the Benedictine Alpirsbach Abbey, with its Romanesque and Gothic architecture, the monastery route includes the abbeys in Hirsau and Maulbronn. As one of the earliest sites of the Cluniac Reform movement, Hirsau had a significant impact on the development of monasticism in Germany. In Maulbronn, visitors can admire one of the best-preserved monasteries north of the Alps, which has been awarded UNESCO world heritage status as a typical example of a Cistercian Order site.

calw.de

The Martinusweg trail in the diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart

Saint Martin is the most popular saint in Europe. In his honour, in 2005, the European Council designated the route from his birthplace in Szombathely (Hungary) to Tours (France) as a European Cultural Route. This runs past numerous memorials to the bishop, including through the diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart. Here the Martinusweg is subdivided into different day sections, each ending in larger municipalities with accommodation facilities for pilgrims. A mobile app helps with navigation. It is designed to be used offline and thus shows users the right way, even outside towns and cities.

martinuswege.de

Trails for contemplation and retreat in Ehinger Alb

Word has now got around that the Swabian Alb biosphere region has plenty on offer when it comes to varied hiking routes. But you may be surprised to discover that the Ehingen area offers more than just walks: you can also explore the meaning of life. The Ehinger Alb trails for contemplation and retreat follow a circular route through varied scenery, inviting walkers to leave their everyday life behind, step by step, and achieve a new quality of life. Boards alongside the trail prompt you to reconsider the old and familiar and provide fresh stimuli in the form of "reflective sentiments". In keeping with the motto: "The journey is the reward".

besinnungsweg-ehinger-alb.de

Upper Swabia pilgrim trail

The Upper Swabia region between Swabian Alb and Lake Constance has always been steeped in Catholicism, which has bestowed upon the area its once mighty cultural and religious treasures. Numerous places dedicated to the Virgin Mary, pilgrimage churches and monasteries continue to attract pilgrims today. The friends and supporters' association for the Upper Swabia Pilgrim Trail set out to link these sites and, at the

same time, provided the formula for a successful pilgrimage: "Walk and pray to find yourself and God". What sounds simple, often turns out to be a difficult exercise in practice. But those who take on the challenge of a religious journey are given a chance to find stability and security in a world that seems to spin at an ever-faster pace.
oberschwaebischer-pilgerweg.de

The pilgrim's way from Salem to Birnau

In the past, this pilgrim's way formed the shortest service route between the historically significant Salem Abbey and the banks of Lake Constance. It also ran past the pilgrimage chapel in Birnau, one of the oldest pilgrimage sites in Southern Swabia. In the 14th century, pilgrimages were becoming increasingly popular, which Salem's Cistercian monks used for their own gain, establishing a larger church around the chapel with greater capacity. In this way, they contributed to the increased use of the route by pilgrims and ultimately also as a processional route. Today the pilgrim's way is a popular hiking and cycling route, which still allows visitors to follow in the footsteps of the "White Monks".

salem.de

INFO

Authentic overnight accommodation can be found on many of the routes described. For example, at Kloster Reute in Bad Waldsee, Upper Swabia, or at Lichtenthal Abbey in Baden-Baden at the edge of the Black Forest national park.

More information is available from the federal consortium for churches and tourism in SouthWest Germany: kirche-tourismus-bw.de

A digital version of this press release - as well as more detailed information on SouthWest Germany - is available on our website <https://www.tourism-bw.com/press>

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