

Der Chiemsee



The largest lake in Bavaria is the Chiemsee, which is otherwise known as the "Bavarian Sea". The name has a kernel of truth in it: not only does the lake, which has an area of 80 square kilometres, have tides like the sea, it also originated from the primeval Thetis Sea which once covered almost half of Europe.

Among its attractions are the island of Herrenchiemsee with its palaces, the monastery on Frauenchiemsee and Julius Exter's House in Feldwies. The Chiemsee is under the protection of the international Ramsar Convention, which was founded to preserve ecologically important wetlands. Since 1954 the mudflats in the delta formed where the Tiroler Ache flows into the lake have been a protected retreat for many endangered species of waterfowl and wader.

New Palace of Herrenchiemsee

For King Ludwig II of Bavaria, the French "Sun King" Louis XIV was the embodiment of absolute monarchy. In the New Palace of Herrenchiemsee, designed by George Dollmann and Julius Hofmann, he fulfilled his long-cherished dream of building a "New Versailles" as a symbol of absolutism and an independent creation in the Historicist style.



The main highlights of the over twenty state rooms are the Ambassador's Staircase, the Great Hall of Mirrors and the State Bedchamber.



The palace park designed by Carl von Effner also features motifs from Versailles.

As, with the New Palace of Herrenchiemsee, King Ludwig II wanted the park modelled on the Versailles complex without being an exact copy of it. The plans focused primarily on the areas that could be seen from the main rooms of the central palace tract - the State Bedroom and the Hall of Mirrors.

The main parterre on the west side with hedges, geometrically shaped lawns and gravel ornamentation ends in a canal leading to the lake. The Latona, Fama and Fortuna Fountains have been in operation again since 1994, following comprehensive renovation.



Frauenchiemsee



Frauenchiemsee Monastery was founded by Duke Tassilo, and the monastery church was consecrated in 782 by Bishop Virgil of Salzburg. In 788 the monastery came into the possession of Charles the Great, and passed from him to his grandson Ludwig the German. After the Hungarian invasions, the monastery flourished for a long period from the 11th to the 15th centuries. In 1728-1732 the complex, by then in a poor state of repair, was finally rebuilt. After secularization it had a second founder in the person of King Ludwig I, who was responsible for the re-establishment of the monastery in 1837.

The foundations of the church, and possibly also parts of the walls, probably originate from the Carolingian era. What is certain, however, is that the present church was already in existence in the 11th century. In the 12th and 13th centuries it was extended and rebuilt. The appearance of the interior was significantly altered by the addition of a ribbed vault in 1468-1476, and the baroque altars were added in 1688-1702.

During restoration of the interior in 1928, Romanesque frescoes were discovered in the ambulatory, and in 1961 further frescoes from the 12th century were found in the present attic of the church.

The bell tower in front of the northwest side of the church, became the symbol of the Chiemgau. The two lower floors of this eight-sided tower probably date from the 12th century, while the upper one was added in 1395. The tower acquired its characteristic onion dome in 1626. It was not part of the original monastery complex, but was built on the foundations of what was probably a Carolingian building.



Künstlerhaus Exter

Julius Exter (1863-1939) was one of the founders of the "Munich Secession", an association of avant-garde artists. In 1902 he acquired and converted the historic "Stricker" property, and in 1917 settled here permanently.

It was here that Exter developed the unmistakable style of his later work: the colourful pictures, among them many landscape paintings, illustrate his progression from symbolism and neo-impressionism to expressionism.



The study and atelier of this artist today house a permanent exhibition of his works.

