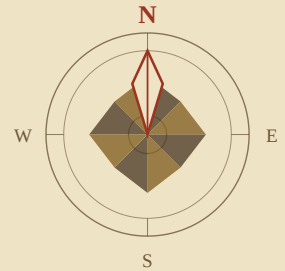


MADE TO EXPLORE

THE RHINE ROAD

*The castles that taxed the river, from Rüdesheim
to Koblenz*

8 stops · 70 km of river · by campervan



KOBLENZ

8

Ehrenbreitstein

Stolzenfels
Lahnneck
Lahnstein
Rhens

7

BRAUBACH

BOPPARD

6

Filsen
Kamp-Bornhofen
Sierrenberg · Liebenstein



Maus

St. Goarshausen

ST. GOAR

5

Katz
Loreley



HUNSRÜCK

TAUNUS

Oberwesel
Schönburg

4

KAUB

BACHARACH

3

Fürstenberg
Heimburg
Nollig
Lorch

Sooneck

Reichenstein

Rheinstein

Assmannshausen

Mäuseturm

2

RÜDESHEIM

BINGEN

RHEINGAU

LEGEND

— the driving route

..... ferry



stage stop



castle

gorge slopes

SCALE — KILOMETRES

0 5 10 15

1

RÜDESHEIM AM RHEIN

Rheingau — the gate, from the vineyard bank

THE CASTLE	The Brömserburg, down in the town, is one of the oldest castles on the Rhine, tenth century, and it was a customs post before it was a wine museum. Above the vines stands the Niederwalddenkmal, the 38-metre bronze Germania raised in 1883 after the war with France. Between the two, the Drosselgasse: a hundred and forty-four metres of lane, the most visited street in Germany.
THE CAMPER	Campsite right on the bank at the edge of town. This is the last place where the Rhine is wide and calm — from the next ferry on, the river tightens between rock. Mind the access: from the B42 down to the bank you pass under a 2.80 m underpass.
FREE	The vineyards above the town are walked on foot, and the monument costs nothing — only the cable car over the vines has a ticket. The Drosselgasse is worth seeing once, in the morning, before it fills.
WHERE TO SLEEP	Campsite · Campingplatz am Rhein, Kastanienallee 4 · GPS 49.97798, 7.94017
OFFICIAL DATA	Rüdesheim – Bingen ferry · Paid per metre of length; above 2.5 m wide, the rate is higher. · read on 5 October 2026

The Rüdesheim–Bingen ferry, a few minutes, camper on deck. It is the first of four crossings: from here to Koblenz there is not a single bridge.

2

BINGEN AM RHEIN

Rhineland-Palatinate — the tower in the water

THE CASTLE	The Mäuseturm stands on an island at the mouth of the gorge, and the legend of Bishop Hatto eaten by mice is a sixteenth-century story. The truth is drier: the tower collected the toll together with Ehrenfels, the castle opposite, and no ship passed both without paying. This was the Binger Loch, the reef that made the Rhine unnavigable until it was blasted.
THE CAMPER	City camper parking (a Stellplatz), right on the riverbank and very close to the promenade (1.4 km): an easy walk on foot. There are only ten places, so come early. From here the B9 starts, the west-bank road you stay on to Bacharach.
FREE	The promenade, with the tower and Ehrenfels in front of you, is where the whole route makes sense: two customs posts, one on each bank, at the narrowest passage. Above the town, the Hildegard of Bingen trail.
✓ ON THE GROUND	Checked on the ground by Calin Muntean · 4 October 2026 · Stellplatz · city camper parking · Wohnmobilstellplatz Mainzer Straße · GPS 49.97037, 7.93044

Bingen → Trechtingshausen → Bacharach, 15 km on the B9. Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck stand above the road one after another, three kilometres apart.

3

BACHARACH

Rhineland-Palatinate — the town Hugo liked

THE CASTLE	Victor Hugo passed through in 1840 and wrote that it was the prettiest place he had seen on the Rhine. Above stands Stahleck, the Palatine customs castle, now a youth hostel: you can sleep in a toll castle for the price of a dormitory bed. In town, the ruin of the Werner chapel, the walls with their towers, and the half-timbered houses.
THE CAMPER	Campsite on the bank south of town, one of the best-placed on the route. The railway runs past — on the Middle Rhine it runs past all of them.
FREE	The walk on the walls, the climb to Stahleck for the terrace — the castle is a hostel, but the courtyard and the view are open — and the Rheinburgenweg, the path linking the castles of the west bank.
WHERE TO SLEEP	Campsite · Camping Sonnenstrand, Strandbadweg 9 · GPS 50.05342, 7.77295

6 km to the Engelsburg ferry, which takes you across to Kaub. The second crossing.

4

KAUB*Rhineland-Palatinate — the castle in the middle of the water*

THE CASTLE Pfalzgrafenstein was built in 1327 on an island with a single purpose: to collect. A chain across the river, a barrier, a boat with soldiers. It was never taken and never destroyed, and it is the most photographed castle on the Rhine. Above it, Gutenfels guarded the rear. And on New Year's night 1813, Blücher crossed the Rhine here on Napoleon's heels.

THE CAMPER Kaub is small. Parking by the ferry on the east bank, and from here you stay on the B42 to St. Goarshausen.

FREE The castle is seen whole from the bank, from the best angle, without a ticket. The passenger boat to the island costs a few euros, and there is less inside than outside. Across the water, Oberwesel with the sixteen towers of its walls.

| Kaub → St. Goarshausen, 10 km on the B42, beneath the Lorelei.

5

ST. GOAR*Rhineland-Palatinate — the two banks and the rock*

THE CASTLE Rheinfels, above St. Goar, is the largest castle ruin on the Rhine. It was raised in 1245 to impose a new toll, and in 1255 an alliance of twenty-six towns besieged it for a year and failed. Opposite, Katz and Maus. And between them the Lorelei rock, 132 metres, at the narrowest and deepest point of the river. The legend of the singing girl is a poem from 1801, not folklore.

THE CAMPER Campsite at St. Goar with the rock in front of you across the water, and another at St. Goarshausen. The ferry between the two towns runs all day, so the bank you sleep on does not matter.

FREE The Lorelei plateau is climbed on foot and is open; only the visitor centre has a ticket. Rheinfels charges, but the outer walls can be walked round for nothing. The ferry is the cheapest thing with an engine on the whole route.

WHERE TO SLEEP Campsite · Campingplatz Loreleyblick, An der Lorelei 29, St. Goar · GPS 50.14088, 7.72191

| St. Goar → Boppard, 15 km on the B9, through the tightest part of the gorge.

6

BOPPARD*Rhineland-Palatinate — the loop*

THE CASTLE There is no castle here, and that is the point. Boppard was a Roman fort, Bodobrica, with walls that still stand, and the toll was set by the river itself: the Bopparder Hamm is the biggest bend on the Rhine, and ships slowed so much that the customs post needed no chain. From above, at the Gedeonseck, the bend looks like four separate lakes — the Vierseenblick — because each turn hides the next.

THE CAMPER Campsite on the bank 4 km north of town, on the B9. Boppard is the largest town on the route, so this is where you stock up.

FREE The Vierseenblick is walked in an hour; the chairlift costs. The Roman walls and the promenade are open. It is the stop where you pay nobody anything.

WHERE TO SLEEP Campsite · Campingpark Sonneneck, B9, Boppard · GPS 50.24861, 7.62583

| The Boppard–Filsen ferry, the fourth and last crossing. From here you stay on the east bank to Koblenz.

7

BRAUBACH*Rhineland-Palatinate — the only castle untouched*

THE CASTLE The Marksburg is the only hill castle on the Rhine that was never destroyed. All the others were blown up by the French in 1689 or left to fall. This one has been inhabited without interruption since 1231. So it is the only place on the route where you see what a Rhine customs post looked like when it worked, not what its ruin looks like.

THE CAMPER Camper place on the riverbank below the castle. From here it is 12 km to the end.

FREE The way up and the outer walls are open. Inside is by guided tour only, with a ticket — and it is the one castle on the route where we say without hesitation that the ticket is worth it.

WHERE TO SLEEP Camper area · Wohnmobilstellplatz Braubach, Rheinuferstraße (B42) · GPS 50.27009, 7.64674

Braubach → Lahnstein → Koblenz, 12 km on the B42. At the mouth of the Lahn, Lahneck and Stolzenfels face each other, one on each bank.

8

KOBLENZ*Rhineland-Palatinate — where the Mosel enters the Rhine*

THE CASTLE The Deutsches Eck is the point of land between the two rivers, and on it sits Kaiser Wilhelm I on horseback, 37 metres with the plinth. Raised in 1897, destroyed in 1945, rebuilt in 1993. Across the Rhine, Ehrenbreitstein, the second-largest fortress in Europe, and the cable car that climbs to it straight over the water. From the top you see both valleys at once and understand why everything you have passed was built.

THE CAMPER Campingplatz Rhein-Mosel, exactly at the confluence, on the Mosel bank with the Deutsches Eck in front of you across the water. You sleep with the statue in your window. A passenger ferry takes you into town in minutes. It closes when the river floods.

FREE The Deutsches Eck, the quays, the Mosel bank — everything at water level is open. The cable car and the fortress share a ticket, and the route ends the way it began: with a customs post, except this time you pay to see it from above, not to pass beneath it.

WHERE TO SLEEP Campsite · KNAUS Campingpark Koblenz/Rhein-Mosel, Schartwiesenweg 6 · GPS 50.36624, 7.60330

End of the route. Cologne is 90 km north, Frankfurt 120 east, and Luxembourg 150 west.

THE ROUTE IN BRIEF

River covered	~70 km
Distance driven	~120 km
Driving time	~3 h in all, without stops or waiting for ferries
Recommended time	5–7 days
Stage stops	8
Ferry crossings	4
Direction	south → north, with the current
Best months	May–Jun · Sep

GOOD TO KNOW BEFORE YOU LEAVE

There is no bridge between Mainz and Koblenz: the route changes banks with four ferries, which take campers, with no booking; the fare varies with length.

From November to March many castles close, and the ferries run rarely, some pausing altogether.

In summer, at weekends, the riverside campsites are full and there are queues at the ferries.

WHEN TO GO

Ideal: May–June when the vines are green, or September at harvest. That is also when Rhein in Flammen fireworks run, on several evenings over different stretches.

Workable: July–August, but on weekends the riverside campsites are full and the ferries queue.

Avoid: November–March. Many castles close, ferries run sparsely and the light sits low in the gorge.

A long weekend: Bacharach, Kaub, St. Goar and Koblenz fit into three days. The rest is added when there is time.

THE FOUR FERRIES

Between Mainz and Koblenz there is not a single bridge. You cross only by ferry, and the route uses four: Rüdesheim–Bingen, Engelsburg–Kaub, St. Goarshausen–St. Goar and Boppard–Filsen.

All four take campers. You pay on board, a few euros for the vehicle plus passengers, and the rates vary with length — check each ferry's table, do not assume.

They run from dawn to evening at intervals of minutes, without booking. In winter the timetable shortens and some pause.

The passenger boat to Pfalzgrafenstein and the one at Koblenz take no vehicles — they are for you, not the camper.

WHERE YOU SLEEP

The campsites sit right on the bank at Rüdesheim, Bacharach, St. Goar, Boppard and Koblenz, and the small towns have Stellplätze. No booking needed outside summer weekends.

What nobody tells you: the railway runs on both banks, hard against the river, and freight trains run at night. On the Middle Rhine there is no campsite without a train. Earplugs, or a pitch as far from the line as you can get.

Free overnighting is banned in Germany in the sense of camping, but one night in the camper in a car park, to recover, is tolerated. On this route there is no point: there is a campsite at every stop.

The B9 and B42 are narrow in places and have nowhere to stop between towns. Do not pull over on the road for photographs — every town has parking at the water.

THE CASTLES, ONE BY ONE

Pfalzgrafenstein Visited by passenger boat from Kaub, small ticket. You see more from the bank than from inside, but walking onto the island is an experience in itself.

Rheinfels Entrance ticket, a huge ruin, a maze of tunnels to take with a torch. The outer walls can be walked round for free.

Marksburg Guided tours only, at set times, ticket. It is the only intact one, so the only one where the inside tells you anything. Worth it.

Stahleck It is a hostel. The courtyard and terrace are open, and you can sleep inside at hostel prices. Not a visit, a stay.

Ehrenbreitstein Combined ticket with the Koblenz cable car. The fortress is enormous, allow half a day. The museums inside are included.

The rest Rheinstein, Reichenstein, Sooneck, Stolzenfels and Lahneck charge and keep seasonal hours. Katz is private, Maus rarely opens, Schönburg is a hotel. All are seen from the road.

How many bridges are there between Mainz and Koblenz?

None. You cross only by ferry, and the route uses four: Rüdesheim–Bingen, Engelsburg–Kaub, St. Goarshausen–St. Goar and Boppard–Filsen.

Do the Rhine ferries take campers?

All four take campers. You pay on board, and the rates vary with vehicle length — check each ferry's own table rather than assuming the car rate.

Which castle is worth the entrance ticket?

The Marksburg at Braubach — the only hill castle on the Rhine that was never destroyed, and the only one whose interior shows how a river customs post actually worked. Guided tours only, at set times.

Are the campsites on the Rhine bank quiet?

Not entirely. The railway runs on both banks, hard against the river, and freight trains run at night. On the Middle Rhine there is no campsite without a train.

THE RULE OF THE ROAD

“On this river you paid at every bend, under threat of the chain.

The castles remained. The chains did not.

Today you see them all from the bank, and the only thing you pay for is the ferry.”

Documentary check: September 2026. Places, hours and conditions change — check them before you leave.