

A historical journey through Blankenheim

Discover sights - experience Blankenheim



discover ... at the source ...



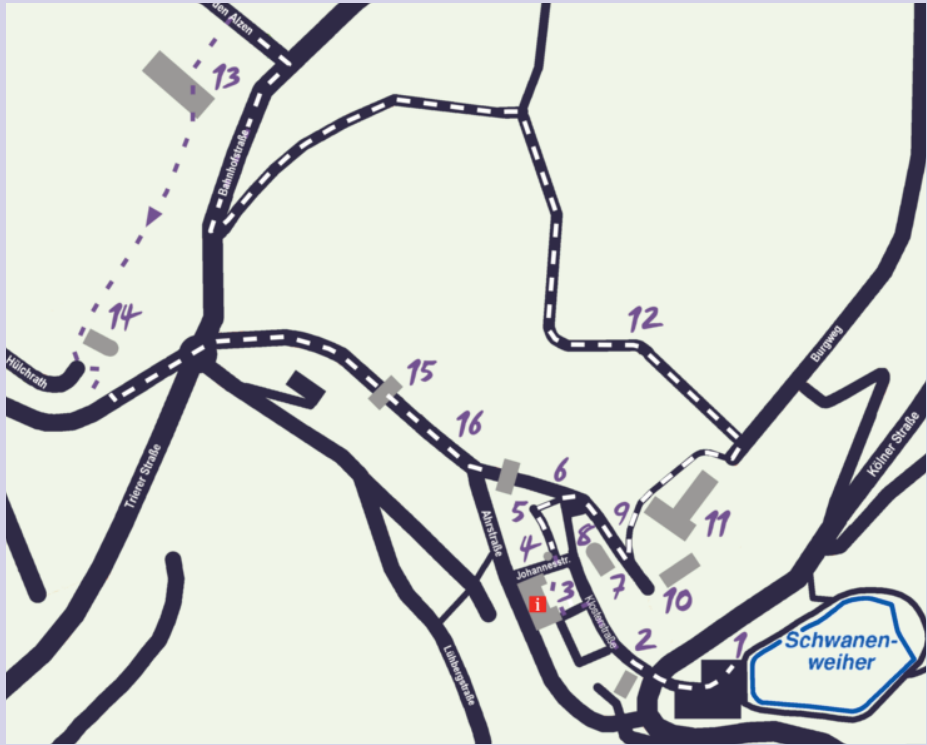
The picturesque village of Blankenheim with its castle is located in the very heart of the Eifel.

In an area of about 150 km², surrounded by a large open space, about 8,500 people live in the 17 villages of the municipality. Blankenheim, with sights such as the source of the Ahr, the counts' castle and the historical town centre, has been a state-approved health resort since 1982.

On 23 June 721 "blancio", i.e. "Blankenheim" is first mentioned in a document. Many villages of the municipality are mentioned in old records, too. That's why it is not surprising that Blankenheim and all the other villages of the municipality are home to numerous memorable buildings and facilities.

You can get to Blankenheim easily by car, taking "Motorway 1" ("A1") with its Blankenheim exit, the federal highways "B51" and "B258" and by train, getting off at Blankenheim's train station - only a "stone's throw" for people from the urban centres of Cologne, Bonn, Düsseldorf and the Ruhr area.

The historical journey leads first to the historical town centre.



From the car park at the "Schwanenweiher"/"Swan Lake" 1 you can see Blankenheim Castle and the **historical town centre** with its numerous buildings of historical interest 2.

From the town hall you walk up "Klosterstraße" with its old half-timbered houses to the **Eifel Museum 3**. The main building in "Ahrstraße" was rebuilt in 1983. While retaining the historical facade of the old hotel "Zur Post", modern interiors were created here.

The Eifel Museum presents interesting facts about geological history. In addition, there are regular temporary exhibitions. At "Gildehaus" the topics "VIA Agrippa Roman Road", "Castle & Dominion – 900 years of Blankenheim" and paintings of the Eifel painter Fritz von Wille are exhibited.

The **Tourist Information**, which is located in the Eifel Museum 3, provides comprehensive information material for guests. Brochures about different offers are available free of charge.

Opening hours:

Eifel Museum

April - October

Mo - Fr 10 - 16 h

Sa - Su 9.30 - 15 h

November - March

Mo - Su 11 - 14 h

Admission is free.

Gildehaus

11 - 15 h

11 - 15 h

11 - 14 h

From the three-storey half-timbered house the view is directed towards a life-size sandstone statue from the 18th century [4](#). This is a **statue of St Nepomuk**, the bridge patron saint.



Source of the Ahr

Close to the Nepomuk is the **source of the Ahr** [5](#). The river has its source in the cellar vaults of a half-timbered house built in 1726. It finds its way through the romantic Ahr valley until it flows out into the Rhine near Sinzig after 89 kilometres. Next to the source of the Ahr a small staircase leads out to the “**Shepherd’s Gate**” and the “**Eifelhaus**” [6](#). Here a part of the battlement in old style can be visited. A magnificent stone from 1512 is attached to the Shepherd’s Gate. The Eifelhaus next to the Shepherd’s Gate is a half-timbered house from 1603.



Gildehaus



Shepherd's Gate

The tour continues with the parish **church of St. Mary's Assumption** [7](#) on the right. The Catholic parish church of Blankenheim is a late gothic hall church. Count Johann 1st of Manderscheid-Blankenheim had it built between 1495 and 1505. The church still holds sacral treasures such as the high altar and the two side altars from around 1440 and a collection of relics, e.g. the bust of St. George, all in silver, from around 1440. Above the modern altar there is a beautiful statue of St. Mary with a halo.



Church of St. Mary's Assumption

After visiting the parish church, the view is directed towards a three-storey plastered red sandstone building from the 17th century, which served both as a town hall and as a **prison** [8](#). Today, artists exhibit their works in the "House at the Sheperds' Gate".

One of the most romantic corners in Blankenheim is the „**Zuckerberg**“ [9](#). Blankenheim's narrowest house – only 2.01 m wide - and some of Blankenheim's oldest half-timbered buildings can be found here. For example, the sill beam of a two-storey half-timbered house built on a slope is decorated with an inscription from 1595.



Blankenheim's narrowest house

As part of the castle fortification, a round **artillery turret** [10](#) was built below the castle at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War in the reign of Count Johann Arnold (1614 - 1644). It was placed in such a way that the least protected south-eastern flank and the town could be effectively defended. However, hardly any shot seems to have been fired from the artillery chamber; the counts usually managed to get rid of the passing troops without getting entangled in war.

Some steps further on you can see the massive building of **Blankenheim Castle** [11](#). According to finds, a Roman fort stood on the same site. Among the excavations were bricks with the stamp of the sixth legion. Count Gerhard VIII. (1438 - 1460) had the castle demolished and built a magnificent palace complex with a park, fountain, ornamental and kitchen gardens. Today a youth hostel with 160 beds is located here.



Blankenheim Castle

When you get to the youth hostel, a path on the left leads to “**Tiergartentunnel**“ [12](#). In 1468 Count Dietrich III. had a long-distance water supply to the castle built, which had to be led into a tunnel under a mountain in order to maintain the gradient. The spring is located about 2 km away in the valley “In der Rhenn“. Its water was fed through a wooden pipe into a water tank in the castle courtyard. The tunnel is one of the least known of the late Middle Ages in all of Europe.

Following the Tiergartentunnel hiking trail it takes you to the **Roman villa** [13](#). This is one of the most important ground monuments in the Rhineland from Roman times. It was once a large estate (villa rustica) with a luxuriously fitted main building as well as stables, barns, sheds and servants' quarters grouped around a spacious farm. The first archaeological research was carried out in 1894. In the following decades several archaeological investigations took place. In 2014 the main building was reconstructed and the grounds were opened to the public.

Along the railway embankment, **Chapel Hülchrath** [14](#) can be visited after a few metres as the next historical sight. A path with “seven footfalls“ is located at the small church. It is one of Blankenheim’s gems, because sacral baroque buildings are very rare. The chapel was built in 1764. The richly articulated form, a finely designed iron belfry and stucco decoration on ceilings and walls in playful rococo make the chapel a special sight.



Tiergartentunnel



Roman villa



Chapel Hülchrath

Along the seven footfalls, the historical hike takes you back down to the centre of the village in the Ahrstraße. Here you can see **George's Gate 15**. Count Salentin Ernst had it built at the beginning of the 16th century, when an extension of the village fortifications became necessary. On the outside there is a niche with the wooden statue of the village patron St George. A historical carnival museum in the rooms above the gate gives information about the history and importance of the Blankenheim carnival, which has been documented since 1613.



George's Gate

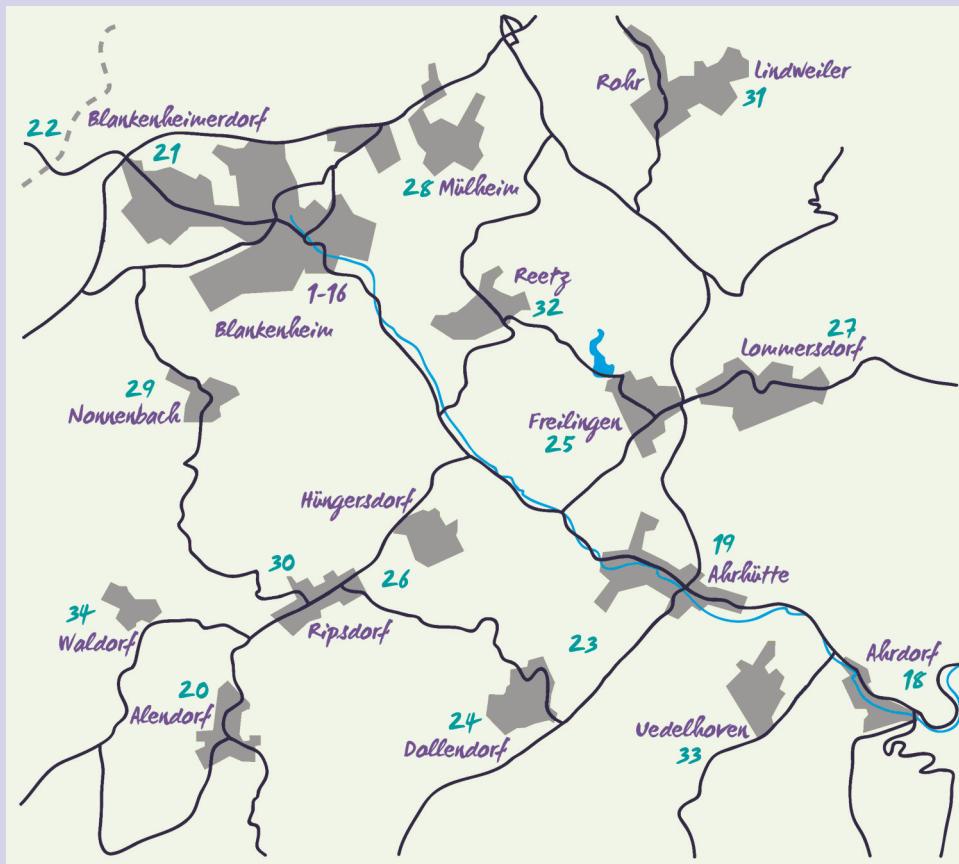
After a few metres, Blankenheim's **old church tower clock 16**, dating from 1907, shines in its old glory at a jeweller's shop. After the clockwork with a weight of 500kilos had to make way in the course of the modernisation of the church, the owners of the shop had the clock renovated by a specialist in about 900 working hours. Afterwards the tower clock and a carillon were integrated into the facade of the house.



Church tower clock

After a refreshment in Blankenheim's gastronomy, the journey of discovery can be continued through the other villages of Blankenheim. Due to the great number of monuments it is only possible to list a few examples here. The villages are characterized by romantic corners and alleys with half-timbered farmsteads worthy of preservation. Some of the objects are still inhabited buildings which can therefore only be visited from the outside. You will find appropriate parking possibilities, several restaurants and accommodation..

Villages of the municipality of Blankenheim



Bridge in Ahrdorf

18

The building which spans the Ahr river in an artistic and landscaped style dates back to the 19th century. Due to many floods in cellars and residential houses in Ahrdorf caused by the rushing water of the Ahr and the much too narrow passage of the only bridge arch, the municipality had a second bridge arch built in 1985 in the style of the original.

Riding master house of the former iron-works in Ahrhütte

19

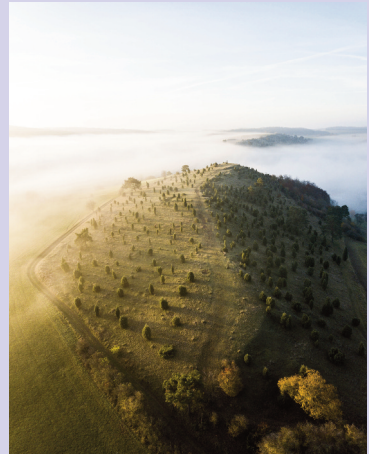
The former riding master house from 1677 is a two-storey quarry stone building with eaves facing the street. A striking feature is a door in the gable, which shows the Aremberg coat of arms with a duke's crown, ermine and golden fleece.

Calvary
near Alendorf

20

The so-called Calvary is a destination for many locals and guests throughout the year for two reasons: A lush juniper vegetation awaits the visitor. For many groups Alendorf is the starting point to the unique juniper protection area Lampertstal.

From the former Catholic parish church of St. Agatha a Way of the Cross leads to the final cross on the Calvary. In 1663 Count Salentin Ernst had a chapel built on the site of the present final cross. This chapel doesn't exist anymore. The Stations of the Cross, built between 1663 and 1680, were increased in the 19th century.



Calvary near Alendorf

Catholic parish church
St. Peter and Paul in
Blankenheimerdorf

21

The nave of the triaxial plastered, quarry-stone parish church was built in 1648. The tower of the church dates from 1852 and the tower cross from the 17th century. Altar, communion bench, pews, confessional, gallery with organs and sacristy door are of neo-gothic origin.

Train station
Blankenheim (Wald)

22

Blankenheim is connected to the national rail network with the Blankenheim (Wald) station on the Eifelbahn. Guests who would like to visit the municipality from the conurbations have a good connection. Today, there are still four more old but privately owned railway station buildings in Blankenheim.

Castle ruin „Schlossthal“
(also called "Finger
of God")

23

On a high plateau above the Ahr valley you will find the ruins of the castle "Schlossthal", which still today points to a once magnificent castle complex. A dynasty had established its residence here, which was first mentioned in the property register of Prüm Abbey in 893 as the noblemen of Dollendorf. Until the middle of the 15th century the castle was the family's residence.

St Antonius's Chapel
near Dollendorf

24

On a hill between Dollendorf and the castle ruin Schlossthal, St Antonius's Chapel of the Cross is romantically situated. As the end point of the Way of the Cross, it was donated in 1702 together with the stations. Every year on Good Friday the Way of the Cross leads along the stations from Dollendorf to Antonius's Chapel.



St Antonius's Chapel

Quarry stone house
in Freilingen,
Lommersdorfer Str. 2.

25

The farmstead, built in the 17th century, contains an unusually large and representative residential building of a farm for this region. The two-storey residential house was built in quarry stone.

Hermann-Josef-Chapel
between Huengersdorf
and Ripsdorf

26

A small plastered quarry stone chapel, romantically situated under a mighty group of trees, invites many hikers for a short rest and contemplation. The chapel, which dates from the 19th century, has a narrow, pointed entrance on the western gable side with four walled, pointed windows, a protruding bench and a profiled eaves cornice. Even today processions of supplications go to Hermann-Josef-Chapel.

Way cross Huehnerberg
near Lommersdorf

27

The approx. 3.50 m high sandstone cross from the 18th century is an example of numerous existing road crosses in the municipal area.

Lime kiln
near Mülheim

28

The partially restored lime kiln near Mülheim provides an insight into the interior of a lime kiln plant from the 19th century. Next to it you can find limestone benches.

Chapel St Brigida
in Nonnenbach

29

The small, pretty chapel dating from 1851 is the centre of the romantic village of Nonnenbach which is situated in the valley. The small plastered quarry stone hall building is characterised by a square ridge turret with a pointed octagonal helmet. A beautiful addition to the small chapel is a small fountain and a seating area for hikers located nearby.

„Bread house“
in Ripsdorf

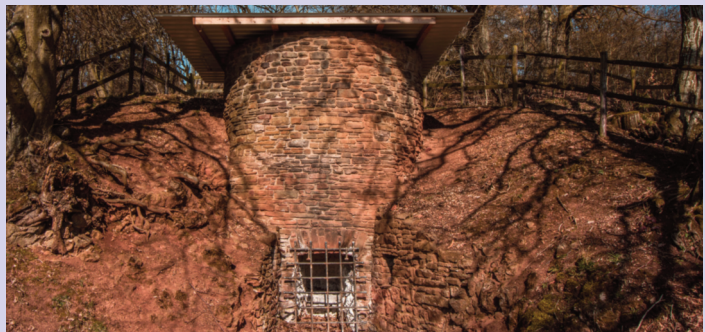
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In Tränkgasse in Ripsdorf there is a beautiful half-timbered ensemble, the so-called “bread house” and another half-timbered house from the 17th century. The “bread house” is a two-storey half-timbered house with an angular attached quarry stone barn and the large porch of a baking oven, which gave the building its name.

Lime kiln
near Rohr/Lindweiler

31

The lime kiln near Rohr/Lindweiler, restored in 1988, was built around 1850. A lime kiln festival in autumn 1988 demonstrated the techniques of lime burning in grandfather's time under the scientific supervision of the Geological Institute of RWTH Aachen University.



Lime kiln near Rohr/Lindweiler

Castle house
in Reetz

32

The castle house in Reetz, dating from the 16th century, was built as a two-storey quarry stone building and has a high base. The double-locked door is dated to the 16th century.

St Mary's Chapel
near Uedelhoven

33

One of three wayside chapels near Uedelhoven is the St Mary's Chapel on the way to Ahrdorf. The quarry stone chapel, built in 1988, has a pointed choir end with a gable side opened in a large pointed arch with rebate.

St Dionysius Chapel
in Waldorf

34

The late gothic chapel is a small two-bay hall built of quarry stone with a straight closed choir room. The origins of the St Dionysius's Chapel date back to the 15th century. Three colourful baroque altars date from the 17th century.

From orchid meadows, juniper slopes, floodplains to geological features and eventful stone bridges, hikers and walkers are offered a varied landscape in our municipality. Nature lovers can also enjoy great views in the Lampertstal nature reserve and admire a nature hardly touched by human hands.



Lampertstal nature reserve

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