

# ALTÖTTING

Heart of Bavaria 

## Discovering the heart of Bavaria



Festivities, sights and round trips



Bayern

[www.altoetting.de/tourismus](http://www.altoetting.de/tourismus)



A Bavarian saying has it that "from every doorstep, a path leads to Altötting". Each year innumerable pilgrims journey to this national shrine located in Bavaria. Whether pledged to old traditions, moved by deep faith or out of sport-related ambition, everyone treading the paths to Altötting is motivated by the heart. For over 1250 years the town has been the spiritual centre of Bavaria and for more than five centuries it's been the most important Marian pilgrimage site in the German-speaking world. Since the blossoming of pilgrimages here in 1489, an incalculable number of pilgrims have flocked to the Chapel of Grace with its Black Madonna: among them prince-electors, emperors and kings of Bavaria and Austria, as well as three popes.



## "Following the Footsteps of Emperors, Kings and Popes"

The history of Altötting is intrinsically linked with both the Wittelsbach and the Habsburg dynasties. Emperors, kings, as well as three popes spent time in Altötting as pilgrims. Since the 17th century the Wittelsbach dukes, prince-electors and kings have had their hearts enshrined in artistically fashioned urns and placed as a princely guard of honour opposite the image of the Black Madonna in Altötting. Among them is the heart of "fairy-tale king" Ludwig II of Bavaria, famous for his impressive castles.

The world-famous Altötting Madonna, the so-called "Black Madonna", is actually at the root of the most important Marian pilgrimage site in German-speaking countries. The 66 cm high statue of Our Lady of Altötting was carved in the early Gothic style in the Upper Rhine region around 1330 and is made from lime tree or coniferous wood.

In her left hand, Mary holds a sceptre with a lily blossom as a sign of her virginity. The Child Jesus rests on her right arm and carries a celestial sphere representing the omnipotence of God. Since the Baroque period, both Our Lady of Altötting and the Child Jesus have worn elaborate crowns adorned with precious stones. These treasures were often donated by female members of the royal Wittelsbach family.

In addition to the natural darkening process of the wood, the Altötting Madonna is blackened by the soot of all the candles lit throughout the centuries and is therefore revered as the "Black Madonna".

## "The Heart of Bavaria and One of the Hearts of Europe"

(Pope Emeritus Benedikt XVI)

## Dates, Festivities and Celebrations

The pilgrimage calendar is highlighted by many traditions and festivities such as the first of May, marking the beginning of the Marian month, the impressive Corpus Christi procession and the Feast of the Assumption on August 15th, which is preceded by a solemn procession of lights, the evening before. Above all, the three-day Whitsun celebration marks the arrival of numerous traditional groups of pilgrims, the origins of which go back hundreds of years. This event is bathed in a very special atmosphere. However, worldly customs should not be missing at a pilgrimage site either. Every year, on the weekend following Whitsun, Altötting's court fair takes place, featuring a procession of the breweries' festively decorated, horse-drawn carts. Beer, snacks and Bavarian specialties are among the quintessential draws of this one-week long event held at Dultplatz.

Altötting's Lenten Market: **April 7th**

Holy Week and Easter: **April 14th – 22nd**

Pentecost: **June 8th – 10th**



Altötting fun-fair and beer festival: **June 14th – 23rd**

Largest Gaustrachten festival (traditional costume festival) in the world presented by the Gauverband I: **July 20th – 21st**



Altötting's Abbey Market: **July 26th – 28th**

Great Procession of Lights: **August 14th**

Votive Pilgrimage of the Motorcyclists: **September 22nd**

Altötting's Church Fair: **September 28th – October 6th**

Altötting's "Tilly" Market: **November 3rd**



50th Altötting's Christkindl Market and large nativity scene exhibition: **November 23rd – December 15th**

Altötting's Advent Singing in alpine style and other concerts during the advent season



## Worth a visit: Museums

The **Jerusalem Panorama of Christ's Crucifixion** refers to an extensive circular viewing space. The panorama art form was widespread in the 19th century. The classic panorama of Christ's crucifixion from 1903 is the only historical spacious panorama in Germany (the screen area is about 1200 square meters) and today it is a UNESCO listed site. Its creator was Prof. Gebhard Fugel (1863-1939), a doyen of biblical imagery.



The **Pope Benedict XVI House** – treasury and pilgrimage museum – offers information on the history of Altötting's pilgrimages and precious artistic testimonials of its pilgrimage tradition. Besides the famous "Golden Horse" (a small Marian altar made of gold and enamel, a world-wide unique work of art that experts rank among the most precious art treasures of Europe) or the bridal wreath of Austrian's Empress Elisabeth, known as Sissi, numerous other treasures from many centuries are on display.



At the **Altöttinger Marienwerk** one can view the Diorama Show. Ingeniously illuminated three-dimensional spatial images, more than 5,000 figurines, some of them hand-made, building models, sculptural landscapes and paintings are merged in a total of 22 vivid units showing historic events in the pilgrimage history of Altötting. This unique Altötting work of art bears witness to the unwavering trust that people have placed on Altötting's Mother of Mercy in the past 500 years with all their ups and downs.



**The Incense Museum** – its fragrance is closely connected to the High Masses celebrated by the church. Many people have experienced its beneficial and pain-relieving effect. At times there is something mystical about incense, and at other times it is just relaxing. The museum is small, but impressive. There are interestingly designed boards with information reaching from the history of incense up to the areas of incense application. Some 3,500 years ago different peoples already recognised the beneficial effect of incense on the body. They discovered that smoke disinfects the air. Incense is also an ingredient of ointments applied on the joints and skin.

## Guided city tours in Altötting

Get to know Altötting from a different perspective and immerse yourself with our tour guides into the days of miracles, emperors and kings, popes and much more. Altötting has a rich history and a lively present that is reflected in many places.



Themes of the guided tours:

### **Altötting: The Heart of Bavaria for 1,250 years**

Classic guided tour, including church visits.

### **Customs and Traditions in the Heart of Bavaria**

Experience the customs and traditions of Altötting.

### **525 Years of Marian Miracles in Altötting**

Learn more about the centuries-old Marian pilgrimage to Altötting.

### **In the Footsteps of Emperors, Kings and Popes**

Emperors, kings and popes are an integral part of Altötting's history.

### **Short Guided Tour: Pilgrimage Town and Bavarian National Shrine**

Short tour of the Gnadenkapelle and Stiftspfarrkirche.

For groups of up to 30 persons – Duration: 90 minutes  
€ 61.00 per group – Meeting point: Altötting townhall

Guided tours are available in the following languages:  
English, Italian, French, Spanish, Polish.

Please register at least 3 days in advance with the Tourism Office: [touristinfo@altoetting.de](mailto:touristinfo@altoetting.de) or +49 (0)8671 5062-19



## Pilgrimage weekend in Altötting (suggestion)

### **1st day (Friday)**

Individual arrival in Altötting.

Discovery of the pilgrimage town and visit to the local museums (see previous pages).

Dinner in a typical Bavarian beer garden.



### **2nd day (Saturday)**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Guided city tour "Customs and traditions" in English by prior request at the local tourist office (€ 61.00 per group, max. 30 participants).

Tour to the surrounding area in the afternoon, e. g. to Marktl, the birth place of Pope Benedict XVI, or Burghausen with Europe's longest fortress complex and Raitenhaslach Monastery. Dinner at the hotel.

Participation in the candlelight procession of Altötting (from May to October every Saturday evening after evening mass).

### **3rd day (Sunday)**

Breakfast at the hotel.

10.00 am. Attend festive High Mass at the Basilica of St Anne with orchestral mass, followed by individual departure or additional sightseeing in the Inn-Salzach area.

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Heart of Bavaria ♥

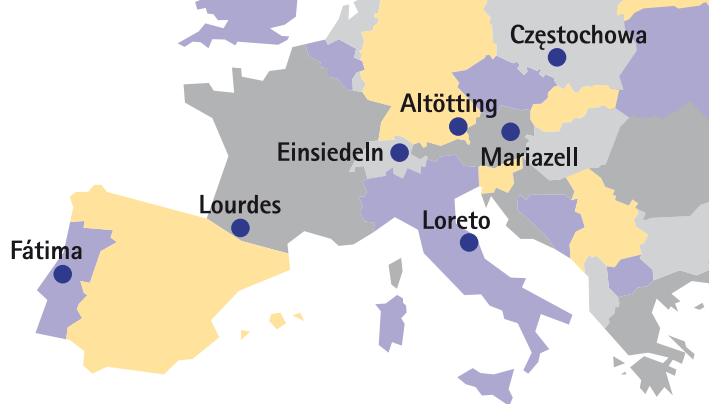
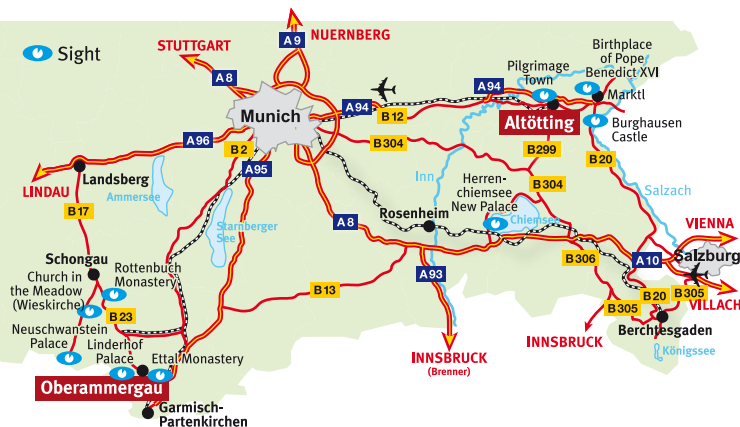
## Bavaria's religious centers

The Marian pilgrimage town of Altötting and the Passion Play village of Oberammergau – next performances in 2020 – are among the must-see's of religious places in Bavaria.

Tour suggestion:

Day 1: Welcome in Altötting, the spiritual center of Germany  
 Day 2: Altötting – Marktl – Burghausen – Salzburg – Altötting  
 Day 3: Altötting – Castle at Herrenchiemsee – Oberammergau  
 Day 4: Wieskirche – Castle Neuschwanstein – Oberammergau  
 Day 5: Oberammergau – Castle Linderhof – Departure

With this round trip you can combine the most important places in South Bavaria.



## Shrines of Europe

The association "Shrines of Europe" was founded in 1996 and is uniting Europe's principle Marian pilgrimage sites: Lourdes, Loreto, Fatima, Częstochowa, Marizell, Einsiedeln and Altötting. The importance of these great Marian Shrines was emphasized by the visits of the last European Popes John Paul II and our Bavarian Pope Benedict XVI. As great devotees of Mary, they each visited the shrines during their time in office.

**How about travelling to the Shrines of Europe and organizing a pilgrimage to three or more of the most important Marian places of pilgrimage in Europe?**

[www.shrines-of-europe.com](http://www.shrines-of-europe.com)







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