



Stadt Ulm

ulm

Fishermen's and Tanners' Quarter



Although you usually hear people refer to the Fischerviertel, the proper name of the district is the "Fischer- und Gerberviertel". The position next to flowing water was also ideal for the tanners ("Gerber"). Their houses bear impressive witness to leather production. The animal skins were processed and left to drip dry on the galleries (balconies) that rise on wooden pillars from the shallow water. The water power also kept a total of seven mill wheels running.

Of course, life in former times had little to do with old town romanticism. A terrible stench from the rotting animal skins permeated the streets. That's no longer a worry today. Instead, you can enjoy the atmosphere in a café or restaurant. They've understood good food and drink in the Fischerviertel for centuries.

Visitor information

The Fischerviertel is about 10 minutes by foot from the main station and is also only a few minutes' walk from Ulm Minster. The nearest stop is "Steinerne Brücke", which is served by bus line 5 amongst others. The nearest parking is the "Parkhaus Fischerviertel".

Advice for people with walking difficulties and for wheelchair users: the area is laid with historically accurate rough cobblestones.



There's no better place to forget the present than on a walk through Ulm's fishermen's and tanners' quarter. Its enchanted world of half-timbered houses lapped by water begins just a few steps to the south of the modern city centre. Glittering river Blau, dripping mill wheels, twittering sparrows. The streets run up to the gates in the city wall, where they are greeted by the magnificent view of the Danube. All this makes the erstwhile artisans' district the city's most popular tourist attraction after the Minster.

Two branches of the river Blau run through the quarter and then flow into the Danube. Many of the beautiful buildings from the 15th and 17th century actually have part of their foundations in the water. Because the soft ground has given way, the buildings have subsided over time. This tilting is what gives the Fischerviertel its typical charm.

Fishermen settled on the land during the Middle Ages. They headed out onto the Danube in small boats and returned with fresh fish. Shipbuilding later developed into an important economic sector, producing shallow wooden boats with box-shaped structures. These later became known as "Ulmer Schachteln" (boxes) due to their design. They transported people and goods to countries further down the Danube.



Published by:
City of Ulm, Public Relations
02/2019
Text: Marlene Müller
Pictures: City archives Ulm



1 Schiefes Haus and Häuslesbrücke, 2 View from the Häuslesbrücke

3 View from "Auf der Insel", 4 Lochmühle

5 Schweinmarkt, 7 Schönes Haus

8 Zunftthaus, 9 Ulmer Münz

1 Schiefes Haus

Schwörhausgasse 6, built 1406, expanded to the river 1443

The Schiefes Haus ("Crooked House") is listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the "most crooked hotel" in the world. The building has sunk on the side along the river because the ground is very soft there: it tilts by around 10 degrees. The building has been renovated to ensure it is stable despite its inclined position.

2 Häuslesbrücke

Built 1316

It is probably Ulm's oldest bridge. The two arms of the river Blau, the "Große Blau" and the "Kleine Blau", flow beneath it. It takes its name from the adjoining inn, the "Forelle" ("Trout"), which was simply called "Häusle" ("Cottage") centuries ago.

3 Auf der Insel

The little street called "Auf der Insel" ("On the Island") is flanked on both sides by the river Blau. You can see the back of Fischer-gasse from here. The picturesque tanners' houses from the 15th and 17th century make for a beautiful row of houses.

4 Lochmühle

Gerbergasse 6, first mentioned 1356

The southern side of the building dates from the beginning of the 17th century. The mill wheel was used to mill tanning substances for leather production, and a large wheel is still present today. The building is home to an inn now though.

5 Schweinmarkt

Farmers sold their pigs here until the 1970s. A bronze sculpture, showing a farmer trading three pigs to a butcher, commemorates this tradition. From "Saumarkt", ("Sow Market") as the square is also known, it is just a short walk to the Wilhelmshöhe, which provides a lovely view of the Fischerviertel.

6 Vaterunsergasse

Officially named 1869

A popular explanation for this street's name ("Our Father Street") is that corpses were transported through the street during a time of plague, before being thrown into the Danube. Pure invention, say historians. The name probably arose because the time it takes to walk along the street is no longer than it takes to say the Lord's Prayer.

7 Schönes Haus and Fischerplätzle

Fischer-gasse 40, built 1616

The Fischerplätzle used to be a small harbour that led to the Danube. The city wall separates it from the green open space along the banks of the Danube. The "Schönes Haus" ("Beautiful House") is also to be found on Fischerplätzle and was once home to members of the mariners' guild.

8 Zunftthaus der Schiffleute

Fischer-gasse 31, built at the end of the 15th century

Containers holding caught fish were once kept in the water secured to the back of the fisherman's house. The top floor is home to the Ulmer "Schiffverein" association, which arranges the traditional "Fischerstechen" jousting tournament on the Danube every four years.

9 Ulmer Münz

Schwörhausgasse 4, building dating from the 17th century with Mediaeval sections

Coins ("Münze") were minted here during the Thirty Years' War. Although it was only an outpost of the actual mint, it remains a symbol of the centuries-old tradition of money in Ulm. "Ulm's money rules the world" was a popular saying for good reason.

10 Staufenmauer

Corner of Schwörhausgasse / Weinhof, built at the start of the 13th century

The remains of Ulm's first city wall consist of bossage stone, which was typical of fortifications of the Hohenstaufen period. They are a little archaeological gem. In contrast, the prominent city wall along the Danube was only built at the end of the 15th century.

