



Mindelheim – places of interest



# Mindelheim

Stadt der Kultur und Lebensfreude

## 1 Forum on Theatre Square

Formerly the salt store: Since 2002, a modern conference and event centre which houses the city theatre (Stadtheater) built in 1935. The square in front of the theatre is a frequent meeting point for guided tours of the town.

## 2 City moat beside St. Stephen's church

In the north east of the town is the city moat (Stadtgraben), a park since 1996. Until 1809, the moat was filled with water; today, it gives us an impression of the former city fortifications.

## 3 Main gateway [Oberes Tor]

This is a five-storey gate tower, referred to in 1337 as the Habertor. It houses the city clock and the "poor sinner's bell" (*Arme-Sünder-Glocke*). The characteristic roof of the building has small corner turrets and dates from around 1500. Every year at carnival time (Fasnacht), the tower is "dressed up" to become the world's largest carnival jester.

## 4 Crypt chapel [Grufkapelle] · Church square

Viewed from the south, the crypt chapel in the square near St. Stephen's church has a purely Gothic facade but, from the north, it is a charming annex with Baroque volutes. The lower level of the chapel was once the ossuary and housed the bones from the cemetery. Around 1700, it became the pilgrimage chapel *Maria Schnee*. The chapel on the upper level is dedicated to the archangel Michael and may be visited on a guided tour. To the west of the picturesque square is the cloisters area (*Kreuzkloster*); to the east is the *Mesnerhaus*; to the south are the four prebendaries' houses (*Benefiziatenhäuser*) with wide mansard rooves.

## 5 Parish church of St. Stephen

In 1409, *Duke Ulrich von Teck* and his wife, *Anna of Poland*, ordered the building of a Gothic basilica which then became the parish church. After 1712, the nave and chancel were rebuilt in the Baroque style by Valerian Brenner. Neo-Romanesque decorations were added between 1862 and 1865, but were removed in the 20th century. The central feature of the church is the altarpiece (1962) by Erwin Holzbaaur, showing the vision and martyrdom of St. Stephen. In the chapel tower and choir chapel to the



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north of the church there are notable epitaphs, such as the sandstone slab marking the grave of *Anna of Poland* and the red marble tomb of *Duke Ulrich* and his second wife *Ursula von Baden*.

## 6 Heilig-Kreuz convent · Museum of local history

The Franciscan convent was founded in 1456 and its tradition remains unbroken. Between 1680 and 1740, it was rebuilt in the Baroque style with a connecting passageway to the parish church, as it is today. The elegant Grisaille window surrounds have been restored in accordance with historical findings. The magnificent summer refectory (Sommerrefektorium) is opened for special events. Since 1948, the guest wings of the convent (south and west wings) have housed the Museum of local history.

## 7 Town Hall [Rathaus]

In the year 1783, the former weavers' house became the Town Hall. The characteristic neo-Renaissance façade was designed in 1897 by the Munich architect Eugen Drollinger, who also worked for King Ludwig II, the "fairy-tale king". Since 1903, a statue of *George I von Frundsberg* by Johann Bradl has adorned the south-western bay of the Town Hall building.

## 8 The town square [Marienplatz]

This square marks the centre of the town. Until 1783, the Gothic town hall building, the Teck'sche Kaufhaus, took up the western half of the square. There has been a Marienbrunnen (fountain) here since 1694; today's fountain dates back to the year 1763. The square was extensively restored in 2008.



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## 9 Einlasstor [entrance gate]

This gate with its defiant crenellated tower was first mentioned in 1469. Upon payment of a specified amount, latecomers were readmitted to the safety of the town, even after the gate had been closed for the night.

## 10 St. Silvester's chapel · Tower Clock Museum

The tower is 48 metres high and a focal point in the townscape. Building work on this chapel, which was endowed by *Anna of Poland*, began in 1409. The chapel was later rebuilt and then secularised in the early 19th century. Since 1979, the Silvesterkapelle has been home to the Swabian Tower Clock Museum (*Schwäbisches Turmuhrenmuseum*). One of the items in the collection is the second-longest clock pendulum in the world. The *Silvestersaal* provides the perfect ambience for classical concerts.

## 11 College tower [Collegturm]

This round tower, which was built around 1500, indicates the line of the original town wall which ran along the western façade of the college to the lower gate.

## 12 Jesuit College · Museums

After the dissolution of the *Augustine monastery* in 1526, *Duke Maximilian I* summoned the Jesuits to Mindelheim. The college building as it stands today was built between 1627 und 1679, despite the pressures of the *Thirty Years' War*. After the Jesuit order was dissolved in 1773, the site was the headquarters of a Maltese commandry until it was finally secularised. Today, this complex houses the *Krippenmuseum* (nativity scenes), the *Textile Museum* and the *Archaeological Museum*.



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### 13 Lower gate [Unteres Tor]

This gate, originally called the *Schnäbelinstor* or *Klostertor*, was first mentioned in 1263. Today, the gate shows evidence of the period around 1350. Mindelheim's oldest town gate is now home to the town archives.

### 14 Jesuit Church of the Annunciation

From the 13th century on, this church was part of the *Augustine monastery* until being taken over by the Jesuits in 1618. In 1625, the nave was rebuilt, but the walls surrounding the chancel (about 1430) were retained. After 1722, the nave was extended, the ceiling was heightened and this magnificent church was lavishly decorated in the colour scheme typical of early 18th century, late Baroque architecture. The elegance of the building derives from the many more recent design elements of the early Rococo period. Three mighty altars focus attention to the front of the church. To the south of the chancel is the *St. Xavier Chapel*; to the north, above the sacristy, the *St. Ignatius Chapel*. Every year during the Advent and Christmas period, the Baroque nativity scene with its large figures is set up in the nave.

### 15 Jesuit school [Jesuitengymnasium]

Between 1656 und 1659, the Jesuits erected the two wings of the school building which also housed the congregation hall and is located east of the church. After 1773, the ground floor was used as the grain market (*Schranne*) and the uppermost level housed the city theatre. Nowadays, the building is home to the town music school and the adult education centre (*Volkshochschule*).



Teckstraße

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Kornstraße

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Gerberstraße

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Maximilianstraße

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Hermelestraße

Georgenstraße

Fuggerstraße

Hohenschlitzgasse

Frundsbergstraße



Teckstraße

Kleinhansstraße

Hauberstraße

Maximilianstraße

Imhofgasse

Frundsbergstraße

Kaufbeurer Straße

Pfarstraße

Kumbacher Straße

Bad Wörthofer Straße

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## 16 Sacred Heart Church in the Maria Ward Institute

This church, located at the heart of the monastery complex, was built between 1715 and 1720 and is now the oldest Sacred Heart Church still standing in the diocese of Augsburg. The encrypted depictions of the Heart of Jesus in the ceiling frescoes are unique. Please ring the bell at the entrance if you wish to view the church.

## 17 Courthouse [Pfleghaus]

From the turn of the 18th century, this representative building with its mansard roof housed the administrator's office.

## 18 Apothecary's garden [Engelapotheke]

There is evidence of an apothecary's shop dating back to 1626 and one has been located at this spot since 1780. During the 1990s, the garden, which lies beyond the gate, was redesigned in accordance with historical tradition. It contains many medicinal herbs and a rare damson plum tree imported by the Romans.

The courtyard is private property, but may be viewed on enquiry in the chemist's shop.

## 19 From the Alte Post, along Maximilianstrasse

The name "Alte Post" recalls the fact that the *Gasthof zum Hecht* was once the posthouse, which accommodated such prominent guests as Prince Eugene of Savoy, King Ludwig I, Emperor Franz I, Archduke Ferdinand and Czar Nikolaus I. A plaque still reminds us of the courageous landlady, Caecilie von Dreer, who saved Mindelheim from certain destruction in 1796. From here, it's not far to the *Jochamhaus* with its neo-Baroque façade, designed in 1898 by Eugen Drollinger. A few yards further on is the birth house of the prominent local writer *Arthur M. Miller*.



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## 20 Heilig-Geist-Spital [former infirmary]

Since it was founded in 1426 by *Duke Ulrich von Teck* and his brother *Ludwig von Teck*, the former infirmary has also been home to elderly Mindelheim residents. The buildings as they stand today date from the year 1658; the façade in the characteristic classical style was added in 1830. Inside, is the house chapel designed in the style of the 19th and early 20th century. In the passageway, is the 18th century Spitalkrippe, which shows Old and New Testament scenes which change throughout the year, and a picture panel by the local artist Erwin Holzbaur in remembrance of the benefactors. From the passage, there is direct access to the underground car park and to the Imhofgasse.

## 21 Imhofgasse · Town moat

This narrow alleyway marks the first “extension” to the town area in the early 19th century. Here, the little houses lean against the town wall from both sides, but do not yet venture beyond the mediaeval town limits. The town moat lies beyond the wall and can be reached via a few steps near the entrance to the car park.

## 22 Prison tower [Gefängnisturm and Fronfeste]

This cylindrical 13th-century building with its pointed spire is also called the *Malefizturm* (Lat. “Maleficus” Tower), the *Robbers’ Tower* (Raubturm) or the *Iron Tower* (Eisenturm). The Fronfeste was added in 1834. Part of the original fortified town wall remains, and a narrow passageway leads through it to the town moat. There are some good vantage points from the footpath near the European Fountain (*Europabrunnen*). The prison tower and the towers of the main gate and St. Stephen’s Church are connected by the line of the old town wall.

## 23 Chapel of Our Dear Lady

West of the town, near the Lower Gate (Unteres Tor), there is a jewel of architectural history – the former *Leper Chapel* which was built in 1360. The *Liebfrauenkapelle* contains a work of particular note, the “*Mindelheimer Sippe*”, dating from the late Gothic period (around 1520). In 1645, the Mindelheim artist *Georg Schenck* created further reliefs to match this work, as well as the altar. The chapel can be viewed daily from 9 to 5 between Easter Sunday and All Saints’ Day (beginning of November).



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## 24 Herrgottsruh Chapel

This tiny chapel is oval in shape and was built in 1718 to mark the final station on the way of the cross. The focus of the chapel is the altar made of red and grey marble with the Herrgottsruh figurine. Only accessible on official guided tours of the town.

## 25 St. Catherine’s Chapel [Katharinenkapelle]

This hexagonal chapel on the crest of the hill was founded in 1606 by *Maria Fugger*, a niece of George II von Frundsberg, in remembrance of her late mother, *Katharina von Schwarzenberg*. From here, there is one of the best views of Mindelheim. Only accessible on official guided tours of the town.

## 26 Mindelburg Castle

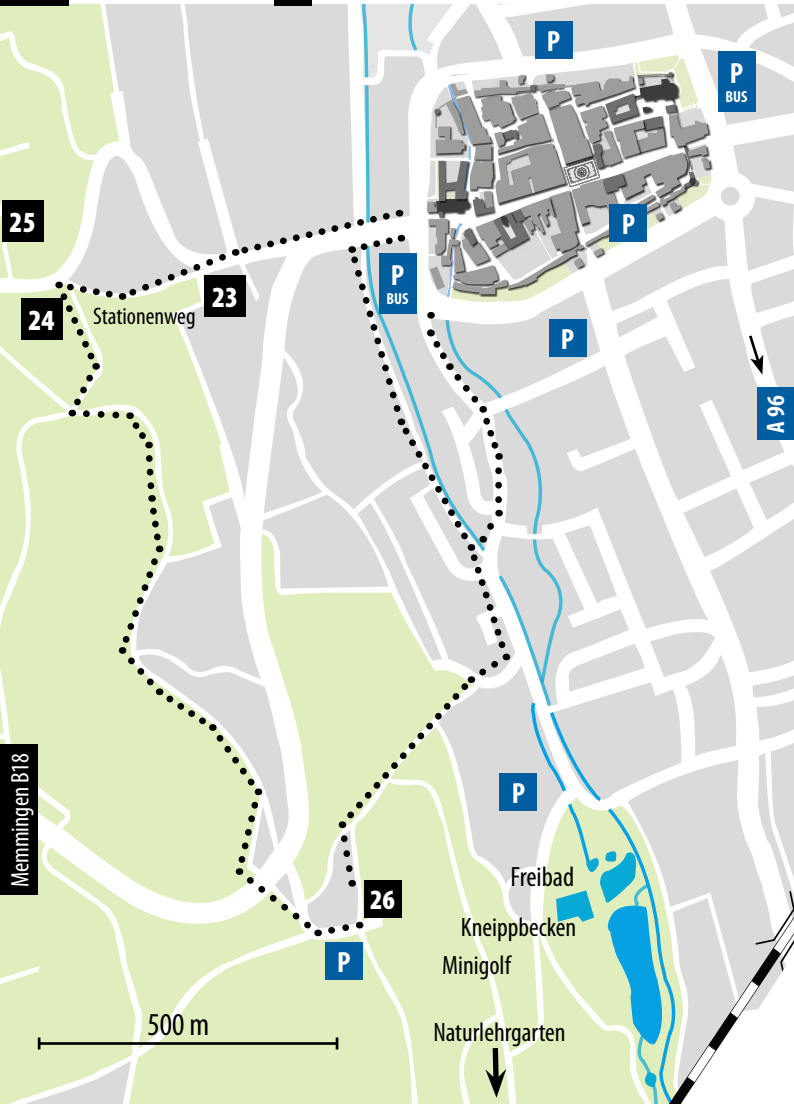
Mindelburg Castle is built on a hill, south west of Mindelheim. It is a typical mediaeval castle, with round fortified bastions, gates and moats. The oldest still visible parts of the building indicate that the castle was built in the late 12th century. It was later home to the *Dukes of Teck* and the *von Frundsberg family*. St. George’s Chapel, which was built in 1370 and redesigned in the Baroque style in 1718, houses the earliest Madonna figure in Mindelheim, dating from the late Gothic period (around 1490). In the vaulted tap room of the prebendary’s house, there is a fresco dating from about 1520 showing the lord of the castle, *George I von Frundsberg*, with some guests. Today, parts of the castle have been let, but the castle courtyard with its 27-metre well is accessible all year round and the observation tower is open from May to October. The chapel may be visited on an official guided tour. There is a restaurant (*Burggaststätte*) at the entrance to the castle (closed on Tuesdays).



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Memmingen B18

500 m

A 96

Freibad  
Kneippbecken  
Minigolf  
Naturlehrgarten



**The history** of our town begins as a village settled by Alamannic tribes in 7 A.D. A Reichshof mentioned in 1046 is evidence of a Carolingian settlement that was to be of great significance for the later history of Mindelheim. In the late 12th century, the castle and the town itself were built, most probably to safeguard the old salt road from Mindelheim to Lake Constance. In 1256, a document mentions “citizens”. After the end of the Staufer duchy, under the “Lords of Mindelberg”, a dominion emerged, built up of small territories with a town as its centre, typical of the Swabian region. The Dukes of Teck ruled from 1365 to 1439 when they were succeeded by their nephew, Bero von Rechberg and his son Bero II, and later by Ulrich von Frundsberg, a Tyrolean knight, who was married to Barbara von Rechberg. In 1473, the most famous member of the family, George I von Frundsberg - the “Father of the landsknechts” - was born in Mindelburg castle. The death of his grandson George II was followed by a long dispute over matters of inheritance after which Duke Maximilian I of Bavaria finally prevailed in 1616. It is an odd quirk of history that, from 1705 to 1715, John Churchill Duke of Marlborough ruled what had, by then, become the imperial principality of Mindelheim.

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