

Breathing World History...

Schmalkaldic League | Martin Luther | 1537

Tips for a Tour of the Town

„Spilling the beans...” – Of a fatally ill reformer, a love-craved landgrave and a pushed off princess.

Discover ideas, quirks, and passions of the members of the Schmalkaldic League that have been widely unknown up until now, as well as a lot of facts about the Reformation City worth knowing. A cheerful walk takes you to places behind the scenes of our town, which has influenced the course of history to such a great extent. Authentic places and stories will certainly make you marvel and smile.

Following Luther's Tracks

Sources of Life – Martin Luther made church history in Schmalkalden and met his God in Tambach-Dietharz. Both places are connected by a hiking trail through the Thuringian Forest.

This part of the Luther Trail exquisitely combines the pleasure of hiking and the search for traces of Luther on his paths. It crosses the Rennsteig, Thuringia's famous long-distance trail, which runs through some of the most beautiful parts of the Thuringian Forest. This 19-kilometer hike is considered to be of moderate difficulty, is equipped with signposts and information boards, and well-constructed and developed. The trail encompasses a difference in altitude of 456 meters.



Schmalkalden – small town with great history

There is a very special kind of magic lingering above this beautifully renovated historic town with its timber-framed houses. No matter which way you turn, you can always feel a gentle breeze of more than a thousand years of history. Winning of iron ore and mining, as well as the founding of the Schmalkadic League have left their traces in Schmalkalden.

You will see: visiting the Town Hall, St. George's Church with the Luther Room, a walk through historic downtown Schmalkalden, or visiting Wilhelmsburg Palace will let time fly by!

Reformation, Luther & the Schmalkaldic League

Schmalkalden was a focal point for Germany and Europe in the 16th century. The Landgrave Philipp of Hesse was one of the first Protestant princes of Germany and an adversary of Charles V. Philipp was one of the princes who realised that only a united alliance of all Protestants would offer protection against the Emperor.



The Schmalkaldic League was founded in the last week of December, 1530. Seven imperial diets were held in Schmalkalden. The one in 1537 has gone down in history as the most "glittering princes' diet". It was attended by sixteen princes, six counts, envoys of the Emperor, of the Pope and of the kings of France and Denmark, representatives of the 29 Imperial and Hanseatic cities, and 42 Evangelist theologians. On the instructions of the Elector of Saxony, Johann Friedrich, Martin Luther presented his articles of faith, which were incorporated into the Book of Concord of the Evangelical church as the Schmalkaldic Articles.

Come with us on discovery tour

1. St. George's Church

In February 1537, the most distinguished Protestant theologians of the time preached here. Among them was Martin Luther, who gave sermons on two separate occasions. The old paraments' chamber now houses a small museum known as the Luther Room.



2. Town Hall

The town hall is where the Schmalkaldic League was founded. From 1530 to 1543, it was also one of the most important places where the league convened. The events of the 16th century are commemorated by the coats of arms for the member towns in the foyer, a bust of Luther by Berlin-based artist Wieland Förster (1996) and a mural depicting Schmalkalden in the 16th century.

3. Luther's House

Martin Luther lived on the second floor of this house from 7 to 26 February 1537 during the most important meeting of the



Schmalkaldic League. He was the guest of the Hessian chamberlain Balthasar Wilhelm.

4. The Hessenhof

During the meeting of the Schmalkaldic League in 1537, the building was used for debates between Protestant theologians.

5. Heads of the Reformation

A very important painting shows the most famous heads of the city: (LTR) Martin Bucer, Philipp of Hesse, Johann Friedrich of Saxony, Philipp Melancthon, Johannes Bugenhagen and Martin Luther.



6. Wilhelmsburg Palace

Wilhelmsburg Palace, a remarkable monument to the art and culture of the German Renaissance, was built for Landgrave Wilhelm IV of Hessen-Kassel between 1585 and 1590 as a secondary residence. There is a permanent exhibition at the museum of the castle, called „The Schmalkaldic League - the political arm of the reformation“.



Editor:

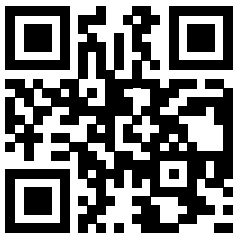
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