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PFARRKIRCHEN



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Welcome to Pfarrkirchen, the administrative capital of the Rott and Inn valleys in Lower Bavaria.

Pfarrkirchen and its environs was already a settlement in the New Stone Age 7000 years ago, which excavations around Untergaiching have unearthed. The name "Pfarrkirchen" was first recorded in a document of trade of Bishop Engilmar of Passau (875-899) as "Pharrachiricha".

In 1262 it passed into the possession of the Wittelsbach family who granted market rights in 1317. Pfarrkirchen was raised to the status of 'town' in 1862 and, since the zone reform in 1972, has been the administrative centre for the Rott and Inn valleys.

Presently the town has approximately 12,640 inhabitants and spans an area of 52 km². Pfarrkirchen is 377 meters above sea level and belongs to the hilly tertiary Isar-Inn region. The landscape is formed by rolling hills, notched by the uneven valleys of its brooks as well as the main valley which cuts diagonally in an east-west direction, at times up to 1 km wide. Along with the undulating landscape, the appearance of the area around Pfarrkirchen is due to the scattered forests.

In order to learn more about Pfarrkirchen let's take a walk through the historical old town and the whole urban area.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wolfgang Reißmann'.

Wolfgang Reißmann
1st Mayor



- 1 The tour begins at the tourist information offices in the market square. Here the „old town hall“ (Altes Rathaus) can be seen. It was built around 1500 round a gothic core and has an octagonal cupola tower from the renaissance with a baroque bell roof. Above the bay is a large coat of arms of the former Baron, Prince Karl Theodor (reigned 1777-1799). It is dated 1787 and was probably mounted to celebrate the ten-year anniversary of the baron’s rule.

The Pfarrkirchen bell, probably cast in the 14th century, still hangs in the lantern of the cupola tower on the old town hall. It has a diameter of 54.5 cm and carries the inscription in minute gothic lettering: „Gaspar.waltasar.melgr.maria hilf“ (address to the Three Kings and the Mother of God).

These days it houses the Registry Office, the Council Chamber and the town museum alongside the tourist information offices. A number of art exhibitions take place in the course of the year in the Council Chamber. Valuable examples of ancient crafts and traditional, rural art from Pfarrkirchen and the Rott valley are exhibited in the museum.

Opening times

Tourist information:

Mon to Fri 9 am - 5 pm, Sat 9 am – 12 midday

Town museum:

April to October, Tues and Thurs 2 – 4 pm,

Fri, Sat, Sun and bank holidays 3 – 6 pm

Art exhibitions: Dates at www.pfarrkirchen.de

Tues and Thurs 2 – 4 pm

Sat, Sun and bank holidays 3 – 6 pm



- 2 Cross now to the so-called „Wimmer horse“, a symbol of the town. This powerful bronze was cast in 1966 by the sculptor Prof. Hans Wimmer as a gift to his home town and has occupied its place in the heart of the town since then. It characterises the significance of horses to the Rott valley. Works of Hans Wimmer can be seen in public places and buildings both in Germany and abroad including the „Christopherus Fountain“ in Schärding am Inn and the „Hans-Wimmer-Sammlung“ (Hans Wimmer collection) in the Veste Oberhaus in Passau.

Hans Wimmer wrote in his autobiography about the horse: „During my childhood the horse, or rather the steed, played the most important role in the Rott valley. It was inconceivable that one failed to recognize a horse from these neighbourhoods or didn't discern its ancestry, individuality, age and distinction; just as one knew the best blacksmith and the most reliable stable hand“.



- 3 From here you can look across the Pfarrkirchen town square (Stadt-platz), which is among the most beautiful in Lower Bavaria. The Inn-Salzach style of architecture is easily recognizable with its structural coherence and the colourful facades of the town houses and businesses (mostly from the 16th and 17th centuries), decorated with bays, cross-arched arcades and renaissance alcoves. The high frontages are also typical. The actual roofs are hidden behind.

The buildings in bright pastels with cheerful southern flair stand in the long, wide town square. However, the colours of the houses were not accidental. Since a large proportion of the population was unable to read at that time, the people orientated themselves by the colours of the houses. For example, the miller's would be white (flour), the butcher's red (blood) and that of the brewer's yellow (beer) etc.

The former „Plinganser Inn“ (Gasthaus zum Plinganser), ancestral home of Georg Sebastian Plinganser (1681-1738) is also seen here. He was one of the leaders in the Bavarian farmers' uprising (1705/1706) against the Austrian Imperial Habsburg occupation.

Their slogan was: „Better to die a Bavarian than to rot an imperialist“.

The neighbouring house to the right has an alcove with a gilded roof. It is called the „Little Golden Roof“ (Goldenes Dachl) of Pfarrkirchen.

The owner of the house wanted to bring a touch of „Innsbruck flair“ to Pfarrkirchen.



4



- 4 Turn around to see the New Town Hall (Rathaus), a building in the Maximilian style (Maximilianstraße, Munich), which was built in 1865. The newly renovated current Town Hall I, together with Town Hall II (a former boys' school) in Ringstraße 29 and the Old Town Hall provide the town's administrative seat. In Town Halls I and II, among other things, the artworks from notable Pfarrkirchen artists such as Hans Reiffenstuel, Prof. Hans Wimmer and Maria Theresia Ströbel can be appreciated

Previously the fire brigade, the weigh master's office, the police and a school room were situated in this „magistrates' building“ along with the mayor's office. The building was financed through a special tax which became known as the „local malt tariff“ meaning that beer became more expensive!



- 5 To the right stands the Town Fountain. The so-called “Lions Fountain” was erected to commemorate the elevation of Pfarrkirchen to the status of ‘town’ in the Bavarian kingdom in 1862.

At Eastertide the fountain is decorated with garlands and scores of Easter eggs in accordance with an old Franconian custom. Leading up to Christmas it becomes an illuminated Advent crown.

- 6 Move to the left to the Catholic parish church of the united parishes of Pfarrkirchen, under the patron saints Simon the apostle and Judas Thaddäus. Its origins date back to a building with a roman nave, which was enlarged to three naves in the 13th /14th centuries. In the 15th century, reconstruction resulted in the late gothic style. The church’s slim tower is 67 meters high, with pointed arches. The pointed spire with its towers at the four corners can be seen from afar. Between 1971 and 1973 it was fundamentally renovated, expanded and modernised to look as it does today. Red marble gravestones from graves of local priests and citizens from the renaissance and baroque periods have been built into the walls.



The copper and silver cross found on the High Altar wall was made by the sculptor Wolfgang Hirtreiter of Gröbenzell, Munich, who also made the ambones and the altar. The sculpture is enclosed by a stylized crown of thorns. To the left and right are representations of five apostles and below these the church's patron saints St. Simon and St. Judas Thaddäus can be seen.

The parish church originally commanded a chime of five bells. Four of these had to be removed in the 2nd world war and were melted down; only one, from 1562, was rescued. In 1948 two new bells were purchased. In 1955 the Bell of Mary arrived weighing 1500kg.

- 7 At the back of the town's parish church (opposite the main gate), the Pigeon Fountain (Taubenbrunnen) enhances the church square. The well was created in 1994 by Joseph Michael Neustifter from a sketch by the former Mayor, Georg Riedl, and is inscribed with a well-known proverb:

"Better a bird in the hand than two in the bush"! - In the German version, the two birds are sitting not in the bush but on the roof, as depicted on the fountain.



8



- 8 Here is also one of the most remarkable late Gothic buildings to be seen in the region. Erasmus House, previously the Erasmus Chapel from the 15th century, is based on an octagon, with a tented roof.

Until 1806, the Pfarrkirchen cemetery lay around the parish church and the present Erasmus house was the cemetery chapel. Having been used as a school and a dwelling, it now houses the offices of the parish church foundation.

9



Slotted in behind Erasmus House is All Soul's Chapel (Allerseelenkapelle), a small Rococo building from the 18th century with a beautiful small Rococo altar. The altar cloth represents the „seven sacraments

of purgatory“ and because of its rarity, is very valuable. The chapel was fundamentally renovated in 1994/95.

The devotion to the seven sacraments was a form of piety for the people of Catholic southern Germany during the Baroque period.

Viewing is only possible during office hours, accompanied by a member of parish staff (from the catholic presbytery).



- 10 Walk down the stairway to the left of the church to the Pflegstraße, house no. 18. This is the old administrative Courthouse (altes Pfliegergerichtsgebäude) which was site of the local court between 1712 and 1803. An information plaque on the outside wall is a reminder of this time. Later this building was used as the Jäger Weißbier (wheat beer) Brewery, and nowadays as a restaurant.

The „Pfleger“ was the baron’s representative, including for court proceedings and bore the right of high justice alone. From 1803, following secularisation, administrative duties were reallocated to regional courts, which entailed the separation of administration and justice at the same time.

Market statistics show that there were 12 brewers and 2 innkeepers in 1774 in Pfarrkirchen alone. They were the upper echelons of society. From these the chamberlain (mayor) and alderman were usually selected.



- 11 The next building of note is the Catholic priest's residence (1714 - 16). As is often the case, it was also used as a farm until 1910. These days the chaplain's house, the church archives and rooms for youth groups are housed in what were previously stables. The actual farm buildings stood in front of the Rott gate tower opposite the priest's house but were sold and demolished in 1953.

Pfarrkirchen can look back on a series of significant clerics who undertook good deeds for their church, for example minister Simon Münich (1799 – 1882). Among other things, he paid 3,200 guilders out of his own pocket to divert the Rott onto the priest's living. By doing this he delivered „the Rott Vormarkt“ (the modern Simbacher Straße which is close by) from the risk of deep flooding that had often caused damage to this southerly section causing Typhus fever, which until then can be seen noted as a common cause of death in the parish death registries.

PARK-HOTEL

PFARRKIRCHEN

Seit 2012 hat das Parkhotel für seine Gäste geöffnet und glänzt besonders wegen seiner zentralen Lage in der Innenstadt und der guten Verkehrsanbindung.

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- 12 Just beside this is the hospital square with the late gothic hospital grounds and church from the 15th century, documented as a „Citizens Charity Hospital of the Holy Spirit“. In the first half of the 19th century, the church was drastically changed. Worth noting are the neo-Gothic high altar and the shrine altar which were probably built before the 19th century. These days the church is used for concerts and to display nativity scenes during the Christmas market and is only open at these times. It was possible for old and frail residents to live and eat in the Hospital of the Holy Spirit free of charge through a charitable foundation.

Part of the Bill of fare from the year 1608 for special days:
 New Year's day: mornings after the religious service: boiled meat, cabbage with bacon and milk; evenings: bread and cheese; at night: for each recipient a poached sausage, bread soup, pickled barley, salad with eggs, sweetened milk; Easter Saturday: 1 loaf of wheat bread, 2 boiled eggs, 1 piece of grease to clean the shoes; Easter Sunday: mornings after the religious service: 2 bread rolls with boiled meat, cabbage with bacon, roast veal, egg custard.



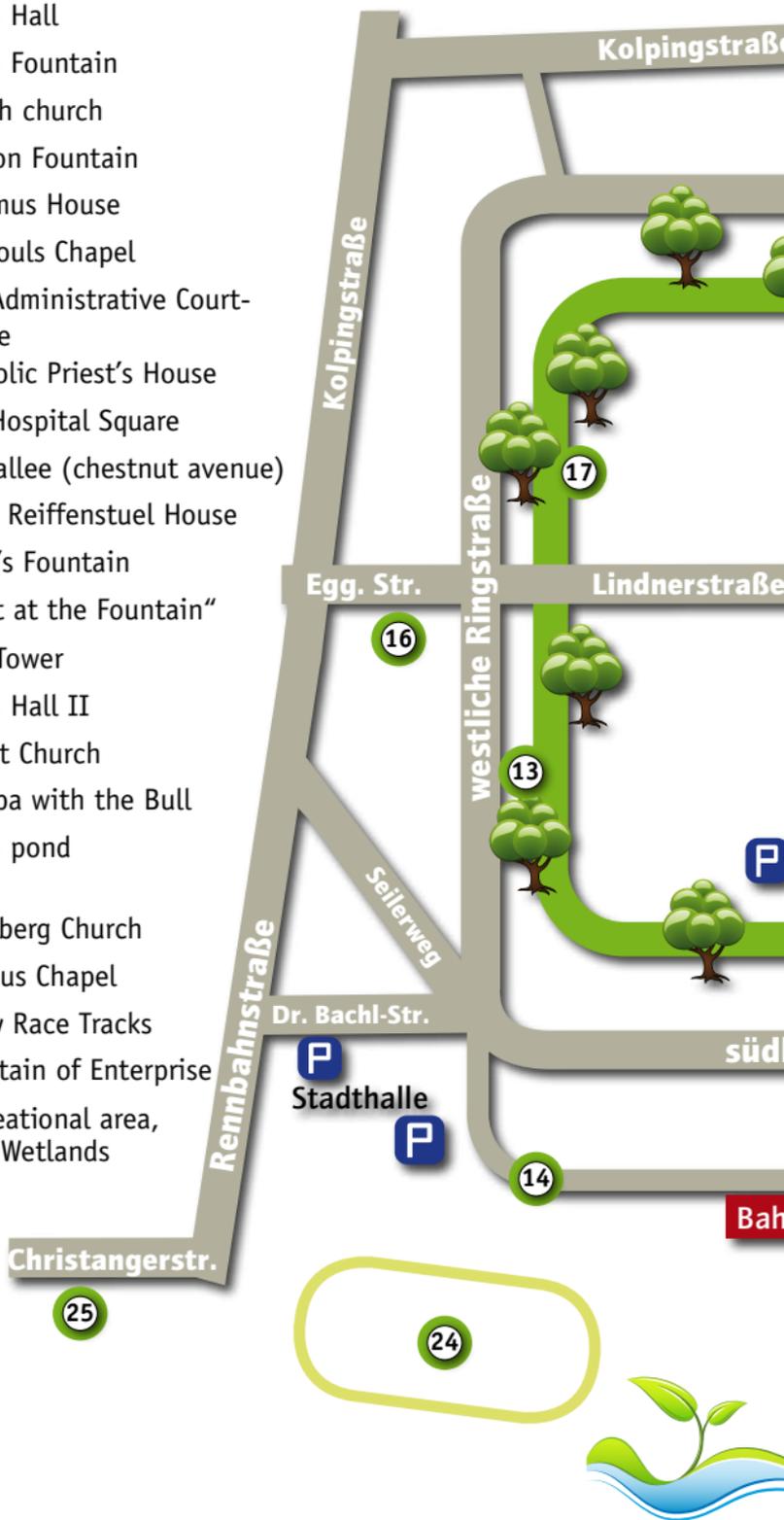
- 13 After leaving the square, turn left. Past the site of the former Rott gate tower (see foundations), you are led into Ringallee - a chestnut avenue - which runs along the former ramparts of the city. It is unique in Lower Bavaria. With a length of about a kilometre, it circles the town centre and forms, in the truest sense of the word, the Pfarrkirchen „Wall Street“. 365 fruit trees were planted in 1803, poplars were added later and in 1876 the existing chestnut avenue came into being. In the avenue, several fountains and attractive lawns can be found next to the remainders of the old city wall dating from 1558. Consequently in the middle of the town the moods of nature in the change of the seasons can be enjoyed.

The high cost of building the wall to the people of Pfarrkirchen led them to ask Duke Albrecht 5th to introduce a pavement tax. It was approved that: a farthing could be collected „from every loaded cart travelling through our market“.



Plan – tour

- ① Old Town Hall (Tourist information)
- ② Wimmer Steed
- ③ Town square with „Plinganser“ Inn and the „Little Golden Roof“
- ④ Town Hall
- ⑤ Town Fountain
- ⑥ Parish church
- ⑦ Pigeon Fountain
- ⑧ Erasmus House
- ⑨ All Souls Chapel
- ⑩ Old Administrative Court-house
- ⑪ Catholic Priest’s House
- ⑫ Old Hospital Square
- ⑬ Ringallee (chestnut avenue)
- ⑭ Hans Reiffenstuel House
- ⑮ Mary’s Fountain
- ⑯ „Rest at the Fountain“
- ⑰ Red Tower
- ⑱ Town Hall II
- ⑲ Christ Church
- ⑳ Europa with the Bull
- ㉑ Town pond
- ㉒ Gartlberg Church
- ㉓ Alexius Chapel
- ㉔ Sulky Race Tracks
- ㉕ Fountain of Enterprise
- ㉖ Recreational area, Rott Wetlands



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PFARRKIRCHEN

22 Gartlberg



26 rottauen



- 14 Now walk a little way down the avenue to the right to Bahnhofstraße, then left to the railway station. On the right-hand side is Hans-Reiffenstuel-Haus, the cultural centre for the town.

This building, previously used as a warehouse, was completely renovated and now accommodates an exhibition room, the local music school and the library. There is a permanent exhibition here of native animals. Wildlife from the forests, rivers, mountains, ponds and swamps and other creatures, including some albinos and a wide variety of bird species are displayed in cases. In the exhibition room on the ground floor in collaboration with the artistic association "Munich Secession", several significant art exhibitions take place annually, which can be visited free of charge.

The house received its name from the legacy of the painter Hans Reiffenstuel, who spent a large part of his career in Untergaiching, a settlement near Pfarrkirchen. In 1996 his widow presented Pfarrkirchen with his artistic legacy which comprises approximately 1700 works.

Opening times

Library and Native Animal Exhibition:

Mon – Fri 2 – 5 pm, Thurs 11 am – 1 pm (term-time only)
and 2 – 7 pm, 1st Saturday in the month 10 am – 12 midday

Art exhibitions: Dates at www.pfarrkirchen.de

Thurs – Sun and bank holidays 3 – 6 pm



- 15 Walk in the direction of the town centre again and find the Marienplatz with its beautiful Mary's Fountain (Marienbrunnen), created by the sculptor Joseph Michael Neustifter in 1990. Mary with child is enthroned in the centre of the five twisted columns. Baby Jesus holds a toy Rottaler horse in his hand while enjoying sucking his thumb and Mary is smiling. The fountain is built on the concept of a village structure – in the middle, the church and around it are worldly scenes. The history of Pfarrkirchen is told on the columns. The fountain is dedicated to the protection of life and nature.

Neustifter became well known through the creation of the „Benediktsäulen“ (Benedict's Columns) in Marktl am Inn, Velletri (in Italy) and the cloister at Metten as well as for the Mariensäule (Mary's Column) at Lourdes (France). Neustifter is a member of the Munich Secession in the Haus der Kunst, Munich. He lives and works in Eggenfelden in the Rott Valley.

- 16 Walk further through a passage between the buildings and into Ringallee - a chestnut avenue - and follow it to the right to Eggenfeldener Strasse. Looking out of town one can see the „Rest at the Fountain“ – a sculpture and fountain by Bernd Stöcker.

The fact that there is a fountain here again is based in history. Wells as „water providers“ for the community only began to be replaced by water pipes from the middle of the 19th century.





17 Back in Ringallee, turn to the left. This leads to the Red Tower (Roten Turm), a multi-cornered brick building that was part of the city wall and, in former times, one of five turrets. Moreover, there were three gate towers in the wall.

The medieval market of Pfarrkirchen only had three districts of the town and never had a northern entrance. The defences were surrounded by a moat, all of which has been filled in with the exception of one section (the town pond). There were embrasures in the town wall shaped like keys or violin slits.





- 18 Further along Ringallee one comes to the former Boys' School (Knabenschule). The building, in the neoclassical style, served as a school from 1896 until 1969. It was renovated in 2001 and is now Rathaus II (Town Hall II) in which some of the town's administration is accommodated. A bronze statue, "Das Waisenmädchen" (the Orphan Girl) by Prof. Hans Wimmer, stands in front of the main entrance.

In the middle of the 19th century the desire to separate boys and girls for their education emerged. A girls' school was constructed in 1858 in Bahnhofstrasse and when boys' tutorage could no longer be suitably undertaken in the previously used building, an appropriate plot of land for a boys' school was sought. The proposal was entirely against constructing the building near the girls' school, so in the end the boys' school was built here.

Fahrten von Mai – September jeweils am Dienstag und Donnerstag, außer bei schlechter Witterung und an Feiertagen. Freier Eintritt ins Heimatmuseum Pfarrkirchen. Kinder bis 12 Jahren zahlen die Hälfte.

Pfarrkirchen – Bad Birnbach / € 5,-

Abfahrt Pfarrkirchen (Marienplatz)
Rückfahrt von Bad Birnbach

12:30 Uhr
18:00 Uhr

Bad Birnbach – Pfarrkirchen / € 5,-

Abfahrt Bad Birnbach (Bus-Parkpl. »Artrium«)
Rückfahrt von Pfarrkirchen

13:30 Uhr
17:00 Uhr

Wahlweise zusätzlich mit Wertgutschein
in Höhe von € 2,50 (z. B. für Kaffee u. Kuchen)



19 Follow the road for a few meters along Dr Bayer-Straße away from the town and arrive in Kolpingstraße. Here is the protestant Christ Church. It was built in 1912-1913 from designs by Professor Wilhelm Käb in a striking example of art nouveau. Especially worth mentioning are the three colourful church windows round the altar by Gustav Treak of the Royal Bavarian stained glass studio in Nymphenburg and also the gilded crucifix from the workshop of the sculptor Hermann Lang, Munich. The church was renovated in 2010.

On the 28th of March 1883, the first Protestant service in Pfarrkirchen took place in the festively decorated council chamber, which is in the present Altes Rathaus (old town hall). The Catholic Co-operator and eventual Dean, Max Lanz made his harmonium available for the ceremony – a remarkable ecumenical gesture in that time. 23 parishioners from Pfarrkirchen and Eggenfelden took part in the service.

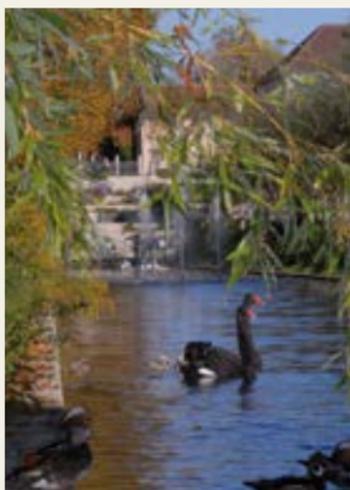




- 20 Turn back towards the town centre to find the artwork “Europa with the Bull” (Europa mit dem Stier) in Dr. Bayer-Straße. (Artist: Alois Demlehner). The 1.80 m high statue, constructed from stainless steel, shows Europa’s careful approach to the bull as described in Greek mythology. Thus, as a reflection of our time, it can be related to the expansion of the EU. Both woman and animal stand on a stylized world hemisphere. The 12 stars of the EU flag are engraved on the platform. It is held by the 36 meridians, connected by embellishments.

The names of the EU member countries (effective in 2001) are immortalized on the leaves.

21



Straight ahead the town pond can be seen. It is the only remaining part of the earlier moat which formed part of the defences and surrounded the entire town. In the summer our pair of black swans, „Herbert and Schnipsi“, can be seen swimming here. Walk along the old city wall and through „Am Stadtweiher“ lane, to view some typical back courtyards.

A little further on brings you once more to the town square. Here the tour through the historic old town of Pfarrkirchen is at an end. Before you do any more sight-seeing, let us recommend a rest in one of our numerous cafés, ice-cream parlours or bars.



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Sight-seeing outside the town centre

www.urlaub-im-rottal.de



- 22 A special symbol of the town is the Pilgrimage Church of Mary on the Gartlberg, the Gartlbergkirche. This two-spired baroque building dominates the Pfarrkirchen townscape from all directions and was erected between 1661 and 1715 from designs by the Italian church builder Domenico Zuccali. The choir stalls and high altar were built by Giovanni Battista Carlone and Paolo d'Allio from stucco marble. Both artists also carried out important work in the cathedral at Passau. The stucco in the nave was created by Ehrgott Bernhard Bendl – one of the artisan Bendl family from Pfarrkirchen! The church was renovated in 2008.



There is a lovely example of the 15 Stations of the Cross, built in 1888, to be admired on the footpath up to the Gartlberg. In 1972 the old carved Stations from the town's parish church were integrated.

As to the origins of the pilgrimage church: In 1659 the Pfarrkirchen hat maker Wolfgang Schmierdorfer nailed a religious picture of Mary, which can still be seen by the High altar, to a tree on the Gartlberg in order to be able to pray in peace.



This was witnessed and in the course of time, more and more people came to pray to the Mother of God and implore her assistance. After an apparently lifeless girl was rescued from a pit of deep water and brought back to life with the aid of the Madonna, many pilgrims visited the spot and finally two years later the building of the church began.

- 23 The Alexius Chapel (Alexikapelle): This chapel on Passauer Straße was erected in the 16th century for plague victims and lepers to honour the patron saints of plague, St. Alexius and Lazarus. It was earlier surrounded by a cemetery for foreigners, plague victims and executed criminals. The chapel was relocated some metres south-eastwards in 1962 because of road construction and was renovated in 1994.



The parish death register for Pfarrkirchen shows more than 300 deaths from plague in 1743 (from a population of about 900). The corpses were buried around the Alexius chapel in the town's plague cemetery.

The chapel is not publicly accessible.



24 For centuries horse races were held in Pfarrkirchen on market day. The first sulky race course in Bavaria was built in Pfarrkirchen in 1894. The 1000 meter long sand track has been a popular meeting place for sulky race fans and horse breeders ever since. Traditional horse races take place every year during the Whitsun weekend on the oldest race track in Bavaria. The highlight is the Bavarian Breeders Race on Whit Tuesday.

The following is taken from issue 304 of the Augsburg evening newspaper, 1897: „A first-class sulky course has emerged in the heart of the most important horse-breeding region, in the Rott valley, the grounds and facilities of which can stand proud when compared with other tracks on the continent. The trials of our young horses, coming from rural breeding ideals, have shown what valuable, powerful horse stock we already own.“

Besides equine sport, it is also home to motorcycling. Every year dirt track races are conducted. Pfarrkirchen has already been the venue for dirt track world championships several times.



25 The Fountain of Enterprise (Unternehmerbrunnen) stands in the inner courtyard of the Training and Technology centre of the Chamber of Trade in Christangerstraße. This bronze was created by the Eggenfelden sculptor Joseph Michael Neustifter in 1988.

The statue shows the exploited workman with a forced smile, holding himself just above water. The treasury, represented by the eagle's claw, and the bankruptcy vulture are breathing down his neck, while the banks and other lenders are at his heels.



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BAR
EIS**



26 The recreational zone by the river, the „Rott Wetlands“ (Rottauen) is ideally placed for walks in the area around the town. Information about plant and animal life on the river is displayed on the nature walk. „Loreley of the Rott“ (artist: Wolfgang Auer), a 1.70 m high female sculpture is mounted between the small waterfall by the creek Dr. Bayer-Bach and the Theatron, an open-air stage. One can enjoy the prospect of the quietly flowing river from the „Ruhesteg“ (the „quiet pier“) made of wood which juts out a little over the Rott and then while away some time on the inviting benches and the „Lange Bank“ (Long Bench) by the weir.

The Rott Wetlands are a relaxation zone in Pfarrkirchen, developed in the course of flood protection measures. At the information pavilion, information can be found about footpaths and cycling routes.

IMPRINT

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tourist-info@pfarrkirchen.de / Photos: Pfarrkirchen town

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Further information:

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