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The canton of Aargau holds many surprises:

Fortresses

There is no other region in Europe as small as Aargau where visitors can see so many fortresses and castles. These date from the time when the



Hallwyl castle

powerful Habsburg royal family of Europe established its stronghold in Aargau, some 900 years ago. Visitors can also experience the Middle Ages at the Lenzburg castle or visit the Hallwyl castle, which is one of the most beautiful moated castles in Switzerland. *from the internet*

Kloster Königsfelden

Anlass zur Gründung des Klosters Königsfelden war die Ermordung von König Albrecht I. in 1308. Für das Seelenheil des Ermordeten gründete die königliche Witwe Elisabeth ein fürstliches Hausstift. Es ist ein franziskanisch-klarissisches Doppelkloster. 1311 besiedelten die ersten sechs Mönche den Konvent, die Einschliessung der Nonnen erfolgte ein Jahr später.

Mit der Eroberung des Aargaus durch Bern 1415 brach die Verbindung zum Stifterhaus; 1528 säkularisierte Bern im Gefolge der Reformation das Kloster und nutzte die Gebäulichkeiten als Landvogteisitz und Gutsbetrieb. 1804 richtete der junge Kanton Aargau seine Heil- und Pflegeanstalt (heute Psychiatrische Dienste Aargau) darin ein. *internet*

Capital of Switzerland

In 1798, five years before Bern became the federal capital, Aarau became the capital of Switzerland. The «Haus im Schlossgarten» served as the first seat of government in Switzerland, and a rather grandiose row of houses for all the European embassies was started. But alas, when the houses were finished, Aarau was no longer the capital, and the houses were sold to citizens who could afford them... *tb*

Water

Water is depicted in Aargau's coat of arms: The three powerful rivers, the Rhine, the Aare and the Reuss, trace the natural borders of the canton. Aargau boasts gorgeous river landscapes, which are an inviting place for a stroll or a swim - the perfect place for anyone looking for relaxation.

Water was also instrumental for the beginning of the economic development of the canton Aargau. Water powered wheels, serving as a source of energy for mills, and waterways provided a natural means of transport for trade. *from the internet*

Small towns

Aargau is the canton of charming small towns. Zofingen, Aarau, Brugg, Laufenburg, Lenzburg, Bremgarten, Kaiserstuhl and some even smaller



Old bridge in Bremgarten

towns all competed for supremacy - with the result that none became dominant and big - but they all have their particular charm and are well worth a visit. *tb*

Spas

The Romans already knew where to find the best places for relaxation. City names such as Bad Zurzach, Bad Schinznach, Rheinfelden and Baden attest to a spa and bathing culture several hundred years old. At the Zurzach thermal baths warm water reaching almost 40°C bubbles from 1000 metres to the surface. Here you can stock up on energy and find peace and quiet. A visit to the thermal baths of Baden, Rheinfelden and Schinznach Bad is just as relaxing. *from the internet*