

HILDEGARD-WAY

The places where Hildegard of Bingen was involved are no longer easy to identify. But still in the city of Bingen, there are paths that lead to many encounters with the most important woman of the Middle Ages. This pamphlet invites visitors to get to know our city and the places of remembrance of Hildegard that reflect her life and work – on a walk along the numbered points of the chart ① – ⑩.

Along our Hildegard Way are also many shops and dining establishments, containing an assortment of quality products that identify with the theme of Hildegard of Bingen – from literature on wine to spices and tea. Participating establishments are also recognized by the Hildegard logo in their shop window:



① MUSEUM AM STROM

In the large Hildegard exhibit of the Museum am Strom more than 300 square meters portray a vivid and lifelike picture of the great abbess: consider the long ago destroyed Hildegard cloister resurrected again in fascinating models, impressive works of art, valuable originals (like the first print of the „Physica“ of 1533) and graphic reproductions that vividly depict life and work. As one ascends to the museum gallery, sound systems and views of the Rhine help you experience Hildegard's visual



② HILDEGARDEN

The Hildegarden of the museum shows numerous plants represented by Hildegard in her nature studies („Physica“). In this book the scholarly Benedictine nun described almost 300 herbs, shrubs, and trees with their (healing) effect on people. With almost 30 beds, some with plant varieties for a common purpose and some with only a single



species, accompanied by numerous illustrated explanation plaques, the garden offers a comprehensive overview of the Hildegard plants – and allows again and again the great healer to speak for herself. For example, you can learn interesting things about betony, to which Hildegard attributes special effects, though unfortunately not proven yet: „Anyone who is dumb or simple minded, pound the betony herb to juice and put it on their chest in the evening, and they will gain understanding.“

③ SALZSTRASSE (SALT STREET)

Salt Street is one of the oldest Bingen streets: in the 12th century it was already known by its current name („Salzgassun“). Salt was called „white gold“ in the Middle Ages, which is why the salt trade provided the Bingen merchants a lucrative business: the salt was unloaded from the ships and transported up Salt Street for resale at the

market. Hildegard of Bingen also knew about the importance of salt and recommended its moderate use in consideration of sound nutrition: „Who eats food without salt, will become internally weak. Too much strongly salted food dries and damages the internals. Therefore, each food should be salted so that one tastes the food, not the salt.“

④ SPEISEMARKT (FOOD MARKET)

During Hildegard's time, the market place existed at the same place. Of course, the visionary Hildegard warned against the dangers of trade that promote greed and pride and so on, all too often favoring earthly passions. It is this attitude that was often maintained in the Middle Ages in church circles, where Hildegard in a vision also portrayed a very negative picture of the market hustle: „perishable wealth ignites pride and vain glory, fleeting pleasures create arrogance and ambition, and



Represents a marketplace with sales' tables and merchants (Scivias, Vision II,7)

sale and purchase brings with them many types of earthly passions.“ Nevertheless, despite all of her warnings, successful trade still carried on in Bingen, and that's why the devil may not have taken them.

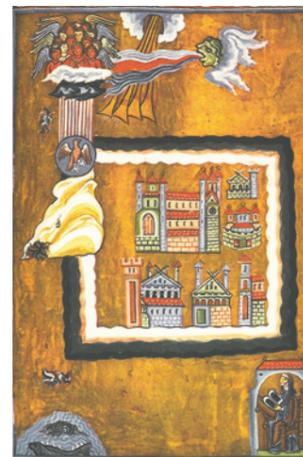
⑤ KAPUZINERSTRASSE (CAPUCHIN STREET)

This street was formerly called „Street of Our Lady“ – named after a Virgin Mary chapel that stood here during the lifetime of Hildegard (since 1143). For Hildegard of Bingen, worshipping the Virgin Mary had great importance: she dedicated to the Virgin Mary 16 of her most beautifully written liturgical [public worship] chants. The most famous of them („O virga ac diadema“ [Praise for the Virgin]) contains the following lines translated into modern language: „Then the celestial harmony sounded, and all Earth marveled, O praiseworthy Mary, because God loved you so. O how lamentable and dismal it is that sorrows and wrongs at the serpent's word flowed into Woman.“ (Translation: Sabina Flanagan, University of Aldelaide, Volume 124-5).

⑥ MOAT

The Bingen town wall, still preserved here in the form of a wall and ditch, was constructed in the middle of the 12th century – exactly at the time when Hildegard moved

into her cloister at Rupertsberg. Back then, as the first towns thrived on the Rhine river, the nature of open settlements changed in many places. The new town walls symbolized the transformation of the times and impressed the contemporaries. Even Hildegard described the image of a walled town from several of her visions in the „Book of Divine Works“. The walled town is the symbol for the divine court, where people, according to their merits, will be assigned to the bright or dark places for eternity: „And I saw a large rectangular-shaped town surrounded on all sides by light and darkness like a great wall.“



Vision of the walled town (Liber div. Op. 6)

⑦ KLOPP CASTLE

The history projector in the castle courtyard allows you to have a view of Hildegard's town: a virtual depiction takes



the form of medieval Bingen. In addition to the important structures of her era that survived, the projector presents the shapes of the long-vanished structures creating an image of medieval Bingen. Among them is the Hildegard cloister at Rupertsberg that was destroyed in 1632. When the famous painter and hydraulic engineer Matthias Grünewald in 1510 repaired the well that ran dry in the courtyard of the Klopp Castle, he could still see the cloister. This sight left a lasting impression on the artist: on his world-famous Isenheimer Altar, Grünewald depicted the cloister as he saw it from the castle courtyard – and in this way he preserved for history the cloister at Rupertsberg as part of a world-class piece of art.

⑧ VINEYARD „SCHLOSSBERG“

During Hildegard's time, Bingen was not only surrounded by vineyards, but the vines actually grew in many areas in the town itself – but today, one can only experi-

ence these vineyards on the hill of Castle Klopp. Also, the Hildegard cloister at Rupertsberg was encircled by rows of vines, and the sisters had additional vineyards in Rheinhessen and in Pfalz. Wine played a major role in the diet of the people because the wine, unlike the water from the well, through its alcohol content did not contain bacteria and provided vitamins. To a great extent, Hildegard adhered to the health-promoting effect of wine: „The grapevine has fire-like warmth, and that fire is so strong that it gives its juice a taste that is different from other herbs. Wine makes the blood of those who drink it good and healthy.“

⑨ HILDEGARD INFORMATION CENTER

The local Hildegard Information Center, maintained by the Bingen Tourist Information Center, provides an orientation for the visitors addressing many typical questions about Hildegard of Bingen: When are the Hildegard sites open? What traces has the great teacher of the church left in Bingen? What is worth a visit with only scarce time available? Volunteers try to answer all practical questions concerning Hildegard tourism and also convey in personal conversation basic information on the Bingen teacher of the church and her work.

Multi-media equipment presents the most important places in the „Land of Hildegard“, and numerous brochures offer various illustrative material for a successful discovery of Hildegard's traces. Regular events and small presentations on Saturdays invite you to come back again and make you want to experience additional encounters with the most famous woman of the Middle Ages.

The information center is open between April and October on tuesday-saturday from 10:00 to 16:00.

⑩ BASILICA ST. MARTIN

In the Bingen Basilika (St. Martin parish church), which was first mentioned in the year 1006, but today exists as a late-neogothic structure, the old crypt offers the opportunity to come close to Hildegard. It is quite probable that the Abbess of Rupertsberg knew this holy place, where valuable relics could be worshipped.

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The crypt in the Rupertsberg cloister, which disappeared long ago, could hardly look any different than this simple Romanesque vault from the 11th century, actually one of the earliest among those in the Rhineland. Here was the tomb of Saint Rupert and his mother Bertha, who had been worshipped since the 8th century for their blessed service for the poor and the sick. Most likely, the relics of Hildegard were also placed in the Rupertsberg crypt during the 13th century.



www.landderhildegard.de



Design: Wordwide, Mainz

BINGEN HILDEGARD- WAY

»SCIVIAS – HILDEGARD OF BINGEN«

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11 CLOISTER VIEW ON THE NAHE RIVERBANK

The Bingen Nahe riverbank in the Middle Ages featured an imposing view of the facade of the Hildegard cloister with its two mighty west towers. Today, the cloister, which in 1632 was destroyed in the Thirty Years' War, has almost completely disappeared. Only a few arches of the church nave [the main area of the church] are preserved in the art-nouveau style at Rupertsberg. Even the crypt under the choir ruins, the former site of the Hildegard shrine, fell victim in the year 1859 to nearby railway construction. The history projector, however, helps to inspire the imagination: in the eyes of the beholder rises the missing cloister backdrop in the midst of its historical surroundings.

A complete Rupertsberg setting outside the town walls of Bingen takes form like it could have been in the 13th century.

12 BRIDGE OVER NAHE RIVER

From today's Nahe river bridge you can see the Drusus bridge from the 11th century – it is considered to be one of the first stone bridges of the Middle Ages in Germany. Already in Hildegard's time, it was an important link for long-distance travel: from here the town of Bingen connected to the entire medieval world. The closeness of the bridge was also important to Hildegard and apparently influenced the location of the cloister foundation at Rupertsberg. From the cloister, her numerous scolding and admonishing letters

were sent on their way to addressees in all of Germany and beyond. From the bridge, Hildegard's travels began for her sermons throughout the region, and most likely she visited the chapel that still exists today at the easternmost pillar of the bridge to ask for divine assistance for her more dangerous faraway journeys.

13 RUPERTSBERG



Cloister model at the Museum am Strom

In approximately 1150, the Hildegard cloister with a three-aisle church in the center was built at Rupertsberg. While at Rupertsberg for almost 30 years, Hildegard wrote most of her works, which were then copied in the local scriptorium and sent to the outside world. The plaque at the entrance of the Rupertsberg vault helps the visitor to visually imagine the location of the various buildings of the cloister that were destroyed in the year 1632. The Rupertsberg vault, which extends below the former nave and on the weekends is open for visitors, is the only remaining place that offers direct access to the historic site. The Rupertsberg Society offers



regular guided tours and various events there, providing first and foremost spiritual access to Hildegard and an insight to her work.

14 MEMORIAL CHURCH ST. RUPERT AND ST. HILDEGARD

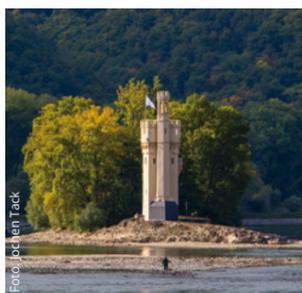
For centuries after her death, Hildegard was not a folk saint because of her difficult to understand and uncomfortable visions that only scholars valued. Only in the 19th century did the prophetess [a woman who speaks by divine inspiration] become a folk saint, which also applies today; moreover, on 7 October 2012, Pope Benedict pronounced her to be a teacher of the church. Also in 1892, the new parish church of Bingerbrück was consecrated as a memorial church of Saint Hildegard and Saint Rupert. In the church sanctuary, there is a shrine with relics of the two patrons. The artistically designed windows in the church transept [perpendicular wing(s) to the nave] depict the life and work of Hildegard. A bronze statue of the visionary by Karl-Heinz Oswald adorns the parvis [an enclosed space at the church entrance].

15 BINGERBRÜCK

At the time of Hildegard, the Bingerbrück district of Bingen did not exist. The local area was characterized by vineyards, the nearby forest and the long-distance roads along the Rhine and Nahe rivers. It was only with the development of the railroad junction in the 19th century that today's Bingerbrück settlement mainly came into being. Nevertheless, Hildegard had the opinion that the Rupertsberg in the early Middle Ages was the actual core of Bingen. As she indicated in her Life of Saint Rupert, Bingen [Bingerbrück of today] was a sizeable town with well-fortified houses, while „on the other side of the Nahe river lay only a village, where ordinary workmen and fishermen had their homes, and there were also fruit sheds and winepresses.“ Hence, researchers until today are puzzled over what historical foundations Hildegard based her assumptions regarding Bingerbrück.

16 “PARK AT THE MOUSE TOWER“

The 2008 Bingen Garden Show was located at the confluence of the Rhine and Nahe rivers, against the romantic backdrop of the „Bingen Loch“ [the shoal behind the Mouse Tower]. This place, the „Park at the Mouse Tower“, was developed as a recreational park for the whole family – with a magnificent view of the Mouse Tower and the UNESCO-world heritage Upper Middle Rhine Valley.



Such modern romanticism for Hildegard, however, was far too distant. In her work of nature studies, the so-called „Physica“, the Rhine river, whose praises would be sung later, has a bad reputation: “Because it comes from the sea with forcefulness, the Rhine water is slightly corrosive like lye. If one takes a bath therein, it causes bloated, swollen skin.” Why Hildegard, by the way, believed the Rhine river originated from the sea and the Nahe river from the Rhine, remains unclear. On a daily basis, had the learned abbess used logical observation of the Rhine-Nahe confluence in front of the eyes, she would have been convinced otherwise.



2 THE ROCHUSBERG: HILDEGARD FORUM AND ROCHUS CHAPEL

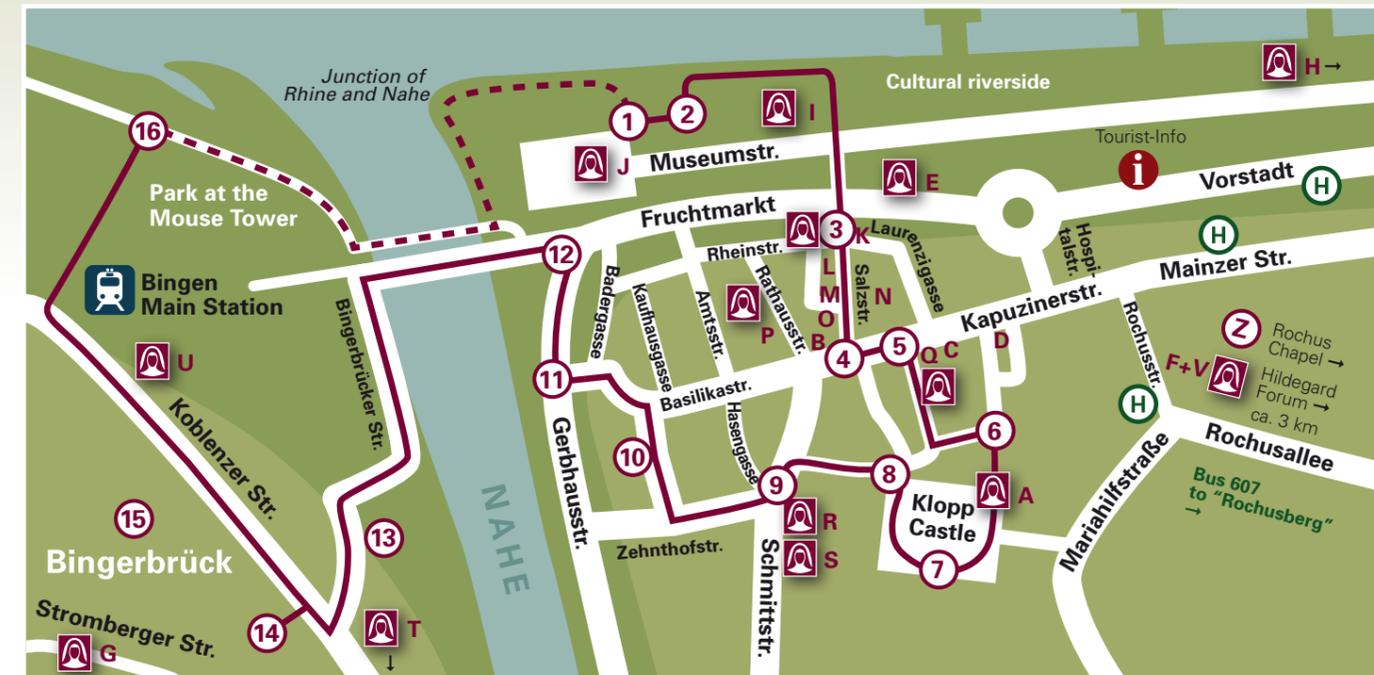
In the 19th century, the entire tradition of Hildegard found a new home in the 1814 newly constructed Rochus Chapel, which originated from a 1666 plague chapel. At that time [the 17th century] the old Eibingen Cloister at Rudesheim, where the Rupertsberg nuns fled in 1632 with Hildegard's relic treasures, was closed. That is why the new Rochus Chapel was furnished with the altars and icons from the Eibingen Cloister, which created the first Hildegard memorial church. Today, the existing large Hildegard and Rupert altar from 1895 also bears witness: in its center stands a Hildegard statue, which is accompanied by eight relief-crafted scenes from the life of Hildegard on the sides of the altar. The altar is only accessible during services in the church.

Also located in the Rochusberg is the Hildegard Forum of the Sisters of the Cross: changing exhibitions, lectures and seminars address the life and work of the prophetess. A meditation room invites you to an audio-visual journey of Hildegard's compositions accompanied by images of the books regarding her visions. The large herb and orchard garden at Hildegard Forum was designed after a medieval Benedictine model: here grow approximately 80 medicinal plants and trees that are described in Hildegard's „Physica“. The garden can also be visited during guided tours.

The entrance area of the Rochus Chapel is also accessible outside the services.



BINGEN HILDEGARD-WAY



- 1 Museum am Strom
- 2 Hildegarden
- 3 Salzstraße
- 4 Speisemarkt
- 5 Kapuzinerstraße
- 6 Moat
- 7 Klopp Castle
- 8 Vineyard »Schlossberg«
- 9 Hildegard Information Center
- 10 St Martin Basilica
- 11 Cloister view on the Nahe riverbank
- 12 Bridge over the Nahe
- 13 Rupertsberg
- 14 Memorial Church St Rupert and St Hildegard

- 15 Bingerbrück
 - 16 Park at the Mouse Tower
 - Z Hildegard Forum and Rochus Chapel
- Hildegard Catering**
- A Klopp Castle Restaurant
 - B Restaurant “Alte Wache”, Speisemarkt
 - C Hotel/Café “Köppel”, Basilikastraße
 - D Café “Röthgen”, Kapuzinerstraße
 - E Cocktailbar “Rheingau-Treff”, Vorstadt
 - F Hildegard Forum, Rochusberg
 - G Restaurant “Schlösschen am Mäuseturm”, Stromberger Straße
 - H Zollamt, Hafestraße
 - I Ludwig IV., Hindenburganlage

- Hildegard Products**
- J Museum am Strom Shop, Museumstraße
 - K Lioba Neumann's, Gifts and Wine, Salzstraße
 - L BIN 2 Tee & Naturkost, Salzstraße
 - M Marita Kunkler's, Esotericism Store, Salzstraße
 - N Brager Butchery, Salzstraße
 - O Martin's Coffee and Delicatessen, Salzstraße
 - P Reiner's Winery, Rathausstraße
 - Q Goldsmith Claus Dresander, Kapuzinerstraße
 - R Das Sparschwein, Schmittstraße
 - S Bookshop “Schweikhard”, Schmittstraße
 - T Hildegard Pharmacy, Koblenzer Straße
 - U Martin Butchery, Koblenzer Straße
 - V Hildegard Forum, Rochusberg

