



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Visiting Guide to the Mosel - 2018

This guide aimed at all wine lovers visiting the Mosel results from the multiple answers which we have given over the years to wine lovers from all over the world asking us for advice on visiting the Mosel.

The Mosel Valley is a great region to visit, not only because of its great wines and Estates, but also because it has so much to offer in terms of scenery, history and relaxation.

The Mosel Valley stretches over 200 kilometers (125 miles) and is typically divided up into five separate areas, which are worthwhile to know (listed here from north to south):

- The Terrassenmosel: this refers to the part of the Mosel River stretching from Koblenz to Pünderich. Well-known villages here are Winningen, Pommern, Bremm, Merl and Cochem.
- The Middle Mosel: this is the central area, which stretches from Pünderich to Schweich. This area is probably the best known to wine lovers as it covers the villages of Traben-Trarbach, Ürzig, Zeltingen, Wehlen, Graach, Bernkastel, Brauneberg, Piesport, Trittenheim, etc.
- The Trier-Ruwer: this area covers the winemaking area around Trier, where there are a series of side valleys, the most important one being the Ruwer Valley, which one could argue is a small region by itself. Outside the city of Trier, the best-known villages here are Avelsbach, Mertesdorf, Eitelsbach and Kasel.
- The Saar Valley: this area starts from Konz, where the river Saar flows into the Mosel and stretches upriver up to Serrig. This is the region of the famous Scharzhofberg vineyard and of such well-known villages as Kanzem, Wiltingen, Oberemmel, Ayl, Ockfen, Saarburg, etc.
- The Upper Mosel (Obermosel): this is the part of the Mosel Valley situated upriver from Konz. Much of this less well-known area forms the border with Luxembourg. Contrary to the rest of the Mosel, the reigning grape here is not Riesling, but the ancient Roman grape Elbling.

It is a fascinating area to discover but there are a number of things to keep in mind in order to make the most of your visit.

This guide covers the following:

- Practicalities on how to get to the Mosel, how to move around, find accommodations, visit Estates, etc.
- Recommendations on where to eat and where to buy wines.
- A calendar with all major wine events.
- A few recommendations on what to do next to visiting winemaking Estates.

The recommendations and advice provided in this guide are solely based on our own personal views and experience (also to be clear, we have always paid the full retail price and have not been paid in any way by any of the places mentioned here). While we took great care in preparing it, we neither claim completeness nor accuracy, as things can change. Still, we hope that this guide proves useful and would welcome any feedback (positive or negative!).

This is the **2018 version**. We update this guide annually, feeding it with new insights, discoveries and other relevant information.





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Practicalities

HOW TO GET TO THE MOSEL?

There are a series of airports situated close to the Mosel:

- Frankfurt Airport is roughly a 2 hours' drive away from Trier, but only 1.5 hour away from Koblenz.
- Frankfurt/Hahn Airport, which is served by no-frills airlines, is actually only ½ hour away from Berncastel (1 hour from Trier) and is therefore a quite attractive option should you fly in from somewhere in Europe.
- Luxembourg Airport may also be a good alternative. It will take you approx. ½ hour to get to Trier by car.

Should you fly in via Cologne / Köln or Düsseldorf Airport, you need to take into account 2 to 2.5 hours to get to Trier on some of the busiest and most congested roads in Germany. Here a safer and less stressful alternative is to take a train to get to the Mosel (most probably through Cologne / Köln or Bonn main train station and Koblenz).

HOW TO MOVE AROUND?

The Mosel is a small region in terms of acreage under vine (less than 10,000 ha or 25,000 acres) but much less so in terms of size: it stretches over 200 km (125 miles)! If you want to enjoy the region and visit some winemaking Estates in different parts of the region, public transport is not really a practical option, especially if you are short on time. There are good bus services, but it takes quite some time to get around. The train can be a good way to get from Trier to the Saar Valley. However, it is less so if you want to reach Berncastel. The city has no direct train service. The closest station is Wittlich, which is 15 kilometers (10 miles) inland of the city.

Overall, a car remains the easiest and fastest way to move around (there are plenty of possibilities to hire one if you arrive at an airport or a main train station). You only need to take into account in your planning that it takes quite some time to move from one part of the Mosel to another. Just as guidance, you need to set aside 30 minutes to get from Saarburg to Trier (i.e. to get along the Saar), another 45 minutes to get from Trier to Berncastel and then another 45-60 minutes to get from Berncastel to Winningen and Koblenz. Driving through Trier may also be long (up to 30 minutes) as there are often traffic jams on the main road.

We would also encourage you to take a little bicycle ride, should the weather play along. Bicycle lanes are often separate, wide and well-marked, and you can stroll along some of the top vineyards. Also tourist boats navigate the Mosel and the Saar, for instance from Berncastel up to Trier or down to Traben-Trarbach and Cochem. We find these the best way to take advantage of the Mosel beauty.

WHERE TO STAY OVERNIGHT?

This is probably the easiest part of setting up your trip! The region lives from tourism. There are plenty of options for overnight accommodation. Many quality growers also run small pensions or lodging rooms and this is usually our preferred option as it offers great QPR and gives often the opportunity to meet up with the grower, have a chat and possibly taste some wines.

Advance booking is not only advisable but often required, especially if you want secure accommodation during the main holidays season (June-September), in particular in the larger cities (Saarburg, Trier, Berncastel, Traben-Trarbach, Cochem, etc.): Plenty of tourists have discovered the beauty of the region and most places are booked up months in advance during the holidays season. Hotels and guest room facilities run by winemakers are well connected to the Internet and can easily be booked either directly online or through specialized travel websites.

HOW TO VISIT ESTATES?

There are hundreds of Estates actively producing wines in the Mosel. We would of course strongly recommend you to have a close look at the Estates which we review every year in our Mosel Fine Wines Issues. Choosing among them is then a matter of personal preferences.

There are however a few things to take into account when planning a tasting visit.

- **Make an appointment:** Most winemaking Estates in the Mosel are small operations and do not run regular opening hours with tasting and entertainment facilities like one would know them from "New World" Estates. It is therefore crucial to make an appointment before visiting an Estate.
- **Be aware of legal holidays:** Sundays and legal holidays are likely to be off-limits for any tasting at privately run Estates. For your information, the legal holidays in Rheinland-Pfalz are (dates for 2018): New Year's Day (January 1), Good Friday (March 30), Easter Monday (April 2), Labor Day (May 1), Ascension Day (May 10), Whit Monday (May 21), Corpus Christi Day (May 31), Day of German Unity (October 3), All Saints' Day (November 1), Christmas Day (December 25) and Boxing Day (December 26).



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- Check languages: Winemakers, especially the younger generation, almost all speak English now. Language should in principle no longer be an issue today (it was in the past). However, you may want to make sure about it while making your appointment as not all members of a winemaker's family may master the English language well enough.

Taking the above into account, you should be in for some of the most memorable tasting moments anywhere in the world!

WHAT IF I ONLY HAVE ONE DAY TO SPEND IN THE MOSEL?

This has been a question which came quite regularly from wine lovers who plan a tour of Germany (possibly as a family holiday) and need to spread a week over the whole German country or from wine lovers on business trip to Germany and who were able to carve out a quick "touch and go" visit to the Mosel.

Visiting one or several of your favorite Estates can prove a great experience but, if you happen not to be often in the Mosel, it can also prove quite limiting in terms of exposure to the variety of the region.

One alternative is to visit one of the large Estates in or around Trier (i.e. the Bischöfliche Weingüter and the Vereinigte Hospitien in Trier, or the von Kesselstatt Estate in Morscheid for instance). These large Estates own vineyards throughout the Mosel, Saar and Ruwer Valleys and allow you to get a great overview of the different styles and specific terroir in one sitting.

Another option is offered by some wine shops such as the Rieslinghaus in Bernkastel. For a more than fair fee, they offer a series of wines for tasting (which can include wines from Estates which are not set on private consumer visits such as Egon Müller or Joh. Jos. Prüm). We provide a full list of wine shops in this visiting guide and indicate when we are aware of the possibility to taste wines.

WANT TO BRING SOME BOTTLES BACK HOME?

If you come to the Mosel by plane and want to bring some bottles back home from your trip (something we all want to do when we travel to a wine region), you have to bear in mind that you will not be allowed to take these bottles as hand luggage into the plane. These will have to be checked in and travel in the baggage hold. So there are two things to which you should pay attention:

- Have your bottles well wrapped in to avoid any problems during the travel, ideally in polystyrene boxes or at least in special wine shipping boxes, and if possible put these in your own baggage.
- Airlines often charge extra money (and this can be quite expensive) for additional baggage or weight. Check especially the maximum bag weight you are allowed to take with your regular ticket (especially if you fly with no-frills airlines).

WANT TO SEE THE MOSEL... FROM YOUR COMPUTER?

You have not been able to visit to the Mosel yet wonder what it looks like? There are 12 live cameras along the Mosel from Mehring to Calmont, and you can browse from one to the other as well as have different viewpoints from each camera. The site is provided in German language only but the map is interactive and you just have to click onto a village and then "Zur Webcam" link to access its live streaming. You even have access to different viewpoints (which generally cover a full panorama) for each camera. Here is the site: www.mosel-webcams.de.

VISITING DURING WINTER?

Wintertime can offer some of the most beautiful views on the vineyards, especially when there is some snow. However quite some activities close during that time (some also listed here below including restaurants and shops), and it is better to check in advance when you prepare your trip not to be disappointed.



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Eating out in the Mosel

The Mosel Valley is quite touristic and, as a result, offers plenty of opportunities to eat out at comparatively attractive prices. We provide here a list of a few places which we personally have enjoyed over the past few years, also because of their wine list.

The restaurants are listed in alphabetic order within each region.

Obermosel	Victor's Gourmet-Restaurant Schloss Berg	A three-star Michelin temple of fine dining in Nennig-Perl, not far off the Saar, making classy cuisine with a great list of wines from the region and beyond.	www.victors-fine-dining.de
Saar	Villa Keller	A gastronomic restaurant and a more casual bistro beautifully situated on the shores of the Saar River in Saarburg.	www.villa-keller.de
	Weinrestaurant Ayler Kupp	A very good restaurant in Ayl offering modern-style cuisine as well as local classics ... and a great view on the Ayler Kupp vineyard.	www.saarwein-hotel.de
	Saarburger Hof	A very good tavern-styled restaurant in the center of Saarburg with a stunning wine list, including many mature wines.	www.saarburger-hof.de
Trier-Ruwer	Alt Zalawen	A very traditional German restaurant in Trier (on the riverbank) with simple but hearty food.	www.altzalawen.de
	Brunnerhof	A bar-styled place serving stylish but simple hearty food until late at night with a great selection of wines.	www.brunnenhof-trier.com
	Eurener Hof	A restaurant-styled place with a great wine list including often quite old wines.	www.eurener-hof.de
	Weinstube Kesselstatt	A good simple tavern in the pedestrian center of Trier serving hearty food with the von Kesselstatt wines.	www.weinstube-kesselstatt.de
	Oechsle Wein & Fischhaus	A modern-styled restaurant (as well as shop) in the heart of Trier focusing on fish and Mosel wine.	www.oechsle-weinhaus.de
Middle Mosel	Schloss Monaise	A high class restaurant situated in a beautiful castle on the outskirts of Trier, and run by wine-maniac and "Mosel wine and food pairing" wizard Hubi Scheidt.	www.schloss-monaise.de
	Yong Yong	A modern-styled and inexpensive soup-bar styled place in the center of Trier serving Asian food to pair with a nice wine list.	www.yong-suppenbar.de
	Burg Landshut	This newly opened restaurant with modern style in the old castle above the village of Bernkastel offers a breathtaking view through its patio door and traditional food and a decent list of bottles from local winemakers.	www.burglandshut.de
	Moselschild / Oliver's Restaurant	A Michelin BIB Gourmand recommended restaurant in Ürzig serving elegant and hearty food with a nice selection of wines from the Ürzig / Erden area.	www.moselschild.de



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Schloss Lieser	This newly renovated luxury hotel plans to offer "a restaurant of the highest quality." However, the project has been in plans for over a year now. Given the potential, we keep it on the list: Interested visitors should contact the hotel for a timely update.	www.schlosslieser.de
Reiler Hof	A nice simple restaurant in Reil with a large terrace and a good wine list serving delicious modern-styled German cuisine presented nicely.	www.reiler-hof.de
Richtershof	A classier restaurant in Mülheim serving local food paired with the region's classics.	www.weinromantikhotel.de
Rüssels Landhaus	A few miles off the Mosel River south of Leiwen, this one-star Michelin restaurant offers fine modern styled food with a great wine list.	www.landhaus-st-urban.de
Schanz	An elegant two-star restaurant in Piesport offering great modern and stylish fresh food.	www.schanz-restaurant.de
Sonnora	An institution in the region and the only three-star Michelin place near the Middle-Mosel Valley. Chef Helmut Thielges sadly passed away in 2017 but the family and team continue the tradition of this legendary house.	www.hotel-sonnora.de
Tafelhaus	A Michelin one-star restaurant in Trittenheim with a terrace offering a superb view on the famous Apotheke vineyard serving good local food and wines (especially from young winemakers).	www.wein-tafelhaus.de
Die Weinstube Hotel Nicolay 1881	A nice old-styled restaurant in Zeltingen serving only fresh vegan food.	www.weinstube-vegan.de
Zeltinger Hof	A very good restaurant in Zeltingen serving local specialties with a great list of wines from known as well as unknown Mosel producers.	www.zeltinger-hof.de

We do not list here the classic bistros and *Weinstuben* which can be found in every village, and which offer simple yet delicious food (and this for little money) as well as a selected list of local wines and beers. Locals will readily share their favorite addresses. However, chances are that the menu will only be available in German and that nobody will be at hand to translate it into English for you (but your smartphone or tourist guide will probably help you translating the menu).

If you fancy a beer after a long day of wine tasting, both the Bahnhof Cues (www.bahnhof-cues.de) in Bernkastel and the Kloster Machern near Zeltingen (www.klostermachern.de) offer their own brews as well as some food.



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Buying Wine in the Mosel

Some may want to buy a selection of wines from the region without the hassle of going through visiting and buying at each estate (we use this opportunity to buy some bottles from new unknown Estates!). We usually rely on the following places.

Middle Mosel	Rieslinghaus (aka Weinhaus Porn)	This institution in Bernkastel offers a great selection of wines from leading and upcoming Estates in the Mosel. In addition you can try a large selection by the glass or choose any bottle on sale to enjoy on site (either inside or on the terrace).	www.rieslinghaus.mythos-mosel.de
	Mosel Wein Museum	A "Vinothek" situated in the cellars of the St. Nikolaus Hospital (Bernkastel-Kues), where one can buy wines from sometimes less well-known makers. One can also taste these wines for little money.	www.moselweinmuseum.de
	Wivino Vinothek	A great bar located in an old vaulted cellar in Wittlich to enjoy top Mosel wines.	www.wivino.de
Trier	Weinhaus Minarski	A great selection of wines from the whole region (but also from other regions in Germany and throughout the world). Any bottle available can be enjoyed at the wine bar.	www.weinhaus-minarski.de
	Fritz Steinlein & Co	An export business (representing some of the finest Mosel Estates) which also has a shop in Trier-Olewig with a very fine selection of wines.	www.fritz-steinlein.de
	Das Weinhaus	A great shop with a wide selection of Mosel producers offered at very competitive prices. It also offers a selection of French and Italian wines.	www.weinhaus-trier.de
	Werwie's Wild und Feinkost	A fine selection of wines including top Estates from the Mosel as well as food including local venison, deer or wild boar.	www.werwieswild.de
Saar	Bonsai & Wein	A surprising name for a very attractive shop tucked in the streets of Saarburg offering Saar wines from all the major growers (as well as from some lesser known ones).	www.vinothek-saar.de



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Major Wine Events in 2018

For those still choosing their dates to visit the Mosel, we provide here some key Mosel wine-related events which will take place in 2018 (with either the confirmed or the likely date).

On top of these events, we regularly provide additional information on what to do in the region on our website and / or on social media. You may therefore want to follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

May 25-27	Mythos Mosel: A grand gala dinner followed by two days on which leading Estates from Ürzig to Pünderich (with many guest Estates from other parts of the Mosel) present their wines. Some restaurants also take part in this event by serving special menus and wines.	www.mythos-mosel.de
June 5	Riesling-Präsentation: Vintage presentation of the Bernkasteler Ring Estates at Kloster Machern in Wehlen.	www.bernkasteler-ring.de
August 24-26	Saar Riesling Sommer: A grand gala dinner followed by two days on which leading Saar Estates (with many guest Estates from other parts of the Mosel) present their wines. Some restaurants also take part in this event by serving special menus and wines.	www.saar-riesling-sommer.de
September 20	Meisterwerke der Mosel: A vintage presentation by the VDP Mosel at which member Estates present their latest vintage as well as some mature wines (<i>on invitation only</i>).	www.vdp.de
September 20-21-23	Auctions: September is Auction month in Germany! The annual Auctions start with two events in the Mosel, organized by the Bernkasteler Ring (20) and the VDP Mosel (21) in Trier, and one in the Nahe (Bad Kreuznach) on the 23. The annual Auctions are must-go-to events for any German wine lover as some of the best wines of the vintage and other rarities are offered for tasting and for sale. Every year, we publish a full report <u>ahead</u> of the Auctions with valuable information and tasting notes.	www.vdp.de www.bernkasteler-ring.de www.moselfinewines.com
September TBD	Tafelrunde: Annual vintage presentation by the members of the Klitzekleine Ring.	www.klitzekleinerring.de



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The Mosel Beyond Wine Tasting

The region is full of charm and there are plenty of things to do beyond tasting wine in the Mosel. Here are some ideas which may inspire you.

ADMIRE THE BREATHTAKING SCENERY

To be honest, if you have never been to the Mosel before, this is what you should plan to do on your first visit: Enjoy the landscape, either by having a walk, taking a bicycle ride or simply by driving around. The Mosel Valley is full of hills, cliffs, beautiful steep vineyards, picturesque villages and castle ruins on the hill. If you like romanticism, you will love this!

Hardcore wine lovers have asked us for particular spots where you can enjoy some of the most prestigious and beautiful vineyards. Here are some of the spots that never fail to take our breath away, even after so many years.

Wiltinger Gottesfuss, Kupp, braune Kupp and Hölle	These vineyards form a stunning amphitheater. Drive the road from Konz in direction of Wiltigen: this narrow road runs right through the Wiltinger Kupp. The view from the bottom part of the street will take your breath away.	K133 (Konz-Wiltigen)
Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhof / Maximin Grünhäuser vineyards	A stunning view on these two vineyard walls stretching into side valleys on opposite sides of the tiny river Ruwer can be best viewed when coming from Luxembourg in direction of Trier. Take the B52 road up to the first junction and then drive down towards Mertesdorf. At mid-hill, one gets a stunning view over these two majestic vineyard hills.	K77 (B52-Mertesdorf)
Trittenheimer Apotheke	The Trittenheimer Apotheke is best enjoyed from a high point up the Leiwener Klostergarten. For this, take the road from Trittenheim to the Trier-Kaiserslautern motorway and stop at the top of the hill. Sit down and enjoy!	L 148 (Trittenheim)
Piesporter hill	There is a hillside road from Dhron to Piesport, which takes one up the hill through the beautiful vineyards in the classic part of the Dhroner Hofberg. At the top of the hill, one gets a stunning view over the Piesporter amphitheater.	L156 (Dhron-Piesport)
Brauneberger Sonnenuhr	Drive to the riverbank in the village of Brauneberg, you will find a quiet street with nut trees and you will face the central part of the Juffer and the Juffer-Sonnenuhr hill and enjoy a superb "vineyard wall" feeling.	Nussbaumallee / Brauneberg
Bernkasteler Doktor	Walk the road up to the ruins of the Landshut Castle (the entrance to the road is in the old town of Bernkastel, next to the Rathaus restaurant am Marktplatz), you will enjoy a superb view on the Bernkasteler Doktor as well as a full 180° panoramic view from Brauneberg to Wehlen.	Marketplace of Bernkastel / Pedestrian path
Wehlener Sonnenuhr	The whole hill between Bernkastel and Zeltingen is breathtaking. However, our favorite spot to admire this beautiful hill is from the river bank on the Wehlen side of the river.	Uferallee / Wehlen
Ürziger-Erdener hill	This is best admired by taking the direct road from Zeltingen to Erden, i.e. on the other side of the river. You will face a wall which will glow red in the evening sun. This has to be one of the best views in the Mosel!	L189 (Erden-Zeltingen)
	If you do not want to climb up the Erdener hill, you can take drive to the top of the hill by taking the K62 from Üzig to Traben-Trarbach and at the crossing, turn to the right into the L58. You will see a full panorama ranging from Zeltingen down to Kröv.	K62 / L58 (Üzig-Traben-Trarbach)
Piesporter hill	There is a hillside road from Dhron to Piesport, which takes one up the hill through the beautiful vineyards in the classic part of the Dhroner Hofberg. At the top of the hill, one gets a stunning view over the Piesporter amphitheater.	L156 (Dhron-Piesport)
Kröv	Coming from the north of Kröv, use the K63 which offers a breathtaking view on another U-turn of the Mosel River and the landscape.	K63



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Bremmer Calmont	The Bremmer Calmont is the steepest terraced vineyard in Europe. Drive along the Mosel and you will get a panoramic view on an incredible landscape with the Mosel River making a full U-turn, and, on the other side of the river, the ruins of the Stubent convent.	L49
Winninger Uhlen	Among the most impressive vineyards in the Terrassenmosel is the Winninger Uhlen. Drive from Kobern-Gondorf to Winnigen along the B416 and enjoy the breathtaking view on this amphitheater with small vine terraces.	B416

HIKE THROUGH THE VINEYARDS

Another favorite with wine lovers touring the Mosel is hiking through the vineyards. The regional authorities have laid out walks, which are called "Steig" in German (literally meaning climb), throughout the Mosel. In particular the Erdener Steig (www.kletterweg.de) and the Bremmer Steig (www.calmont-klettersteig.com) offer breathtaking views, if you do not suffer from vertigo (it involves climbing up ladders). There are many more spread throughout the Mosel, with new ones being added every year, as for instance the Saar-Riesling-Steig in Ockfen, opened in 2015.

For lovers of long-distance footpaths, there is a series of 24 "Steige" which allow you to walk from Perl to Koblenz along the Mosel River, i.e. a total of 365 km! Each stage is composed of walks of between 11 and 24 kilometers, and you can of course choose to only do one. All the necessary information can be found here: www.moselsteig.de.

In addition there are many more "Steige" in the region north and south of the Mosel, in the Eifel and the Hunsrück. Both areas are rural, hilly and offer plenty of beautiful countryside. Here also plenty of information is available on the Internet.

IMMERSE YOURSELF INTO THE ROMAN ORIGINS OF THE REGION

The region is full of fascinating roman artifacts. There is still an aqueduct from the Ruwer Valley going through the hill of Grünhaus to serve fresh water to the neighboring city of Trier. Trier itself has many Roman sites, the best known being the Porta Nigra. But the city also includes the well-preserved ruins of an ancient amphitheater. Old roman wine pressing sites have been uncovered in many vineyards along the Mosel over the past decades, including in Erden, Brauneberg and Piesport, and the ruins of the buildings are freely accessible.

One way to enjoy the beauties of the Roman side of Trier is to use the "Antiquity Card" (more information available here: www.trier-info.de/english/antiquity-card), which offers several options to combine multiple site visits.

DISCOVER THE GOLDEN "BELLE EPOQUE" ERA

If you enjoy architecture and in particular the great Art Nouveau period, it may come as a surprise that some of the finest examples of this architectural style can be found around Traben-Trarbach. Around 1900, wineries built incredibly large and lavish wine cellars on the shores of the Mosel. Many of these wineries have been given up, but the beauty of their architecture has lived on. Also, the city is full of superb representative Art Nouveau villas and buildings built by the grandes of the turn of the 20th century. The simplest way to enjoy them is to stroll around the city and admire its beauty. The city's website provides ample information, also on thematic tours (NB: we mention these tours as they sound incredibly interesting but we have not yet done them ourselves).