


## Touring the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site

**One of the highlights along the new “Grand Tour of Switzerland” is the city of St. Gallen, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site that attracts visitors with its original St.Gallen monastery plan from the early Middle Ages and the 14<sup>th</sup> St.Gallen Festival.**



A bit of advice before you go: you may want to consider driving to the St.Gallen-Lake Constance region this year as many of the most beautiful places along the “Grand Tour of Switzerland” are most easily accessed by car, including the spots in Eastern Switzerland. The route winds along the Swiss side of Lake Constance from Europe's largest waterfall through the medieval towns of Schaffhausen and Stein am Rhein, ending up in the St.Gallen-Lake Constance region where the tour highlight awaits: the Abbey District with its Baroque cathedral was designated a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1983. Its origins can be traced to the Irish monk Gallus, who established a hermitage on the site more than 1,400 years. Within a hundred years, the small community had grown into a monastery. During the Middle Ages, the abbey became a renowned centre of European learning and one of the most important cultural hubs of the West.

### **Rococo, monastery plan and a mummy**

The ornate Abbey Library is the most famous landmark of St.Gallen and the main attraction in today's abbey complex. Every year, thousands of visitors shuffle through this room wearing the mandatory slippers over their shoes to preserve the antique hardwood floor, mesmerised by its unrivalled beauty. Even though the monks that used to sit and write in this room have long since vanished, their library is still home to tens of thousands of rare manuscripts. Here, in one of the most beautiful Rococo halls in Switzerland, visitors can marvel at the more than 170,000 printed books and view some of the 2,000 original medieval manuscripts in a rotating exhibition. The famous St.Gallen monastery plan from the 9th century can be seen by the public for the first time in its original form. It will be on display in the new exhibition hall. The parchment is the earliest representation of a monastery district from the Middle Ages. It was probably drawn between 819 and 826 in the Reichenau monastery on Lake Constance and is owned by the Abbey Library of St.Gallen. Another tourist draw is the Schepenesse mummy which is on display in its double sarcophagus in the Abbey Library. The priest's daughter Schepenesse lived in Thebes between 700 and 650 B.C. and was one of the city's elite. Her mummy with the ornately painted inner and outer sarcophagus was brought to its final resting spot in St.Gallen in 1821.

### **Culture in a unique setting**

Once a year, the abbey courtyard of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site with its magnificent Baroque cathedral serves as the backdrop for the St.Gallen Festival. This year's programme includes "Stiffelio", an opera by Giuseppe Verdi, and other dance performances and concerts to be held in the theatre and in the Baroque cathedral.

#lovestgallen #sginspiriert #ineedswitzerland #inlovewithswitzerland

**Contact:**

St.Gallen-Bodensee Tourism  
Tobias Treichler  
Vice Director / Head of Marketing & Customer Experience  
Bankgasse 9 / Postfach  
CH-9001 St.Gallen  
Tel. +41 (0)71 227 37 19  
Fax +41 (0)71 227 37 67  
tobias.treichler@st.gallen-bodensee.ch

