

The Old City Hall



The old City Hall was once a fortified gate structure (13th century) and the original access to the fortress. In 1631, the upper story was severely damaged by ammunition fire. After rebuilding from 1673 to 1676, the upper story was used as the City Hall from 1676 until 1909. Today, it houses the City Historical Museum which exhibits many interesting items including an impressive model of the fortress.

Villa Rothschild

The famous conference of the Minister Presidents of the States of Germany, in which the passing of the constitution was initiated in 1949, took place in the former villa of the Rothschilds, a Frankfurt banking family. In 1955 the city purchased the estate, which in 1956 was opened as „Hotel Sonnenhof“ (until 2005). Among the names to be found in the guest book are those of Sophia Loren, Theodor Heuss and Willy Brandt. After extensive renovations, the hotel & restaurant „Villa Rothschild“ was reopened in March of 2007.



Hotel Falkenstein Grand

On this site once stood the formerly internationally famous pulmonary sanatorium founded by Dr. Peter Dettweiler (1837-1904), which was demolished in 1907. Emperor Wilhelm II erected a convalescent home for his officers and personally attended the opening ceremonies. The home consisted of a main building and at first five outbuildings.

After the end of World War I, French soldiers were initially billeted here. Later it served again as a convalescent home and from 1946 as a state sanatorium for pulmonary diseases. From 1964 until 1997 it housed the „Taurus Klinik“.



Villa Andreae

Albert Andreae de Neufville, a banker from Frankfurt, erected this villa on the „Geisberg“ in 1891 as his summer residence. This villa incorporates features of other well-known historical buildings in Frankfurt. After 1945 this „small palace“ was used by the Inner Mission of the German Evangelical Church of Hesse and Nassau as a boarding school. In 1987 Villa Andreae was purchased by a property developer who became notorious throughout Germany when his corporate empire spectacularly collapsed just a few years later.



The Fortress of Falkenstein

As early as the 11th century a fortification existed on the „Nöringsberg“, named after the powerful Counts of Nürings (Nörings). Successors to that family, which died out in 1171, were the Lords of Bollanden-Falkenstein. They erected a new castle complex just meters away from the original and named it „Neu-Falkenstein“ after their ancestral castle in the Palatinate.



In the 14th century the castle and village of Falkenstein passed to the Lords of Nassau, who awarded Falkenstein as a community fiefdom to various chivalric families, the Lords of Kronberg, von Hattstein and von Staffel. During the reign of the Lords of Hattstein, the fortress in Falkenstein served as a starting point for numerous robberies. After the death of the last of the Knights of Staffel in 1679, Falkenstein experienced difficult times under the new feudal Lords of Bettendorf (1681-1773). During this period the deterioration of the fortress began and continued into the middle of the 19th century. Many residents retrieved stones from the fortress to use as construction material for their own homes. Falkenstein, at that time still an independent municipality, became the owner of the fortifications in 1954. From here one has a spectacular view of Frankfurt and the area surrounding the Main River.

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Discover
Königstein in Taunus
and its history

Welcome to Königstein im Taunus

Our spa and health resort, centrally located in the Hochtaunus Nature Preserve, invites you to discover its numerous outstanding features. The fortress ruins, the picturesque historical centre with its charming narrow streets or the Kurbad (a complex including an indoor/outdoor swimming pool, sauna and restaurant) with its stunning views over Königstein, all represent the diverse facets of Königstein.

Königstein, located on the southern slopes of the Taunus Mountains and surrounded by extensive forests, was declared a „Heilklimatischer Kurort“ (a resort city known for its healthy climate) in 1935. The history of the so-called „Kur“ (various treatments for medical ailments) began with Dr. George Pingler. He established a small „cold water“ sanatorium named the „Prießnitzbad“ in 1851. From then on numerous guests flocked to Königstein in order to take the „cure“. Prominent guests included Queen Elisabeth of Rumania and the Frankfurt poet Friedrich Stoltze.



Many wealthy families from Frankfurt also began spending their summers in Königstein, so that from the middle of the 19th century, many splendid summer villas were constructed, which further enhanced the appearance of the city. Well-known sanatoriums were established which treated prominent patients such as the painter Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and the conductor Otto Klemperer.

Falkenstein – the district of Königstein with the highest elevation - has also been allocated the title „Heilklimatischer Kurort“. Falkenstein is an excellent starting point for many interesting hikes. The district of Mammolshain is known not only for its fruit orchards, but also for its forests of chestnut trees, so that Mammolshain is known as the „chestnut village“. One of the steepest bike paths in Germany runs through Mammolshain.

The district of Schneidhain is the birthplace of Johann Weck, who invented the preserving jar known throughout the world and which in German is named „das Weckglas“ after him.

Villa Borgnis – „Kurhaus“ in the park



The house „Hauptstraße 21“ was originally the site of the guesthouse „Zum grünen Baum“. Probably the most well-known guest was Field Marshall Blücher, who made this building his general headquarters for two days in November of 1813 while retreating west after the Battle of Leipzig. Matthias Borgnis, a businessman from Frankfurt, purchased the building in 1838, which included a large garden. Located within this garden was a cellar which was all that remained of a hunting lodge from the Kurmainzer Era (1581 - 1803). Borgnis had a garden villa erected on this foundation in 1860. In 1927 the Villa Borgnis was opened as a municipal „Kurhaus“ and after extensive renovations in 1999 „Villa Borgnis - Kurhaus im Park“ now houses a restaurant and the civil registry office of Königstein.

The Fortress of Königstein

The founding of the castle and city is based on a magical legend: the famous King Chlodwig of Franconia – who ruled between 481 and 511 – lost his way while hiking in the Taunus Mountains. Being exhausted, he collapsed onto a boulder and with his sword scratched the figure of a cross into the stone. The stone broke open and a virgin dressed in white appeared to him. She foretold that he would be victorious over the Alemanen if he fought under the sign of the cross. When he returned, she would be redeemed. After the victorious Battle of Zülpich, King Chlodwig returned and etched a cross in the stone, from which a white dove emerged and flew away. Chlodwig thereupon had a fortress erected on that stone as well as building a chapel in the valley. The first mention of Königstein in historical documents dates back to 1215. Therefore it is assumed, that the original castle also stems from the 11th century. The castle was located on the most important trade route between Frankfurt and Cologne. Below the castle a small settlement developed which was granted city rights in 1313.

Owners of the imperial fiefdom were first the Imperial Ministers of Münzenberg, followed by the Lords of Bolanden-Falkenstein and as of 1418, the Lords of Eppstein. In the year 1535, Count Ludwig von Stolberg inherited power over Königstein. He implemented the Reformation here in 1540 and fortified the existing residential palace. Under the rule of the Kurmainz, Catholic religion was reintroduced to Königstein and the fortifications were enlarged and further developed. A state prison was also located in the national fortress of Königstein. At the end of the



18th century supporters of the Mainz Republic were incarcerated here. In 1792 a large part of the city burned down after the fortress was bombarded by the Prussians. Only four years later, in September of 1796, the castle was dynamited by members of the French military. In 1803 the castle became the property of the Dukedom of Nassau. In 1866 the Duchy of Nassau passed to Prussia. The castle, however, remained in the ducal family's private possession. Through an endowment in 1922, the castle is now property of the city of Königstein.

Palace of Luxembourg

This small palace, popularly known as „the Luxemburger“ or „Palace of Luxembourg“, served from 1686 until 1694 as an administration building and summer residence of the Prince Elector of Mainz. Due to the dissolution of the electoral state of Mainz in 1803, the estate became the property of Nassau and was at first used as the residence of the highest ranking judge in Nassau. George Christian Dörr, a leather merchant from Frankfurt, purchased the former administration building in 1820. Duke Adolph of Nassau (1817-1905) acquired it in 1858 as a summer residence and from 1873-1877 had it converted into a palace.



This residence was especially treasured by Adelheid Marie, the wife of Duke Adolph, who in 1890 became the Grand-Duke of Luxembourg. Until her death in 1916, she continually received visits from many members of the aristocracy. After her death the palace passed on to her daughter, Hilda von Baden. In 1952, a businessman from Frankfurt purchased the palace including the surrounding park from her heiress, Grand-Duchess Charlotte of Luxembourg. The building has been the property of the city of Königstein since 1970. After extensive renovations, the palace is leased to the judicial authorities of the state of Hesse and since 1981 serves as the local courthouse. The outbuildings in Burgweg, which once belonged to the palace have been converted to the City Hall.