

GREAT SPA TOWNS of Europe

We hope you enjoy your stay and wish you a pleasant time discovering The Great Spa Towns of Europe World Heritage Site

For more information about The Great Spa Towns of Europe please visit www.greatspasofeurope.eu

or www.welterbe.badkissingen.de

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Die bedeutenden Kurstädte Europas
 Welterbe seit 2021



Welcome to *The Great Spa Towns of Europe*

Welcome to Bad Kissingen



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UNESCO World Heritage Site: The Great Spa Towns of Europe

The Great Spa Towns of Europe is a World Heritage Site comprising eleven historic spa towns across seven European nations. Together they are an exceptional testimony of European spa tradition, a complex urban, social and cultural phenomenon which has its roots in ancient times and reached its golden age between 1700 and the 1930s. From several hundred large and small spa towns that have contributed to this European spa phenomenon, the series includes eleven of the most elegant, dynamic and international best examples.



The Great Spa Towns of Europe have joined forces to preserve their cultural heritage for future generations.

Worldwide Significance

With their specific form, function and architecture, the Great Spa Towns of Europe are outstanding examples of the unique European spa town typology. Between 1700 and the 1930s, intensive exchange of innovative concepts in the fields of medicinal springs and spa medicine (balneology) as well as the development of recreational activities contributed to the formation of this town type.

The Great Spa Towns of Europe influenced the development of other spa towns as well as the field of balneology throughout Europe and across the globe.

Moreover, The Great Spa Towns of Europe bear exceptional testimony to the European spa phenomenon.

The holistic approach of taking the cure is characterised by a combination of medical aspects, social activities including theatre, dance, music and gambling, as well as exercising in the fresh air in a recreational and therapeutic spa landscape. These elements of taking the cure directly influenced the urban structure and architecture of the spa towns and shaped the design of city squares and open spaces.

Interchange of innovative ideas that influenced the development of spa towns until the 1930s

Testimony of the European spa phenomenon

The Spa Town – Expression of the interchange of innovative ideas and exceptional testimony of the European spa phenomenon

The 11 Great Spa Towns are places of health, leisure and social life. Each town is distinct, yet they all developed around mineral springs. Urban structures were designed around the springs and constructed to fully serve the holistic approach of taking the cure. The spaces include facilities for the external and internal application of the mineral waters, a broad range of accommodation, recreational facilities such as theatres and casinos, and specific infrastructure such as mineral water pipelines, railway stations or facilities for the production and use of salt and brine.

The spa towns are also characterised by their green spaces which include parks and gardens as well as extensive spa landscapes that continue to be used for recreation and therapeutic purposes. Views and vistas link these surrounding landscapes with the spa-specific buildings and facilities.

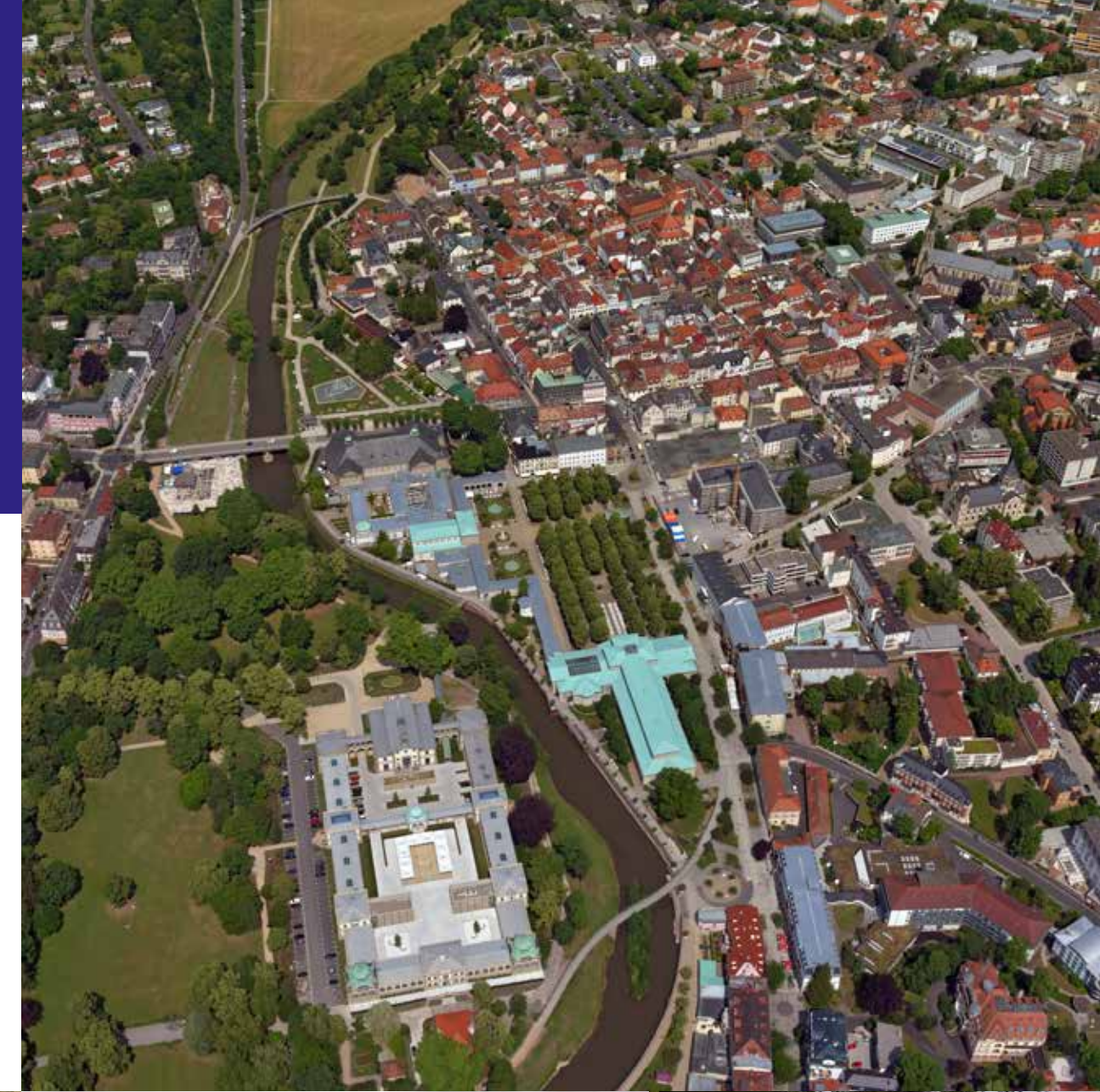


Bad Kissingen and The Great Spa Towns of Europe

212 hectares of the City of Bad Kissingen is part of The Great Spa Towns of Europe UNESCO World Heritage Site.

All of the important elements of a spa town can be found here: urban layout, architecture and infrastructure characteristic for spa towns and natural mineral springs. As a fully functioning spa town with four of its seven springs in the World Heritage Site, Bad Kissingen continues to welcome guests to experience the tradition of European spa culture.

Each of the eleven spa towns exhibit a special contribution to the so called serial and transnational World Heritage Site, a site composed of several component parts throughout various countries. Bad Kissingen's contribution is based on three elements:



The area of the Lower Saline (Untere Saline) north of the old town



Its political and international significance through Bismarck



Its central spa quarter arranged around the spa garden (Kurgartenensemble)



Its central spa quarter arranged around the spa garden (Kurgartenensemble)

The function and structure of the harmoniously designed spa ensemble has been preserved to this day. The architectural quality of the buildings by architect Max Littmann from the reform era of the early 20th century is outstanding. In addition, the Kurgarten created in 1738 was the first spa garden in the world that was planned and designed specifically for the purpose of taking the cure.

Here in the Great Spa Town of Bad Kissingen, visitors can tangibly experience traditional spa functions and enjoy the typical urban design, elements and architecture of a European spa town.

The holistic spa tradition is evident throughout the ensemble and is exemplified by the use of the medicinal springs for the drinking cure which includes the water pouring ceremony, the ornamental plants and trees maintained by the spa nursery, the concerts by the Bad Kissingen spa orchestra Staatsbad Philharmonie Kissingen, numerous high-quality cultural events in the Regent's Building (Regentenbau) as well as a vibrant social life.



The Political and International Significance through Bismarck

The Great Spa Towns were meeting places for various international elites, including scientists, artists and politicians. These towns turned into a political stage during the spa season. Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck visited Bad Kissingen numerous times, earning the town particular international importance. It is here that he drew up the Kissingen Dictation and created the foundations of the German social security system. Bismarck's rooms, including the original furnishings, have been preserved in the Museum Obere Saline.



The area of the Lower Saline (Untere Saline) north of the Old Town

Within the series, Bad Kissingen is the only town to own historical facilities for the production, extraction and use of brine (saline spring water), making it particularly significant in 19th century spa medicine.

The fact that brine was included in spa treatments in Bad Kissingen traces back to two factors: the decline of the evaporated salt industry as a whole and the growing trend of seaside resort. Bad Kissingen responded to the developments of the time by introducing brine baths and converting the graduation works into an open-air inhalatorium, helping to continually attract visitors from around the world to its health and spa facilities.

