



News & Views

- News
- Features
- Gallery
- Weekly Roundup
- Your Column
- Past Editions

Resources

- Acronyms
- Addresses
- Indonesian Cabinet
- Indonesian History
- Links
- Where to go

Members Area

- Register
- Login
- Archives
- Who's Who
- Provinces
- Companies
- Laws

About Us

- Company Info
- Subscription/Advertising
- Online Advertising

Associates



Search

Esslingen: Germany's free imperial town

Wahyuni Kamah, Contributor, Esslingen, Germany

What does an untouched and original German medieval city look like? If you want to know visit Esslingen, a historical town in the southern part of Germany that is only a 15-minute drive from Stuttgart.

The capital of Baden Wuerttemberg state is often called Esslingen am Neckar, meaning Esslingen by the Neckar River. The river that flows by the city allows tourists and locals to tour by punt, giving the city the nickname "The Little Venice".

Situated in the Neckar Valley, Esslingen was founded by a kaiser (emperor) 1,200 years ago. The town has never been occupied by an army since, so Esslingen has always been called a "free imperial city".

"Esslingen was one of the few cities in Germany that was not bombed by the Allies during World War II," said Julia Haug from the Esslingen Tourist Office.

"Esslingen can be said to be one of the oldest cities in Baden Wuerttemberg, as stated in the document," she added, referring to the town charter of 1219, which is before Stuttgart even existed.

Quite different from other German cities that have *altstadt* (old towns), the whole of Esslingen seems medieval. Strolling down the city's streets, you will feel the Middle Age atmosphere: the clean, narrow and winding cobblestone roads lined with old, four-story half-timber houses. Perhaps, only the industrial area gives a clue that this is in fact a modern city.

Despite its medieval charm, Esslingen is home to high-tech companies and the automobile industry, which employ about 45,000 people. In addition, about 4,500 students study at the city's technical academy. The city of 100,000 is also the administrative center for people living in neighboring villages. They register their cars or exchange foreign banknotes in Esslingen.

Tourists can see the Middle Age architectures in churches, museums, half-timber houses that are now apartments, restaurants, shops and offices in this

More Stories

[`Gendut' pens restlessness in works](#)

[Food supplements, a thriving business](#)

[U.S. regulations on food supplement protect users](#)

[Story behind RI's sole synagogue](#)

[Award celebrates Muslim intellectual Ahmad Wahib](#)

[Happy birthday, Siao Ying](#)

[Major bookstores offer wide selection of imported books](#)

[Bookstores liven up the weekends](#)

[Book-reading bug needs to be spread through Indonesia](#)

[BMW 330i blends power, speed and comfort](#)

[Demand growing for Maserati Cambriocorsa](#)

[KIA Sorento heats up SUV competiton](#)

[RI boys ready for Special Olympics](#)

[Al Azhar students have fun with hybrid program](#)

[Colonial history haunts mystery city of Semarang](#)

[Swiss watch: Designers transform adjectives into timepieces](#)

[Burberry classic trendy check greets](#)

town.

The old, historical buildings are concentrated in the Old Town. St. Dionys, the *stadtkirche* (town church), was built in the 12th century. It is the most important church in the city. Inside the church are beautiful, massive stained-glass windows.

Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) is the earliest Gothic church in southwest Germany and St. Paul's Cathedral, in the Markt Platz, is the oldest surviving church of the Mendicant order in Germany. The Old City Hall, built in 1425, was originally a tax office and store. Here you can see an astronomical clock, a glockenspiel and a Renaissance facade by Heinrich Schickhardt.

Esslinger Burg, a fort on the hill by Esslingen, is worth visiting should you want to have a panorama of the city. In the 12th century it was a defensive fort, and now the tower is a restaurant.

You can buy designer brands and perfumes, along with electronic goods, antiques and books in Esslingen's Old Town pedestrian zone.

Street singers from Russia or other East European countries often busk in the area.

During the summer, ice cream stalls are scattered along the pedestrian zone. Restaurants and cafes put chairs and tables outside under large umbrellas to allow people to enjoy alfresco dining.

Besides European and Asian restaurants, visitors can find many kebab stalls run by Turkish immigrants. They can also drop in at the Turkish club, where the menu and conversation are Turkish.

Exploring Esslingen in one day is possible.

If you want to take a rest after walking around, try Maille Park in the middle of the Old Town's pedestrian zone under the *Innere Bruecke* (Inside Bridge). In the park -- which is enclosed by brooks of the Neckar River -- you can sit and relax under the tall trees. The park also has playground equipment for children.

Esslingen is also famous for its champagne and 85 hectares of vineyards, which can be seen from the pedestrian zone.

There are a number of wine producers in Esslingen, but Kessler House is Germany's oldest champagne producer. Wine lovers should not miss a visit to Kessler, which is walking distance from St. Dionys

[local fashion lovers](#)

Entertainment

[Now Showing](#)

[Still Playing](#)

[Oni obsessed with being an artist of character](#)

[On the Record](#)

Arts

[Didik brings down the house in San Francisco](#)

[Personal experiences emerge in imagined bodies](#)

Book Review

[Psycholinguistics: The role of the human mind in language](#)

[On the Shelves](#)

Church.

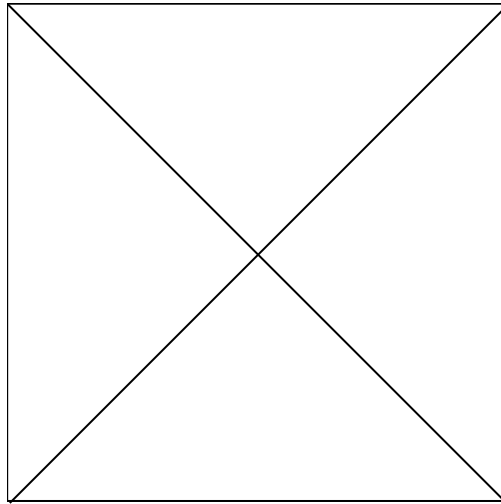
Like people in most small cities, the people of Esslingen are generally friendly. English is not a problem in the downtown, but on the edges of the city they only speak German with a Swabian dialect, which can be very difficult to comprehend.

Esslingen is not only about old churches, burgs, gates and wine cellars. Art lovers can pay a visit to, among others, the Villa Merkel municipal art gallery, the J.F. Schreiber Museum, which has world-renowned picture books and cutout books, and the LIMA, a literary marionette theater that puts on works of world literature.

From the Esslingen rail station you can reach other cities in Germany. Just in front of the station is the bus station, which links the town to its neighboring villages and small cities, and of course, Stuttgart airport. The bus fare is about 2.5 euro.

Esslingen is one place where you will find a real Swabian atmosphere. One tour package even includes a Swabian meal at a typical Swabian restaurant. The tourist office, which is situated in the Markt Platz, will give you information about the different tours and packages.

[printer friendly](#)



[News](#) [Features](#)
[Gallery](#) [Weekly Roundup](#) [Your Column](#) [Past Editions](#)
[Acronyms](#) [About Us](#) [Links](#)
[Archives](#) [History](#) [Who's](#)
[Who](#) [Provinces](#) [Companies](#) [Laws](#) [Outlook](#) [Home](#)

This Website is designed for The Jakarta Post by [CNRG ITB](#).
All contents copyright © of The Jakarta Post.
webmaster@thejakartapost.com

