

Kelheim Hall of Liberation

Kelheim Hall of Liberation

The impressive rotunda of the Hall of Liberation, situated on the Michelsberg in Kelheim, southwest of Regensburg, dominates the surrounding countryside. King Ludwig I commissioned the construction of this monument to commemorate both the victorious battles against Napoleon during the Wars of Liberation 1813–1815 and the unification of all the German races. The Hall of Liberation is one of a series of monuments – the Feldherrnhalle (Hall of Generals), the Siegestor (Gate of Victory) and the Ruhmeshalle (Hall of Fame) with the Statue of Bavaria in Munich as well as the Walhalla in Regensburg – which were built for the glorification of Bavaria and the German nation. The architect first chosen to design the Hall of Liberation was Friedrich von Gärtner, who began work on it in 1842, modelling it on centrally planned buildings from ancient Rome and medieval Italy. In 1847, after only the foundation walls and two of the large steps at the base had been completed, building came to a temporary halt with the sudden death of Gärtner. He was succeeded by Leo von Klenze, King Ludwig I's favourite architect and one of the most important German neoclassical architects in Germany, whose works (Alte Pinakothek, Ludwigstraße) dom-



View of the dome with the glass lantern (top left); Limestone figure symbolizing the German tribe "Rheinländer" (bottom left); View of the interior with the floor mosaic (right)

inated Munich in the 19th century. Klenze redesigned the Hall of Liberation in a style that reflects both the elegant proportions of ancient temples and the fortified characteristics of medieval towers or temples of the Holy Grail. The inauguration ceremony took place on 18 October 1863, the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Nations near Leipzig. The Hall of Liberation is built in the shape of an eighteen-sided polygon. The massive supporting buttresses of the façade are crowned by eighteen monumental statues – allegories of the German tribes. The 5.80 m statues were designed by the sculptor Johann Halbig and are made of Danube limestone. The number eighteen also stands for the date of the Battle of the Nations, 18 October 1813, when Napoleon's forces were crushed by the coalition near Leipzig. The interior is dominated by 34 Goddesses of Victory made of white marble, mounted with linked hands on an encircling base. The statues were designed by Ludwig Schwanthaler and symbolise the thirty-four German states of the German Confederation (Deutscher Bund), which was founded in 1815. The coffered ceiling of the 45-metre-high domed hall and the divisions created by the alcoves, arcades and galleries give the room extra-ordinary acoustics, which combine with the architecture and the light, festive colours of the interior to create an appropriately ceremonious atmosphere.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON BOTH MONUMENTS

Verwaltung der Befreiungshalle Kelheim
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FURTHER INFORMATION

www.kelheim.de · www.riedenburg.de

KELHEIM HALL OF LIBERATION

OPENING TIMES

13 March – October: 9am – 6pm
 November – 12 March: 9am – 4pm
 Tickets will be sold until 45 minutes before closure
 Last admission: 30 minutes before closure
 ♿ Accessible via lift

REFRESHMENTS

Café Bistro Befreiungshalle · Tel. (0 94 41) 68 36 79 · open daily

TRANSPORTATION

Train to Saal, bus to "Wöhrdplatz"; car park (for which there is a charge) and free bus facilities available

PRUNN CASTLE

93339 Riedenburg · Tel. (0 94 42) 33 23 · Fax (0 94 42) 33 35

OPENING TIMES

April – October: 9am – 6pm
 November – March: 10am – 4pm
 Closed Mondays
 The castle can only be visited by participating in a guided tour
 ♿ Only accessible via staircase


REFRESHMENTS

Burgschenke Schloss Prunn · Tel. (0 94 42) 17 65
 Tuesday – Sunday: 11am – 6pm · Closed November – March

TRANSPORTATION

Car and bus parking facilities available free of charge

Information on all places of interest

 Bayerische Verwaltung der staatlichen Schlösser, Gärten und Seen
 Postfach 20 20 63 · 80020 München
 Tel. (0 89) 17 90 80 · Fax (0 89) 17 90 81 90
 info@bsv.bayern.de · www.schloesser.bayern.de





With its exposed position, Prunn castle is a dominant feature of the Altmühl river valley.

Prunn Castle

Prunn Castle, perched on an almost vertical crag high above the River Altmühl in the Jura southwest of Regensburg, is a picture-book knight's castle. First mentioned in a document in 1037, by the mid-12th century it had become a romanesque stronghold. One of the oldest elements of the castle is the keep, which has a height of 31 metres. The castle first came into the possession of the Wittelsbach family when it was bought by Duke Ludwig of Bavaria in 1288. In 1338, however, Prunn Castle changed ownership again and passed to the Fraunberg knights of Haag. Their coat of arms, a white horse on a red background, is still visible from a considerable distance on the castle wall. Under the Fraunberg knights in the 14th century – the late gothic era – the castle became a cultural centre devoted to minnesong and Middle High German poetry. Evidence of these activities is provided by fragments of frescoes in the former guardroom (Wachstube) and the discovery of a manuscript of the Nibelungenlied, the so-called "Prunner Codex". The "Prunner Codex" was discovered by Wiguläus Hundt, humanist and historiographer of Duke Albrecht V, and placed in the duke's



Guardroom (top left); Prunner Codex (top right); Portrait of a young prince, 17th century (bottom left); Castle kitchen (bottom right)

library in Munich in 1575. Today this valuable manuscript is kept in the Bavarian State Library in Munich. In 1672, after several more changes of ownership, the castle was acquired by the Jesuits of Ingolstadt. Their most important legacy is the palace chapel, which they remodelled in the baroque style in around 1700. In 1822, when Prunn ceased to exist as an administrative entity, the castle finally returned to the Wittelsbachs. In 1827 King Ludwig I ordered it to be preserved as a historic monument, just in time to prevent it from falling into ruin. The rooms are named after their original functions (such as the Guardroom, the Kitchen and the Courtroom) and provide an insight into life in the castle. Most of the furniture dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries. Elaborate tiled stoves from the Renaissance and rococo eras feature in many of the rooms such as the Gothic Room and the Rococo Room. In the Gothic Room (Gotische Stube) is an illustration of the Nibelungenlied manuscript that was found in Prunn Castle. Fragments of the medieval frescoes can be seen in the Guardroom (Wachstube). From the courtyard and the windows of the rooms there is a splendid panoramic view of the Altmühl valley.

Kelheim Hall of Liberation Riedenburg Prunn Castle

