

Make the Most of a Layover in Munich

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Munich Sights and a Short History

The city center of Munich is compact, making it easy to see many sights in a short amount of time. Munich was founded in 1158 and in 1175 the small city, with Marienplatz at the center, was fortified with protective walls. By 1330, the city outgrew the fortifications. The walls were expanded and eight city gates were built, three of which still stand today. The city was further strengthened in the early 1600s, but by the 18th century, the walls were seen as useless and destroyed. The main sights of Munich remain in a centralized area that was once confined by those city walls. Historic churches, squares and lanes, beautiful buildings and beer gardens are all within the city center. Throughout history, both fire and war destroyed many of Munich's buildings so that today there is a mix of style and more than a few replicas.

A Layover in Munich: 4-6 Hour Self-Guided Walking Tour

Karlsplatz (Karl's Square)

Karlsplatz, a square that emerged with the city walls were torn down and named for the man who ordered the destruction, is on the western edge of the city center. On the east end of the square is Karlstor Gate, which was used as an entrance into the fortified city until the 18th century.

Walk through the arched Karlstor Gate onto the pedestrian promenade, Neuhauserstrasse, to...

Burgersaalkirche (Citizen's Hall Church)

The pink façade of Burgersaalkirche is hard to miss and resembles a government building more than a church. It was built in 1709 as a 'citizen's hall' and not consecrated as a church until 1778. On the ground floor is the crypt of Pater Rupert Mayer, a Jesuit priest who was known for his resistance against the Nazis. On the second floor is the glittering church, heavily decorated with frescoes.

Continue walking east to...

Michaelskirche (St. Michael's Church)

The 400-year-old Michaelskirche, originally built as part of the Jesuit College, is known for two things: first, for being the largest Renaissance church north of the Alps and, second, for having the second largest barrel-vaulted roof after St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Inside the expansive church is a crypt containing royal tombs, including that of "Mad" King Ludwig II.

Retrace your steps on Neuhauserstrasse a short distance to Eisenmannstrasse and walk south to...

Damenstiftskirche (St. Anna's Church)

Damenstiftskirche was built in 1733. The interior was designed by the Asam brothers two years later. While the church façade is quite plain, the interior is in the late Baroque style, which was the style in which the Asam brother excelled. What exists today is a replica, as only the outer walls of the church

remained after World War II. The church is often referred to as St. Anna's for the convent next door, which is now a girls' school.

Continue walking south to...

Allerheiligenkirche am Kreuz (Church of All Saints)

Allerheiligenkirche was built in 1478 of simple red brick, including the bell tower. The interior was embellished in the Baroque style in 1620. It was the first church with a cemetery for the St. Peter parish.

Across the street from the church is the entrance to...

Asamhof Passage

Strolling down Asamhof Passage makes the city seem miles away. Outdoor cafes draped in flowers line the shaded alley, making it a perfect spot for a coffee or tea.

Continue through the passage to Sendlinger Street. Turn right (southwest) and walk to...

Asamkirche (Asam Church)

Asamkirche, known officially as St. Johann Nepomuk Church, is one of Munich's most interesting churches. The small space measures just 72 feet long and 26 feet wide. It was built between 1733 and 1746 by the Asam brothers as a private chapel. As such, they had full control over the design, covering nearly every inch of the small church in the Baroque style.

From the church, continue walking (or just look) further down the road to...

Sendlinger Tor (Sendlinger Gate)

Built as part of Munich's second city wall, Sendlinger Tor was erected in 1318. The towers on either side were added in 1420, creating 3 separate arches. They were replaced in 1906 with a single arch, which suffered only slight damage in the war. Even part of the original city wall remains on Sendlinger Tor.

Retrace your steps on Sendlinger Street heading northeast to Dultstrasse. Turn right (south) and continue across the street into Sankt-Jakobs-Platz. Pass by the museums (or stop in if you have time) curving to the left. At Sebastianspl, turn right onto the narrow alley and walk to Pralat-Zistl-Strasse. Turn left and follow it to...

Viktualienmarkt (Victual's Market)

The sight was first used as an outdoor market in 1807 when Marienplatz could no longer accommodate the size of the market. Today, there are 140 stalls selling unique and traditional products. A blue and white striped Maypole stands in the center near the expansive beer garden. The shaded outdoor space is a fine place to stop for a sausage on a roll and a half liter of brew.

Walk northeast through the center of the market on Viktualienmarkt Street to...

Heiliggeistkirche (Holy Ghost Church)

Heiliggeistkirche was built in the late 1300s for the order of the Hospice of the Holy Ghost, but was remodeled in the 1700s. The choir buttresses and north wall of the nave are the only remaining portions of the original church. Inside are several works of art.

From the front of the church (the opposite end from the bell tower), turn left on Viktualienmarkt. Walk along the brick-arched shops (which will be on your right) to Peterspl. Turn right and walk to...

Peterskirche (St. Peter's Church)

In the 11th century, long before Munich was a city, a church stood where Peterskirche is today, on the only 'hill' in the area. Peterskirche is the oldest parish church in Munich, although destruction, rebuilding and expansions of the actual church have occurred. In the 17th century, the 300-foot-tall spire was added. The tower – which has 299 stairs – can be climbed for 3 euro for views over the city. Inside the church are several altars (including one of a blinged-out skeleton of St. Munditia; find it in the second altar on the left) and many paintings.

Find Rindermarkt Street near the door of the church (and entrance to the tower). Turn left and walk to...

Rindermarkt (Cattle Market)

Not much of a market today, Rindermarkt was once where cows were sold. The only remnants of such is the cow fountain and perhaps a few stalls selling local products. The tower to the south, Lowenturm, is a water tower that dates to the 15th century. Ruffinihaus, a group of homes at Rindermarkt #10, date to the early 1900s and are exquisitely decorated.

Leave the square on the north side on Furstenfelderstrasse. Walk a short distance to the glass doors on your right that lead to Kaufingertor Passage and walk through to Kaufingerstrasse. Cross the pedestrian street and continue on the alley, Mazaristrasse, to...

Frauenkirche (Cathedral of Our Dear Lady)

Frauenkirche, also called Munchner Dom (Munich Cathedral), has a capacity of 20,000 and is an easy-to-spot landmark in the city. The Cathedral, made of brick in the Gothic style, was built within 20 years, starting in 1468. The onion-domed towers rise 325 feet into the skyline; the originally planned Gothic spires were too expensive to complete, so eh more affordable domes were used instead and not finished until 1525. The church suffered damage during World War II, but the towers never fell.

Walk to the back of the church to Filserbraugasse Street and find...

Andechser am Dom

Andechser am Dom, a small restaurant with a beer garden, serves beer from the Andechs Monastery Brewery. Beer was first made at the monastery in 1455 by seven Benedictine monks. While the brewery, still run by monks, is a distance from Munich's city center, the restaurant offers the opportunity to taste the monks' brew.

Continue down Filserbraugasse to Weinstrasse. Turn right (south) to...

Marienplatz (Mary's Square)

The city center of Munich since 1158, Marienplatz has been used for tournaments, as an outdoor marketplace and today as a gathering place. It's also the site of the Christmas Market during the month of December. In the center is Mariensaule, Mary's Column, which was placed in Marienplatz as a celebration of the end of Swedish occupation in 1638. The gold statue of Mary as the top dates to 1590.

On the north side of Marienplatz is the...

Neues Rathaus and Glockenspiel (New Town Hall and Carillon)

The 400-room Neues Rathaus is home to Munich's city government. The building was constructed between 1867 and 1908. The exterior intricately decorated in the Gothic Revival style and extends 328 feet along Marienplatz. The Glockenspiel, a sort of storytelling music box on the tower, plays three times a day (15-minute shows at 11am and 12noon (also at 5pm in the summer) and a five-minute show at 9pm.) The 43 bells and 32 life-sized figures spin around to tell the story of a Duke's marriage in 1546, complete with a jousting tournament, and the story of Schafflertanz – the Coopers' Dance – which is said to have begun in 1517 during the plague. The dancing was to give hope to the citizens.

On the east end of Marienplatz is the...

Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall)

On the east end of Marienplatz is Altes Rathaus, where the local government met until 1874 when the New Town Hall was opened. The building dates back to the 1300s, but was redesigned in the 1400s in the Gothic style. The two tunnels that run through it were created in 1877 and 1934. The tower marks the former Talburg Gate, one of the original entrances through the city walls.

At the base of Altes Rathaus (before going through the tunnel), turn left (north) on Burgstrasse. Walk to...

Alter Hof Palace (Old Court)

The Alter Hof Palace in the center of Munich was once the residence of Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV and dates back to the 12th century. The five-winged palace had to be completely reconstructed after World War II.

Walk through the palace courtyard to Pfisterstrasse. Turn right (east) and walk to Sparkassenstrasse. Turn right (south) and walk to Munzstrasse. Turn left (east) to...

Hofbrauhaus

The origins of the Hofbrauhaus date to 1589 when plans for the brewery were first established by Wilhelm V, Duke of Bavaria as a place to make brown ale for the royal household. Today, the beer hall – which was built in 1897 – is a place of gathering for locals and tourists. Lively bands play traditional German songs. Wooden picnic tables are shared with strangers, enormous pretzels are sold by staff in traditional dress and waiters effortlessly carry multiple liters of beer to thirsty patrons. Prost!

A Layover in Munich: 2-3 Hour Self-Guided Walking Tour

Even with extremely limited time, it is possible to see many sights in Munich. This quick walking tour could be done in less than an hour without stopping at all, but at least two hours are needed to see the inside of churches, climb the bell tower and have a beer at the Hofbrauhaus.

Refer to the list above for descriptions of each sight.

Karlsplatz (Karl's Square)

Walk through the arched Karlstor Gate onto the pedestrian promenade, Neuhauserstrasse, to...

Burgersaalkirche (Citizen's Hall Church)

Continue walking east to...

Michaelskirche (St. Michael's Church)

Continue walking east to Augustinestrasse. Turn left (north) and walk to...

Frauenkirche (Cathedral of Our Dear Lady)

Walk to the back of the church to Filserbraugasse. Walk east to Weinstrasse. Turn right (south) and walk to...

Marienplatz (Mary's Square)

On the north side of Marienplatz is the...

Neues Rathaus and Glockenspiel (New Town Hall and Carillon)

Exit Marienplatz to the south (opposite New Town Hall) on Rindermarkt and walk to...

Peterskirche (St. Peter's Church)

Leave the church to the south on Peterspl. Turn left (east) on Viktualienmarkt. Curve around to the north to the large intersection and on the left is...

Altes Rathaus (Old Town Hall)

Continue walking north (the name of the street changes to Sparkassenstrasse) to Munzstrasse. Turn right (east) and walk to...

Hofbrauhaus

Prost!

Let us know what you thought of our tour! Go to <http://jetsettingfools.com/make-the-most-of-a-layover-in-munich/> and leave us a comment!

