

Bad Ems is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

The small spa town on the Lahn receives one of the one of the "Great Spas of Europe", the highest international cultural award.

Imperial spa, summer capital of Europe, world spa - the Rhineland-Palatinate spa town of Bad Ems presents itself as an extraordinary place and fascinates history and culture enthusiasts alike. And now it's official: on 24 July, UNESCO decided to recognise the "Great Spas of Europe" and thus Bad Ems as a World Heritage Site. The holiday resort on the Lahn has thus received the highest international distinction that can be bestowed on a cultural site. It certifies that Bad Ems has an outstanding cultural heritage, the preservation of which is in the interest of mankind. And this can be experienced at every turn in the town's historic spa quarter.

Bad Ems is located in the Lahn Valley holiday region, nestled in the middle of an idyllic nature park and surrounded by low mountain ranges. Nature has been particularly kind to Bad Ems, which has 15 healing springs. One of them, evaporated and pressed, produces the famous Ems pastilles. Thanks to its "water treasures", Bad Ems was already one of Germany's best-known spas for centuries before it joined the small circle of spas of European rank in the 19th century.

Visitors encounter this sophisticated 19th-century spa and its glittering history at every turn in today's spa town. Magnificent baroque buildings alternate with masterpieces of spa architecture or classicism. In the midst of this dreamlike ambience, you can stroll, linger and dream back to times gone by. The baroque bathing castle, the marble hall, the Russian Orthodox church and Germany's oldest casino, to name but a few sights, delight photographers and historians alike.

The former imperial spa was the haunt of the celebrities of the time from the high nobility, the arts and academia. Nowhere, not in Berlin, not in Stockholm and not in St. Petersburg, did the people come as close to a monarch as on the spa promenades of Bad Ems. Kaiser Wilhelm I took a cure here, as did Tsar Alexander II, Dostoyevsky wrote his "Brothers Karamazov" and Richard Wagner worked on his opera "Parzifal" at Balmoral Castle. Jacques Offenbach even worked as a concertmaster in Bad Ems for 12 years. Some of his works were premiered here, in the Marble Hall.

Years ago, Bad Ems was included in the circle of the "Great Spas of Europe", the most important spas in Europe. In addition to the spa town on the Lahn, the eleven cities include Baden-Baden and Bad Kissingen in Germany, Karlsbad, Franzensbad and Marienbad in the Czech Republic, Spa in Belgium, Bath in England, Montecatini Terme in Italy, Vichy in France and Baden near Vienna in Austria. Together they applied to UNESCO for World Heritage status and were finally able, on 24 July, to receive the highest international distinction that can be bestowed on a cultural site.

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