

# The Fame of Basel

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## THE FAME OF BASEL

In the very heart of Europe, at the point where France, Germany and Switzerland meet, the city of Basel lies, steeped in tradition, on the River Rhine at the junction of the main traffic routes.

A centrally-situated venue for congresses, Basel was, at the time of the Oecumenical Council of Basel (1431 to 1448), already renowned for her hospitality, and the foundation of the University in 1460 ensured her place as a city of culture. As early as 1471 Basel was granted the

and big Swiss chemical manufacturing firms — is favoured both by her position at the traffic junction of the road and rail routes from north to south and east to west and by her extensive dock facilities at the end of the navigable waterway from the North Sea.

The unique position of the second-largest city in Switzerland (220,000 inhabitants) in forming the meeting-place for three European countries is underlined by the fact that the national railway systems of three countries have a terminus station within her walls, and by the fact that the international airport of Basel-Mulhouse (only 4 miles from the centre of the city) is on French soil.

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Basel can look back on a past stretching over two thousand years. The centuries have laid an individual and enchanting stamp on the city; here we come across houses, churches, gateways and alleys dating from the Middle Ages, side by side with terraced streets displaying all the dignity of the 17th and 18th centuries — there, we find new buildings soaring skywards, signs of the modern age. A tour round the streets will unearth a veritable treasure-house for the keen photographer and the lover of contrasts.

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Basel's fame as a home of museums and art collections began long ago, in 1661, when the Amerbach Collection became public property; this collection, which includes a number of works by Hans Holbein and a representative selection of modern paintings, is numbered by connoisseurs among the leading art galleries of the world. The unique treasures of the Historical Museum (which includes those of the Minster), the collections of Basel researchers in the Museum of Natural History and Ethnology, and the Kirschgarten Museum, which mirrors the charm of the 18th century, are also very well known. The enthusiast in the history of pharmacy, in sport, music, shipping or fire-brigades, will find a special museum in Basle dealing with his special interest.

Lovers of art — old or new style — will be more than satisfied by the constantly-changing exhibitions and the widely-varied frescoes and statues.

One of the most popular attractions for many visitors is the Zoological Gardens, which is famous for the animals it has succeeded in rearing.



(Photo: Swiss National Tourist Office)  
"On the River Rhine . . ."

right to hold fairs, and since the First World War the town has housed, for eleven days each Spring, the comprehensive official exhibition of the country's industrial production.

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The industrial and commercial city of Basel — with her numerous large and small Banks, the Bank for International Settlements, world-famous insurance companies