

Top Ten Sights to Visit in Munich

First-time travellers to Munich, the capital of Bavaria in Germany, should definitely visit the amazing sights and places that will be listed in the following. As Munich is very compact and small with a good and reliable transport system, it is an easy city to travel around. In addition, it is possible to walk quite a bit when covering the must-see sights.

1. Marienplatz

Start your sightseeing tour at Marienplatz which has been Munich's central square since the foundation of the city in 1158. There are many brilliant sights clustered at and around Marienplatz that used to be a corn and fish market with the name "Schrannenmarkt". In 1638, Elector Maximilian I ordered the construction of the "Mariensäule" (Column St. Mary) because Munich was shielded from the Swedish occupation during the Thirty Years' War. When the corn market was finally moved to the area of the Viktualienmarkt and the Schrennhalle in 1853, the square received its present name "Marienplatz". Where the "Fischbrunnen" (Fish Fountain) is now, fish used to be sold here. In the east of Marienplatz, there is Munich's Old City Hall that was first mentioned in 1310 and redesigned many times. Now, the Marienplatz is dominated by the New City Hall, an impressive building of Neo-Gothic style that was constructed between 1867 and 1909 according to plans of the Austrian architect Georg Hauberisser. The famous "Glockenspiel" in the tower of the New City Hall is not only a major tourist attraction, but also the fifth largest in Europe.

2. Frauenkirche (Dom)

Near Marienplatz is the Frauenkirche ("Dom"). With its height of 99 m and its two towers with onion-shaped domes, it is the landmark of Munich and dominates the city center together with the New City Hall. The Frauenkirche was constructed between 1468 and 1488 in late Gothic style due to plans of Jörg von Halspach in order to replace an older church. In 1525, the towers received their copper domes in Renaissance style. Although the design of the Frauenkirche is quite simple, this catholic cathedral is an amazing building.

3. Viktualienmarkt and Church St. Peter (Alter Peter)

Also next to Marienplatz, there is the "Viktualienmarkt", Munich's largest fruit and vegetable market where you can get nearly everything you want including spices, exotic fruits as well as Bavarian specialities. For a brilliant view of the city, you should visit Munich's oldest church and probably its origin, St. Peter, also called "Alter Peter" at Viktualienmarkt. If you manage to climb about 300 steps to the top of the tower, you might even see the mountains around Munich when the weather is clear. After this exhilarating experience, the beergarden in the middle of the Viktualienmarkt is a great place to recover and regain your energy.

4. Odeonsplatz and Church St. Kajetan (Theatinerkirche)

North of Munich's historic city center, there is the Odeonsplatz with the beautiful church St. Kajetan (Theatinerkirche) of baroque style and the Feldherrnhalle. In 1790, crown prince Ludwig decided on the construction of the Odeonsplatz instead of the northern city gate as well as a luxurious main road to the north of Munich and put Leo v. Klenze in charge of the design in 1816. In addition, he wanted to design the exit from the Residenz to the royal path (now Briennerstrasse) to the Nymphenburg Castle in a more attractive way. The "Feldherrnhalle" at the Odeonsplatz was designed by Friedrich v. Gärtner on the model of the Loggia dei Lanzi in Florence and is a victory monument for the Bavarian army and its generals.

5. Residenz and Hofgarten

Also directly at the Odeonsplatz is the Residenz that used to be Munich's city castle and residence of the Bavarian dukes, electors and kings as well as the entrance to the Hofgarten, a small garden with a gate by the famous architect Leo von Klenze. Although quite small, the Hofgarten is Munich's most

central garden and very suitable for a break during your sightseeing or shopping tour in the center of Munich.

6. English Garden

When you leave the Hofgarten in north-east direction, a path leads directly to the English Garden. With an age of more than 200 years and a size of about 4 km², the English Garden is the oldest and largest park in Munich. The English Garden is not only a must-see place for all visitors to Munich but is also a great park for relaxation and leisure activities. There are quite a few amazing sights in the park such as the Chinese Tower with its' huge beergarden, the artificial lake "Kleinhesseloher See" as well as the highest viewpoint of the park, the Monopteros.

7. Königsplatz

After enjoying your time in the English Garden or the beergarden at the Chinese Tower, you should explore other areas of Munich, maybe on the following day. The Königsplatz (constructed between 1817 and 1862) in the Munich area Maxvorstadt was created by Karl v. Fischer and later by Leo v. Klenze on the model of European classicism which in this case was the Acropolis in Athens. This square is highly impressive and there are also quite a few exhibition halls in its buildings such as the Glyptothek with antique statues. If you want to explore more exhibitions, you should head for the Alte, Neue and Moderne Pinakothek as well as the Lenbachhaus which are important exhibition halls in Munich near Königsplatz.

8. Nymphenburg Palace

If you still have time left, the Nymphenburg Palace in the west of Munich in the district Neuhausen-Nymphenburg is really worth a visit. The history of the origins of the brilliant Nymphenburg palace of baroque style and its gardens covers a period of more than 300 years. Because a successor to the throne, Max Emanuel, was born in 1664, the elector Ferdiand Maria and his wife Henriette Adelaide of Savoy put the Bolognese architect Agostino Barelli in charge of constructing a summer residence with a small ornamental garden for her. In the park of the Nymphenburg Palace, there are quite a few important places to visit such as the Amalienburg and the Pagodenburg. Next to the Nymphenburg Park, there is the Botanical Garden of Munich, one of the most important botanical gardens throughout the world.

9. Olympic Park with Olympic Tower

Another important, but very different and rather modern park is the Olympic Park in the north of Munich. In the summer of 1972, the XX. Olympic Games were held in Munich. For this purpose, the Olympic Park was created between 1966 and 1972 on a barren area. One of the most striking features of the Olympic Hall, the Olympic Stadium and the Swimming Centre is their common tent roof constructed of acrylic glass and designed by the German architect Günther Behnisch. With a size of 3 km², the Olympic Park is the second largest park in Munich and despite its still artificial character, it is quite popular not only for sports, but for other leisure activities and events as well.

10. Oktoberfest (Wies'n) at Theresienwiese

Late September every year, the Oktoberfest, one of the most famous public festivals throughout the world, starts at the Theresienwiese and lasts for about two weeks.

Of course, there are much more amazing sights in Munich. If you are in Munich in summer, you should not miss visiting one of the numerous beergardens in the capital of Bavaria.