

Press Information

Nature in Stuttgart

Parks and scenic lookouts define the cityscape

Stuttgart is one of Germany's greenest metropolises – surrounded by gently rolling hills, woodlands, and vineyards that stretch into the heart of town. Around 25% of Baden-Württemberg's state capital is wooded. Thanks to its unique topography – the city centre lies in a valley basin – Stuttgart has more than its share of scenic lookouts offering magnificent panoramic views.

Gardens and Parks

The goal of linking all the various parks and gardens to form a green belt was pursued from the 1920s onwards and completed for the International Horticultural Exhibition (IGA) of 1993. Bridges and footbridges link the Palace Gardens, the park of the Villa Berg, Rosenstein Park and the Wilhelma, the Leibfriedscher Garden, the Wartberg and Killesberg Hill Park to form an extensive, contiguous series of green areas. Each of the elements has retained its original character, reflecting the typical features of different epochs and individuals. Not only does this account for the **Green U's** charm from the point of view of its landscapes and design; it also represents a stroll through the horticultural traditions and history of the state capital.

King Friedrich I had the Palace Gardens laid out in the year 1807, and they have continued to be a highlight of Stuttgart's city centre right up to the present day. This picturesque green park stretches from the New Palace in the heart of town to the River Neckar at Bad Cannstatt, continuing on through Rosenstein Park. The upper and central **Palace Gardens**, which were redesigned in 1951, are only a stone's throw away from the main railway station and Königstrasse and are an inviting setting for a relaxing stroll, with their ancient trees, large expanses of lawn, lakes and decorative fountains, as well as outdoor chess and a bocchia pitch. The upper Palace Gardens contain the New Palace, the Opera and Playhouse, the Rose Garden and the Eckensee Lake. In the central Palace Gardens there's the Café am See, the beer garden, the Landespavillon, the Planetarium, the ruins of the Lusthaus (Pleasure Palace) and the Schlossgarten Lake. The adjoining lower Palace Gardens end at the R. Neckar, from where the "U" continues in Rosenstein Park.

Rosenstein Park in the district of Bad Cannstatt is said to be South Germany's largest English-style landscape park. It was laid out between 1824 and 1840 by order of King Wilhelm to plans by Johann Bosch, the court gardener. Some years later Rosenstein Palace was built in Rosenstein Park. Today the park is owned by the state of Baden-Württemberg and is a listed historical site. To the north of Rosenstein Park lies the **Wilhelma**, the city's zoological and botanical gardens. It has existed in its present form since the year 1953. In the historical palace grounds dating from 1846,

about 11,000 animals from 1,200 different species and around 8,500 species of plants are on show on an area some 30 hectares in size.

Killesberg Hill Park (Höhenpark Killesberg) was created in the north of Stuttgart by town planners for the occasion of the Horticultural Exhibition of the German Reich in 1939. Those not wishing to explore the park on foot can take a leisurely ride through its grounds on the Killesberg miniature railway and admire the animal enclosure, works of art and flower displays. In the middle of Killesberg Hill Park is the 42-metre-high **Killesberg Tower** – a unique construction consisting of steel latticework with four platforms at different heights. From the top, there's a wonderful view over Stuttgart and the surrounding region.

Immediately behind Cannstatt's mineral spa, a flight of steps leads up to the **Kurpark Bad Cannstatt**, the Spa Park, which is located above the Kursaal (Spa Hall). Extensive lawns for sunbathing, small spaces and winding paths are perfect for relaxation, picnics, walks and recreation. Also in the Spa Park is the Gottlieb Daimler Memorial. Close by, the Daimler Tower and the ruins of the Daimler Villa are still to be seen.

In accordance with the Chinese tradition, the **Chinese Garden**, also known by the delightful name of "Garden of Beautiful Melodies" reflects the world in miniature. With its soothing yin and yang atmosphere the garden affords a wonderful view over Stuttgart's valley basin.

Weissenburg Park begins directly on the Weinsteige at the foot of the Bopser hill. Formerly in private ownership, it was acquired by the city of Stuttgart in 1956 and redesigned as a public park. From the benches on the panorama plateau there's a marvellous view over Stuttgart's city centre, and there are also lots of smaller seating areas that are ideal for picnics. On a knoll in the park the Teahouse and the "Marble Hall" now welcome visitors as a restaurant and event location.

Scenic Lookouts

Still unknown to many locals: **Santiago de Chile Square** in Stuttgart-Haigst. The terraced site affords views over Palace Square, Charlotte Square and much more besides. An orientation board provides information on the various sights that can be seen.

The steep steps known as the Eugensstaffel lead up to beautiful **Eugensplatz** with the Galatea Fountain. From this square you literally have the whole city at your feet. In the summer months, locals and visitors alike enjoy the view even more with a delicious ice from the nearby "Pinguin" ice cream parlour.

If you're looking for a far-reaching 360° view and want to survey the Stuttgart valley basin with its vineyards from on high, you won't want to miss the hill known as **Karlshöhe** and its **beer garden**. The beer garden is located in a park with vines, a children's playground and English gardens.

Birkenkopf, the hill affectionately nicknamed "**Monte Scherbelino**" ("Mount Rubble"), lies in the west of Stuttgart and is the highest point in the inner-city area with a height of 511 metres. In the aftermath of World War II, 15 million cubic metres of debris were deposited on its summit, some of it still recognisable today. From here there's a fantastic view over Stuttgart.

Not far from Killesberg Hill Park, rising out of the houses that surround it, there's the 20-metre-high **Bismarck Tower**. Those who climb its 92 steps are rewarded by fantastic panoramic views.

Without doubt one of the most beautiful views over Stuttgart's vineyards and the Neckar Valley is from the **Royal Burial Chapel** on the Württemberg. The mausoleum was erected by King Wilhelm I as a token of his love for his consort, Queen Katharina, following her premature death. If you like, you can combine the view from the Burial Chapel with a walk through the vineyards.

By the way: Some of the best viewpoints are reached via "**Stäffele**". These flights of steps are a relic from the second half of the 19th century, when countless stairways and paths were constructed so that wine growers could cultivate their steep vineyard terraces in the city centre. More than 400 of these "**Stäffele**" are still in existence today. If you want to climb them all, you'll have to brave some 20 kilometres of steps!

Information about the Stuttgart Region at: Stuttgart-Marketing GmbH, "i-Punkt" Tourist Information, Marktstraße 2 (in the House of Tourism on Stuttgart's market square), info@stuttgart-tourist.de, www.stuttgart-tourist.com

Hotel rooms: hotels@stuttgart-tourist.de

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