

The Route Charlemagne

Each station on the Route Charlemagne deals with a theme that is as relevant to our times as it was to Charlemagne's. And each station is an outstanding work of architecture. The central starting point of the route will be the CENTRE CHARLEMAGNE. There, the story of Charlemagne and of Aachen begins, and from there you follow your own individual path along the route. The TOWN HALL for instance is the station of Power. The CATHEDRAL represents Religion. The GRASHAUS is the station of Europe. THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER MUSEUM is the station of Media. The SUPER C is the station of Science.

Imprint

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**ROUTE
CHARLEMAGNE
AACHEN**

The stage

The Route Charlemagne is the stage of the international „across the borders“ festival. Even before all the stations are opened, artistic events of international standards will be taking place along the route. These performances offer contrastive comments to the themes of the Route Charlemagne; they set new, unexpected and critical accents. The „across the borders“ festival transcends not only cultural borders but also the borders between artistic disciplines. It intentionally integrates the locations, the streets and the life of Aachen's old town centre into its performances.



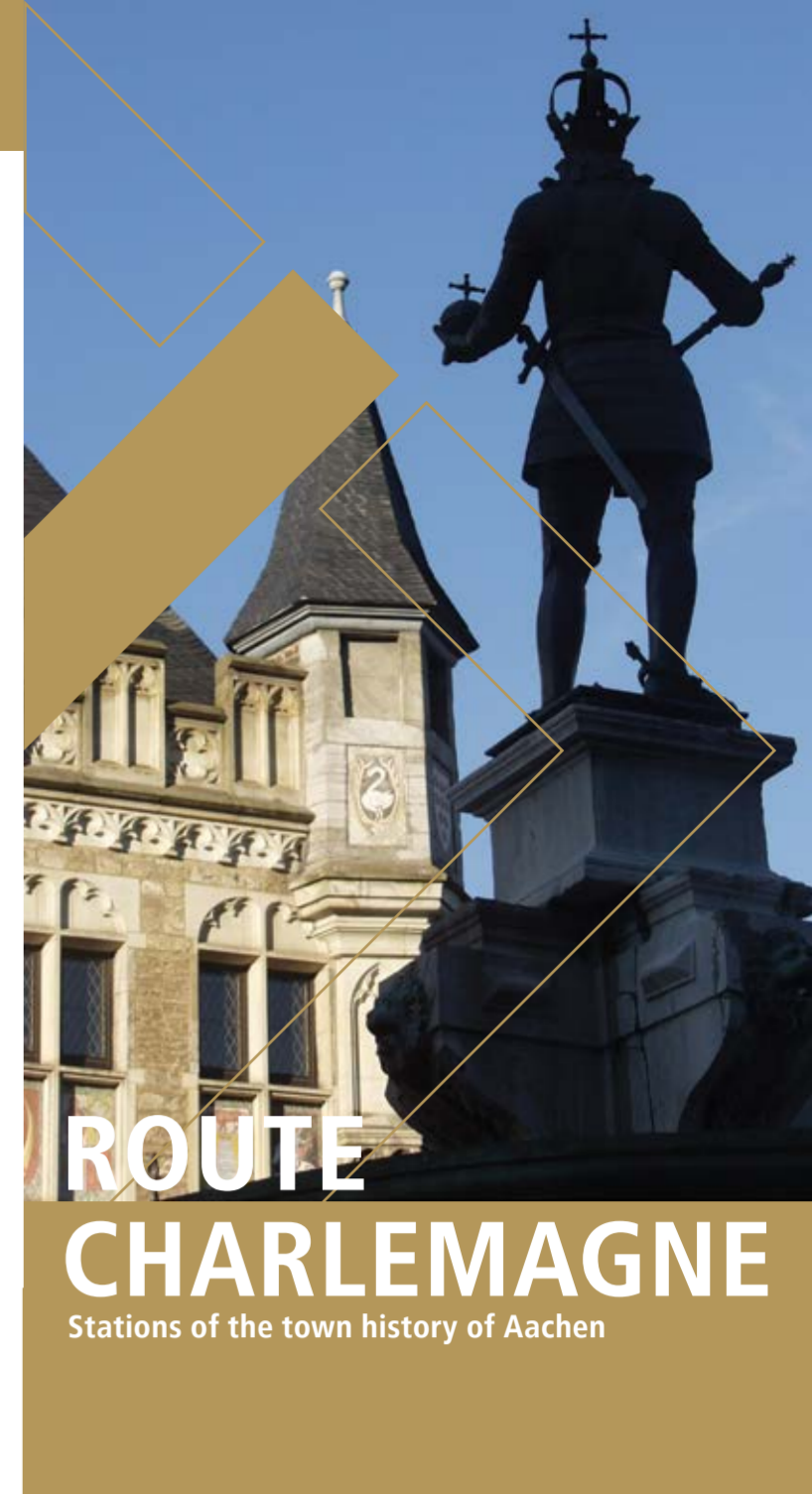
Information

Centre Charlemagne
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www.route-charlemagne.eu

Open to visitors
Tue - Sun 10.00 am - 18.00 pm, closed on Mondays



The central starting point of the Route Charlemagne is the Centre Charlemagne, the new city museum located on the Katschhof between the Town Hall and the Cathedral. Here, visitors can get detailed information about all the stations and sights on the Route Charlemagne.



Price 1,-Euro

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ROUTECHARLEMAGNEAACHEN

Centre Charlemagne

A

Town Hall

B

Cathedral

C

International Newspaper Museum

D

From the Stone Age to the present day: the "Centre Charlemagne – New City Museum of Aachen" is located on the Katschhof, the former Palace Courtyard between the Cathedral and the Town Hall.

Here, visitors can find out about Aachen's most prominent historical personalities, events and narratives. They will learn something about the "settlement at the hot springs", and especially about Roman Aachen. The sections "Charlemagne's Palace and St Mary's Church" and "City of Coronations" offer glimpses back to medieval times. "Baroque Spa Resort" and "Dawn of the Modern Age" show Aachen as a fashionable spa resort where noble guests and celebrities came in search of amusement, and as an emerging industrial town. "From Frontline Town to European City" traces Aachen's history during and after the great wars of the 20th century through to its role as a place of European reconciliation and progress, where each year the Charlemagne Prize is awarded to outstanding Europeans. And ever-present: Charlemagne, the central figure in whom the history of Aachen and the history of Europe converge.

The Centre Charlemagne also boasts temporary exhibitions, a museum education section and a café. By the way, the building continues to be used by the City Administration, and also houses Aachen's Citizens' Service Centre.

The central starting point of the Route Charlemagne is the Centre Charlemagne, the new city museum.



hks Architekten + Gesamtplaner

Around 1350, on the foundation walls of the deteriorating King's Hall of the old palace, a new city palace was built to fulfil a dual function: as the town hall of the city-state Aachen, and to accommodate a celebration hall for the coronation banquets of the German kings. The Town Hall and its Coronation Hall rank among the most prominent secular monuments of Gothic architecture.

Today, the Town Hall is one of the stations on the Route Charlemagne. It stands for the development of civic self-government and European democracy. Here you will learn about Aachen's experiences of war and peace, and the development of European integration is vividly charted by the International Charlemagne Prize, which has been awarded annually in the Town Hall since 1950. You will experience the visual impact of the Coronation Hall with its replicas of the imperial regalia of the German kings and the impressive Charlemagne Frescoes by the painter Alfred Rethel. But the most important exhibit remains invisible: with the help of the AIXPLORER, your electronic guide, you will also experience what it might have been like to be at a coronation banquet in this very hall back in the 16th century.

The Town Hall continues to be the seat of the Lord Mayor, and the place where Aachen's city council convenes.

To this day, the Town Hall regularly welcomes heads of state – to the award ceremony of the International Charlemagne Prize.



Coronation Hall

The Aachen Cathedral with its Carolingian core structure is the most important testimony to Aachen's ecclesiastical history. In 1978, it became the first German monument to be declared by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage site. The marble throne, Charlemagne's shrine and other decorative furnishings reflect the process of Charlemagne's sacralisation and stylisation into the ideal image of a medieval ruler. The extension of the Cathedral to include a Gothic chancel in 1414, on the 600th anniversary of Charlemagne's death, and the establishment of pilgrimages are closely related to the history of the city.

The sacralisation and mythification of Charlemagne can also be traced in the exhibits in the Cathedral Treasury. These include the antique Persephone Sarcophagus, in which Charlemagne's body was buried for a time, as well as the Cross of Lothair and the Bust of Charlemagne. The two latter pieces played a role in coronation ceremonies. They rank among the most significant examples of sacral art in Europe.

As part of the Route Charlemagne, the Cathedral, the Cathedral Treasury and the Cathedral Information document represent the theme of RELIGION.

Aachen Cathedral goes all the way back to Charlemagne's original St Mary's Church.



Cathedral

In the Große Haus, a town house in the heart of Aachen dating from 1495, the Aachen Newspaper Museum was established in 1931. Its principal feature is a collection, unparalleled anywhere else in the world, that goes back to the very inception of the newspaper. In the context of the Route Charlemagne, the building has been transformed into a new museum of media.

The museum maintains and presents the historical collection. But its main focus is on the emergence and the future of our modern media society. It shows how news arises and spreads, how media turned into mass media, how the media were adapted and manipulated, and what freedom of the media really means. It deals with the globalisation of the media. And with questions about their future. What media technologies are visible on the horizon? Will they change our culture and our society?

But the museum also makes the connection to the times of Charlemagne, who, in the course of his reforms, introduced a standardised script across Europe, a script that laid the foundation for today's lower-case letters.

The International Newspaper Museum offers a hands-on exploration of the history of media.



International Newspaper Museum

Grashaus

E

Super C

F

Couven-Museum

G

Elisenbrunnen

H

Aachen's oldest Town Hall, the Grashaus, will become the station EUROPE on the Route Charlemagne. Its construction in 1267 symbolised Aachen's new identity as a free imperial city. After today's Town Hall was built just a century later, it served, among other things, as a court and a dungeon until, in the 19th century, the dilapidated building was renovated and turned into the city archive.

In the future, the Grashaus will be a place of European democracy. In a "European Classroom", children and young adults will learn how to participate in the political decision-making process. Institutions like the Charlemagne Youth Prize and the information centre "Europe Direct" will focus on questions about the future of European politics in a globalised world. The varied history of the building itself is a reference to some of these issues: self-determination, human rights and cultural identity.

The Grashaus will be open to all visitors. A small exhibition will relate the building's significance for Aachen's civic history to the fundamental questions of European development.

The Grashaus is scheduled to open in 2015.



Grashaus

Charlemagne's palace with its palatine school was also a place of science. The Route Charlemagne connects Aachen's old town centre with the neighbouring inner city campus of the RWTH Aachen University. Today, this university is one of Europe's most renowned research institutions.

The Super C, the Service Centre of the RWTH Aachen University, is also the "Science" station on the Route Charlemagne. Temporary exhibitions there will give an impression of the scientific findings and technological developments that will shape the 21st century. A multi-media wall will allow you to eavesdrop directly on research activities.

The Super C of the RWTH Aachen University represents the topic Science.



Super C

The Couven-Museum represents the topic of ECONOMY and upper middle-class interior decor and lifestyle in the 18th and 19th centuries. The apothecary Adam Coebergh had the house built at the Hühnermarkt in 1662 and set up the Adler Pharmacy in it. Andreas Monheim acquired the house in 1783 and, three years later, commissioned its renovation by the architect Jakob Couven, son of the famous architect and town planner Johann Joseph Couven. On the site of the medieval town weigh house, Jakob Couven created this typical example of an Aachen town house in Rococo style.

The rooms of the museum show the development of a variety of interior decor and furnishing styles ranging from late Baroque and Rococo, through Louis-Seize and Empire, to Biedermeier. They also feature a pharmacy, a kitchen and an exhibition of decorative and pictorial tiles.

In the Couven-Museum, visitors can experience how the upper middle classes of the 18th and 19th centuries lived.



Couven-Museum

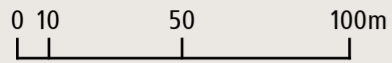
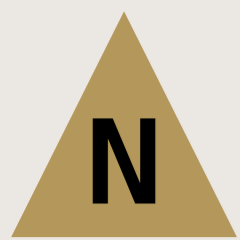
The Route Charlemagne includes the Elisenbrunnen. Together with the Elisengarten, it symbolises the starting point of Aachen's history: the thermal springs. People have been settling near them since the Neolithic Age. The Romans built a grand thermal bath complex here, along with urban villas. And it was no coincidence that Charlemagne's palace was also built right next to the hot springs. Archaeological excavations under the Elisengarten have yielded important insights into the history of Aachen.

The Elisengarten, originally established in 1851, was completely renovated in the framework of the Route Charlemagne project. Between 2007 and 2010, large-scale archaeological excavations were carried out, and their findings were published on the Internet. A section of the Roman and medieval foundations discovered can be seen in the Archaeological Showcase.

The Elisenbrunnen was built between 1822-1827.



Elisenbrunnen



- A** Centre Charlemagne
- B** Town Hall
- C** Cathedral, Cathedral Treasury and information point
- D** International Newspaper Museum

- E** Grashaus
- F** SuperC
- G** Couven-Museum
- H** Eisenbrunnen



Aachen is a Historical City

Aachen's history reflects the history of Europe. Founded around thermal springs, the city grew, following a Roman and then a medieval pattern. At its centre stood Charlemagne's palace and his St. Mary's Church. This complex became part of a network of palaces, abbeys and courts that extended across the whole of the Carolingian empire. After his death, Charlemagne became a legend, and this legend has remained an integral part of the city's history to this very day. Charlemagne's tomb, his throne and his palace are now memorial sites of European heritage. But they are also a part of a city that has a firm eye on the future and seeks the answers to the great questions of the 21st century.

Aachen is a City of Science

The interconnection of science with art and culture was a fundamental principle of Carolingian rule. Charlemagne had the scattered works of ancient authors gathered together again. He documented the traditions of the enemies he conquered and called scholars from all over Europe to the palatine school he founded here in Aachen: astronomers and theologians, mathematicians and architects alike. Without the copies that were produced at this school, we would no longer be in possession of a major part of ancient literature. Today, Aachen hosts four well-established universities, and science is a decisive location factor for the city. Nowhere in Europe today are there so many colleges and research centres as here in the region surrounding the cities of Maastricht, Liège and Aachen.

Aachen is a European City

In Charlemagne's times, Aachen was the centre of an empire that stretched from the North Sea to Central Italy and from the Pyrenees to the River Elbe. The integration of the peoples living in the Carolingian empire and centralisation of governance were two of Charlemagne's major political achievements. The subsequent division of his empire, in a long historical process, gave rise to the nations France and Germany. After the end of the Second World War, of National Socialism and its crimes against humanity, the European democracies began the process of forging a united and peaceful Europe. The border town of Aachen became a European city. With its Charlemagne Prize, it invoked the heritage of Charlemagne and created a symbol of modern European politics.

Charlemagne lived from 748 to 814

With a sweeping and still highly controversial policy of expansionism, Charlemagne built a huge empire. He initiated political, economic and cultural reforms manifested in the introduction of a common Christian faith, a standardised script and a common currency. Charlemagne's imperial coronation by Pope Leo III in Rome in 800 marked the legitimisation of this medieval empire. One of the grandest attestations to the cultural glory of his times is the St. Mary's Church that Charlemagne built in Aachen, today's Cathedral. Here, after his death, Charlemagne was entombed, and for this reason the German kings were crowned here from 936 to 1531. Charlemagne was glorified as the epitome of an ideal ruler.

