

# Monastery

Former monastery of  
St. Peter and Paul

# A Monastery with Great Charisma

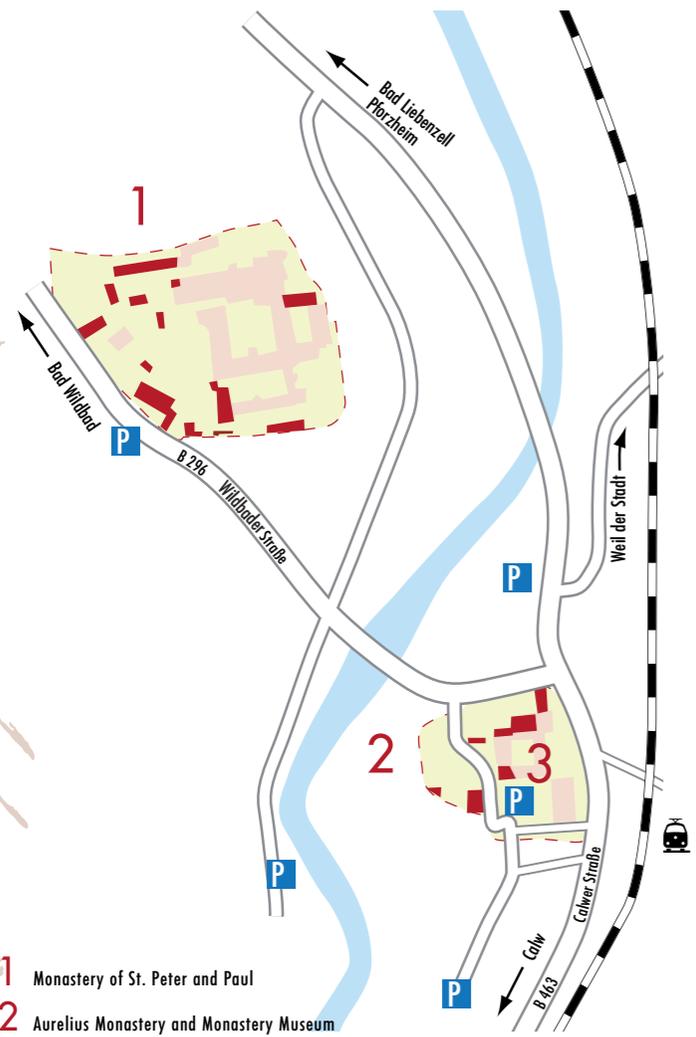
# Feel the spirit of history



# Hirsau – climatic health resort with an eventful history

Stages of the Hirsau

Climatic health resort



- 1 Monastery of St. Peter and Paul
- 2 Aurelius Monastery and Monastery Museum
- 3 Herb garden



**The Monastery of St. Peter and Paul**  
The rapidly increasing wealth of the monastery enabled and, due to the rising number of monks, also necessitated the building of a new monastery on a dominating river terrace on the left of the river Nagold. Abbot William did not live to see the completion of the new monastery, which was considerably larger than the Aurelius Monastery. He was however able to consecrate the church of St. Peter and Paul in May 1091, just a few weeks before he died. In 1092, under his successor, Gebhard of Urach, the monks left Aurelius Monastery, which then continued as a subordinate priory.



**Ducal Hunting Seat**  
After the Reformation (1534), a monastic school was opened. Duke Frederick planned an extension. The ducal castle, which was built on the site of the medieval abbot's house between 1586 and 1592 bestowed, with its outwardly structured Renaissance façade, an imposing character upon the entire building complex.

**Hirsau Herb Garden**  
Where the former cloister once stood, behind Aurelius Church, a herb garden with native medicinal herbs has been created along the lines of a medieval herb garden. In the 37 herb beds you can find around 50 different types of plants, e.g. from "Walahfried's herb garden" and from the "Medicinal Treasures of Hildegard of Bingen".



**Availability of guided tours of the Monastery**  
From May to October (in German): every Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and every Sunday and public holiday at 11:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.. Duration: approx. 1.5 hours

**Meeting point**  
Main entrance (lower archway), Wildbader Strasse

**Admission**  
Adults EUR 3.50  
Children and juveniles EUR 2.50  
Combi ticket includes Monastery Museum

**Themed tours**  
All through the year there are many special guided tours on a variety of topics (in German). Availability on request and at [www.calw.de/ssg](http://www.calw.de/ssg)

For further information and availability go to [www.calw.de/guided-tours](http://www.calw.de/guided-tours)

**Hirsau Herb Garden**  
Aureliusplatz 7, behind Aurelius Church

**Opening times**  
open all year round, publicly accessible

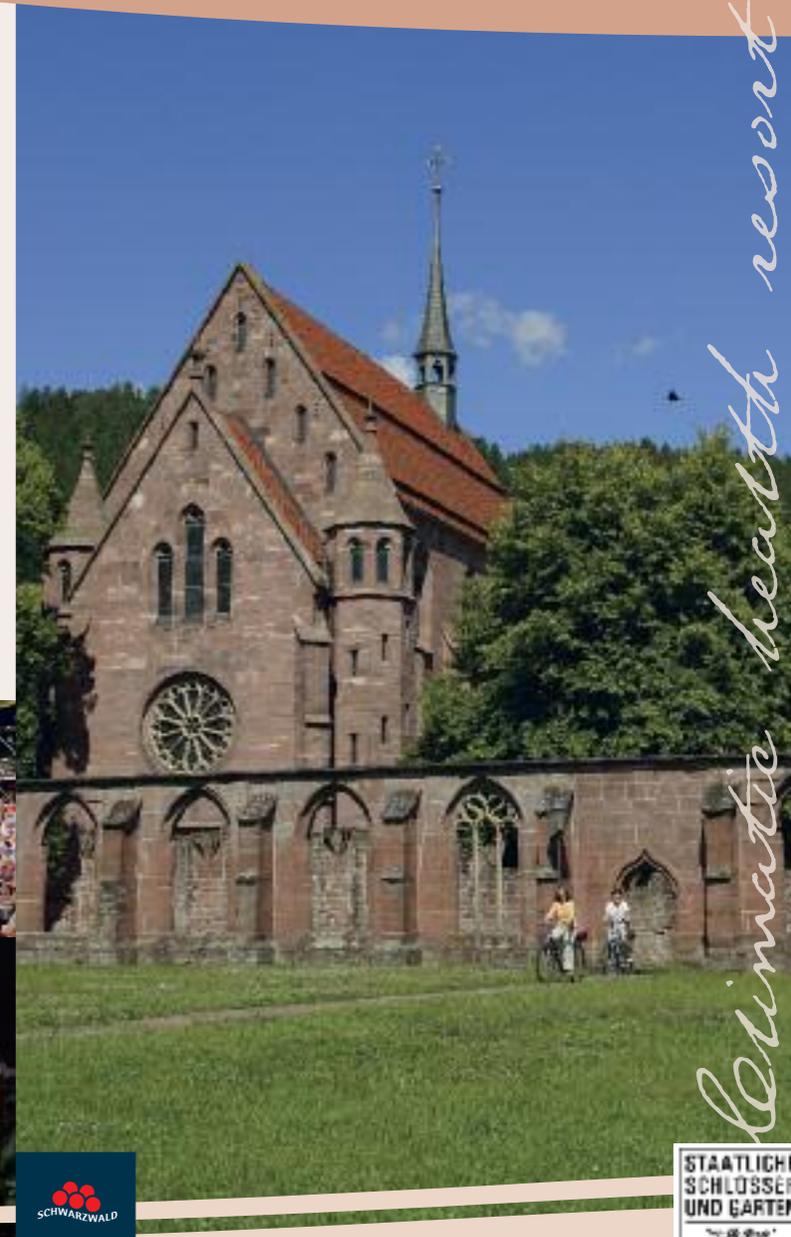
Guided tours for groups (in German) can be booked at the tourist office. Sparkassenplatz 2, 75365 Calw, Phone +49 (0) 70 51 167-399 [stadtinfo@calw.de](mailto:stadtinfo@calw.de)

**Admission**  
EUR 50.00 for groups not exceeding 25 persons

A different monastery altogether: every year, the fascinating atmosphere of Hirsau Monastery casts a spell over thousands of concert enthusiasts. For the purposes of the Calw Monastery Festival in July and August, the historic ruins are transformed into an open air setting with special charm. It also provides the stage for the Calw Summer Cinema, which lasts until the end of August offering exceptional cinematic enjoyment in the open air.

Fascinating and informative guided tours through the ruins of the Monastery of St. Peter and Paul and St. Aurelius Church bring the history of these stone witnesses alive for young and old.

A visit to the monastery cellar of this historic site with its lively ambience is always an unforgettable experience – both during the wide variety of cultural events and for private festivities.

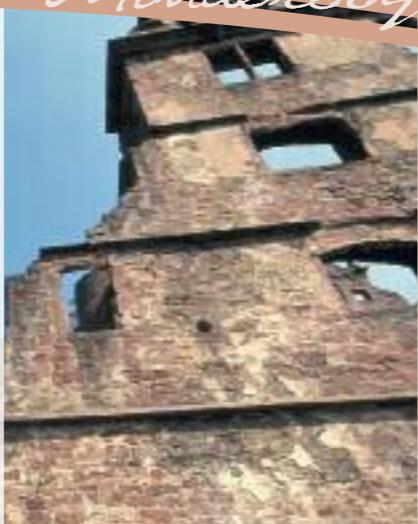


*Hirsau – climatic health resort with an eventful history*  
 Monastery Museum – Experience Monastery History  
 Feel the Spirit of History



*Zu Hirsau in den Trümmern,  
 Da wiegt ein Ulmenbaum  
 Frischgrünend seine Krone  
 Hoch überm Giebelsaum.  
 Er wurzelt tief im Grunde  
 Vom alten Klosterbau,  
 Er wölbt sich statt des Daches  
 Hinaus in Himmelsblau...*

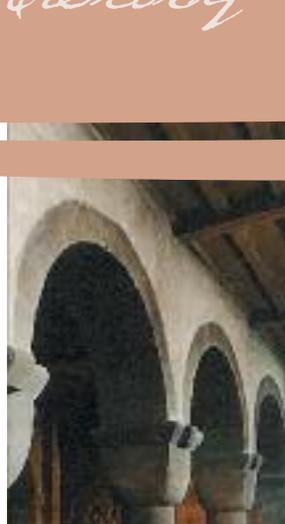
Ludwig Uhland



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 (during opening hours)  
 or Phone +49 (0) 7051 939710  
 klostermuseum@calw.de  
 www.calw.de/monastery-museum-hirsau



**Aurelius Monastery I**  
 The first monastery church was consecrated in 830. It is however presumed that a small cell already existed around 768. Thanks to archaeological excavations, the ground plan of the first monastery church has been known since the middle of the last century. Follow-up investigations carried out in recent years have confirmed this knowledge and expanded it significantly.



The air in Hirsau is pure. Here, in unspoilt nature, in one of the loveliest parts of the Nagold valley, you can take a deep breath and at the same time take a breather and completely unwind. The climatic health resort in the middle of the Northern Black Forest invites you to relax and enjoy – and what is more, it is not far from Calw, the town of Hermann Hesse. Immerse yourself in the impressive history of the Hirsau monastery culture. In the former Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter and Paul you will encounter an important piece of medieval history. Feel the fascination of bygone times in the Monastery of St. Aurelius and the Monastery Museum. The charming herb garden will help you pause for a while and regain your calm.

The poet Ludwig Uhland extolled the romantic atmosphere of Hirsau Monastery in his poem about the elm tree. The extensive ruins with the soaring Owl Tower still impress us today. The oldest evidence of the medieval monastic culture in Hirsau is Aurelius Church, which is almost one thousand years old, on the opposite bank of the river Nagold. In summer, not only church services but also concerts are regularly held in the mystical atmosphere of this church. Hirsau made history in the 11th and 12th centuries as an important German reform monastery of Cluniac influence. The three-nave Basilica of St. Peter and Paul was one of the largest Romanesque churches in South-West Germany and served as a model for

many other monastery churches before finally being destroyed by French troops in 1692 in the Palatinate War of Succession. The Romanesque complex has undergone several architectural styles over time, for example the Gothic Chapel of our Lady, which is still used as a church today, and the magnificent Renaissance hunting seat of the Dukes of Württemberg, which was home to the famous elm tree following the destruction of the building. In the Monastery Museum, visitors can immerse themselves in the history of the monastery and the lives of the Benedictine monks of Hirsau.



**Opening hours**  
 April-October  
 Tuesday to Friday  
 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
 Saturdays and Sundays  
 Midday to 5:00 p.m.  
 Closed from November to March

**Admission**  
 Adults EUR 2.50  
 Juveniles (12–18 years) and groups (fifteen persons or more) EUR 1.50

**Hirsau Monastery Museum**  
 In 1991, on the occasion of the nine hundredth anniversary of the consecration of the Church of St. Peter and Paul, the town of Calw together with the "Badisches Landesmuseum" (Regional Museum of the State of Baden) opened a museum to exhibit the archaeological discoveries from the monasteries, which had been collected in Hirsau since the 19th century. The museum building adjoins the northern side of Aurelius Church and is an important testimony to the history of the monastery. It was carefully rebuilt to restore its former character of a ducal administrative building. Erected on top of Romanesque and even older foundations, it owes its appearance to reconstruction work carried out in 1634. In addition to the relics on display, numerous texts and graphics provide an excellent insight into the history and culture of Hirsau Monastery. Models of the Monastery of St. Peter and Paul shed light on the structural connections, which can be hardly or no longer discerned in the extensive ruins. In addition to the history of the monastery, there is a separate exhibition on the local and social history of the health resort Hirsau with its clubs and associations, main trades and industries and activities in the 19th and 20th centuries.

**Aurelius Monastery II**  
 After the dereliction of the first monastery, a new building – the Romanesque Aurelius Church – was erected on the same site under the direction of Count Adalbert of Calw and consecrated in 1071. This church, a three-nave colonnaded basilica with a flat ceiling and arched aisles on a cross-shaped ground plan, was converted into a barn in 1584 after being partly dismantled. In this form, it conserved the impressive remains of its Romanesque architectural substance. When the church and the adjacent monastery buildings were completed, the monastery, under the direction of its resolute abbot William (1071–1091), began its unforeseen ascent to become one of the most important German reform monasteries of Cluniac influence.

