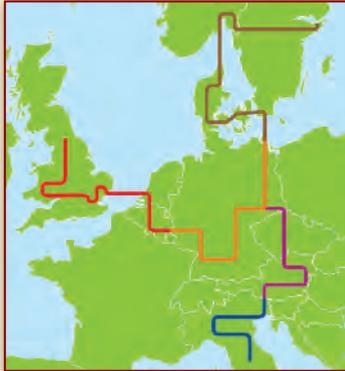


## THE DATABASE

Do you want to know more about theatre buildings in Europe? In the free online database [www.theatre-architecture.eu](http://www.theatre-architecture.eu) you can find information on more than 350 European theatres, including a rich visual documentation. The number will grow continuously, and by 2016 the database will present all historic theatres in Europe.

## THE EUROPEAN ROUTE

The European Route expands every year. Watch it grow and continue your journey on the **Nordic Route** to unique theatres in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Cross the English Channel on the **Channel Route** to selected historic theatres in the UK, the Netherlands and Belgium. Enjoy theatres from the Habsburg Monarchy on the **Emperor Route** across Austria and the Czech Republic. Go on holiday in the south and visit the oldest theatres in Europe on the **Italian Route**. And look forward to the **Adriatic Route** and the **French Route**, opening in 2014.



The **German Route** is organized by the City of Hanau and Comödienhaus Wilhelmsbad. E-mail: [comodien@hanau.de](mailto:comodien@hanau.de)

More information on the routes on the Internet: [www.europeanroute.info](http://www.europeanroute.info)

## PERSPECTIV

PERSPECTIV – Association of Historic Theatres in Europe – is the coordinator of the European Route. The non-profit association connects people across Europe who are responsible for historic theatres or who else have a professional or private interest in this topic. Together we support the preservation, restoration, and adequate use of as well as research into this very special common European heritage.

More information: PERSPECTIV · PF 31 II 26 · 10641 Berlin · Germany or on the Internet, [www.perspectiv-online.org](http://www.perspectiv-online.org)

## BAYREUTH

## Margravian Opera House

In June 2012, the Margravian Opera House in Bayreuth was proclaimed a **Unesco World Heritage**: it is a unique monument of Europe's festival, theatre and music culture in the Baroque era. While the Opera House is undergoing extensive restorations, visitors will still be able to get a glimpse of the auditorium. A world heritage centre has opened in the foyers, where an exhibition presents a fascinating view of the building, its architect Giuseppe Galli Bibiena and the Margravine Wilhelmine who commissioned the theatre. A 3D animation allows the visitor to experience the architecture in close-up and in an interactive way.



Also in and around Bayreuth: the theatre of ruins in the Hermitage (1744), the grotto theatre at Sanspareil (1747), Richard Wagner's festival theatre (1876) and much more.

**Markgraefliches Opernhaus** · Opernstrasse 14 · 95444 Bayreuth  
Tel.: +49 (0)921 7596922 · E-mail: [sgvbayreuth@bsv.bayern.de](mailto:sgvbayreuth@bsv.bayern.de)  
[www.bayreuth-wilhelmine.de](http://www.bayreuth-wilhelmine.de) · [www.schloesser.bayern.de](http://www.schloesser.bayern.de)  
Visits World Heritage Centre: 9:00 to 18:00 (April–Sep);  
10:00 to 16:00 (Oct–March)

## THE EUROPEAN ROUTE PROJECT

Theatre has been a corner stone of European culture for over 2500 years. The buildings created for this art mirror our history. They can be found everywhere in Europe. Together they form a very special part of our common **European heritage**.

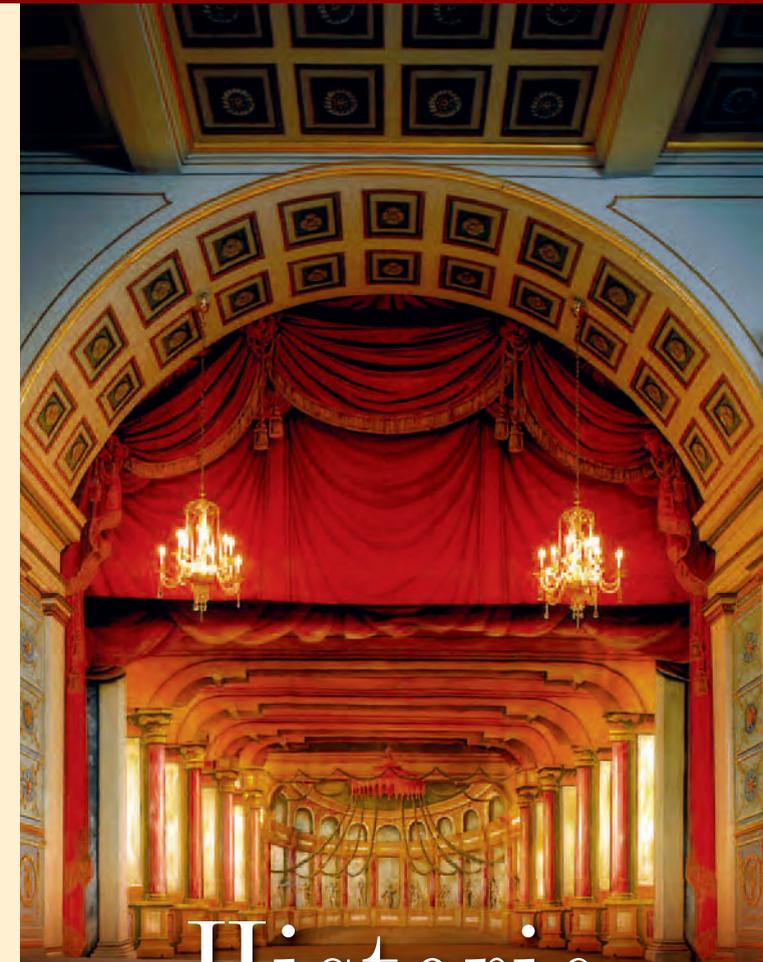
The “European Route of Historic Theatres”, begun in 2007, aims at making this heritage more accessible. In the period 2012 to 2017, sixteen partners from twelve countries are joining their forces to expand the route across the continent, build the first ever online database of all still existing historic theatres in Europe, create a travelling exhibition that presents this common European heritage in context, and foster cross-border cooperation by way of meetings and an annual international conference. The European Route project is supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

More information:  
[www.europeanroute.info](http://www.europeanroute.info)



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Title picture: Ekhof Theatre, Gotha © Stiftung Schloss Friedenstein



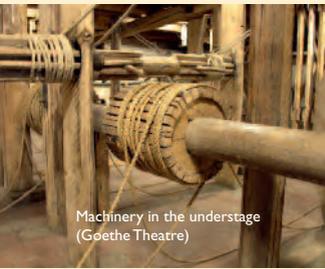
# Historic Theatres

## GERMANY

# THE JOURNEY

Counts, dukes and kings were the driving force of theatre life in Germany from the 17th to the 19th century. Let us make a journey to their theatres and find out what they have to tell us.

Our journey starts on the island of Rügen. In this ideal holiday place the Marquis Malte of **Putbus** built his ideal city – complete with a theatre (1821), of course. The mainland was split between two Dukes of Mecklenburg: one duke had a new theatre built in his capital **Schwerin** in 1886, the other duke opened his summer theatre in **Neubrandenburg** already in 1794. The shining example was the Prussian king Frederick the Great who built five theatres. Of those his private theatre (1769) in the New Palace in **Potsdam-Sanssouci** can still be visited.



Machinery in the understage (Goethe Theatre)

Travelling south we enter Goethe's world. Near the city of Halle (Saale) where Handel was born we find the historic spa **Goethestadt Bad Lauchstädt** and the Goethe Theatre which the famous poet had built in 1802. After a little excursion to Weimar we arrive at the private theatre (1800) of the Stein family at **Kochberg** palace. And finally there

is the palace theatre in **Gotha**, the Ekhof Theatre (1681/1775), the centre of German theatre in the 18th century.

In the 19th century, **Meiningen** became the centre of German theatre. Duke Georg II, the theatre duke, created a theatrical style that was copied throughout Europe. The style is embodied in the huge stage decorations that are still preserved and on display in the theatre museum.

Not far away, in **Bayreuth**, we find one of Frederick the Great's sisters, the Margravine Wilhelmine. She wanted to boost the image of her seat and built the most breath-taking theatre north of the Alps, the Margravian Opera House, a Unesco World Heritage. It was inaugurated in 1748 on the occasion of the marriage of her daughter with the Duke of Württemberg. Following the example, the duke had a number of theatres built, of which the palace theatre (1758) in **Ludwigsburg** has survived. His neighbour, the Elector Carl Theodor of the Palatinate, had inaugurated the Rococo Theatre in his summer palace **Schwetzingen** already in 1752.

Prince Wilhelm of Hesse-Kassel thought more in commercial terms: in 1781 he ordered the construction of a "Comœdien Haus" in order to lure guests into his new spa **Wilhelmsbad**. The archbishop Clemens Wenzeslaus had a similar idea, but lacking the financial means he left it to a Mr Schmitz to build and run the theatre (1787) in **Koblenz**. Thus our journey to historic theatres ends – or begins – with one of the oldest municipal theatres in Germany.

# ACROSS GERMANY



## Tourist offices

**Goethestadt Bad Lauchstädt**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)34635 21634  
touristinformation@goethe-theater.com  
www.goethe-theater.com

**Bayreuth**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)921 88588  
info@bayreuth-tourismus.de  
www.bayreuth.de

**Gotha**  
Tourist-Information Gotha/Gothaer Land  
Tel.: +49 (0)3621 50785712  
tourist-info@gotha.de  
www.gotha.de

**Grosskochberg**  
Tourist-Information Weimar  
Tel.: +49 (0)3643 7450  
tourist-info@weimar.de  
www.weimar.de

**Hanau**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)6181 295950  
touristinformation@hanau.de  
www.hanau.de/tourismus

**Koblenz**  
Koblenz-Touristik  
Tel.: +49 (0)261 30 38 80  
info@touristik-koblenz.de  
www.touristik-koblenz.de

**Ludwigsburg**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)7141 9102252  
touristinfo@ludwigsburg.de  
www.ludwigsburg.de

**Meiningen**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)3693 44650  
tourist.info@meiningen.de  
www.meiningen.de

**Neubrandenburg**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)1805 170330 (14ct/min)  
touristinfo@neubrandenburg.de  
www.neubrandenburg-touristinfo.de

**Potsdam**  
Tourismus Service  
Tel.: +49 (0)331 275580  
tourismus-service@potsdam.de  
www.potsdamtourismus.de

**Putbus**  
Putbus-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)38301 431  
info.putbus@putbus.de  
www.putbus.de/tourismus.htm

**Schwerin**  
Tourist-Information  
Tel.: +49 (0)385 59252-12/-13/-14  
info@schwerin.info  
www.schwerin.de

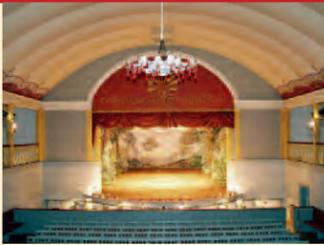
**Schwetzingen**  
Stadtinformation  
Tel.: +49 (0)6202 945875  
stadtinfo@schwetzingen.de  
www.schwetzingen.de

# HISTORIC THEATRES IN GERMANY

## GOETHESTADT BAD LAUCHSTAEDT

### Goethe Theatre

This theatre, inaugurated in 1802 in the then fashionable spa Bad Lauchstaedt, is one of the most important memorial places of the life and works of the great German poet and playwright Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). The architect Heinrich Gentz designed the building according to the poet's ideas: in its functional simplicity and modernity the essence of bourgeois theatres of the time. The ducal theatre troupe from Weimar, directed by Goethe, performed here for many years, presenting enlightened drama as well as opera. Today, the originally preserved building is the venue for about 50 performances from April to October, featuring mostly classic German drama and Mozart's operas. A technical highlight is the reconstructed stage machinery below and above the stage: it allows performing scene changes like in Goethe's days. Authentic furniture is on display in the green room and in other buildings in the historic spa gardens.



#### Historische Kuranlagen & Goethe-Theater Bad Lauchstädt

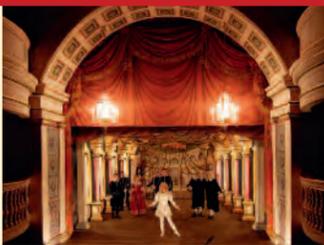
Parkstrasse 18 · 06246 Goethestadt Bad Lauchstädt · Tel.: +49 (0)34635 7820  
E-mail: info@goethe-theater.com · www.goethe-theater.com

Visits: Tue–Sun 10:30, 14:00, 16:00 (April–Oct); Mon–Sun on appointment (Nov–March); 10:30 only on rehearsal or performance days. Groups on appointment only.

## GOTHA

### Ekhof Theatre

Friedenstein Palace, the largest early Baroque palace in Germany, not only houses outstanding art and antiques collections but also a focal point of German theatre history: the Ekhof Theatre.



Built in 1681, it presents itself today in a design from 1775 when modern German theatre was born here, as Conrad Ekhof, creator of the realistic style in German acting, served as director of Germany's first standing repertory company. Fixed days of performance, regular salaries, a growing repertoire, subscriptions, tickets sold to all citizens, state subsidies, and a pension fund were unique assets of this Gotha court theatre. The theatre is preserved today exactly as it was in Ekhof's time – including the originally preserved stage machinery that springs to action during the Ekhof Festival (July, August).

Ekhof-Theater · Schloss Friedenstein · 99867 Gotha · Tel.: +49 (0)3621 82340  
E-mail: service@stiftung-friedenstein.de · www.ekhof-festival.de

Visits: Ekhof-Theater & Gotha theatre history exhibition: Tue–Sun 10:00 to 17:00 (April–Oct); 10:00 to 16:00 (Nov–March)

## GROSSKOCHBERG

### Private Theatre at Kochberg Palace

The ensemble of theatre, park and palace Kochberg – once the country estate of Goethe's love Charlotte von Stein – is one of the most pleasant places in Thuringia;



it is owned by the foundation Klassik Stiftung Weimar. A real gem is the carefully restored private theatre ("Liebhabertheater") with its 75 seats, built for Carl von Stein around 1800. During the weekends from May to October one can enjoy outstanding drama and opera performances as well as concerts, featuring works from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic period, presented by renowned artists. The theatre is managed by the non-profit friends association "Freunde des Liebhabertheaters Schloss Kochberg e.V." that champions historic performance practice.

Liebhabertheater Schloss Kochberg · 07407 Grosskochberg · Tel.: +49 (0)36743 225 32  
E-mail: vorstand@liebhabertheater.com · www.liebhabertheater.com

Klassik Stiftung Weimar · E-mail: info@klassik-stiftung.de · www.klassik-stiftung.de

Visits: access during the opening times of the palace, Tue–Sun 10:00 to 18:00 (April–Oct). Guided tours on appointment

## HANAU-WILHELMSBAD

### Playhouse Wilhelmsbad

This theatre owes its existence to Prince Wilhelm of Hesse-Kassel, heir to the throne of Kurhessen. In January 1781 he ordered the treasury in Hanau to allocate 3500 florins "for the construction of a Comoedien Haus [playhouse] at Wilhelmsbad", his brand-new spa. On July 8, 1781 the theatre – built to plans by the Councillor Franz Ludwig von Cancrin – was inaugurated with the operetta "Tom Jones" by François André Danican. Theatre performances and concerts are still taking place in the Comoedienhaus, mostly organized by Comoedienhaus Ltd., i.e. the City of Hanau culture department, and the Hanau theatre association. In summer, the Comoedienhaus and the surrounding historic spa gardens are a unique festival location.



Comoedienhaus Wilhelmsbad · Parkpromenade 1 · 63454 Wilhelmsbad  
Tel.: +49 (0)6181 2958129 · E-mail: comoedien@hanau.de · www.hanau.de

Visits: on appointment

## KOBLENZ

### Koblenz Theatre

Even archbishops commissioned theatres once. An example is the archbishop of Trier and Elector Clemens Wenzeslaus who chose a private investor to construct his "House for Plays, Operas, Balls, and Assemblies" in the city of Koblenz. Only seven months later, on 23 November 1787, the theatre was inaugurated with Mozart's opera "The Abduction from the Seraglio." A week after that, the first play was performed: "The Brigands" by Schiller. In 1867 the city became the owner of the theatre. The alterations that had accumulated in the 200 years of its existence were reversed in 1984/85 and the theatre completely restored, with the aim of recovering the original as closely as possible. Today the Koblenz Theatre houses three permanent companies for drama, opera, and ballet and offers performances almost every day.



Theater Koblenz · Clemensstraße 1 · 56068 Koblenz · Tel.: +49 (0)261 1292840 & 2841  
E-mail: teaterkasse@theater-koblenz.de · www.theater-koblenz.de

Visits: on appointment

## LUDWIGSBURG

### Palace Theatre

A highlight of the ducal residence at Ludwigsburg is the palace theatre. It was constructed from 1758 onward by Philippe de la Guépière for Duke Carl Eugen. In 1812, King Friedrich I of Württemberg had the auditorium remodelled in Classicist style by Friedrich von Thouret. The theatre was used until 1853, then deserted for 100 years. And so the auditorium, the stage and the complete stage machinery as well as painted front curtains and stage decorations from the 18th and early 19th century survived – the only ones in Germany and a rare collection in Europe. A permanent exhibition tells the story of the palace theatre. And music lovers meet for the Ludwigsburg palace festival from June to August (www.schlossfestspiele.de).



Schlosstheater · Schloss Ludwigsburg · Schlossstrasse 30 · 71634 Ludwigsburg  
Tel.: +49 (0)7141 182004 · E-mail: info@schloss-ludwigsburg.de · www.schloss-ludwigsburg.de

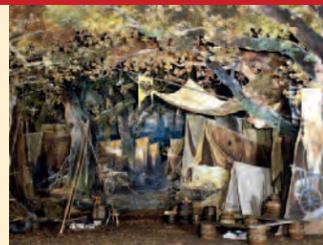
Visits as part of the palace tour: Mon–Sun 10:00 to 17:00 (summer), 10:00 to 16:00 (winter). Special guided tours on appointment.

Theatre museum open all year round Mon–Sun 10:00 to 17:00

## MEININGEN

### Meiningen Museums Theatre Museum

Starting in 1866, Duke Georg II of Saxe-Meiningen, the "theatre duke", created a new theatre style with his court theatre company, took it on tour, and caused a sensation all over Europe. "The Meiningers" became synonymous with up-to-date theatre. We can still get an impression of it by way of 275 original, hand-painted stage decorations, among them complete stage sets (above: "Wallenstein's camp"). They were painted in the workshop of the Brueckner brothers in Coburg who also worked for Richard Wagner. The collection is unrivalled in the world and is shown in presentations that change once every year. A film, a light & sound show, original costumes, theatre posters and photographs round off the exhibition. In nearby Elisabethenburg Palace more theatre history is on display, for example the theatre duke's apartment.



Theatre Museum in the riding hall · Schlossplatz 1 · 98617 Meiningen

Tel.: +49 (0)3693 471290 · www.meiningermuseen.de

Visits: Tue–Sun 10:00 to 18:00 · Light & Sound show at 10:00, 12:00, 14:00, 16:00

Closed mid-January to mid-February

Meininger Theater · Bernhardstrasse 5 · 98617 Meiningen · www.das-meininger-theater.de

Guided tours: on appointment, tel.: +49 (0)3693 451136

## NEUBRANDENBURG

### Playhouse

When at the end of World War II the historic city centre of Neubrandenburg fell victim to the flames, a gem remained miraculously intact: the Playhouse (Schauspielhaus). The half-timbered building made of clay bricks had been constructed in 1793/94 as a summer theatre for the court theatre troupe of Duke Adolf Friedrich IV of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. Today it is the oldest theatre in the region. Used for non-theatrical purposes from the late 19th century onward, the building was rediscovered as a theatre by way of a thorough sanitation between 1990 and 1994. The vaulted ceiling of the auditorium, the central box, the foyer and the outer walls were restored, the vanished stage replaced with a modern one. Since then, the theatre and orchestra holding "Theater und Orchester GmbH Neubrandenburg/Neustrelitz" has been presenting 150 performances here every year, covering all genres.



Schauspielhaus · Pfaffenstrasse 22 · 17033 Neubrandenburg · Tel.: +49 (0)395 5699832

E-mail: servicenb@landestheater-mecklenburg.de · www.theater-und-orchester.de

Visits: on appointment · box office: Tue–Fri 10:00 to 13:00 and 13:30 to 17:00

## POTSDAM

### Theatre in the New Palace

The New Palace in Sanssouci park was built 1763–1769 for the Prussian king Frederick II the Great. Besides apartments for guests and banqueting halls, the king had a theatre installed in the south wing. The facade does not indicate the existence of a theatre. Only the statues on the eaves with their masques and musical instruments could be a hint. The auditorium inside has the form of an amphitheatre and is decorated in Frederick's variant of the Rococo style. Gilded palm trees, rocailles and hermes define the room together with the red velvet on the benches. The theatre seats 226 spectators and offers operas, plays, and ballet performances all year round. From July 2013, it will be closed for a couple of years due to restoration works.



Schlosstheater im Neuen Palais · 14469 Potsdam · Tel.: +49 (0)331 9694271  
www.spsg.de

Visits: no visits until further notice due to restoration works

## PUTBUS

### Putbus Theatre

Visiting the theatre in Putbus is an integral part of every holiday on the island of Ruegen. It is situated in a town that Marquis Wilhelm Malte of Putbus (1784–1854) commissioned as his seat; which in turn became the second oldest spa on the coast of the Baltic Sea. In a capital and in a spa there had to be a theatre. And thus it was inaugurated in 1821. Redesigned in 1826, it was elaborately restored from 1992 to 1998. Since then this gem of North German Classicism has been glittering with its old beauty. In cooperation with the theatres in Stralsund and Greifswald ("Theatres Vorpommern") about 300 performances per year are presented here.



Theater Putbus · Markt 13 · 18581 Putbus · Tel.: +49 (0)38301 8080

Tickets: +49 (0)3831 264 66 · E-mail: service@theater-vorpommern.de

www.theater-vorpommern.de

Visits: Mo–Thu 11:15 and 14:00 (except rehearsal and performance days)

## SCHWERIN

### Mecklenburg State Theatre

In the square facing the fairy-tale style palace of the dukes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the arts have been given two palaces of their own: the theatre and the museum buildings. The theatre opened on 3 October 1886, successor to a number of earlier theatre buildings in the city, commissioned by Grand duke Friedrich Franz III and designed by Georg Daniel. The architect created a neo-Renaissance facade and a neo-Baroque auditorium with three tiers, seating 540 spectators, as well as noteworthy foyers. On top of the fascinating architecture, a figuratively painted main curtain, a stage organ and sound machines, all from the late 19th century, have been preserved. The resident repertory company produces plays, operas, operetta, ballet, puppet theatre and plays in the local dialect and performs almost every day.



Mecklenburgisches Staatstheater Schwerin · Alter Garten 2 · 19055 Schwerin

Tel.: +49 (0)385 53000 · E-mail: service@theater-schwerin.de

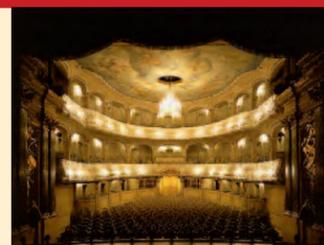
www.theater-schwerin.de

Visits: for dates of guided tours, please see website; groups on appointment

## SCHWETZINGEN

### Rococo Theatre

The Rococo Theatre (1752/53) by Nicolas de Pigage is the oldest still existing theatre in Europe featuring tiers without boxes. Just 20 years after its inauguration it was remodelled in the Classicist style on the order of the art loving Elector Carl Theodor of the Palatinate. Today the simultaneity of the two styles gives the theatre its special appeal. The Rococo Theatre at Schwetzingen Palace was a venue for the Mannheimer Hofkapelle, for (first) performances of works by Voltaire, Gluck and J. Chr. Bach. This tradition continues with the SWR Schwetzingen Festival (Schwetzingen Festspiele) in May and the Mozart Weeks in September, when recitals and opera productions can be enjoyed in the Rococo Theatre. Also worthwhile seeing is the famous palace garden with its delightful 18th century buildings.



Rokokotheater · Schloss Schwetzingen · 68723 Schwetzingen

Tel.: +49 (0)6202 128828 · E-mail: info@schloss-schwetzingen.de

www.schloss-schwetzingen.de

Visits: on appointment