

Explore the Old Town

A Walking Guide

Cham





Cham

Cham takes its name from the river Chamb. The Chamb has its source across the border in Bohemia (a historic region in present-day Czech Republic) and meanders through the valley running from Furth im Wald to Cham, an ancient trading and migration route. The name Chamb has its origin in the Celtic word kambos meaning crooked or serpentine. The Chamb joins the river Regen in Cham which then continues on to join the Danube in Regensburg.



1

Cordonhaus

When it was constructed, this building was used as a priory for the monastery of Reichenbach (about 30km from Cham), but during its long history it served various purposes. In the 18th century, it was a garrison for cavalry and takes its name from the French “cordon” used to describe a chain of military strongholds along a border to secure the territory. During the 1970s, the building was under severe danger of collapse, but it was renovated thoroughly and, since 1981, hosts the Tourist Information and municipal gallery. In the courtyard you can see part of the old town wall.



Luckner House

2

Until 1873, the birth house of Count Luckner, who was born in January 1722, stood at the top of Straubinger Straße. The original building, however, burned down and now only a plaque reminds the visitor of the historical celebrity native to Cham. Nikolaus Luckner was made Marshall of France by King Luis XVI in 1791. The French revolution marked the height of Luckner's career as well as his downfall. Accused of treason, he was put on the guillotine in January 1794. He was vindicated a year later when the French National Covent declared that he had been executed unjustly. "La Marseillaise", the French national anthem, was dedicated to Count Luckner by its composer Joseph Rouget de Lisle.

The town halls carillon can be heard every noon at 12:05 ringing out with "La Marseillaise".



3

Straubinger Turm

This fortified tower with its quarry stone wall dates from the 13th century and used to be part of the inner town wall. As early as the 13th century, Cham was notably protected by a wall and defensive fortifications. In 1366 for instance, the Bohemian king Ottokar was not able to take the town due to its high and sturdy walls and its strategic position in the river bend.

For decades, storks have been nesting on the roof of the Straubinger Turm.



St Mary's Apothecary

4

This pharmacy is situated in an imposing bourgeois manor with baroque mansards. The house was converted to its present use around 1750. The descriptive frescos were painted in 1934, depicting scenes related to healing and caring for the sick.



5

Café Krone

This former coffeehouse has an impressive façade and the roof structure is over 400 years old. It has retained a medieval look even though its days of glory have long past. In 1489, nobles of the “Löwlerbund” (lion’s alliance) assembled here when they rose up against the Bavarian Duke Albrecht IV. Frederick V, Elector Palatine - infamously known as the Winter King – also stopped off here on his way to Prague in 1615.



Marktplatzbrunnen

6

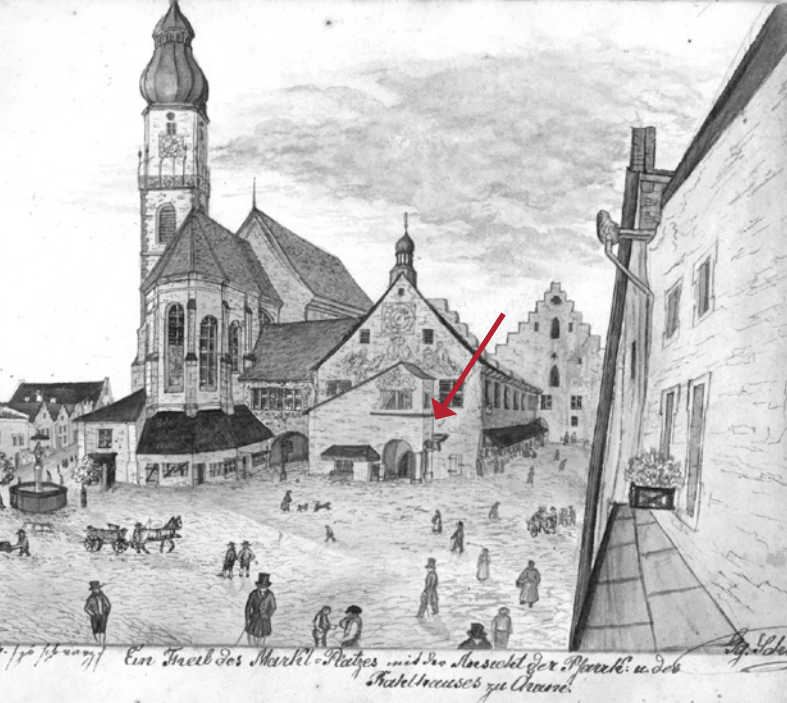
In 1995, artist Joseph Michael Neustifter created this intriguing fountain on the market square. If you look closely, you can discover surprising details. Count Luckner, for example, cheekily looks up to the carillon on top of the town hall and waits for it to play “La Marseillaise” every day at five past noon. The forest witch and her children are decorated with feathers, flowers and foliage, recalling images of mother nature. The third figure, the “Bilmeschneider” is one of the best known mythological creatures of Bavaria. Used as an allegory for failed harvests and hunger, he is portrayed as walking the fields with scythes on his heels, cutting down the grain. In this particular representation, though, he embodies peace and fertility, wearing a peace-sign as a necklace.



7

Parish Church of St James

The history of this church is documented since 1220, but only stone fragments and the gothic choir have survived from the 13th and 14th centuries. Big fires in 1558 and 1657 and the collapsing of the tower in 1701, made a complete reconstruction necessary in 1749. During the process rubble was also removed from damage inflicted by pillaging Pandurs in 1742. In 1847, almost the entire baroque interior was removed and replaced by Neo-Romanesque elements, but since 1894, efforts have been made to restore the former baroque decorations. Noteworthy are the richly decorated pulpit, the altar of St Aloysius on the north wall, and the Infant Jesus of Prague on a side altar.



Pillory

8

The local pillory was a stone platform attached to the Townhall's façade at about two meters height. Culprits would be chained to the wall with a garrotte for public punishment. Depending on the charge, the shamed lawbreakers would also be scourged.

Zeichnung: Georg Schmitt, 1847



9

Townhall Fountain

The bronze statue of a little dog was created in 1995 by Joseph Michael Neustifter to remind the visitor of a fountain that used to be in this spot. When the eastern part of the Townhall was renovated in 1994, a 13 meter deep well was discovered which had been in use until the 19th century. There are, however, different theories regarding the use of the well.



Townhall

10

There is documented evidence that the oldest part of the Townhall, its eastern wing and the connection to the neighbouring church's gothic choir, date back as far as the 14th century. The western wing dates from the 15th century and has a very noticeable gable and oriel. Above the main entrance a memorial stone is located, recalling the building of the outer town wall in 1430 as a protection from the Hussites. There is also a Jewish grave stone built into the wall, dating from 1230. When the Jewish population of Regensburg was banished, their belongings were demolished and the stone was brought to Cham from a Regensburg cemetery.



11

Church Square Fountain

There used to be a fountain on this square from early times on. Remnants of it were found when the square was redone in 1990, and the well was still filled with clear pure water. Nowadays the water is no longer needed for the town's water supply – the new fountain, build by the local artist Sebastian Roser in 1991, is purely decorative. It symbolises the topographical location of Cham on a hilltop, overlooking the river Regen valley. The granite slabs are made from local stone, recalling images of cultivated fields. The straight lines crossing though the fields represent road and railway connections.

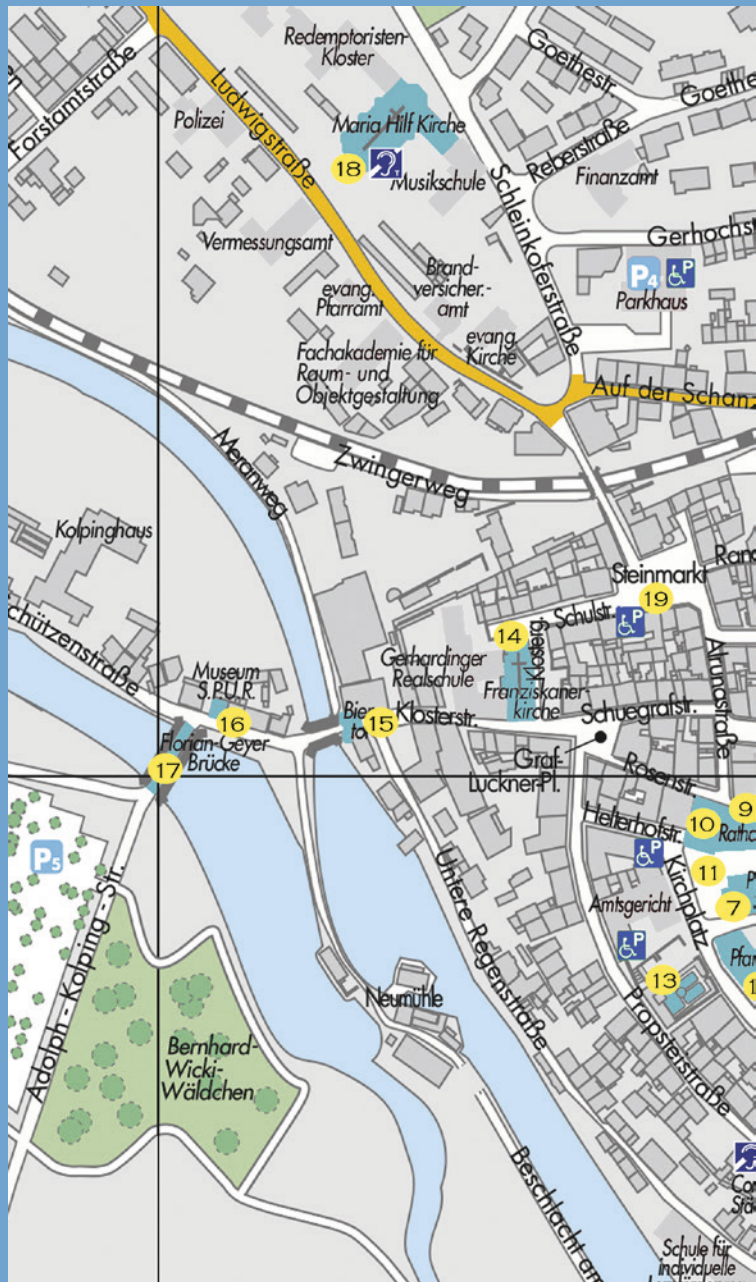


Parish House

12

The locale parish house dates from the 17th and 18th centuries. It was burned down by the Pandurs in 1742 and rebuilt again on the same spot.

Today this little garden is a romantic place in the middle of Cham. In former times, it was located just to the south of the town moat. Remains of the outer town wall are still visible today. This wall was built as an additional protection against the Hussites around 1430. At the Spitalchurch, even now the wall is about 10 meters high.



- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Cordonhaus | 8 Pillory |
| 2 Luckner House | 9 Townhall Fountain |
| 3 Straubinger Turm | 10 Townhall |
| 4 St Mary's Apothecary | 11 Church Square Fountain |
| 5 Café Krone | 12 Parish House |
| 6 Marktplatzbrunnen | 13 Parish Garden |
| 7 Parish Church of St James | 14 Franciscan church |



- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 15 Biertor | 22 Spitalchurch |
| 16 SPUR Museum | 23 Spital Building |
| 17 Florian-Geyer-Bridge | 24 Place of Humanity |
| 18 "Maria Hilf" Abbey | 25 The Blue Bridge |
| 19 Steinmarkt | |
| 20 Grassl Tower | |
| 21 Spitalgarten | |





13

Parish Garden

Across the street from the Parish House you step into the Parish Garden through an impressive arch. The arch originates from a distinguished building which burned down in 1742. The entrance is habitually referred to as the “Reichenberg Gate” after the family who used to live there. Wunibald Reichenberg was a well-known 18th century linguist. In 1986, the Parish Garden was renovated and reshaped in baroque style, since then offering a peaceful haven in the town centre.



Franciscan church

14

From 1631 to 1802, there was a Franciscan monastery on this site. After its closing, the church was used as a shed until 1866/67, when it was completely redone and used for church services again. The church tower was not built until 1879.

Franciscan orders are different, mainly roman-catholic communities who follow the rules set down by St Francis of Assisi.



15

Biertor

This is the only remaining gate of four former town gates. It probably dates from the 14th century and was originally called the Burgtor – the castle gate. When the adjacent town castle was no longer in use, it became home to a brewery in 1642, which remained there until the 1920s. People started calling it the Biertor – the beer gate – and this is name still used nowadays. Across the bridge there are terraces and benches to enjoy the river view.

The Meranweg is an idyllic walk along the river Regen, leading to the station and the “Maria Hilf” Abbey.



SPUR Museum

16

The building at Schützenstraße 7 is the former poorhouse. Its late gothic structure is amongst the oldest, still existing, secular buildings in town and, since 1991, is home to the SPUR Museum. SPUR is the name of a group of artists, mainly graduates from Munich Art Academy who had their first joint exhibition in 1957. The group existed until 1965, and its members have included

- Heimrad Prem - Roding 1934, †1978 Munich,
- Helmut Sturm - Furth im Wald 1932, †2008 Pullach,
- Lothar Fischer - Gernersheim 1933, †2004 Baierbrunn,
- H.P. Zimmer - Berlin 1936, †1992 Soltau

Opening times: Easter to Epiphany (6th January)

Wed, Sat, Sun and on public holidays 2-5pm



17

Florian-Geyer-Bridge

The bridge that used to be in this spot until 1991 has some claim to fame as it starred in the 1959 German antiwar movie "The Bridge" by director Bernhard Wicki. Due to higher traffic density and structural problems, the bridge used in the movie had to be replaced by the one you see today.



“Maria Hilf” Abbey

18

The Redemptorist order built their monastery between 1900 and 1909, situated on a terraced elevation above Ludwigsstreet. This also included the abbey church and a retreat centre. Up to 271 people worked on the building site. The monastery was consecrated by bishop Antonius of Henle on 2 September 1909. The whole complex is built in a neo-romantic style and the decoration of the church interior has been influenced by the Nazarene movement. Since 1993, the communal music school occupies parts of the building.

The name “Redemptorist” originates from Latin and means redeemer.



19

Steinmarkt

The Stone-Market was one of the former town markets, trading mainly milling and grinding stones. Interesting historic buildings remaining include an impressive 16th century civic house with a gothic oriel as well as a salt and grain storage tower which belonged to the electoral prince.



Spitalgarten

20

Today this little garden is a romantic place in the middle of Cham. In former times, it was located just to the south of the town moat. Remains of the outer town wall are still visible today. This wall was built as an additional protection against the Hussites around 1430. At the Spitalchurch, even now the wall is about 10 meters high.



21

Grassl Tower

This preserved fortified tower dates from the 15th century. In order to defend the town, semi-circular towers were dotted along the wall – allegedly 24 in total. The towers of the outer town wall were open at the back so aggressors were not protected and not able to defend themselves should they have captured the outer wall. The name originates from the owners of the tower.



Spitalchurch

22

The appearance of the Spitalchurch has been altered multiple times through fires and wars. Inside, for instance, an inscription at the choir reminds of the rebuilding of the church in 1514. It was destroyed for the last time by the Pandurs in 1742. Well worth seeing are, for example, the gothic south portal with its 14 spheres, the delicate 18th century pulpit and the high altar.



23 Spital Building

The Spital was the old infirmary. It burned down in 1873, and the house that now stands in its place was built around 1877/78. At the western gable end a stone carving depicting the crucifixion has been set into the wall. Today, town library and town archive are accommodated here. Opposite the entrance is a plaque commemorating the Spital Gate – the former eastern entrance to Cham.



Place of Humanity

24

Since the middle ages, the corner formed by the infirmary and Spital church was a place of compassion and mercy to the poor, the old and the sick.

In summer 2010 this special courtyard was created as a “place of humanity”.

Humanity, which is ingrained in everybody as a natural striving, has to be kept alert and alive.

Here children, youths and adults can find inspiration to think about virtues, human rights and duties.



25

The Blue Bridge

This cycling and walking bridge was opened in 2000 to provide a better connection from the centre to the local recreation area “Quadfeldmühle”. The bridge has become very popular with lovers – hundreds of lockets have been joined to the metal railings in the past few years.

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Coat of Arms

Towers and wall represent the town fortifications – the privilege of a town – and the stylised comb (German Kamm) forms the connection to the name Cham. The oldest known representations of the coat of arms from the 13th and 14th centuries already portray it in this fashion. In 1809, the coat of arms was amended and since then includes the Bavarian white and blue lozengy as well as crossed swords to honour the merits of the Chamer Landwehr (a territorial army).



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