

Basel

Basel-Stadt · Switzerland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Basel lies on the Rhine in the corner where Switzerland, France and Germany meet. It is a city of art, with more than 30 museums, and also of chemistry and pharma industry. The compact old town sits above the river on the left bank.

Basel is easy to visit in one to two days. It suits travelers who like museums and walks by the river.

When to visit

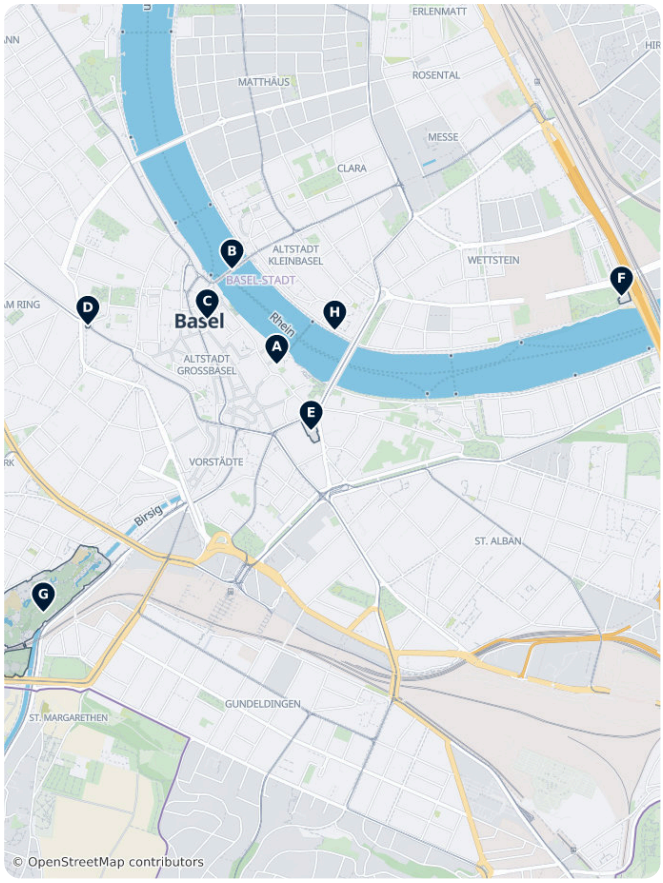
May to September is the best time. Days are warm and the Rhine is a place to swim and relax. Art Basel, the large art fair, takes place in June and hotels are busy then. Fasnacht, the carnival, starts the Monday after Ash Wednesday and runs for 72 hours. Winter is cold and grey, but the Christmas market is one of the best in Switzerland.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for watersports	5° / 12° Feels like 1°	-1° / -8°	13 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for watersports	7° / 14° Feels like 3°	-1° / -9°	Dry air
March	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 19° Feels like 8°	2° / -4°	13 rainy days · Dry air
April	Good Good for cycling	16° / 23°	5° / -1°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Good Good for sightseeing	20° / 26°	10° / 4°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 30°	14° / 8°	16 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	25° / 31°	15° / 10°	17 rainy days · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	25° / 32°	15° / 10°	15 rainy days · Calm winds
September	Good Good for sightseeing	21° / 27°	11° / 5°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	17° / 23°	8° / 1°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 17° Feels like 7°	3° / -3°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for watersports	6° / 12° Feels like 2°	0° / -8°	14 rainy days · Dry air

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Basler Münster is the red sandstone cathedral above the Rhine. Climb a tower for views of the city and the river.
- B Mittlere Brücke is the main bridge across the Rhine and links the old town with Kleinbasel.
- C Rathaus is a red town hall on the market square. Look into the painted courtyard.
- D Spalentor is a medieval city gate with a tiled roof.
- E Kunstmuseum Basel Hauptbau has the oldest public art collection in the world, with works from the 15th century to today.
- F Museum Tinguely shows moving machines by *Jean Tinguely* and is good for children.
- G Zoologischer Garten Basel is a large zoo near the centre, known for its gorilla and rhino programmes.
- H Rheinuferpromenade is a pleasant path along the water for walking and sunset views.



Basel – Plan Your Trip

Turn the places from this guide into a real itinerary, with smart routing, time estimates, and everything you need for a perfect trip.

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What to experience

- See the carnival fountain, Fasnachts-Brunnen, a moving sculpture by *Jean Tinguely*.
- Visit Museum der Kulturen for world cultures.
- See contemporary art at Kunstmuseum Basel Neubau, in the new building.
- Visit Naturhistorisches Museum Basel for natural history.
- Float down the Rhine in a waterproof bag in summer. Locals do this daily.
- Go to the point where three countries meet at Dreiländereck.

Day trips

- Freiburg in Germany is about 1 hour away by train and has a historic centre and a large cathedral.
- Colmar in France is about 1 hour away by train and has a small, colourful old town.
- Augusta Raurica, a large Roman site, lies about 20 minutes from Basel by train.

Getting there

- By air: EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg is on the French side of the border. A bus to the Swiss station in Basel takes about 20 minutes. Zurich Airport is also an option, about 1 hour by train.
- By train: Basel SBB is a main hub. Trains run to Zurich in about 1 hour, to Bern in about 1 hour and to Paris in about 3 hours. Check times on SBB.
- Basel also has a German station, Basel Badischer Bahnhof, for trains to Germany.

Getting around

- The old town is easy to walk, and most sights are within a 20-minute walk of the station.
- Trams and buses cover the city. Buy tickets at machines or in an app before you ride.
- Hotel guests in Basel get a free local transport pass. Ask at check-in.
- Four small ferries cross the Rhine. They are pulled by the river current and cost little.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town and the Rhine banks are compact and mostly flat.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

The city is flat and has many bike lanes.

Driving

- A car is not needed in the city. Parking in the centre is limited and costly.
- The border with France and Germany is close, so crossing is easy. Check if a motorway sticker is needed in the neighbouring country.

Food & drink

Try Basler Läckerli, a spiced honey biscuit, and Basler Mehlsuppe, a flour soup eaten during carnival. Läckerli are sold all over the old town. Restaurants range from traditional to international.

Prices are high. Markets on Marktplatz have fresh local products.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Birchermüesli
A raw-oat, fruit, and yogurt breakfast invented by a Zurich doctor around 1900, now standard on breakfast buffets.

LUNCH

Rösti
A fried, shredded-potato cake, originally a Bernese farmer's breakfast, now a national side dish.

DINNER

Cheese Fondue · Fondue
Melted Gruyère and Vacherin cheese in a shared pot, eaten by dipping bread cubes on long forks.

Raclette
Cheese melted tableside or under a grill and scraped over boiled potatoes, pickles, and onions.

Zürcher Geschnetzeltes
Sliced veal and mushrooms in a creamy white-wine sauce, traditionally served with rösti.

Älplermagronen
Alpine herder's macaroni gratin with potatoes, cheese, and cream, often topped with fried onions and served with apple sauce.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Cervelat
Switzerland's best-known sausage, usually grilled and often called the country's unofficial national dish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Swiss Chocolate · Schweizer Schokolade
Switzerland pioneered milk chocolate in the 19th century; look for small-batch chocolatiers alongside the big national brands.

Basler Läckerli
A dense, spiced honey-and-candied-fruit biscuit from Basel, traditional around Christmas.

DRINKS

Swiss Wine · Vin Suisse
Mostly consumed domestically rather than exported; Valais and Vaud, along Lake Geneva, produce the best-known Chasselas whites.

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Safety & health

- Basel is very safe.
- Watch your bags in crowded places, such as the station and trams.
- Tap water is safe to drink.
- Swimming in the Rhine is popular but the current is strong. Use a swim bag and stay close to the bank.

History

Basel started as a Roman and then a medieval town on the Rhine. Its university, founded in 1460, is the oldest in Switzerland. The city joined the Swiss Confederation in 1501.

The humanist *Erasmus of Rotterdam* lived and worked in Basel in the 16th century and is buried in the Basler Münster. In the 19th and 20th centuries the city grew as a centre for chemistry and pharma.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Switzerland at a glance:

CURRENCY
CHF CHF

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



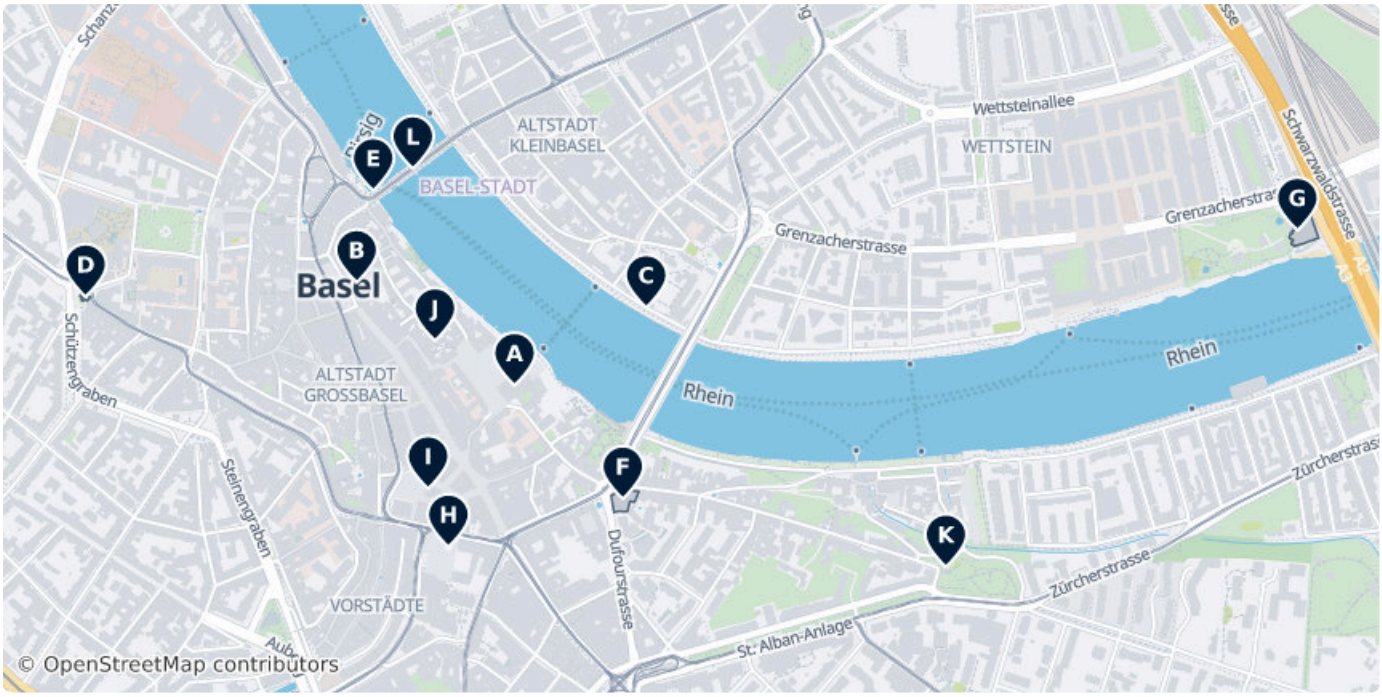
Type C / Type J
230 V · 50 Hz

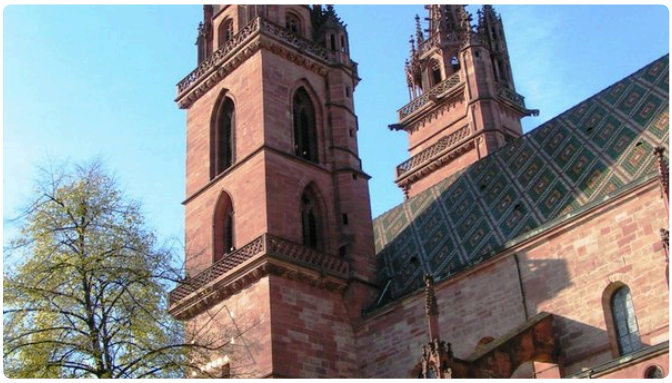
LANGUAGES
German, French, Italian, Romansh

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Basel's Absolute Essentials

Basel sits on the Rhine and features a blend of medieval architecture and world-class art. The red-sandstone Basel Münster and the 500-year-old Rathaus dominate the historic center, while the Spalentor and St. Alban Gate represent the city's surviving medieval fortifications. Art enthusiasts can explore the Kunstmuseum, housing the world's oldest public collection, or view Jean Tinguely's kinetic sculptures at his dedicated museum and the playful Fasnachts-Brunnen. Historical landmarks like the Mittlere Brücke and the Barfüsserkirche offer deep insights into Swiss heritage and the city's strategic riverside location.





A Basel Münster

Basel Minster is a religious building in the Swiss city of Basel, originally a Catholic cathedral and today a Reformed Protestant church.

Rittergasse 3, 4051 Basel, Switzerland (47.55643, 7.59230)

baslermuenster.ch, +41 61 272 91 57



B Basel Town Hall

The Basel Town Hall is a 500-year-old building dominating the Marktplatz in Basel, Switzerland.

Marktplatz 9, 4001 Basel, Switzerland (47.55820, 7.58829)

bs.ch, +41 61 267 81 81



C Rhine promenade

This is the best place to start your visit of Basel. Come here on a sunny morning and admire amazing panorama.

Oberer Rheinweg, Basel 4005, Switzerland (47.55777, 7.59564)



D Gate of Spalen

The Basel city walls are a complex of walls surrounding the central part of the Swiss city of Basel, only partially preserved today.

Spalenvorstadt, 4056 Basel, Switzerland (47.55795, 7.58141)

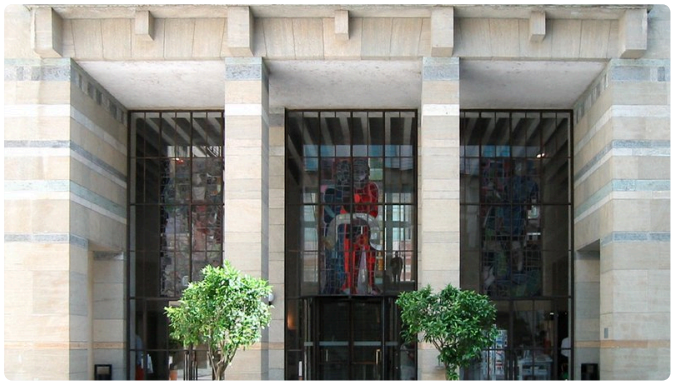


E Central Bridge

The oldest bridge crossing the Rhine was standing there until it was replaced in the 20th century.

Mittlere Brücke / Schifflände, 4001 Basel, Switzerland (47.55977, 7.58871)

basel.com/en/Media/Attractions/Sightseeing/Mittlere-Br...



F Kunstmuseum Basel

The Kunstmuseum Basel houses the oldest public art collection in the world and is generally considered to be the most important museum of...

St. Alban-Graben 20, 4010 (47.55449, 7.59505)

Tu	09:00–18:00
We	09:00–20:00
Th–Su	09:00–18:00

kunstmuseumbasel.ch, +41 61 206 62 62



G Tinguely Museum

The Museum Tinguely is an art museum in Basel, Switzerland that contains a permanent exhibition of the works of Swiss painter and sculptor...

Paul Sacher-Anlage 1, 4058 Basel (47.55909, 7.61218)

Tu–We	11:00–18:00
Th	11:00–21:00
Fr–Su	11:00–18:00

tinguely.ch, +41 61 681 93 20



H Tinguely Brunnen

A masterpiece built by the renowned Swiss painter and sculptor. Note that the iron figures are moving and interacting with each other.

Theaterstrasse, 4051 Basel, Switzerland (47.55367, 7.59062)

basel.com/en/Media/Attractions/Sightseeing/Tinguely-Fo...



I Basel Historical Museum – Barfüsserkirche

The Basel Historical Museum is one of the largest and most important museums of its kind in Switzerland and a heritage site of national...

Fasnachtsgasse, 4001 Basel, Switzerland (47.55466, 7.59010)

Tu–Su	10:00–17:00

hmb.ch, +41 61 205 86 00



J Museum of Cultures

The Museum of Cultures in Basel is a Swiss museum of ethnography with large and important collections of artifacts, especially from Europe,...

Münsterplatz 20, 4051 Basel (47.55720, 7.59028)

Mo	Closed
Tu–Su	10:00–20:00

mkb.ch, +41 61 266 56 00



K St. Alban Gate

The Basel city walls are a complex of walls surrounding the central part of the Swiss city of Basel, only partially preserved today.

St. Alban-Vorstadt, 4052 Basel, Switzerland
(47.55332, 7.60325)



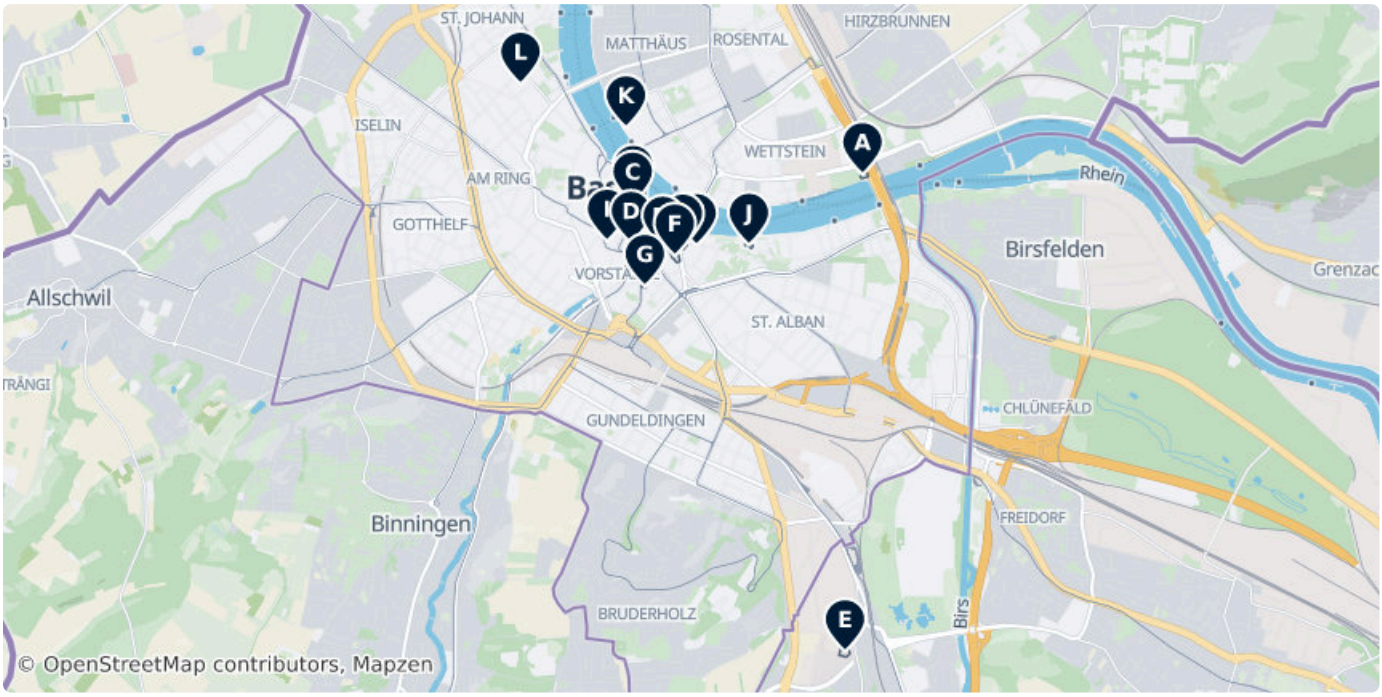
L Middle Bridge, Basel

The Middle Bridge is a historic bridge in the Swiss city of Basel. It is situated on the oldest existing bridge site across the Rhine,...

Mittlere Rheinbrücke, Basel 4051, Switzerland
(47.56014, 7.58972)

Basel's Top Museums

Basel serves as Switzerland's cultural hub, boasting over 40 museums within a small geographic area. This selection features the Kunstmuseum Basel, home to the world's oldest public art collection, and the Museum of Cultures, which houses extensive ethnographic artifacts. The list includes specialized institutions like the Tinguely Museum, dedicated to kinetic sculpture, and the Basel Historical Museum, which occupies multiple historical sites including the Barfüsserkirche and the Haus zum Kirschgarten mansion. The collections span fine arts, natural history, and contemporary works.





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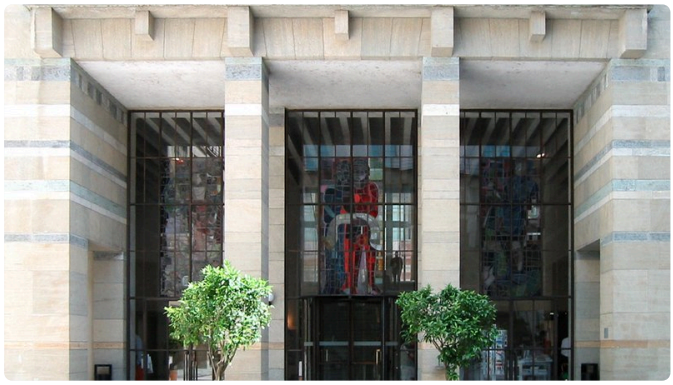
tinguely.ch, +41 61 681 93 20



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Tu–Su	10:00–17:00

hmb.ch, +41 61 205 86 00



E Schaulager

The Schaulager is a museum in Newmünchenstein, a sub-district of Münchenstein in the canton of Basel-Country, Switzerland.

Ruchfeldstrasse 19, 4142 Münchenstein, CH (47.52842, 7.61051)

schaulager.org, +41 61 335 32 32



F Kunstmuseum Basel

The Kunstmuseum Basel houses the oldest public art collection in the world and is generally considered to be the most important museum of...

St. Alban-Graben 16, 4051 Basel (47.55386, 7.59428)

Tu	09:00–18:00
We	09:00–20:00
Th–Su	09:00–18:00

kunstmuseumbasel.ch, +41 61 206 62 62



G Basel Historical Museum – Haus zum Kirschgarten

Located in an 18th-century town mansion, this museum showcases domestic life and living culture from the 18th and 19th centuries through period rooms and specialized collections of clocks and toys.

Elisabethenstrasse 29, 4051 Basel (47.55190, 7.59144)

We–Su 11:00–17:00

hauszumkirschgarten.ch, +41 61 205 86 00



H Natural History Museum of Basel

Natural History Museum Basel is a natural history museum in Basel, Switzerland that houses wide-ranging collections focused on the fields...

Augustinergasse 2, 4051 Basel (47.55762, 7.59033)

Tu–Su 10:00–17:00

nmb.bs.ch

I Basel Historical Museum – Musikmuseum

Housed in the former Lohnhof prison, this museum displays over 650 musical instruments spanning five centuries, offering insights into the history of music-making in the Upper Rhine region.

Im Lohnhof 9, 4051 Basel (47.55480, 7.58784)

We–Su 11:00–17:00

musikmuseum.ch, +41 61 205 86 00



J Museum of Contemporary Art

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Basel opened in 1980 as the first public museum in Europe exclusively dedicated to the production and...

60 Sankt Alban-Rheinweg, Basel 4052, Switzerland (47.55455, 7.60135)

museenbasel.ch/en/museen/kunstmuseum-basel-gegen...



K Museum Kleines Klingental

Situated in a former 13th-century Dominican nunnery, this museum preserves original stone sculptures from the Basel Cathedral and historical models of the city's development.

26 Unterer Rheinweg, Basel 4058, Switzerland (47.56210, 7.58963)

We–Sa	14:00–17:00
Su	10:00–17:00

mkk.ch



L Museum of Anatomy

This museum is a real blow for everyone interested in human body. Educating collection of amazing exhibits.

Pestalozzistrasse 20, 4056 Basel, CH (47.56489, 7.57958)

Mo–Fr	14:00–17:00
Sa	Closed
Su	10:00–16:00

anatomie.unibas.ch/museum/, +41 61 267 3535

M Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig

Switzerland's only museum dedicated exclusively to ancient Mediterranean art, featuring a collection of Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Etruscan artifacts dating from the 4th millennium BC to the 7th century AD.

St. Alban-Graben 5, 4051 Basel (47.55436, 7.59314)

Tu–Su	11:00–17:00, 11:00–22:00, 11:00–17:00

antikenmuseumbasel.ch

N Cartoonmuseum Basel

Dedicated to satirical art, this institution hosts rotating exhibitions of political caricatures, comics, and cartoons from around the world, housed in a building combining late Gothic and modern architecture.

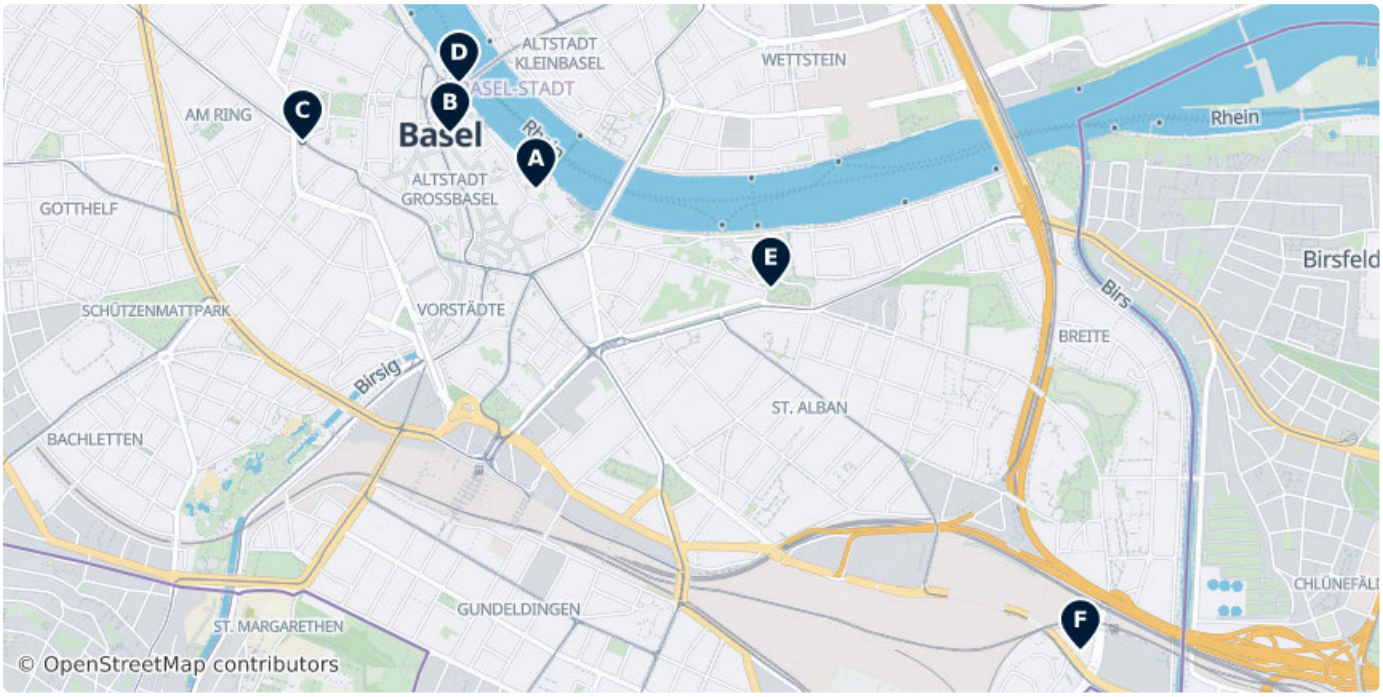
St. Alban-Vorstadt 28, 4052 Basel, CH (47.55453, 7.59637)

Tu–Su	11:00–17:00

cartoonmuseum.ch

Basel's Historic Landmarks

Basel’s history is preserved through its architectural landmarks spanning the medieval and Renaissance periods. The red sandstone Münster and the ornate, 500-year-old City Hall on Marktplatz serve as central anchors. The city's former defensive system is represented by the Spalentor and St. Alban Gate, two surviving 14th-century gateways. Spanning the Rhine, the Mittlere Brücke marks one of the oldest bridge sites on the river, while the St. Jakob monument commemorates a significant 15th-century battle.





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baslermuenster.ch, +41 61 272 91 57



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F St Jakob Schlacht 1444

This monument commemorates the Battle of St. Jakob an der Birs fought in 1444. It honors the Swiss confederate soldiers who faced a significantly larger French Armagnac force, serving as a symbol of Swiss bravery and national identity.

(47.54192, 7.61769)

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