

# Freiburg

**Freiburg** is known as the "Jewel of the Black Forest". It is a major city in the southwest of Germany, situated not in but on the edge of the Black Forest.

## Understand

Lying in the secluded wine-rich south western corner of Germany, Freiburg is a very laid back, beautiful university city. Known throughout Germany for its university, good weather (snow in Winter and seemingly endless sunny days in Summer), vineyards and soccer club, Freiburg is considered by Germans to be a desirable place to live.

Due to its secluded location in the "Dreiländereck" (Three country corner) and being fairly removed from any other larger German cities, the mentality in Freiburg has often more in common with Alsace in France and Switzerland than the rest of Germany. Locals often go shopping in France and Switzerland for their respective native products and go to museums and theaters in Basel or Zurich. Everything above Frankfurt is "North Germany" and very far away. Hence one can find a strong local patriotism, which shows itself in the anthem of Baden (the former independent state), often sung more than the national anthem!

Freiburg has also been described as California of Germany.

## Get in

### By plane

The closest airport with international destinations is the "EuroAirport" Basel/Mulhouse/Freiburg. Buses run frequently from the airport to Freiburg. Other good choices are Frankfurt Airport or Zurich Airport, both about a 2 hour train ride away with direct connections. Recently, the airport Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden has begun to be a destination for cheap Intra-European Airlines like Ryan Air. It is a 40 minute train ride to the north of the city. Another possible airport is Stuttgart, with less convenient train connections. <http://www.euroairport.com/EN/accueil.php>

### By train

The Freiburg Hauptbahnhof (main train station) is situated close to the inner city. Frequent connections run north-south, with fast trains leaving in each direction each hour. Main direct destinations include:

- Frankfurt Airport (Flughafen), 2 hours <http://www.frankfurt-airport.com>

- Zurich, 2 hours, (Switzerland)
- Basel, 40 minutes (express) 1 hr (local), (Switzerland)
- Mannheim (close to Heidelberg), 1.5 hours
- Berlin
- Cologne
- Hamburg
- Milan, (Italy)

## By car

Freiburg is connected to the German highway system via the A5, running along the Rhine Valley from south to north, starting at the Swiss border. It also is accessible through the Black Forest via the B31 (Ost). To France it takes about 30 minutes by car. To Switzerland it is about 40 minutes. Heidelberg is a 1.5 hour car ride to the north, using the A5. Lake Constance is reachable in two hours via the B31.

## Get around

The best way to get around Freiburg is by bike. Many of Freiburg's citizens use their bikes and this way one can really get a feel for the city. However, Freiburg also has an excellent (yet pricey) bus/tram system. For a weekend, the best bet is to buy a weekend ticket (either a 24 hour RegioKarte or a card that has 20 points on it). These cards will allow you to use all of the public transport within Freiburg, and also take the Regio DB trains that service the greater region free charge. Timetables and tickets can be found on the VAG Freiburg website: <http://www.vag-freiburg.de/73.0.html?&L=1>

Most of Freiburg's important sights are situated close to each other in the inner city. One can cross the inner city by walking in about 10-15 minutes or by riding the tram. Although passengers are rarely controlled, one is expected to pay one's fare to support the system. The same applies for regional trains, which are controlled about 25% of the time. A ride without a valid ticket incurs a 40 Euro fine. Those repeatedly caught without a valid ticket can face court orders, as it is considered a criminal offence.

Like most European cities, use of automobiles is limited in some parts of the inner city, and bike riders must walk their bikes.

## See

- The **Münster** (Main cathedral) is, next to the Black Forest, the main draw for Freiburg, one of the oldest and most beautiful in all of Europe. The gargoyles are not to be missed - be sure to study every corner of the Munster. Make the effort to climb the to the top of the tower for the fabulous views. Every day in the morning (until 1 pm Mon-Fri, 1:30 pm Saturday), except on Sundays, there is a market on the square surrounding the church. Go on Saturday mornings as it then will be the biggest and nicest. Lovely assortment of vendors. Try the sausages.

- **Bächle.** The city is crisscrossed by small canals in the streets of the inner city. These canals used to be the irrigation system of medieval Freiburg. But don't step into one (or do!) as legend has it that anyone stepping into a Bächle is deemed to stay in Freiburg and marry a Freiburger.
- **Schwabentor.** One of two remaining old city gates.
- **Martinstor.** The other old city gate. Interesting here is the location of the only McDonalds in the inner city of Freiburg. There are also a Burger King and a Subway in 15 meters range.
- **Altes Kaufhaus,** located on the square surrounding the Muenster.
- **Rathäuser** (city halls) The historic and current city halls are about a five minute walk from the Münster.
- **Seepark.** A man-made lake and a popular escape from the urban housing estate of Betzenhausen. Complete with beer garden and a restaurant, Seepark is popular with families and those planning a walk around the stunning green-belt area.

## Do

- Hike up the **Schlossberg** to get to the **tower** on top of it. Takes about 15 minutes from the old city and offers you an amazing view of the Black Forest, Freiburg, the Kaiserstuhl and the Voges mountain range in France.
- Take the Tram 2 then bus 21 to the **Schauinsland** cable car. At the top, great views as far as the Swiss Alps. Warning -- doesn't run in bad weather.

## Learn

The University of Freiburg is one of the most famous German universities. Founded in 1457, the university is considered to one of the best in Germany and Europe. It attracts 22000 students to Freiburg, giving it the flair of a student town. This is a prime destination to go study in Germany as an exchange student or for language classes. Additionally there are several smaller universities that contribute to the student image of the city. The biggest of these is the Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg, located in Littenweiler to the east of the city.

## Buy

- As in most other German cities, the inner city is the place to go shopping. There you will find everything from H&M to shops selling Armani.
- Several large department stores exist on **Kaiser-Joseph Strasse** and smaller independent shops and stalls in the many back-streets and alleyways. Outside of the city centre one can find several large supermarkets, such as Real, E-Center and Kaufland.
- Freiburg is known throughout Germany for its fascination with all that is esoteric, from alternative complimentary medicines to jewelry made from semi-precious stones. The famous '**Kartoffelmarkt**' (potato market), situated close to the

'Stadttheater' (city theatre) boasts a large collection of stalls selling alternative clothing, jewelry and accessories every weekday morning.

- Due to the large city centre-based university, many large bookstores can also be found in the heart of Freiburg, selling both new books and second-hand.
- The large **Farmer's market** in the 'Münsterplatz' (Minster square) at the foot of the 'Münster' (Minster cathedral) is where Freiburgers buy their locally produced flowers, fruit and vegetables as well as enjoy a traditional 'wurst' (German sausage) as a snack. Every weekday (until early afternoon) and Saturday morning, the Münsterplatz is a bustling market of commerce. One cannot experience Freiburg truly without a visit to the 'Münstermarkt'.
- **Grocery stores:** Migros, located at the bottom of the one of the shopping centers, has the best fresh selection of all grocery stores in Freiburg. Penny Markt, located near the University, and Aldi (if you don't mind buying most things in large quantities), in Schwarzwald city, are among the cheapest. Kaufland to the north of the city on Waldkircher Strasse has an impressive range. Treff discount supermarkets are also excellent for the budget conscious.
- **Shopping malls:** Schwarzwald City is located in the north part of the inner city.

## Eat

### Budget

- Three Italian restaurants situated just outside the inner city have acceptable Pizza for 2 euros up. They are called **Firenze**, **Milano** and **Laubfrosch**, with **Laubfrosch** being the most popular and situated close to the river Dreisam. Bella Italia just across the street has similar prices.
- For **fast food**, check out the area around the Martinstor (sometimes known as McDonald's-Tor because of the McDonald's sign defacing the historic landmark). In that area, you will also find many other fast food places, ranging from Chinese to Turkish, as well as some cafés.
- A very interesting and cheap place to eat is the **Markthalle** also close to the Martinstor. During the day, various small stores from all around the world offer cheap but good dishes. Check out the Indian place. It has good curries.
- The **Brennessel**, **Atlantik**, and **Walfisch** are places where you can eat a lot for a very cheap price.
- The **Afghan Ecke** is a very popular place with locals in Freiburg.

### Mid-range

- **Tacheles** (Grünwaldstrasse, Tel 0761 3196669) claims to have 300 varieties of schnitzels, which each come with a small salad and choice of side dishes.

## DAS KARTOFFELHAUS

(Basler Straße 10, 79100 Freiburg Tel: 0 76 17 20 01) is a charming, cosy restaurant whose specialty is the potato...imagine it in many wholesome yet creative forms; they are all good. There's a particularly wonderful ambience in winter when it's freezing outside. Prices are fair and service is excellent. Open daily 11:30 - midnight.

## Splurge

The **Greifenegg Schlössle** is one of the top culinary destinations in Freiburg. Situated next to the **Kastaniengarten**, it offers an excellent view over the city to accompany dinner. Other very good restaurants are: **Wolfshöhle**, **Villa Thai** (Thai food) and the restaurant in the **Colombi Hotel**.

## Drink

- The **Kastaniengarten** (beer garden) lies perched on the slope of the **Schlossberg**, overlooking both the city and the valley leading into the Black Forest. On nice summer days, this is the best location to relax over a cool beer, and enjoying the views of the Munster, the old city gates and the inner city. Additionally, in good weather conditions you can see as far as the **Vogesen**, named after the mountain range in France. To get there, head to the **Schwabentor**, one of the old city gates, then cross the bridge on its left and head up the mountain a bit.
- The **Grace** and the **Wiener** are stylish bars in the city center.
- The **Feierling** brewery in the heart of the **Altstadt** close to the **Augustiner Kloster** has excellent selfmade beer and is famous for it among the locals. In summer it also has an enjoyable beer garden outside. However, for the experience of the beer garden, go to the **Kastaniengarten**. For good beer, **Feierling** is the best option.
- **Drifters** is a nice location for House music. It is situated in the same building as the club **Cräsh**, a hang out for alternative people, which turned from a more punk into a metal place. <http://www.crash-freiburg.de>
- **Waldsee** is a nice location a bit out of the way. It features "Rootdown" once a month and "Montage", both nice clubs for electronic music. It is excellent during the summer months, as the location offers open space next to a lake. Wonderful menu for warm snacks too.
- **Jazzhaus** is one of Freiburg's most popular spots, featuring the best in live music, both international and local. There is something to suit everyone, from classical to reggae to cabaret. The regular theme nights are also a hit: "Funky Dance Night" and "Sister Zone" (women only) are favorites, not to mention the 60s, 80s and 90s nights. <http://www.jazzhaus.de>
- The **Strandbar** is a more alternative bar opened every Thursday night and in every afternoon and on special occasions. It's located in the "Grether"-Area, an alternative living-and working project close to the inner city.

- The **StuSie** is the Bar of the student village located at tram stop "Am Bischofskreuz". Cheap and good Beer, Cocktails... Shot-night every Wednesday and decent breakfast on Sundays. Many international students.
- The **KTS** is an instituted left-wing project in the south of the city. Many concerts, parties, meetings, political organizations... <http://www.kts-freiburg.org>
- In the summer check out the **Sternwaldwiese**, an area in the Wiehre, where many people make campfires and party all night. Bring your own beer. Another good place to meet local folk is the **Augustinerplatz** located next to the **Feierling**-brewery. Bring your own beer or buy it from the pubs around.
- The **Atlantik** is a bar everybody should have seen when visiting Freiburg. Food, beer, rock music and people that hang out in this place since 20 years. Located behind the Schwabentor, <http://www.cafe-atlantik.de>
- Another Rock-Bar with fewer students and more carpenters is the **Walfisch** in the Wiehre. <http://www.walfisch-freiburg.de>
- The **Mu-dom Bar** is a student-run bar in the neighborhood of Stühlinger. Located in the basement of a former hospital, the space once served as a morgue. Cheap prices and international folk. They have started checking IDs at the door, you must be a student with a valid student ID card (ISIC or Albert-Ludwigs Universitaet) to enter.
- The **Isle of Innisfree** is an Irish pub (one of three in Freiburg) in the heart of the **Altstadt** that claims to have been entertaining Freiburg since 1992, due partly to the fact that live music can be found there twice weekly, Scottish dancing takes place once a week as do regular bingo championships (Sunday) and quiz nights (Monday). Student night is Tuesday and live football are shown on the large screen during major events in the football calendar. The bar is run by a mixture of Irish, British and American staff so English language is not a problem. Not an easy bar to find as it is situated in the basement of a shopping center... <http://www.isle-of-innisfree.de>
- **O'Kelly's** is another Irish pub, actually it was the first Irish pub to open in Freiburg, circa 1990. Situated in the Milchstr, close to the University Library and city theatre. O'Kelly's is a homely type of public house boasting low ceilings and a warm atmosphere, traditionally Irish in decor and ran by an Irish Landlady. Live Irish music can be enjoyed every Friday evening and all major sporting events are shown on the big screens, from Irish TV and German TV. O'Kelly's also plays host to Freiburg's most challenging quiz, **Paul's Quiz**, where quiz members return week after week to take part... <http://www.paulsquiz.com/>  
<http://www.okellys.de>

## Sleep

### Budget

- If you're looking for camp grounds, try "Hirzberg". The owners are extremely friendly and helpful. They have an good knowledge of things to see in the city and local walks in the Black Forest. <http://www.freiburg-camping.de/wEnglisch/camping.php?navid=1>

- If you don't want to stay in the expensive **Jugendherberge**, there is a cheap and very good alternative, the **Black Forest Youth Hostel**. You can cook in their kitchen, however, they won't provide breakfast. Meanwhile, also be prepared to pay in cash... <http://www.blackforest-hostel.de/>

## Cope

### Religious services

Holy mass in catholic churches in the city center:

- **Münster Unserer Lieben Frau**, Münsterplatz (800 m from central station). Sun: 07:00, 08:30, 10:00, 11:45, 20:00; Mon-Sat: 07:00, 08:00, 18:30; Wed, Sat: also 09:00
- **St. Martin**, Rathausplatz (600 m from central station). Sat: 18:00; Sun: 07:30, 09:30, 11:15; Tue-Sat: 07:00; Mon, Tue, Fri, Sat: 09:00
- **Herz Jesu**, Stühlinger Kirchplatz (back-side of the Omnibusbahnhof). Sat: 19:00; Sun: 09:30 (croat.), 11:00; Tue: 09:45; Fri: 18:30
- Overview of all catholic Sunday services in Freiburg [http://www.katholische-kirche-freiburg.de/Seelsorge\\_-\\_Pfarreien/Sonntagsgottesdienste.html](http://www.katholische-kirche-freiburg.de/Seelsorge_-_Pfarreien/Sonntagsgottesdienste.html)

### Tourist Information

- Freiburg has its very own Tourist Information Office. They can provide maps and hotel booking information.

*Opening hours for the Tourist Information office are:*

- June - September (Monday-Friday 10a.m.- 8p.m., Saturday 10a.m.- 5.30p.m., Sunday and Holidays 10a.m.- noon)
- October - May (Monday-Friday 10a.m.- 6p.m., Saturday 10a.m.- 2.30p.m., Sunday and Holidays 10a.m.- noon)

## Stay safe

There is not much to worry about in Freiburg. It probably is one of the safest cities in all of Europe. However, always take the same precautions as you do traveling anywhere else. No need to provoke a pickpocket. However, one should avoid the banks of the Dreisam, especially alone at night.

## Get out

- Nice **daytrips** include:
  - **Staufen:** With its castle ruin and nice old city, Staufen is a pretty, small German town. Note that the devil took the real life Faust (known from Goethe's Faust) in one of the local hotels. So watch out for any weird guys with horns. Staufen lies about 30 minutes by car south of Freiburg.
  - **Vogtsbauernhof:** By car (B33 trunk road from Offenburg in the direction of Villingen-Schwenningen or vice versa) or by rail (the Black Forest route from Offenburg in the direction of Konstanz or vice versa to Hausach station, then 30 minutes on foot) a beautiful outdoor farm life museum, demonstrating 400 years of Black Forest domestic life.
  - **Kaiserstuhl** Hike in the Kaiserstuhl, it's lovely. Go and check a so called **Strausse**
  - **Colmar:** Situated across the border in France, Colmar is a beautiful small city. Many locals from Freiburg like to take visitors there for a quick taste of France, as it is only about 1 hour by car. In the summer, take the back roads for glorious views of sunflower fields.
  - *Alsatian villages:* gorgeous, unspoilt villages in the Alsatian wine region: Riquewihr, Ribeauville, Haut Königsberg.
  - **The Black Forest:** Go hiking or skiing or biking. Just go.
- There are **night trains** to Italy and Amsterdam. Main destinations include Florence, Rome, Milano. In Italy you can also get connections to the south of France fairly easily. Within 15 hours you can get from Freiburg to Nice, Monaco or Cannes.
- Cross the Black Forest and head to Lake Constance. Ride a bike around it.
- Head to **Basel, Berne** or **Lucerne** in Switzerland. From Berne, head on to Interlaken and Brienz. Instead of the train, take the **boat** across Lake Thun. Same ticket, twice the scenery. Thanks to the new fast train connection between Strasbourg and Paris a trip takes less then 3,5 hours from Freiburg.
- Go to **Heidelberg**.
- Go to **Bad Wimpfen** or **one of the many other "Bad's" in the region**.
- **Titisee**, a touristy black forest town.

For more info see: [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

- Based on work by Fabian Kern, Nick Roux, Zeno Gantner and Philipp Schäufele, Wikitravel user(s) Episteme, Morph and Exile, Anonymous user(s) of Wikitravel and others.
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