

Come to Bretten

By car

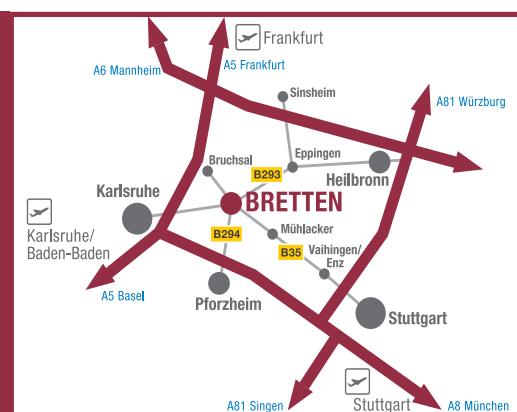
Bretten is centrally located between Karlsruhe, Heidelberg, Stuttgart and Pforzheim. The highways A 5, A 8 and A 6 connect Bretten with remote destinations. Additionally the three state roads B 35, B 293 and B 294 lead through Bretten.

By train

You can easily and comfortably reach Bretten by tram or train. You can get the trains of the „Deutsche Bahn“ at Bretten main station and the city lines to Karlsruhe and Heilbronn or the regional lines direction Bruchsal, Mühlacker, Stuttgart or Heidelberg. Various stops in the city guarantee a convenient trip with the „ÖPNV“ (public transport).

By plane

There are also quick connections to the airports Baden-Airpark, Stuttgart and Frankfurt.



Welcome to Bretten

For any question concerning your stay in Bretten please contact our team of the Tourist Office:

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75015 Bretten
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Please visit us on our website, as well as on our social media channels.

[@bretten.stadt](https://www.facebook.com/bretten.stadt)
[stadtbretten](https://www.instagram.com/stadtbretten)

www.erlebe-bretten.de



1 Marktplatz mit Marktbrunnen (Market Square and Market Fountain)

The Market Square has always been in the center of urban life and for a long time the source of wealth and prosperity of Bretten. For the town, situated at the intersection of important highways, commerce has played a vital role for many centuries. Today's shape of the Market Square has been nearly unchanged since the High Middle Ages. It still resembles the triangular layout, which was very typical for that era. The Market Fountain is one of the oldest and still preserved fountains of Bretten. Its origins date back to the time before 1400. Above the octagonal basin with the four waterspouts a statue of sandstone sits on a pillar dated 1555, representing the elector Frederick II of the Palatinate region – governor from 1544 to 1556.



2 Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall)

The only building extending into the triangle of the square is the Old Town Hall, located in the same place as the previous one, built in 1435. Those times are very famous for its splendid features, including glass paintings and glass etchings. It was destroyed in the great city fire of 1689. On the base of this first town hall another structure was built in 1787 in the style of the „Germain Renaissance“ which is the origin of today's old town hall. Not until 1982 the Old Town Hall was abandoned as administrative seat in favour of a new building in the south of the historical town center. On the front side of the Old Town Hall several coats of arms with corresponding dates point out the repeated change of Bretten's territorial affiliation. They showcase Bretten's historical development from the 8th century onwards. In 767 Bretten was first mentioned in the Lorscher Codex. To the right of the historical coats of arms you can find the coats of arms of Bretten's current sister cities: Hemer (Sauerland/Germany), Bellegarde-sur-Valserin (France), Longjumeau (France), Condeixa-a-Nova (Portugal), Wittenberg (Lutheran city in Sachsen-Anhalt/Germany) and Pontypool (Wales). Additionally there are other sister city agreements among Bretten's boroughs: Neibsheim with Neufelize (France) and Nemesnaduvar (Hungary), Diedelsheim with Hidas (Hungary).



3 Melanchthonhaus (Memorial building and museum)

Right next to the Old Town Hall there is an impressive building made of red sandstone: The Melanchthonhaus memorial building and its corresponding museum. Bretten's famous son Philipp Melanchthon was born here on February 16th, 1497 under the name Philipp Schwarzerd as son of the Palatine smith and armourer Georg Schwarzerd the Elder and his wife Barbara, former Reuter. During his life Melanchthon was reformer, humanist and „praeceptor germaniae“ (Teacher of Germany). He lived in Bretten until 1508 when he went to the latin school in Pforzheim. The original birthplace burned down during the city fire in 1689. In the beginning of the 18th century the brothers Würz of Bretten built a big half-timbered building as residential and business building on the preserved cellar vaults of Melanchthon's birthplace. It was used as a residence and place of business for more than two centuries. The construction of today's Melanchthonhaus started in 1897, the 400th birthday of Philipp Melanchthon. It opened in 1903. The northern front informs by its symbolism about Melanchthon's life. The cities' coats of arms at the balcony remind of the stations of his life: Bretten, Pforzheim, Heidelberg, Tübingen and Wittenberg. Today, besides the museum and a research center, the Melanchthon Memorial Building houses one of the most extensive specialized Melanchthon libraries and a documentation center of the international Melanchthon research. The museum showcases a memorial hall with frescoes and further rooms with about 13.000 books, 490 autographs, coats of arms, paintings, commemorative coins and graphics.



4 Hotel „Krone“ (Hotel „crown“)

The western side of the Market Square is dominated by the Hotel „Krone“ the most rich in tradition of all inns in Bretten. Already in the Middle Age voyagers of all kinds – many merchants, military leaders, scholars, pilgrims, students, princes, dukes and earls found accommodation here, in an inn at the same place. In 1550 none less than the emperor Charles V stayed within its walls. This well-known inn fell victim to the city fire of 1689, too. Today's building was constructed on the same spot according to old plans, drawings and documents. The half-timbering and the sandstone settings of the windows and entrances emphasize the historical character as well as the coat of arms of the Paravicini family above the main entrance. This family ran the Hotel „Krone“ for a long time and belonged to the town's most esteemed and wealthiest families.

5 Pfeiferturm (Piper's tower)

The Pfeiferturm in the north and the Simmelturm in the south represented two important bastions as a part of the city wall. Built in the mid 13th-century the Pfeiferturm was the strongest fortification of the town at 26 meters high. It protected the town (protected by tower guards and pipers, giving the tower its name) to the particularly dangerous northern side. Importantly, its existence prevented that the troops of Württemberg could form a complete ring of siege around the town during the Palatinate War of Succession in 1504. However, it got severely damaged during the siege and could only be restored in 1507. It was used as communication center and sometimes also as prison for the town and district of Bretten. Its high steeple roof also burnt down during the city fire in 1689. So more than 300 years the Pfeiferturm remained as a torso only. Thanks to the citizens' initiative for local and cultural heritage, the tower received a new roof in 2009. It opened in 2017. Originally, it could only be entered from the city walls, today a steep staircase with 152 steps from a door on „Engelsberg“ leads up to the observation platform. From above one has a very good view on Bretten and its surroundings. The tower can be climbed together with a guide (for further information please contact the Tourist Office).



6 Schweizer Hof mit Deutschem Schutzengelmuseum (Swiss Inn with German Museum of guardian angels)

Historical building data shows that the building as it is today was built in 1707, in the period of reconstruction following the city fire in 1689. In medieval times Bretten's tithe house belonged to the wealthy convent of Frauenalb located here. The enormous cellar vaults below the Schweizer Hof were built in the same era and are themselves very interesting. From 1997 to 2001, the Schweizer Hof was restored by the citizens' initiative for local and cultural heritage on a voluntary basis. On two floors the Deutsche Schutzengelmuseum shows approximately 300 exhibits about guardian angels and also guardian spirits. Since 2002 the Schweizer Hof houses the museum of local and regional history of Bretten.



7 Hundlesbrunnen (Fountain of the doggy)

The fountain was built in 1880 so only once Bretten belonged to Baden (since 1803). The legend of the Bretten doggy is well-known, not only locally. It tells the tale of a small fattened doggy, that epitomized the fact, that the citizens still had enough food during the siege in 1504 and consequently the enemies left. The fountain of the Bretten doggy is one of the most important symbols of Bretten and its picture decorates innumerable postcards, advertising leaflets, gift packages and much more.



8 Gottesackerter (God's field gate)

Already in the High Middle Ages Bretten owned three city gates. The „Salzhofer Tor“ – also called „Untertor“ direction Pforzheim, the „Weißhofer Tor“ direction Knittlingen and further to Cannstatt as well as the „Gottesackerter“, leading to Bruchsal and on to Heidelberg. All gates were part of the city wall and had gate keepers. A rooftop rider on the house next door and a modern clay sculpture set up here in 1991 remind of the former site. After the set up of a cemetery in front of the western part of the city wall („Gottesacker“), this name started to be commonly used.

9 Evangelische Kreuzkirche (Protestant Church)

This second protestant church in the historical center of Bretten dates back to 1687 when Lutherans and reformed Protestants were still two different confessions and the Lutherans of Bretten didn't have their own church. The tragedy of the time caused the destruction of the Kreuzkirche, also called Lutherkirche, in the city fire of 1689, only two years after its completion. It was rebuilt after the end of the Palatine War of Succession and inaugurated in 1702 being even more unadorned those times than today. The attached tower was built much later and both the ceiling and the gallery were painted in 1740. It was widely renovated in 1957 and got wonderful interior paintings. The church houses a mechanically very special organ which pipes work by separate air input.



10 Amtshaus (Administrative Building)

With its big walled forecourt, it was built in classicist style. Its medieval predecessor building was the stone house of the palatine reeve, a keep made of stone, which can clearly be seen on the engraving of Merian of 1645. The stone house too, fell victim to the fire of 1689, except its vaulted cellar. Only in 1783/84 the reconstruction of the palatinate administrative seat was started, which kept its function also after the transition of Bretten to the grand duchy of Baden in 1803. Until its dissolution in 1936 the administration of the district authority of Baden had its seat here. In 1888 it was expanded with more rooms for the local court. Today it houses the court and the notary's office and besides that in its vaulted cellar the „Gugg-e-mol-Theater“, a well-known cabaret theatre of Bretten.



11 Evangelische Stiftskirche (Protestant Church)

The Stiftskirche was probably built between 1350 and 1400 and is the oldest and most important church of Bretten. Its oldest part is the tower, supposed to be the tower or keep of a small town castle from the beginning of the High Middle Ages, which served as inner core of the city's defenses. The tower is 61meters high. Initially the patron saints of the church were St. Stephen and St. Laurence. For a long time, this place of worship has been a church for both Catholics and reformed Protestants. The former screen, a wooden gate to separate the choir and the nave of a church, had been transformed into a partition wall for them. The destructions of 1689 did affect above all the tower but left the outer walls nearly undamaged. Around the Stiftskirche was the first cemetery of Bretten (a churchyard in the literal sense of the word). Both on the southern and south-eastern outer walls as well as inside the church, grave stones of spiritual and noble leaders of the former palatine district of Bretten are displayed. They often show old family and territorial coats of arms that date back to the 16th until the 18th century. On the south side the original figure of the Bretten doggy can be seen sitting in a niche. It is a former gargoye.



12 Simmelturm („Simmel“ tower)

Originating from the second half of the 14th century its outside was built with lime stone quarries and its inside faced with sandstone blocks. Various loopholes helped to repulse approaching attackers. From the art-historical point of view, the stony frescoes (so called „envy heads“ to symbolize defense) and coats of arms in the upper tower part are very remarkable. It was part of the southeastern bastions of the town-wall and used as a defense facility. Its name derives from Middle High German „sinwel“ (= round, circular). Like the Pfeiferturm it symbolizes the pride, importance and tradition of the medieval „Brettheim“.



13 Gerberhaus (Tannery)

Built in 1585 it is one of only few houses that survived the big fire nearly without any damage. Situated directly beside the former city wall its construction shows many similarities with the old fortification. In the beginning of 1990 citizens of Bretten worked 14.000 hours on a voluntary basis to preserve the oldest residential house of their town for the future. Today it houses a museum for the history of the town, trade and leather, in which particularly the tools and products of the tanners, shoemakers and saddlers are shown.



14 Katholische Stadtkirche St. Laurentius (Catholic Church)

With its characteristic onion dome this catholic church was only built in 1936 and 1937. From the former catholic part of the Stiftskirche it received the crucifixion group created in 1780, a picture of the birth of Jesus Christ dating back to 1680 and a marvelous sculpture of the Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus, dating back to 1770.



Bretten at a glance

City map and stroll through the historic old town

Bretten - city of Melanchthon

Bretten is a quaint town in the heart of the Kraichgau

Bretten looks back on a proud past with more than 1250 years of history.

Since Bretten was first mentioned in the Lorscher Codex in 767 the town evolved from a small town to an important medium-sized hub. Today tracks of its history-charged past can still be found within numerous buildings and sights. Discover these via a guided city tour or during a stroll on your own. Museums like the one of the birthplace of the great reformer Philipp Melanchthon or the Museum in the Schweizer Hof offer diverse programs even on rainy days.

Bretten is located in the idyllic hilly countryside in the Kraichgau and is therefore an ideal starting point for exciting hiking and cycling tours.

Start an intensive shopping stroll through the various boutiques on the market square with its half-timbered buildings and enjoy delicious food options in the numerous cafes and restaurants.





Arriving in Bretten

Parking

- P1 Parkhaus Pfluggasse
- P2 Parkplatz Sporgasse
- P3 Parkhaus Engelsberg
- P4 Parkhaus Löwenhof
- P5 Parkplatz Seedamm
- P6 Parkplatz Behördenzentrum

Discover Bretten

People – Places – History

Discover Bretten – its wonderful old town, unique flair and history-charged past. You can do this on your own by using the pocket plan.

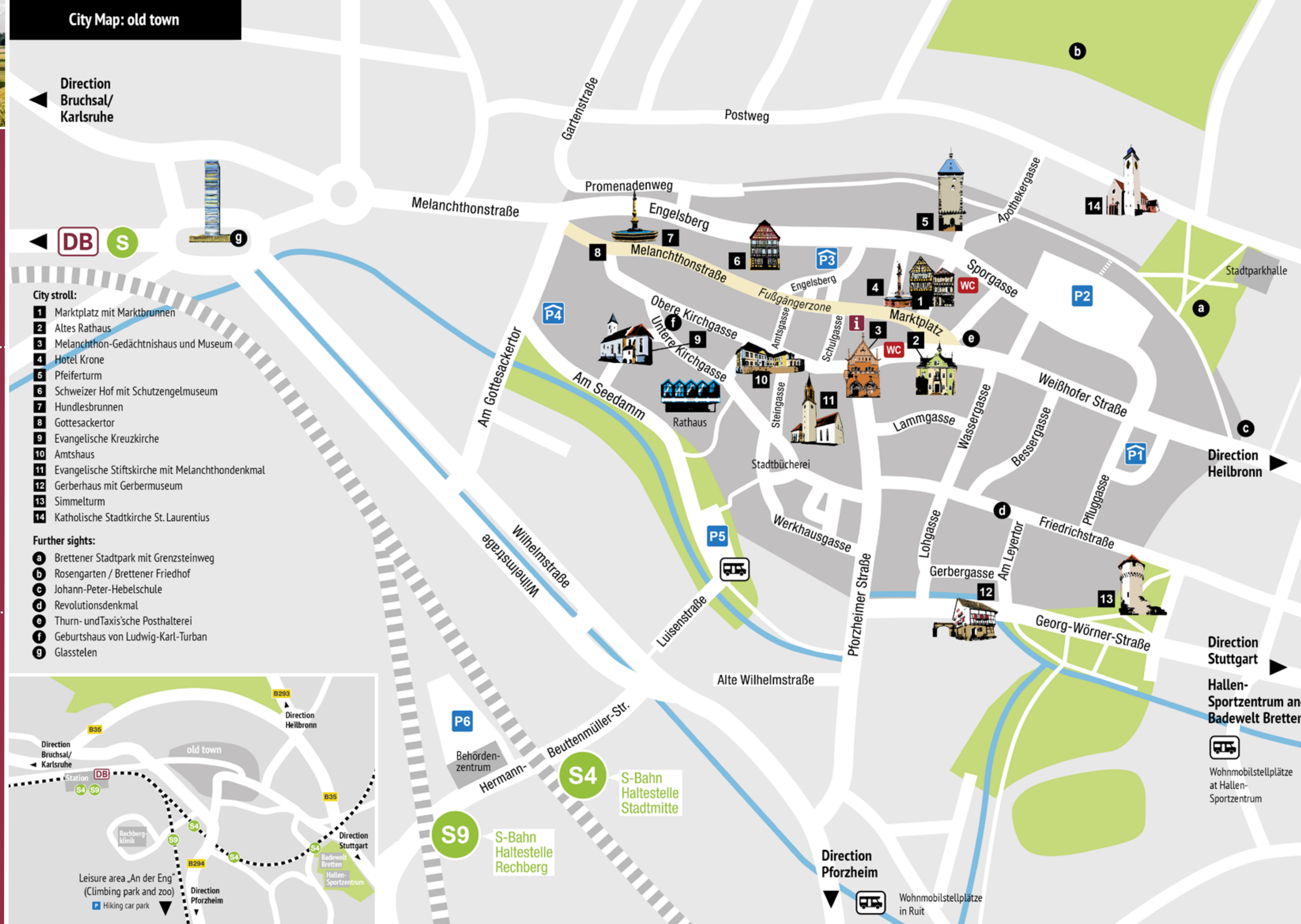
Or do you want a little more information? Our competent city guides are pleased to inform you about Bretten's history. We like to organize your individual tour whether you choose a guided tour through the old town, a stroll with the towerwoman, a special topic tour referring to Melanchthon or a visit of the German Museum of Guardian Angels.

Adventure, culture or pure nature

Enjoy Bretten with all your senses

Escape from everyday stress, recharge your health and joy of life in Bretten and the feel-good region Kraichgau-Stromberg. Have fun, experience exciting adventure, dive into worlds of reading and theatre or just allow yourself a short break. In Bretten you will find the corresponding offer for all your moods:

- Hiking and cycling
- Spa world Bretten
- Climbing park with zip-line courses
- Bretten Zoo
- Multi-generation park and playgrounds
- Kinostar Bretten (cinema)
- Badische Landesbühne (theatre) and the Gugg-e-mol-Theatre (cabaret theatre)
- Public Library and much more



Bretten celebrates

The city lives its history

Bretten knows how to celebrate which becomes most apparent during the annual Peter-and-Paul-Festival in the beginning of July. The city presents its history on a journey through time during the siege by the troops of Württemberg in 1504.

The hustle and bustle of 4.000 historically dressed participants invite the visitors to look, to marvel and to take part. Scenic performances and a colorful camp life of lansquenets, city guards, craftsmen and farmers give insight of the everyday life in a medieval town. Musicians, jugglers, herald trumpets and militia offer a diverse program.

The Peter-and-Paul-Festival is well-known in the region and beyond and was awarded as „Immaterial Culture Heritage“ in 2014. For further information regarding the Peter-and-Paul-Festival and exact dates please use: www.peter-und-paul.de

Experience Bretten

Culture – Events – Markets

Annually Bretten also offers a diverse program of events – readings, theatre, markets and also music events. There is something for everyone.

During the program „Summer in the Park“, the city park becomes a stage alive every two years. Many events – theatre, music, literature and sports take place in a relaxed atmosphere.

Another highlight is the wine market in the end of September, where winemakers of Baden and Württemberg offer their fine wines and seasonal delicacies in comfortable pergolas.

Finally, the traditional Christmas market combined with arts and crafts market invites to come to Bretten.

PICTURE CREDITS
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GRAPHICS AND MAP
Werbeagentur Plan B