

BAYREUTH
Marketing & Tourismus-GmbH
Opernstraße 22, 95444 Bayreuth
Tel. +49(0)921/885-88, Fax: 885-755
www.bayreuth-tourismus.de
info@bayreuth-tourismus.de



Press release

Bayreuth - City of culture and music

Bayreuth enjoys international acclaim as a centre for works by Richard Wagner, thus it is fitting indeed that the Bayreuth Festival will be described "Living World Culture". Each year in July and August thousands of opera fans the world over gather on the "Grünen Hügel" (Green Hill) to watch and listen to Richard Wagner's works at the authentic location. The atmosphere and the acoustics in the festival hall that was built according to Wagner's own plans and ancient models make performances truly special. The Bayreuth Festival stages only Wagner's principal works: The Flying Dutchman, Lohengrin, Tannhäuser, The Mastersingers of Nuremberg, Tristan und Isolde and The Ring of the Nibelung comprising: The Rhine Gold, The Valkyries, Siegfried, Götterdämmerung (Twilight of the Gods) as well as Wagner's later work Parsifal.

Since its inception in 1876 the Bayreuth Festival has seen performance by many artistes of world renown. The Bayreuth Festival orchestra comprising musicians from Germany and Europe's leading orchestras has been conducted by such famous names as Arturo Toscanini, Herbert von Karajan, Pierre Boulez, Daniel Barenboim, Kirill Petrenko and Christian Thielemann. Famous singers to have been celebrated on the stage in Bayreuth and re-

nowned opera directors have been working at the Bayreuth Festival.

A UNESCO World Heritage

But even leaving the festival aside, this wonderful city that is ideally located half-way between Munich and Berlin is always worth a visit. Bayreuth has a wealth of first-rate historic sights that date back to the era of the art-patron Margravine Wilhelmine. The Prussian princess who was King Frederick the Great's favourite sister created a unique complex of castles, parks and the truly wonderful opera house that is prized by all as Europe's finest and best-preserved baroque theatre. Wilhelmine engaged the Italian architects Giuseppe und Carlo Galli Bibiena who were considered the leading theatre architects of their time. The opera house has been inscribed on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites and is opened daily all year round. Since April 24th the new information centre & museum is highlighting the opera houses history in a modern and interactive way. Visitors' information, opening hours and guided tours: www.bayreuth-wilhelmine.de .

The New Palace with Friedrich and Wilhelmine's historic rooms are considered masterpieces of Bayreuth Rococo. The adjacent royal gardens connect the historic city centre with "Haus Wahnfried", Richard Wagner's former home that today houses a museum and the National Archive. Germany's Freemasons' Museum (Deutsche Freimaurermuseum), the Jean-Paul Museum and the Franz-Liszt Museum are all just a stone's throw away. The original grand piano played by the great virtuoso and composer Franz Liszt whenever he was in Bayreuth can be viewed on a tour of the piano making facilities of Steingraeber Bayreuth.

Located just outside the city is yet another work of architecture of European standing: the Hermitage complex comprises the palace, grottos, fountains, the unique semicircular orangery adorned with stained glass and quartz and a central sun temple dedicated to Apollo the god of muses.

Bayreuth's wealth of select specialist shops and stores provide plenty of quality shopping whilst the Rotmain-Center, a newly created extension to the adjacent pedestrian precinct, houses some 80 leading retailers and service enterprises all conveniently under one roof.

Playing their part in ensuring health and well-being is a wide range of state-of-the-art sports facilities and pools including the "Lohengrin Therme" that offers an almost unparalleled range of treatments in its wellness centre. Enhancing the city's own recreational value is the wonderful scenery of Franconian Switzerland in the southwest and the Fichtelgebirge in the northeast.

Further information: Bayreuth Marketing & Tourismus GmbH, Opernstraße 22, 95444 Bayreuth, Tel. +49 (0)921 - 88588, Fax +49 (0)921 - 885755, info@bayreuth-tourismus.de; www.bayreuth-tourismus.de/english

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