

Castles in Germany like coming out of fairy tales

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German castles are more than just piles of old stones. They are windows into centuries of feudal power, royal ambition and thrilling fairy tales.

Germany has more than 20,000 castles, from remote hilltop ruins to palace-like complexes with meticulously maintained grounds. Some are so beautiful they inspired Disney movies. Others are hidden gems that most visitors never discover. Here are the castles in Germany that look like they came straight out of a fairy tale.

Neuschwanstein Castle



Neuschwanstein Castle is a true fairytale castle. Located above the village of Hohenschwangau, it was built more for decorative purposes than defense. With its white limestone facade, pointed towers, and dramatic mountain backdrop, the castle looks like it came straight out of a fairy tale. It even served as the inspiration for Disney's Sleeping Beauty castle.

Despite its medieval appearance, Neuschwanstein still features modern features like flush toilets and central heating.

Burg Eltz Castle



Burg Eltz is a castle in its own right. It has been owned by the same family for over 850 years and has survived centuries of conflict without being destroyed. Nestled in a forested valley near the Moselle River, the castle still has a wild, secluded beauty to this day.

With its tall towers, wooden upper floors and steep roofs, it is one of the finest examples of medieval German architecture.

Heidelberg Castle



Once home to the powerful Palatinate electors, Heidelberg Castle is now a romantic ruin perched precariously on the Neckar River. It blends Gothic and Renaissance styles and remains the symbol of the city of Heidelberg.

Destroyed by the French in the late 1600s, its crumbling walls and empty windows now attract tourists more than emperors.

Hohenzollern Castle



This hilltop fortress in Baden-Württemberg looks like it belongs on a movie poster. Hohenzollern Castle is the ancestral resting place of a family that produced Prussian kings and German emperors.

The current castle, built in the 19th century, is the third in the area and houses many royal memorabilia, including the personal belongings of King Frederick the Great. The castle's high walls, turrets and ramparts are distinctly medieval, yet still retain a 19th-century feel.

Mespelbrunn Castle



Mespelbrunn Castle is a Renaissance jewel with a moat hidden in the Spessart Forest. Unlike most castles, it has not been destroyed or significantly altered, giving it the feel of a time capsule.

Still privately owned, the castle offers a more peaceful visit than other major tourist attractions. The mix of defensive towers and luxurious residences shows the castle's evolution from fortress to luxury home.

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