

## Ulm and its attractions

Ulm is a city in the federal German state of Baden-Württemberg, situated on the River Danube. It was founded around 850 and is rich in history and traditions as a former Free Imperial City (German: freie Reichsstadt). Today, it is an economic centre due to its varied industries, and it is the seat of a university (University of Ulm, founded in 1967). Internationally, Ulm is primarily known for having the church with the tallest steeple in the world, the Gothic minster (Ulm Minster, German: Ulmer Münster) and as the birthplace of Albert Einstein.

Ulm lies at the point where the rivers Blau and Iller join the Danube, at an altitude of 479m above sea level. Most parts of the city, including the old town, are situated on the left bank of the Danube; only the districts of Wiblingen, Göggingen, Donaustetten and Unterweiler lie on the right bank. Across from the old town, on the other side of the river, lies the twin city of Neu-Ulm in the state of Bavaria, smaller than Ulm and until 1810 a part of it. Apart from the Danube in the south, the city is surrounded by forests and hills which rise to altitudes of over 620m, some of them part of the Swabian Alb. South of the Danube, plains and hills finally end in the northern edge of the Alps, which is approximately 100km from Ulm and is visible from the city on clear days.

Although quite small, the centre of Ulm offers a few lovely places that one shouldn't miss:

- The Ulmer Münster, the Gothic minster with the highest steeple in the world (161,53m): you can enjoy a visit both of the interior and up to the top of the steeple from where you can admire a nice view of the city below and the countryside around it. The minster and steeple are open every day from 9 am to 6:45 pm, and more information can be found at <http://www.ulmer-muenster.de/>
- The Fischerviertel (fishermen's quarter) with its dainty houses and canals winding their way through: do not miss the "Schiefes Haus" (crooked house)! From the Fischerviertel you can then continue down to the Danube and enjoy a walk along the river and to the park.
- Quarter "Auf dem Kreuz", in the eastern part of the old city, where half of the buildings were built before 1700.
- Near the Town Hall: this is one of the most beautiful buildings in town (and now a lively restaurant where one can taste the local food!) and in combination with the close surrounding definitely worth seeing.



Figure 1: Ulmer Münster



Figure 2: Left: Fischerviertel; Right: Bank of the Danube

In the surroundings of Ulm one shouldn't miss the Wiblingen Monastery: founded in 1093, it underwent the same fate as all other medieval monasteries in Germany, when it was radically remodeled in the 18th century. The result was an architectural ensemble of impressive dimensions in the baroque style. The abbey church, completed in 1781, is a rare example in Upper Swabia of neoclassical interior design, seeking to re-create the formal idiom of the ancients. The ceilings, painted by Januarius Zick, rank among the finest frescoes in southern Germany. The library has been exceptionally well preserved and is valued by art historians for the complex theological and philosophical themes which underlie its wealth of figurative ornament and its fresco ceiling.

The Wiblingen Monastery can be reached by public transportation by taking bus 3 or 8 from the Ulm bus station (ZOB near the train station) and getting off at Pranger. The actual times of departure can be found under 3-Löwen-Takt-timetable information.

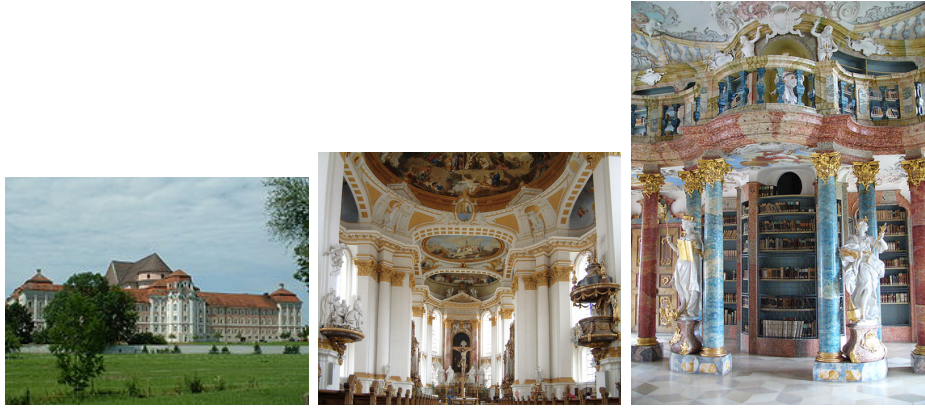


Figure 3: Left: Wiblingen Abbey; Middle: interior of the Wiblingen monastery; Right: interior of the Wiblingen library

More information on the monastery and its well-preserved library can be found at the following links

<http://www.travelgermanyinenglish.com/wiblingen.html>

<http://www.kloster-wiblingen.de/en/268050.html>

If you enjoy biking there are many nice routes around Ulm, which are part of the two major bike-routes "Donau-Radweg" and "Donau-Bodensee-Radweg". A ride that can be easily done on a free afternoon is that to the spring of Blautopf in Blaubeuren, approximately 16km west of Ulm. This spring, which reaches a depth of 21 metres, is of a beautiful, rich blue color, which is the result of chemical properties of limestone densely distributed in the water.

Blaubeuren can also be reached by train from Ulm (only 10 minutes train ride, see <http://www.deutschebahn.com/site/bahn/de/start.html>).

For further information:

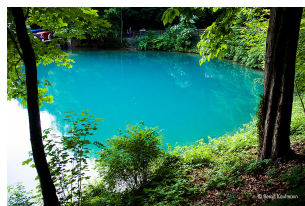


Figure 4: Blautopf

<http://www.showcaves.com/english/de/springs/Blautopf.html>

<http://www.blaubeuren.de/ceasy/modules/cms/main.php5?cPageId=60>

Bikes can be rented for a very moderate price (5-10 euro a day) at the Ulm train station (exiting the train station go left and you'll find the bike rental before the ZOB bus station).

Last but not least, this year there's a special event in Ulm, namely the 200th anniversary of the attempt to fly by Albrecht Berblinger, who wanted to fly over the Danube with his glider. He didn't succeed but until mid-November there's an exhibition on this at the Ulm Stadhaus. See the following link for more detailed information:

<http://www.berblinger.ulm.de/event/0/2/32>

Further information and details on Ulm can be found at the following links:

<http://www.ulm.de/>

<http://www.ulm.de/start.3080.htm>

<http://www.tourismus.ulm.de/tourismus/en/index.php>

<http://iloveulm.de/>