

aristocrats and patrician families had many fine houses built, mainly along the Amtsgasse and on the Market Square, where they still define the town's profile today.



Town Hall on the Market Square

When the last Count of Hanau-Lichtenberg died in 1736, Babenhausen fell to Hesse-Kassel, then in 1810 to the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt. Once all the important offices had been transferred to other towns, Babenhausen lost its significance for the region.

Today, Babenhausen and its five town quarters have about 16,000 inhabitants and occupy an important position between Bavaria and the Rhine-Main region. Crucial for the town's economy are the retail shops, service and craft industries and commercial and manufacturing companies. These include a traditional private brewery and an internationally operating supplier to the car industry. Babenhausen's developed and expandable industrial area makes it interesting for investors. There are of course also other things to do in Babenhausen apart from work! The town's numerous public institutions, such as schools, kindergartens, halls and community centres, offer all that makes living or holidaying in the town pleasant. The leisure activities are also multifaceted. There are a number of riding schools and baseball, rugby, and tennis clubs, and it is also possible to do some gliding and flying and many other types of sport. Babenhausen has become a regional highlight because of its 700 riding horses. Hiking trails and cycle tracks and the park-like swimming pool are irresistible invitations to relax.

The shops, clubs and schools, trade and industry, festivals, restaurants and pubs, and not least the people of Babenhausen themselves and their guests imbue the old walls with a new spirit and ensure that a stay in this idyllic town is a memorable experience.

Should you feel like experiencing Babenhausen, then pay us a visit – even a virtual one at: www.babenhausen.de. Babenhausen is happy to welcome you!

Tours of Babenhausen

I. i-Punkt Tourismus, Rathaus, Marktplatz 2

Ms. Monika Geiger, Tel.: 06073/602-74

- Information and coordination

Ms. Ute Wittenberger, Tel.: 06073/602-85

- General tours, tours for women
- Tours for school classes in German or French

II. Babenhausen Local History Society

Ms. Liz Hartmann, Tel.: 06073/3174

Dr. Klaus Löttsch

- Extended tours, including the parish church (Stadtkirche) (2 hours)
- Detailed tours of the parish church (1 hour)
- Special tours of the castle (if possible and in agreement with the owner)

Ms. Ine Reichart

- Extended tours, including the parish church (2 hours)
- Tours to the half-timbered houses (1.5 hours)
- Detailed tours of the parish church, also in English and French (1 hour)
- Guided bicycle tour to Harreshausen to the "Schöne Eiche" (beautiful oak tree)

Ms. Liz Hartmann

- Extended tours in German, including the parish church (2 hours)
- Extended tours in English, including the parish church (2 hours)
- Detailed tour in German or English of the parish church (1 hour)

Mr. Georg Wittenberger

- Tours of the Jewish cemeteries in Babenhausen and Sickenhofen (1 hour respectively, except on Saturdays)
- Tours to Harreshausen to the "Schöne Eiche" (beautiful oak tree) (approx. 45 mins.)

III. Additional tours

Night-watchman tours (subject to a charge, by appointment)

Mr. Helmut Schroth, Tel.: 06073/5069085

Mr. Burkhard Schimpf, Tel.: 06073/63814

- Night-watchman tours

The tours of the Jewish cemeteries are free of charge.

Particulars are subject to change



Babenhausen
Harpertshausen
Harreshausen
Hergershausen
Langstadt
Sickenhofen

www.babenhausen.de
info@babenhausen.de

Welcome to Babenhausen

The romantic town of Babenhausen with its half-timber buildings is situated between Darmstadt, Frankfurt and Aschaffenburg. Today the former residence of the Counts of Hanau-Lichtenberg is the most eastern town in the Darmstadt-Dieburg District. The surrounding area is characterised by a network of brooks, moats and branches of the river Gersprenz.

A large wooded area extends north to Rodgau and east to the border with the state of Bavaria and makes Babenhausen one of the most densely wooded towns in the state of Hesse. To the south the municipal area reaches as far as the foothills of the Odenwald. On the west, agricultural areas vie with partly protected wetlands and with quarry ponds. Babenhausen is a railway junction on the Darmstadt-Aschaffenburg and Hanau-Odenwald lines. Motorways and their approach roads take you close to the municipal area.



Inner courtyard of the castle

The history of Babenhausen extends back more than 800 years. As early as 1295, King Adolf of Nassau granted Babenhausen a town charter. The town's thriving economic status and civil life were influenced by its having its own market rights and its own fortification and fire system.

The Castle, privately owned today, was formerly a strongly fortified, moated castle. The Romanesque castle site of the Münzenberger dynasty was transformed into a Renaissance style residence in the 16th century by the Counts of Hanau-Lichtenberg.

The town itself was protected by a strong circular wall with towers, of which the town's emblem, the Hexenturm (Witch's Tower), and the Breschturm (Breach Tower) have been preserved.

At the flowering of the town's development the



Breschturm (above) and Hexenturm

1 THE CASTLE

First documented in 1210, built as a Staufer palace in the era of Friedrich Barbarossa in the design of a moated castle. The castle was the residence of the first Counts of Hanau-Lichtenberg; today it is privately owned.

2 FORMER TOWN MILL

This was already a flour mill in the Middle Ages, but was turned into an electricity mill in the late 19th century; today it produces 'green' electricity. Some of its rooms can be rented for private functions. It has an attractive bistro and idyllic beer garden (ideal for cyclists and other tourists).

3 TOWN WALL

The wall has surrounded the historical town centre since the granting of the town charter by the German King Adolf of Nassau in 1296.

4 WITCH'S TOWER

In the late Middle Ages this tower was used as a prison, and it is said that people were tortured here and that some of them died as a result. There is no evidence that witches were burnt in Babenhausen. There is supposed to have been a pillory on the front section at one time.

5 OLDEST HALF-TIMBER HOUSE

The house beside the Witch's Tower called "Am Hexenturm 22", dates from 1484 (and not 1442, as is says above the door) and probably belonged to an aristocratic knight. The medieval half-timbered work is excellently preserved.

6 BURGMANNEN HOUSE

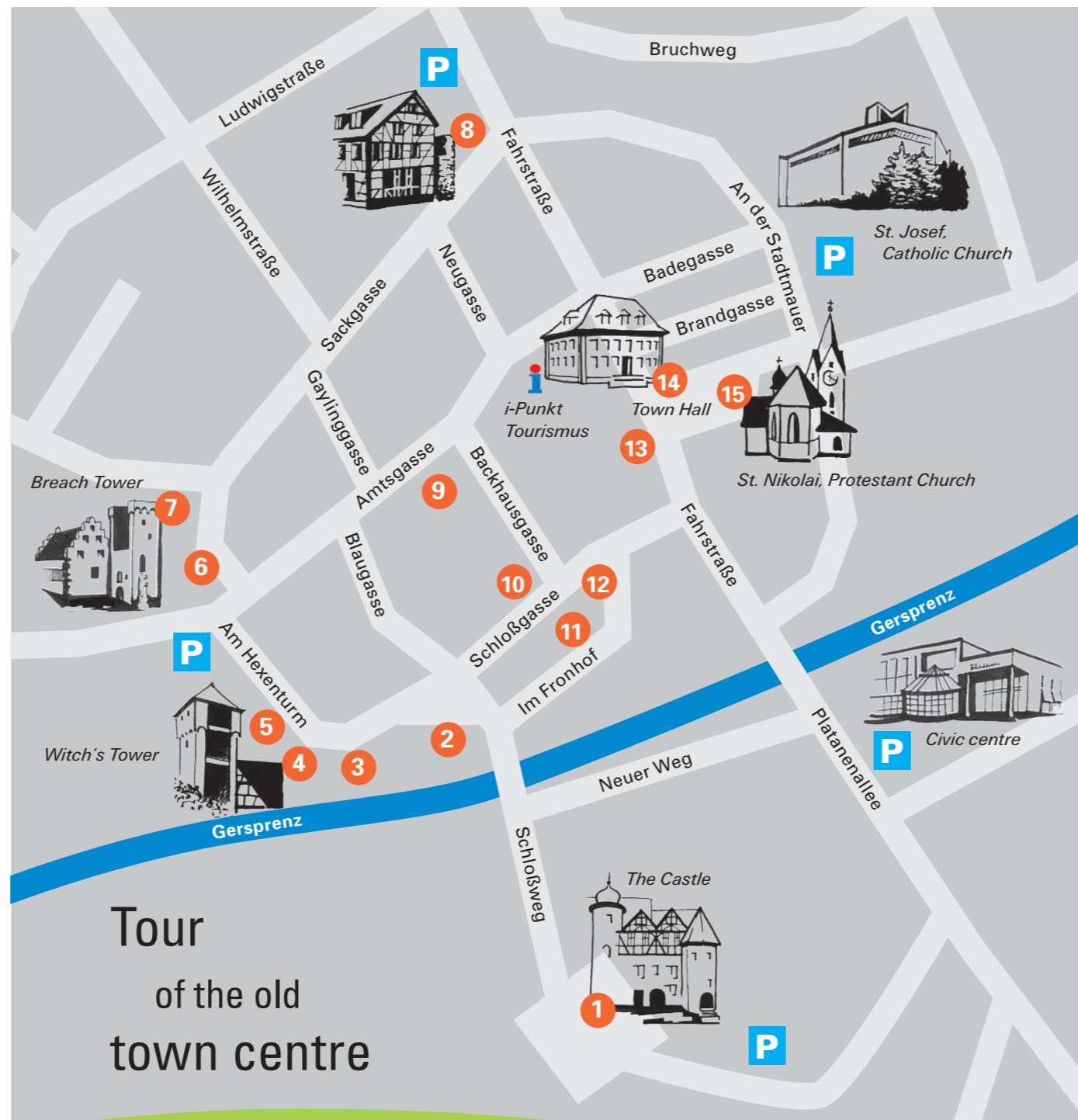
In the Middle Ages, the so-called "Burg" was the ancestral seat of the Herrn von Babenhausen, the oldest aristocratic dynasty in the town. A knight from that dynasty, Vitalis Fridericus, is buried in the parish church.

7 BREACH TOWER

This tower has a breach or gap said to have been made by a cannon ball shot by the Catholic besiegers in the Thirty Years' War.

8 TOWN WALL

The wall includes remains of the former Hanau Tower, also called Cow Tower because cows and other smaller domestic animals were driven out of town through this tower and onto the pasture land.



9 MANOR HOUSES ON AMTSGASSE

The senior civil servants of the Counts of Hanau-Lichtenberg had governmental and military powers. Many famous aristocratic families held offices here by order of the counts: the houses of Gaylinge von Althiem, Rodenstein, Bernstorff, Gemmingen, and Prettlach, among others.

10 VICARAGE

The town's second vicarage is on Backhausgasse. Above a solid lower floor dating from 1595 rises a wonderful half-timber upper floor. This was once the come of the comital "Keller", who was an official of the counts who had financial and police powers.

11 OLD APOTHECARY'S SHOP

Built: 1774. The medicinal plants on the facade were carved by the Babenhausen artist Fritz Kehr (1935).

12 FRONHOF

Former tithe office and storehouse where taxes were raised in the form of natural produce. Later: comital brewery.

13 MANOR HOUSES ON MARKET SQUARE

The half-timber houses on Fahrstraße belonged to the more prosperous citizens of Babenhausen. No. 24 used to be the inn "Zum güldenen Engel". According to legend, the outlaw Schinderhannes is said to have danced at No. 26, formerly the inn "Zum Weißen Schwan".

14 TOWN HALL

The first documented Town Hall building stood here in 1601. It had arcades under which the market took place. The new building of 1804 had a half-timber upper floor which was destroyed towards the end of the Second World War and replaced by a stone structure. There is a weekly market in front of the Town Hall on Market Square: Thursday, 2-6 pm. i-Punkt Tourismus is in the Town Hall.

15 PARISH CHURCH

The medieval parish church was built in two stages: the sanctuary choir dates from 1383, the nave from 1472. The raftered beam ceiling has been restored; its radiant colours date from 1620. Particularly noteworthy: the carved altar, the vestiges of medieval frescoes, the "perpetual worship" stone panels of the first Count of Hanau-Lichtenberg and his wife with their two sons, the medallions by Eberhard Fischer, the "count's seat". The Hessian State Office for the Preservation of Historical Monuments commended the Evangelische Kirchengemeinde for the exemplary refurbishment of the church.