



ADMISSION

Museumszentrum (Museum Centre) | No guided tour
Open Year-Round* Tue.–Sun., 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Prices: €3 | concessions €2 | family ticket
(2 adults, max. 4 children aged 16 or under) €7
Groups (of 20+ people) €2 per person

Offene Zehntscheune (Open Exhibition Depot Tithe Barn) | No guided tour
March to end of October: Sundays and public holidays, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. |
€1 admission

PUBLIC TOURS

(2+ people | no reservation required | prior booking necessary for groups of 10+ people)

Königshalle (King's Hall)

March to end of Oct., Tue.–Sun. | Nov.–Feb., Sat. & Sun. only
Duration: 30–45 min., every hour 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
Prices (incl. Museum Centre admission) €6 | concessions €4 | family ticket
(2 adults, max. 4 children aged 16 or under) €14

Combined ticket for Königshalle (King's Hall) & Freilichtlabor Laresham (Laboratory for Experimental Archaeology)

Mid-March to end of October, Tue.–Sun.
(For two public tours on the same day)
Duration: 30–45 min. (Königshalle) & approx. 90 min. (Freilichtlabor Laresham)
Prices: 10 € | concessions 6 €

BOOKABLE GUIDED TOURS

(For 2+ people | reservation required)

1. World Heritage Site Lorsch Abbey (grounds & buildings)
2. Schaudapot Zehntscheune (Exhibition Depot Tithe Barn)

Open Year-Round, Tue.–Sun.
Duration: approx. 90 min.
Prices (incl. Museum Centre admission): 70 € (up to 10 people),
each additional person 7 € | concessions 5 €
Groups of 20+ people €6 per person

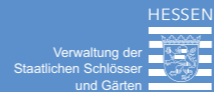
*Museumszentrum (Museum Centre) closed on: New Year's Day,
Shrove Tuesday, Christmas Eve & New Year's Eve

INFORMATION & BOOKING

Tel. +49 (0)6251 86 92 00 | buchung@kloster-lorsch.de

Further information can be found at: www.kloster-lorsch.de

Last updated January 2020 | Information subject to change



Organisation
der Vereinten Nationen
für Bildung, Wissenschaft
und Kultur



Kloster Lorsch
Welterbe seit 1991

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE LORSCH ABBEY

LORSCH ABBEY

FROM THE CAROLINGIAN ABBEY TO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

In 764, the Robertian family began establishing a small monastery between two arms of the Weschnitz River, which was later known as Altenmünster. Just three years afterwards, the establishment was moved to its new location. It became a royal abbey in 772 and was consecrated in 774 in the presence of King Charlemagne. Over the course of eight centuries, monks and clergymen came to gather here around the bones of St. Nazarius, which helped the abbey achieve great prosperity. Around 800, the abbey's possessions and estates stretched over the area of six modern-day European states. The Lorsch Codex, one of Europe's most important economic and historical source documents, contains the first mention of hundreds of cities and towns.

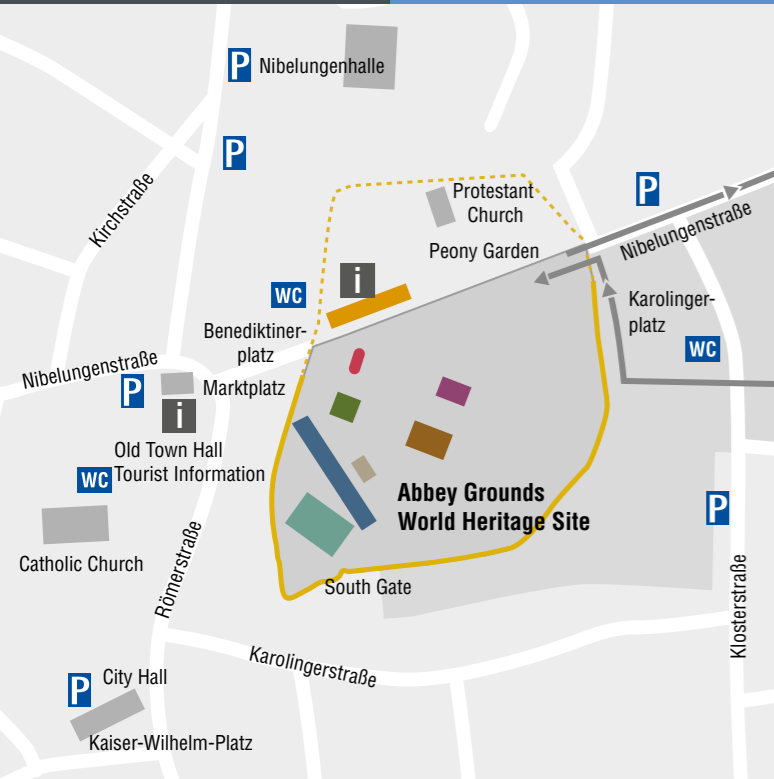
Probably only from the middle of the 10th century as a Benedictine abbey, it was granted imperial immediacy from 772 until it lost this status in 1232. Under the regiment of the Archbishop of Mainz and Prince-electors, Premonstratensian canons ran the abbey until the dissolution of the Lorsch provostship, which began in 1556. From its dissolution through to the mid-18th century, the complex almost completely disappeared. This led to the site being dominated by agriculture, and thereafter it became the grand residence of a master forestry warden.

The Lorsch Abbey is not only linked to the famous 'Königshalle' (King's Hall), but also to a library that is largely preserved – albeit scattered worldwide. The library brought together all available knowledge about God and the world, and the contents of the library reflect the rich cosmos of medieval scholarship. The library is now accessible online at any time for those who are interested. The monastic archives, which are much more difficult to reconstruct, will become accessible to the general public in the near future. As thoroughly eloquent witnesses of the past centuries, the Schaudapot Zehntscheune (Exhibition Depot Tithe Barn) includes findings from more than 200 years of archaeological activity on the site.

Today, our aim is to give this abandoned site a piece of its aura back, to present the relics of its past, to make the site's meaning come alive, and to explore the site's history. The World Heritage Site Lorsch Abbey is property of the State Administration for Palaces and Gardens of Hesse (Verwaltung der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten Hessen).



THE ABBEY GROUNDS



- Museum Centre
- Königshalle (King's Hall)
- Exhibition Depot Tithe Barn
- Former electoral manor
- Church ruins
- Adalherhaus
- Former forestry warden's building
- Herb garden
- Monastery wall
- Former monastery wall

THE CHURCH RUINS

The church is the architectural centre of each monastery and is the centre of life for monks and canons. This was the place in Lorsch that – every day and every night for eight centuries – psalms were sung and a rich Liturgy was celebrated. The church was always magnificently decorated: colourful marble floors, meticulously crafted choir screens, gold and silver altar and altarpieces, precious textiles and murals. From the days of Charlemagne, who was present at the consecration of the church in 774, the three-nave basilica also served as a place of burial. Resting here are Charlemagne's brother in law and cousin Tassilo III, his grandson Louis the German (d. 876), and also two more generations of East Franconian Carolingians. Even though the remains of the church – which was at its peak more than a hundred meters long and had two imposing towers at its western end – are sparse, it continues to impress visitors today. The main structures date from the 11th to the 14th century.

THE MONASTERY WALL

The monastery wall is the largest structure to survive from the time when this was still a monastery. Two thirds of the walls have survived to this day. The wall is still the boundary of the larger, southern part of the monastery area today; its course through the area north of Nibelungenstraße, which has since become densely built upon, can still partially be understood from looking at old field boundaries and with the help of historical maps. Both in its early days and at the beginning of the 16th century, the wall was tasked with fortifying the monastery. In the early Middle Ages, it was part of a defensive enclosure comprising ditches and ramparts. Later, it took the form of a high defensive wall, probably with wooden walkways and a connection to the gates on today's Benediktinerplatz. The last known drawing of these gates dates back to 1830. For most of the eight hundred years of history when this was a monastery, the wall was both a means of separation from – and connection to – the world outside the confines of the monastic community. Each era has made its mark on the preservation and modification of the wall.

THE CAROLINGIAN 'KÖNIGSHALLE'

The most famous building at the World Heritage Site Lorsch Abbey is the 'Königshalle' (King's Hall). It was built around 900 and is considered one of the best preserved examples of Carolingian architecture, referencing classical styles but also consciously deviating from the canon of classical architectural elements. The unique facade decorations correspond with the remains of high-quality architectural paintings inside on the upper floor of the building. Its purpose is not known. Current research points to this being a reception building for visiting rulers, but there is also discussion about it having been used as a courtroom for trials. So far it has only been proved that it was built on an existing cemetery, which buried the deceased from the monastic 'familia' – the many people who served the monastery without being monks or canons. The medieval appearance of the Königshalle was reconstructed around 1935.

THE HERB GARDEN

The Lorsch Pharmacopoeia is one of the oldest manuscripts from Lorsch, originating from the 8th century. It is perhaps one of the earliest pieces of evidence of scientific medicine emerging in the post-antiquity Western World. Contained within is a wise justification of medical practice as a special form of charity, which was a way to convince Christian fundamentalist sceptics who thought of illness and death as consequences of original sin forcibly connected with human existence. The Lorsch Pharmacopoeia also developed importance amongst non-scientific audiences, thanks to the actions of Lorsch citizens. Not only did they obtain a translation of the Pharmacopoeia, but also its 'visualisation' through a garden maintained by volunteers, located on the 'Spittelsberg', behind the tithe barn. This dune takes its name from a nearby monastery hospital, which existed from the 12th to the 15th century. In 2013, the Lorsch Pharmacopoeia was added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme.

THE EXHIBITION DEPOT TITHE BARN

The tithe barn is the oldest, post-dissolution building in the abbey grounds. It was built from the materials left over from monastic buildings at the end of the 16th century. The building consisted of three identically constructed, originally unconnected barns, which were open plan inside up to the roof, each with the same features. A fourth was added around 1720. Now transformed into an exhibition space, the room contains a rich collection of architectural sculptures and archaeological finds from the Roman times through to the 19th century. The most well-known objects being housed here are the so-called Sarcophagus of King Louis the German and the supposed burial coffin of Siegfried, the hero from the Nibelungenlied epic. The exhibition is in the process of being expanded with the archaeological collection that is stored on the newly created upper floor, which is inaccessible to the public. The anthropological and archaeozoological collection, which is also housed here, serves scientific purposes.

POST-DISSOLUTION

Buildings from the post-dissolution period testify to the site being used after the monastery's closure: earliest is the tithe barn from the 16th century, then came the electoral manor, which was probably built in the 18th century on the site of the late-medieval prelatore, and lastly, at the end of the 19th century, the district forestry warden's building and pigsty. All these buildings were witness to the monastery complex's systematically advancing ruin up until the middle of the 18th century. However, when the Archbishopric of Mainz gained possession of the site, the electoral manor formed its new centre, surrounded by the chapel (Königshalle), stables, coach houses, wells, a barn, a kitchen, a confectioner's and a silver servant's apartment. In 1772, the site – with remarkable dimensions – became the residence of a master forestry warden. The award-winning new design of the Abbey Grounds, which was completed in 2014, has returned a dignified air to the place without wiping out the traces of its more recent history.