

## Heidelberg - City of Romanticism

International and national travelers love the city on the Neckar

Well over 12 million tourists and 1.4 million overnight stays in over 7,000 hotel beds - Heidelberg is one of the greatest tourist magnets in Germany. In a survey by the “Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus (DZT)” (“German Tourism Center”), Heidelberg Castle was chosen in 1<sup>st</sup> place in 2012 amongst the TOP 100 sights in Germany. Most of the guests come from Germany, while most of those from abroad come from the USA, Great Britain, Switzerland and the Arab Gulf States.

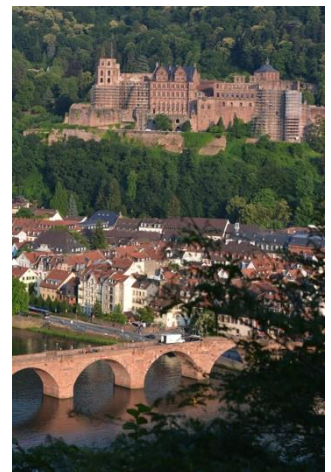
As the epitome of German Romanticism, Heidelberg comes high on the wish-list of many city tourists. “The city with its location and the whole surrounding area has something ideal about it”, wrote Johann Wolfgang von Goethe over 200 years ago in his diary. The Romantic poets such as Joseph von Eichendorff, Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim also fell under the spell of the city, as did the author Mark Twain, the composer Robert Schumann and the painter William Turner.

And justly so, since the city offers a cornucopia of different sights to see, all within a compact area. The majestic **Heidelberg Castle** perched high above the Old Town is literally the crowning tourist glory of Heidelberg. Nor is its attraction diminished by the fact that it has been largely a ruin for over 300 years. Heidelberg Castle was for almost five centuries the residence of the Electors of the Palatinate. With a history stretching back over 600 years, the **University Ruperto Carola** is also inseparably connected with the city. It is the oldest University in Germany, with its almost sacred-looking “**Alte Aula**” (“**Old Assembly Hall**”).

Another famous spot is the **Philosophers’ Walk** - where scholars once strolled in their stiff frock-coats to relax their thoughts with a walk. Exotic plants flourish here on this tiny climate island, which is one of the warmest places in Germany: Japanese plum and American cypress, Spanish broom and Portuguese cherry, lemons and pomegranates, bamboo, palms, pines. Everything here comes into blossom weeks earlier



The illuminated Old Bridge and the famous Castle by night.



View from the Philosophers’ Walk over the city, the Old bridge and the Castle.



Immerse yourself in the history of the city during a tour through the winding alleyways of the Old Town.

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than in the valley below. The outlook is unique - the Philosophers' Walk reveals a true picture-postcard view of the city, the river, the Old Bridge, the Castle and the Königstuhl towering almost 2,000 ft. above it. From the Philosophers' Walk the path winds its way over innumerable steps and rough cobblestones down to the **Old Bridge**, another petrified relic of the old residence city.

Romance also flourishes on the Nepomuk Terrace by the Old Bridge - at the "**Heidelberger Liebesstein**" ("**Heidelberg Love-stone**"), couples have since this summer been able to place a love-lock as a symbol of their eternal devotion. From here it is only a few steps to the **Old Town** with its picturesque squares, churches, museums and other places of interest. And especially in the side streets with their small alleys and secluded courtyards, surprises again and again await the visitor.

In view of everything the city has to offer, guests are also spoiled for choice when it comes to planning their evenings. Heidelberg boasts a historic **theater**, completely renovated in 2012, offering three branches of the art. This is augmented by several private smaller stages. The cultural repertoire in this polyglot small metropolis is just as lively and multi-faceted as the visitors who make their way here from all over the world. This also applies to the gastronomy and hostelry - from the many student pubs and bars to the grand gourmet restaurants, from the back-packer district to the 5-star hotel.



The Philosophers' Garden, a climate island where many exotic plants flourish.