



Recommended Reading & More

We have compiled this selection of books especially for your trip. Please visit your local library, bookstore or favorite online bookseller to obtain any of these titles.

Recommended

Ben Coates. *The Rhine: Following Europe's Greatest River from Amsterdam to the Alps*. Nicholas Brealey, 2019. Once forming the Roman Empire's outer frontier, the Rhine flows 800 miles from the social democratic playground of the Netherlands, through the industrial and political powerhouses of Germany and France, to the wealthy mountain fortresses of Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Blending travelogue and offbeat history, Coates explores the impact that the Rhine has had on European culture and history and finds out how influences have flowed along and across the river, shaping the people who live alongside it.

Andrea Schulte-Peevers, Kat Barber, Marc Di Duca, et al. *Lonely Planet Germany*. Lonely Planet, 2024. Lonely Planet's classic guidebook format provides you with comprehensive planning information for travel in Germany, along with full-color travel photography and maps. Includes must-visit sites, expert local recommendations on eating, drinking, nightlife, shopping and much more in a well-organized layout.

History

Steven Ozment. *A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People*. Harper Perennial, 2005. The word "German" was being used by the Romans as early as the mid-first century B.C. to describe tribes in the eastern Rhine Valley. Nearly 2,000 years later, the richness and complexity of German history have faded beneath the long shadow of the country's darkest hour in World War II. Now, historian Steven Ozment gives us the fullest portrait possible in this sweeping, original and provocative history of the German people, from antiquity to the present.

Mary Fulbrook. *A Concise History of Germany*. Cambridge University Press, Third edition, 2018. This short and informative history of Germany explores the relationships between social, political and cultural factors.

John Julius Norwich. *A History of France*. Grove/Atlantic, 2019. With his celebrated style and command of detail, John Julius Norwich paints a portrait of France beginning with the conquest of Gaul through the end of World War II. This concise history is packed with enthralling stories of heroes and villains, battles and rebellions, making for an entertaining read.

Mark Cioc. *The Rhine: An Eco-Biography, 1815-2000*. University of Washington Press, 2008. A scholarly, well-researched environmental history of the Rhine, particularly its role in European economic and national history over the last 200 years.

Culture

Barry Tomalin. *Germany – Culture Smart! The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture*. Kuperard, Third edition, 2021. A concise, no nonsense guide to Germany's customs, etiquette and culture.

Anja Dunk. *Advent: Festive German Bakes to Celebrate the Coming of Christmas*. Quadrille Publishing, 2021. Anja Dunk shares her recipes for the very best of traditional German festive bakes: lightly spiced Lebkuchen, frosted cinnamon stars, jam-filled ginger hearts, snow-capped coconut macaroons, marzipan-filled Stollen, edible tree decorations, lucky meringue mushrooms and more, plus a gingerbread house dripping with candies and sugar icicles.

Gabriel Kreuther, Michael Ruhlman. *The Spirit of Alsace: A Cookbook*. Abrams Books, 2021. From award-winning chef Gabriel Kreuther and author Michael Ruhlman, this cookbook on rustic French cooking from Alsace showcases recipes inspired by Kreuther's French-Swiss-German training and embraces the spirit of both Alsace, his homeland, and New York City, his adopted home. Recipes include classic Alsatian food like the Flammekueche (or Tarte Flambée) and hearty Baeckeoffe (a type of casserole stew) to modern dishes like the flavorful Roasted Button Mushroom Soup served with Toasted Chorizo Raviolis.

Hossine Bennara, Susan Lundquist. *The Pâtissier: Recipes and Conversations from Alsace, France*. iUniverse, 2006. Take a delicious journey into French cuisine and friendship with authors Hossine Bennara and Susan Lundquist. This collection of stories and mouthwatering French meals explore the cuisine and time-honored recipes of the Alsace region, plus the good-humored conversations and close relationships that often develop over fine food.

Horst D. Dornbusch. *Prost! The Story of German Beer*. Brewers Publications, 1998. Enjoy an introduction to the glorious world of German beer. Nowhere has the history of beer been so intimately intertwined with the political, religious and cultural history of the land and its people than in Germany. Dornbusch, a well-known brewer and author who was born and raised in Düsseldorf, examines this unique history and authentic German beer traditions.

Kay Shaw Nelson. *All Along the Rhine: Recipes, Wine and Lore from Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein and Holland*. Hippocrene Books, 2003. This tribute to the Rhine Valley complements its history and culture with 130 recipes.

Art & Architecture

Robert A. Scott. *The Gothic Enterprise, A Guide to Understanding the Medieval Cathedral*. University of California Press, 2011. An enthusiast, Scott delves into the history, design, architecture and wonder of Europe's medieval cathedrals and great abbey churches.

Travel, Biography & Memoir

Derek Wilson. *Charlemagne: A Biography*. Doubleday, Reprint edition, 2006. An incisive biography of the legendary emperor who bridged ancient and modern Europe and singlehandedly altered the course of Western history. Charlemagne was an extraordinary figure: an ingenious military strategist, a wise but ruthless leader, a cunning politician and a devout believer who ensured the survival of Christianity in the

West. Wilson shows how this complicated, fascinating man married the military might of his army to the spiritual force of the Church in Rome, thereby forging Western Christendom.

Hildegard of Bingen (Author), Mark Atherton (Translator). *Hildegard of Bingen: Selected Writings*.

Penguin Classics, 2001. Hildegard, the “Sybil of the Rhine,” was a Benedictine nun and one of the most prolific and original women writers of the Middle Ages. Many Germans consider her to be the founder of scientific natural history in Germany. Arranged thematically, this edition brings together selections from her visionary trilogy, her treatise on medicine and the natural world, and her songs and correspondence.

Patrick Leigh Fermor. *A Time of Gifts*. NYRB, 2005. Patrick Leigh Fermor effortlessly interweaves anecdote, history and culture in this exuberant account of a walk from Holland, up the Rhine and down the Danube, through Germany, Prague and Austria in 1933. Written not in the moment, but 40 years later, the accumulation of time and experience gives the book particular poignancy.

Literature

Kiran Millwood Hargrave. *The Dance Tree*. HarperVia, 2023. In this gripping historical novel, Hargrave weaves a tale of fear, transformation, courage and love in 16th-century Strasbourg, France. During a blisteringly hot summer in 1518, a lone woman begins to dance in the city square. She dances for days without pause or rest, and when hundreds of other women join her, the men running the city declare a state of emergency and hire musicians to play the Devil out of the mob. Set in an era of superstition, hysteria and extraordinary change, and inspired by true events, “The Dance Tree” is an impassioned story of family secrets, forbidden love and women pushed to the edge.

Catriona Silvey. *Meet Me in Another Life*. William Morrow Paperbacks, 2022. In this poignant, genre-bending debut novel, a man and woman must discover why they continue to meet in different versions of their lives — an imaginative exploration of the infinite forms of love and how our choices can change everything. Two strangers, Thora and Santi, meet in a chance encounter in Cologne, Germany. At once, they recognize in each other a kindred spirit. Before their friendship can blossom, though, a tragic accident cuts their story short. They will meet again.

Ursula Hegi. *Stones from the River*. Simon & Schuster, 1997. Rich in details of daily life in Germany in the first half of the 20th century, this ambitious novel illuminates the impact of Nazism and complicity of townsfolk through the eyes of Trudi Montag, librarian, storyteller and testimony to difference (she’s a Zwerg or dwarf). The first volume in Hegi’s Burgdorf Cycle.

Lewis Spence. *Hero Tales and Legends of the Rhine*. Dover Publications, 2011. These classic tales, first published in 1915, introduce Odin, Brunhild, Lorelei, Siegfried and a host of mythic figures associated with the magic and mystery of the Rhine.

Music

Berliner Philharmoniker. *The Christmas Album*. Deutsche Grammophon, 2016. Delight in pieces by Mozart, Bach and others in this collection of classical holiday music.

Víkingur Ólafsson. *Johann Sebastian Bach*. Deutsche Grammophon, 2018. NPR Music rated Icelandic pianist Ólafsson’s classical album one of 2018’s best. The inspirational arrangements equate to a personal piano performance of varying baroque compositions by the noted German composer J.S. Bach.

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Holiday Markets Cruise ~ The Festive Rhine River

Various artists. *100 Must-Have German Classics*. Cobra Entertainment LLC, 2013. Iconic Baroque, classical and romantic instrumental music abounds in Cologne, other German centers and Eastern Europe. Listen to the classical compositions of German musical superstars Beethoven, Bach, Handel, Wagner and others in this vast collection.

Guidebooks, Language & Maps

Gunter Muehl, Birgit Jordan, Mario Kaiser. *Lonely Planet German Phrasebook & Dictionary*. Lonely Planet Publications, 2018. A handy palm-sized guide to pronunciation, basic grammar and essential vocabulary for the traveler.

Duncan J. Smith. *Only in Cologne: A Guide to Unique Locations, Hidden Corners and Unusual Objects*. Urban Explorer, Third edition, 2020. A comprehensive illustrated guide to more than 80 fascinating and unusual historical sites in Germany's most historic city.