

## Ergolding/Landshut

**Ergolding and Landshut** are two towns that have grown together.

Landshut lies in Bavaria in the south-east of Germany. Situated on the banks of the River Isar, Landshut is the capital of Lower Bavaria, one of the seven administrative regions of the Free State of Bavaria. It is also the seat of the surrounding district, and has a population of more than 70,000.

Owing to its characteristic coat of arms, the town is also often called "City of the three Helmets". Furthermore, the town is popularly known for the Landshuter Hochzeit (Landshut Wedding), a full-tilt medieval festival.

Due to its proximity and easy access to Munich and the Munich Airport, Landshut became a powerful and future-oriented investment area. The town is one of the richest industrialized towns in Bavaria and has East Bavaria's lowest unemployment rate.

Landshut is part of the Alpine foothills and lies 72 kilometres northeast of Munich. The River Isar runs through the city centre.

The city of Landshut and Trausnitz castle were founded in 1204 by Duke Louis I. Landshut was already a Wittelsbach residence by 1231, and in 1255, when the duchy of Bavaria was split in two, Landshut also became the capital of Lower Bavaria. Duke Henry XVI was the first of the three famous rich dukes who ruled Bayern-Landshut in the 15th century. The wedding of Duke George with the Polish Princess Royal Jadwiga Jagiellon in 1475 was celebrated in Landshut with one of the most splendid festivals of the Middle Ages (called "Landshuter Hochzeit"). After his death and the Landshut War of Succession, Bavaria-Landshut was reunited with Bavaria-Munich.

The town is of national importance because of its predominantly Gothic architecture within the historic town centre, especially Trausnitz Castle and the Church of Saint Martin featuring the world's tallest brick tower. Among other Gothic architecture are the churches of St. Jodok and Holy Spirit, but also the Town Hall and the Ländtor, the only still existing gate of the medieval fortification.

**Trausnitz Castle** is a medieval castle.

It was the home of the Wittelsbach dynasty, and it served as their ducal residence for Lower Bavaria from 1255–1503, and later as the seat of the hereditary rulers of the whole of Bavaria.

The **Church of St. Martin in Landshut** is a medieval church. This Brick Gothic landmark is the tallest church in Bavaria, and the tallest brick building as well as church in the world. It is also the 2nd tallest brick structure in the world (after Anaconda Smelter Stack), made without steel supports. St. Martin's church has a height of 130.6 metres.

The **Landshut Wedding** (German: Landshuter Hochzeit) is one of the largest historical pageants in Europe. Countless visitors from all over the world have taken part, or have been spectators of the "Landshuter Hochzeit 1475", a pageant held in Landshut. More than 2,000 participants in medieval costumes bring the festival to life to recreate the Late Middle Ages. It commemorates the wedding between Hedwig (also known as Jadvyga Jogailaitė in Lithuanian), the Polish King's and Lithuanian duke daughter, and George, the son of the Duke of Bavaria at Landshut.

The original medieval wedding is re-enacted every four years, and everyone gets carried away with medieval jousting, pageantry, feasting and wedding processions for a short period in the summer.

The real heroes of the "Landshuter Hochzeit" are the local citizens who act variously as bishops, aristocrats, bride and bridegroom. Every person who wants to take part in this big event has to live near Landshut. It is customary among Landshut males to let the hair grow longer in the months before the event to match the medieval fashion better. Every citizen of Landshut will dress in medieval garments during festival days (even wrist watches are frowned upon) and the city's decoration is retrofitted to a great extent.