Welcome to Kronach
A warm welcome to Kronach

Where there’s so much to discover.
I would like to offer you a warm welcome and hope that this brochure will inspire you to explore our town with its wide range of historical monuments, cultural attractions, leisure activities and events. At the heart of it all is Rosenberg Fortress, our most famous landmark. Its ancient walls are home to various museums, the highlight of which is the Franconian Gallery, which includes masterpieces by Kronach’s most famous son, the painter Lucas Cranach the Elder. There is also a permanent exhibition on fortresses in Franconia as well as a fantastic programme of guided tours and educational activities – ideal for visitors of all ages to learn about the history of the town and its fortifications. The extensive fortress complex serves as a venue for the famous Rosenberg Theatre Festival, the Rose and Garden Festival, concerts, open-air events and classes run by the sandstone workshop. Our programme of events would not be complete without the many festivals that take place in the town itself, which we love to celebrate with visitors. These include the Kroniche Fousanaocht carnival, Kronach in Lights, the Historical Town Festival, the Crana Historica medieval festival, the Marksmen's Festival, the town festival, the Night of Music and, last but not least, the Kronach Christmas market. Kronach is also a great destination for sport, leisure activities and shopping and has a wide range of hotels and restaurants – everything you need to make your stay a memorable one. But don’t just take our word for it. Come along and see for yourself.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Wolfgang Beiergrößlein
Mayor of Kronach
A town dating back over a thousand years

In 2003 Kronach celebrated the 1,000th anniversary of the first documented mention of the town. A thousand years earlier, in 1003, Margrave Hezilo of Schweinfurt is said to have burnt down his castle ‘Crana’ as he fled from Emperor Heinrich II who ruled the territory. In 1122 the region became part of the Prince-Bishopric of Bamberg, whose prince bishops ruled Kronach until 1803. Kronach was granted town privileges in the mid-13th century. In 1430 Hussite troops besieged Kronach and the people of the upper town set fire to the outlying areas in a bid to defend themselves. This led to years of disputes because it had not been agreed with the citizens who lived there. In the 15th century the local beer had already made a name for itself beyond the town’s walls and so it was hardly surprising that a number of prince bishops had beer sent from Kronach to their royal seat in Bamberg. In the course of the 15th and 16th centuries, Kronach was again caught up in conflict during the Margraves War and came under threat from Albrecht Alcibiades, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach in 1553. Today, the story of the Thirty Years’ War or ‘Swedish invasion’ is familiar to all the locals. Kronach, a Catholic town, was repeatedly invaded and besieged by Protestant Swedish troops in 1632, 1633 and 1634. It was 20,000 invaders against just 2,000 citizens! Despite being heavily outnumbered, the people of Kronach did not give up and, with the help of their “brave wives”, were able to defend themselves against all the enemy attacks. One reminder of this period in the town’s history is the coat of arms, which depicts the “suffering men”; another is the gold chain of honour that was awarded in 1652 – the first chain of office for a mayor in Germany. The Mayor of Kronach still wears it today for ceremonial occasions. Kronach came under siege for the last time in 1759, this time by the Prussians. But this attack was also unsuccessful. In 1802 the Prince-Bishopric of Bamberg was occupied by Bavarian forces, and in 1803, after the Final Recess of the Imperial Deputation, was annexed to Bavaria – which meant that Kronach also became part of Bavaria. In 1806 Napoleon Bonaparte came to the town and fortress and gave the order to attack Prussia.
Apart from briefly during the Peasants’ War in 1525, no enemy has ever conquered Kronach and its fortress. The town, a northern outpost of the Prince-Bishopric of Bamberg, has withstood every invasion over the centuries.

Tip: You can trace the history of the town by walking along a special promenade trail in the Landesgartenschaupark, the park where the 2002 regional garden show took place. The 30 bronze panels of the Stadtgeschichtspromenade were created by the Kronach-born sculptor Heinrich Schreiber.
Towering high above the old town of Kronach on Rosenberg hill is Rosenberg Fortress, the former palace of the Prince Bishops of Bamberg and later a regional stronghold. The origins of the fortified hill remain lost in the obscurity of the High Middle Ages. What we do know for certain is that the oldest surviving document with the name ‘Rosenberg’ dates from the year 1249. Today, the fortress is one of the largest remaining fortifications in Germany, covering 23.6 hectares. The complex of walls, moats, buildings and gates that emerged over the centuries is still completely surrounded by the fortress pentagon with its five mighty bastions. It is also easy to see the different building phases, from the medieval keep and the expansion into a Renaissance castle in the 15th and 16th centuries to the additions that created a Franconian baroque fortress with bastions. Having never been conquered, Rosenberg Fortress provides a unique opportunity to study, at a single site, how defensive architecture managed to keep pace with military develop-
ments over nearly five centuries. It ceased to function as a military fortress in 1867 and was acquired by the town of Kronach in 1888. It has been owned by the town ever since. The entrance to Rosenberg Fortress is one of the most beautiful early baroque fortress gates in Germany. It was built in 1662 to designs by the architect Antonio Petrini and served as a model for the fortress gates in Würzburg (1684) and Forchheim (1689). The extensive network of underground passageways is also of particular interest and can be seen on one of the many guided tours.
Lucas Cranach the Elder and the Franconian Gallery
Old Masters of the Late Gothic and Renaissance

Lucas Cranach the Elder
Kronach’s most famous son

The Renaissance painter Lucas Cranach the Elder was born in Kronach in around 1472. He was born Lucas Maler, but named himself after his home town as many prominent artists did in those days. Today, there is a monument outside the New Town Hall on the market square to mark the location of the house where Cranach was born. Cranach left his home town when he was still a young man and worked in Vienna and Coburg before taking a post in Wittenberg at the court of the Electors of Saxony. He was appointed as court painter there in 1505 and went on to create an impressive body of work in the decades that followed.
Franconian Gallery
A branch of the Bavarian National Museum in Munich

The Franconian Gallery presents an outstanding collection of 220 Late Gothic and Renaissance masterpieces by Franconian artists and sculptors. After extensive modernisation of the gallery in 2014, the works of Cranach, Riemenschneider, Hans von Kulmbach and other master painters from the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance period can be admired in a new light – quite literally, in fact, as a focal point of the refurbishment was the replacement of all the lighting. The subtly balanced, individual illumination of the panel paintings, hinged altarpieces and wooden sculptures, most of which are coloured, corresponds beautifully with the new colour scheme in the exhibition rooms, which further accentuates the quality of the artworks. To complete the modernisation, some of the pieces have been rehung and the guidance texts for the individual sections of the museum have been revised. The latter is the result of extensive research for the new exhibition brochure published in 2014, which was carried out by Dr Matthias Weniger, an expert at the Bavarian National Museum on sculpture and painting from around 1500. At the Franconian Gallery in Kronach you will discover an exceptional variety of masterpieces by Franconian artists from the Late Gothic to the Renaissance period that is bettered only by the Germanic National Museum in Nuremberg.

Tip: Kronach is one of a number of places associated with Cranach on the ‘Footsteps of Cranach’ route through Bavaria and central Germany. www.wege-zu-cranach.de
Fortified monuments of Franconia
Permanent exhibition with interactive and multimedia features

Rosenberg Fortress is an outstanding example of a German defensive stronghold. As well as joining one of the many guided tours here, you can embark on a journey of discovery by visiting the interactive multimedia exhibition focused on fortresses in Franconia. The exhibition has several different sections presenting the compelling history of military architecture and the different functions played by fortresses such as Coburg, Kulmbach, Weissenburg, Lichtenau, Würzburg and Nuremberg. What is a fortress? How were these impressive complexes built? How did the building of fortresses change over time? Who were the most influential architects? What was life like at the fortress in times of war, but also in long periods of peace? Who lived and worked at a fortress, and how did the use of fortresses change in the 20th century? The family-friendly exhibition places particular emphasis on clear presentation and interactive elements that both excite and educate. As well as gaining an insight into the art and heritage of Kronach and Rosenberg Fortress, you will also discover that Franconia is a landscape dotted with impressive fortifications.

Tip: Rosenberg Fortress is one of many fortified monuments that have joined forces to form the European ‘Forte Cultura’ route. Find out more at www.forte-cultura.eu.
Local history and contemporary art
Temporary exhibitions in the royal wing

The Fürstenbau, or royal wing, of Rosenberg Fortress regularly hosts temporary exhibitions that incorporate holdings from the town’s extensive local and regional history collection. These exhibitions showcase folklore, tradition and local history in all their many facets and are expertly prepared and attractively presented. Fans of modern art are also well catered for at Rosenberg Fortress. As the birthplace of Lucas Cranach the Elder, Kronach naturally owes much to painting. And today the town and its partners present the prestigious International Lucas Cranach Award every three years, which gives a valuable insight into contemporary representational painting. Installations, sculptures, light art and video art round off the wide range of exhibitions.
The upper town – pretty as a picture!

Kronach’s old quarter, which lies on the spur of a hill, is known by locals as the ‘upper town’. The ensemble of historical buildings, which are enclosed by a fully intact town wall, give the old quarter a distinct late medieval charm.

You will encounter lovingly restored houses, historical towers, fountains, coats of arms and statues, as well as quiet little corners, narrow lanes and pretty squares. On the northern side of the Gothic Church of St John the Baptist, you will find the most beautiful Gothic portal in northern Bavaria. Of particular note is the statue of John the Baptist, a work dating from 1498 by an otherwise unknown artist called Hans Hartlin. Visitors with an interest in architectural history or culture will be drawn to the historical town hall, built in 1583, with its ceremonial hall and former market hall. Today, it is a popular venue for concerts, talks, readings, functions and conferences.

Walking around the picturesque town of Kronach is always a pleasure. You can climb up to the upper town through the narrow Pottugässchen, or walk through Wolfsschlucht along the town wall to Rosenberg Fortress. From Rosenturm tower, you can enjoy views of Marienplatz square or the presbytery built by baroque architect Johann Michael Küchel. You can also see the abbey church or the town hospital with its Gothic church built by Johann Dientzenhofer from 1715 to 1718.

Tip: Stroll around the old quarter, which dates back over 1,000 years, and discover restaurants, arts and crafts and interesting little shops amid the lovingly restored buildings, squares and lanes.
If you are spending a little longer in the Kronach area, you would be well advised to visit the sights in the surrounding villages such as the beautiful Maria-Glosberg Pilgrimage Church, which the famous architect Balthasar Neumann was involved in building. The church and the 17th century residence in Fischbach are well worth a visit, and in Friesen you simply must see the Late Gothic cycle in the church tower that depicts the life of St George. A particular highlight is the Heunischenburg, which is located on Wolfsberg hill between the villages of Gehülz and Burgstall. It is thought to be one of the oldest stone fortifications north of the Alps in Europe. The villages in the Kronach district, such as Fischbach and Gehülz, also offer wonderfully unspoilt scenery. Only a few miles from the centre of Kronach, you’ll find an idyllic landscape that is ideal for outdoor activities or relaxation. Surrounded by forests with magnificent views and criss-crossed by marked walking trails, these uplands are the perfect place to gather your thoughts and get away from the stresses of everyday life.
Heunischenburg near the village of Gehülz
An archaeological monument of European standing

Archaeological investigations were carried out at the Heunischenburg site on Wolfsberg hill (486m) between 1983 and 1987. They identified three Urnfield settlements from the 9th/10th century BC. What was unusual, if not extraordinary, was the building that took place during the third and most recent phase (9th century BC): located on the spur of a hill, the defensive fortification was protected on the open north-east flank by a three-layered wall made of sandstone with a ‘berm’ in front of it. A gate with wooden tower, as was common in the Mediterranean, served to guard a 40m walkway. This construction is one of the oldest stone walls to have been excavated in central Europe and one of the highest-quality fortifications from the late Bronze Age. There many features that clearly differentiate Heunischenburg from large fortified settlements from a similar time (Grosser Gleichberg in Thuringia, Bullenheimer Berg and Grosser Knetzberg in Lower Franconia and Ehrenbürg in Upper Franconia): the compactness and the thickness of the fortifications, the isolated position, and the number of weapons that were found. The fortifications on Wolfsberg hill probably formed an independent defensive structure that was created to guard a trading route for copper and tin deposits in the Fichtelgebirge mountains. They were destroyed in battle at the end of the 9th century BC and never rebuilt.
Established over 60 years ago, the Castle Road invites you to take a journey back in time. More than 90 magnificent castles and palaces line this route from Mannheim to Prague. Around 1,200 kilometres in length, the Castle Road takes you through towns and cities steeped in history, such as Bamberg, Bayreuth, Heidelberg and Nuremberg, as well as 15 places in Bohemia in the Czech Republic, including Cheb, Loket and Karlštejn Castle. Kronach is also one of the stops along the route. As well as the castles and palaces, there are many more impressive historical monuments to discover from different eras. And you can look forward to a warm welcome at the Castle Road’s premium partner hotels, which offer every modern-day comfort for your journey back in time.
Beer and Castle Route

The Beer and Castle Route combines glorious scenery, fascinating history and warm hospitality. It runs along the B85 from the Kyffhäuser hills in Thuringia to the Bavarian Forest, with Kronach one of its many stops. Around 500 kilometres in length, the route passes through varied and unspoilt upland scenery, giving you a real taste of Germany’s heritage. Magnificent monuments of a bygone age – mighty castles, lovingly restored residences and historically significant ruins – bring history to life. And, as taking a break is part of any journey, there are many traditional inns where you can stop for a bite to eat in cosy surroundings. Lovers of good beers will have the opportunity to sample from a vast selection of German specialities – dark, full-bodied beers, fine varieties of lager, refreshing wheat beers and eminently quaffable bock beers. All are produced by breweries that are situated either side of the B85.

Porcelain Route

Delve into the fascinating history of porcelain. Starting in Bayreuth and Bamberg, the Porcelain Route passes through our very own town of Kronach as well as Selb and Weiden, before reaching Karlovy Vary and Ostrov in the Czech Republic. Set amid breathtakingly beautiful scenery, this route provides an insight into a wide variety of traditions, art and culture. It links sites of porcelain making past and present, factory outlets, museums and exquisite porcelain collections. Brands such as Rosenthal, Hutschenreuther and Goebel are synonymous with elegant tableware and fine porcelain figurines and there are boundless opportunities for collectors and specialist shoppers to make a purchase. Discover the history of ‘white gold’ on this unique route and take home many unforgettable memories.
Rosenberg Festival

The Rosenberg Festival in July and August offers open-air theatre of the highest calibre. The festival is held high above the rooftops of the medieval town of Kronach at mighty Rosenberg Fortress, one of the most impressive fortifications in Germany. Against this stunning backdrop, the Rosenberg Festival puts on productions of works of world literature, modern classics and adaptations of comedies and historical material known from film and television. Plays for children and a varied programme of supporting events round off the summer festival. Prepare to be enthralled and enchanted as our festival troupe brings dramatic, comedic and thought-provoking theatre to life on the open-air stage at Rosenberg Fortress.

... all the world’s a stage.
Theatre at Rosenberg Fortress
Kronach in Lights

Once a year, for this ten-day festival, the architecturally stunning old quarter of Kronach is transformed into a breathtaking stage for light art. Many thousands of visitors saunter through the streets by night, enchanted by the sea of lights. The festival was launched by regional association KRONACH Creativ with the aim of capturing people’s imagination through beautiful and atmospheric illuminations. The event also offers a forum for light artists to let their creativity run free. Narrow lanes, courtyards, squares and underground passageways provide plenty of scope for video and laser projections, light installations and light art. Every year, light design students from all over the world come to Kronach to set up different areas within the medieval old quarter and at Rosenberg Fortress as part of a workshop run by prominent light designers. To accompany the dazzling light displays, there are also a number of entertainment stages and places to enjoy regional food and drink.
Crana Historica
Festival of history

Every other year over the Whitsun weekend, Rosenberg Fortress undergoes a spectacular transformation as the Crana Historica fills it with the sights and sounds of long-forgotten times. You’ll get an insight into what clothing, food, skilled trades, and even the art of combat would have been like in the Middle Ages through to Napoleonic times. This festival of international standing provides an authentic visitor experience, offering handmade music with no modern-day amplification and a whole host of hands-on activities. Enjoy this journey back in time through the centuries at one of the largest and best-preserved fortresses in Germany.

Rocking the fortress!

Once a year, the walls of Rosenberg Fortress well and truly rock for the music festival ‘Die Festung Rockt’. Organised by Kronach’s Struwwelpeter youth and arts club, this live event has established itself as THE one-day festival for punk, rock and ska music in Upper Franconia over the last few years. It has already featured a number of prominent artists in its line-up, including Jennifer Rostock, Madsen, Sondaschule, Die Happy, Rantanplan, Bakkushan, LaBrassBanda, Zebrahead and more. This intimate festival has a great atmosphere and attracts around 2,000 people.

www.diefestungrockt.de
www.crana-historica.de
Historical Town Festival
Where the people of Kronach celebrate their history

The Historical Town Festival, known as the Stadtspektakel in German, is all about people bringing the history of their town to life. Alternating with the Crana Historica, this festival takes place in the upper town every two years on the last weekend of June. A number of regional re-enactment groups and local residents celebrate the history of Kronach with great energy and enthusiasm, turning back the clock to the Renaissance period, the 17th century and the Thirty Years' War, and the 18th century too. Other highlights of the weekend include the traditional Viertelmeister race, the enchanting lantern parade and the ceremonial tasting of the Schmäussbräu beer.

Sandstone workshop

The sandstone workshop has been a firm fixture in Kronach’s calendar of events for many years. The workshop encourages the creative and the curious to realise their talents with like-minded people, rather than just watching from the sidelines, to get actively involved and to create a work of art in sandstone. Rosenberg Fortress provides a wonderful setting in which to do just that.
Marksmen’s Festival

The Marksmen’s Festival in Kronach dates back to 1588. During the ‘fifth season of the year’, as it’s known, people of all ages gather from near and far on the festival grounds to celebrate with food, drink and music. This eleven-day festival is considered the finest of its kind in the Franconian Forest. It does of course feature shooting competitions in various disciplines, which culminate in the naming of the king, queen and prince of the shooters.

Rose and Garden Festival

This festival of music and horticulture is a top attraction that brings thousands of visitors to Rosenberg Fortress every year. A multicultural programme of music and the arts has earned it a reputation that extends well beyond the immediate region. It is readily described by the press and prominent figures as the ‘festival of love’, largely because of its wonderful feel-good atmosphere. The festival offers something for all the family, with a market, entertainment, food and drink, exhibitions and music throughout the day. Over a hundred specially selected exhibitors from all over Germany sell plants and roses, garden accessories, beautiful items for indoors and out, and handicrafts of the highest quality. Craft demonstrations, talks by experts, and advice at the stands round off the programme.
Kronach Christmas Market

The annual events calendar traditionally comes to a close with the Kronach Christmas Market. The aroma of mulled wine, the delightful programme of entertainment and the festively decorated stalls around Rosenturm tower and on Marienplatz square make the Christmas market a true delight. The historical setting and the Christmas cheer create a wonderful atmosphere that will stay long in the memory. Be sure to visit Kronach at Christmas.
Kronach is a great destination for art and culture, but also for sports and leisure. It offers tennis, horse riding, skateboarding, BMX biking, gliding, fishing, golf, fitness and much more besides. Keen walkers will discover 200 kilometres of marked trails around Kronach. Cyclists and mountain bikers will also find signposted and well-maintained routes. The Crana Mare pool complex on Kreuzberg hill offers plenty of opportunities for fun, fitness and relaxation all year round.
The Landesgartenschaupark
From brownfield site to vibrant park

The Landesgartenschaupark lies at the foot of Rosenberg Fortress, on the southern edge of the ancient old quarter of Kronach. Here, where the Hasslach, Kronach and Rodach rivers meet, you can enjoy a huge park covering 14 hectares and offering a variety of features. But it was not always like that. As recently as the 1990s, this land was a blight on the townscape, home to an unsightly industrial estate and plagued by considerable environmental problems. To turn this area into an attractive green space and living environment, Kronach, for the regional garden show in 2002, embarked on one of the biggest environmental remediation programmes ever to have been carried out in Bavaria. The result speaks for itself: a gem of a park and a prime example of sustainable ecological development at local level.

Tip: Every Sunday afternoon from May to October, concert bands from Kronach take to the lakeside stage and perform open-air concerts on the theme of ‘new shores’.
Crana Mare
Soak away your stress

The indoor and outdoor pools at Crana Mare are perfect for unwinding. In the indoor pool, you can enjoy views of Rosenberg Fortress as you glide through water heated to 27°C, or relax for a while in the steamroom with its ever-changing fragrances. De-stressing is easy in the jacuzzi or the outdoor pool, which is heated to 34°C. In the summer, our spacious outdoor pool area offers a chance to cool off and is ideal for all the family. The 50 m pool, giant water slide and playing field provide plenty of opportunity for fun and fitness, and there is a shaded parent-child area.
Walking at its best.
The Franconian Forest: Bavaria’s first region to bear the Wanderbares Deutschland quality seal

The Wanderbares Deutschland quality seal is to German walkers what the Bavarian Beer Purity Law is to fans of German beer. The Franconian Forest is the first region in Bavaria to be awarded this respected accolade. An extensive network of walking trails, walker-friendly accommodation, up-to-date information and excellent services mean that on your walking tour in the scenic heart of central Germany, all you need to worry about is putting one foot in front of the other. You can explore the tranquil forests around Kulmbach, Kronach and Hof on the 32 one-day FrankenwaldSteigla walking routes. All of these varied loop trails, which are between five and 18 kilometres in length, have different themes but all come under one of three core experiences: ‘hear the silence’, ‘breathe in the wide open space’ or ‘understand the forest’. The FrankenwaldSteig trail, which is 242km in length, offers plenty of opportunities for some serious walking. It runs right around the region in 13 stages and includes, of course, a stop in Kronach.

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