

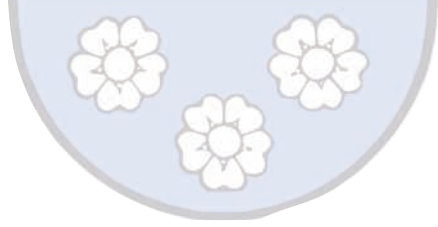
Fascinating  
W E R T H E I M



The blazon of the Wertheim coat of arms:

*“A divided shield, on a golden field, with an emerging red-beaked, black eagle; below three silver roses on royal blue”. The eagle dates back to Count Poppo II of Wertheim while the three roses are said to come from his wife Mechthildis of Riedenburg (Bocksberg). This has been Wertheim’s coat of arms since 1218.*

A short portrait of the old town through the eyes of a city guide and the pictures from the photo club “Wertheimer Fotofreunde”



## Welcome to Wertheim – hometown of the author

1953 was not exactly an important year in the annals of this city rich in history, which is situated between the rivers Main and Tauber. Well, apart from reopening the road bridge across the Main river, that had been blown up by fleeing German troops on March 31st 1945. Nothing special, if it were not for the fact that on a snowy, freezing day in January the author took his first look at the world.

This world subsequently captivated him, as his life led him, after various German residences, across the globe. By traveling far away he learned to value his home. An apt description of the experience of this globetrotter, who returned to his hometown after many years, learned to appreciate it and settled down there.

The Main and Tauber rivers encircle the old town of Wertheim like a peninsula, crowned by the castle hill with its fortress sitting high above the city; it is one of the biggest castle ruins in Southern Germany. Untouched by war, this lovely town with its medieval flair presents itself proudly to visitors from all over the globe. At every corner there is evidence of former wealth, but also of the not always honorable past.

Narrow alleys lead the visitors to beautiful half-timbered houses, shops with a long tradition and lively squares in which to take a rest. On the edges of town international industry has taken up residence. Some of these companies are market leaders worldwide and even supply parts for the international space station (ISS).

May I invite you to take a short tour around town with me? Let yourself be guided, let the sights impress you and listen to the stories about this fascinating Frankonian town at the crossroads of the Nibelungen Road, the Romantic Road and the German Road of half-timbered houses – it's also a certified health resort!



On this house you can also see the indent for the wooden shutters very well. These unfolded into sales tables offering the goods to the citizens. Also interesting is the high water mark from 1764.

Just two houses further down the street a pair of half-timbered houses from the 16th century stand out (Marktplatz No. 12). The flying buttress between the two houses makes you think it was put there just to support their walls which are almost touching at the top. This illustrates very well the way that many buildings from this era widened towards the top – at that time the property tax depended on the size of the ground floor that is why the buildings grew wider with every floor.

In the building to the right of the arc is home of the oldest café of Wertheim, Café Hahn (since 1886). There is, however,

documentary evidence from the year 1580 as a residence of the Knight von Gebstattel. This could have been the gentry “from Gebstattel”, a small village near Rothenburg upon the river Tauber. On the façade of the building to the left we find a crest with the initial “PH” as well as the clothmaker’s clamp.

These represent the erstwhile mayor and clothmaker Peter Heusslein. There are some Chinese looking symbols chiseled into the sandstone walls. They are not characters, but are typical stonemason symbols. They weren’t engraved until the bill had been paid.

Across the market (Marktplatz No. 11) is the former Bach’sche Brauerei (Bach’s Brewery). The hexagon star, symbol of the brewers’ guild, still hands from the façade and is a sign for



*Crest of Michael Rüdiger at the rear building of Rüdiger estate*

“Haustrunk” (free beer distribution on certain occasions). As early as the 17th century four brewers in Wertheim are mentioned, even though wine was predominant. Currently a Chinese restaurant is located here.

On the very left there is the bakery Frischmuth, one of the oldest and best in Germany. The current owner can look back over an unbroken chain of inheritance since 1551 (13 generations) and uses the advertisement slogan: “Best Pretzel in Germany”. This might not be too far-fetched, because the master baker trains chefs and bakers worldwide for the Kempinski hotel chain. The slate siding bears witness to the wealth of its erstwhile owner. But let’s get back to the nosy ladies of Wertheim, because legend has it, that one of the current owner’s ancestors was involved. She could see the market square from one of the four windows on the upper floor very well and was always up to date. It was a thorn in her side not to be able to see was going on in the ballroom house, especially who went in and who came out with whom. She badgered her husband until he had a small, slanting widow installed on the left side – only then was she satisfied.

The tavern “Zum Ochsen” (the Ox) is one of the most coziest in Wertheim (Marktplatz No. 7) and joins the bakery on the left. We reach the rustic taproom through a small, shady beer garden in the inner yard. Here, in the former Arnold cinema, they have been serving German and regional cuisine since 1982.

*The word of God keeps forever (Martin Luther) – carved at the rear building of Rüdiger estate*

