



Courtesy of the city
of Freising

The City of Freising is situated about 35km north-east of Munich on the river Isar and is one of the most important university cities of Bavaria. More than 90 professors teach and carry out research at the [TUM School of Life Sciences](#), the biggest faculty of the Technische Universität München (TUM). The [University of Applied Sciences Weihenstephan-Triesdorf](#) specializes in Green Engineering. A total of 9500 students are currently at both universities.

In the early Middle Ages, a long time before the foundation of Munich, Freising was a city of high cultural importance. From the beginning of the 8th century churches and monasteries were built on the Cathedral hill (“Domberg” or “Mons Doctus”) and on the Weihenstephan hill (“Weihenstephaner Berg”); in their scriptoria wonderful codices of great historical value were produced.

On the Weihenstephan hill, the Brewery of Weihenstephan is located. It is known as the oldest brewery in the world and today it is owned by the Free State of Bavaria.



Above the rooftops of Freising:

View of the Weihenstephan hill (above) with the baroque tower of St. George's church in the foreground and the towers of the brewery of Weihenstephan in the background.

the Cathedral hill or Mons Doctus (below).

Credit: Touristinfo Freising,
R. Lehmann



If you would like to read more about the personalities, epochs and monuments of the bishopric and city of Freising, please [click here](#).

Saint Corbinian

Saint Corbinian arrived in Freising in the early 8th century from Arpajon near Paris. He established a Christian community and he became the first Bishop. His presence is still felt throughout the city of today: The Cathedral has been consecrated to Mary and Corbinian; his relics are kept there. The St. Corbinian Pilgrimage takes place every year in November, and the coat of arms of Freising reminds us of an important episode in his life: Saint Corbinian was on a pilgrimage to Rome when his horse was killed by a bear. As a punishment for his crime, the bear was told to carry the belongings of St. Corbinian to Rome. Thus the bear wearing a packsaddle became the symbol of the Holy Corbinian.



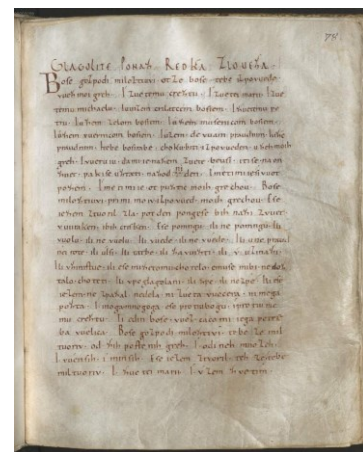
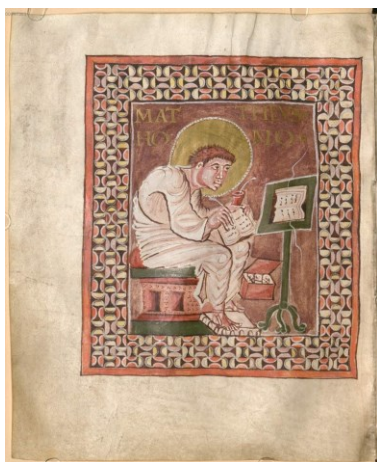
The coat of arms at the Mayor's house



Today modern sculptures of the bear of Freising welcome you at different places in the city (left).

The Cathedral School

Bishop Arbeo (764-783), the author of life story of "Vita Corbiniani", was famous for his cultural impact: Arbeo is the founder of the Cathedral School for the future clergy and the Library with its Scriptorium. Starting in the 8th century numerous magnificently ornamented codices were produced there - and later on in the Benedictine Monastery of Weihenstephan.



From left to right, 1st and 2nd figure: Book of Gospels (CLM17011), about 860 AD in Freising; Fig 3: Extract from the so called "Freisinger Denkmäler", where an old-Slovenian text was written down for the first time, 2nd half of the 10th century.

Source:

Bavarian State Library, Munich:

1. CLM17011, S. 76, <http://bildsuche.digitale-sammlungen.de/index.html?c=viewer&bandnummer=bsb00047303&pimage=00076&lv=1&l=de>
2. CLM 17011, S. 77 < <http://bildsuche.digitale-sammlungen.de/index.html?c=viewer&bandnummer=bsb00047303&pimage=00077&lv=1&l=de>>
3. Abbildung CLM 6426 S. 78 rv <http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/bsb00003258/images/index.html?fp=193.174.98.30&seite=159&pdfseite>

An important personality of the Middle Ages was **Otto von Freising** (1112-1158), a Cistercian monk, historian and Bishop of the city from 1138 to 1158. His was renowned in the theological world of that time for his Chronicle “Chronica sive Historia de due civitatibus“, a further development of the famous “De civitate dei” of Saint Augustin. Otto is said to be one of the most prominent historians of the Middle-Ages [11].



Otto von Freising: Sculpture by Caspar von Zumbusch, 1858, courtyard of the Cathedral Hill. Credit: Tourismusamt Freising/ R. Lehmann



In his bishopric Otto strengthened the economic basis and founded the Monastery of Neustift. Both the monastery and its church which has been consecrated to St. Peter and Paul underwent several transformations over the centuries. Since 1986 the former monastery has been the home of the administrative offices of the district of Freising.

During the reign of Otto the city of Munich, the future rival of Freising, was founded.

The Prince-bishopric of Freising

From the end of the 13th century (1294) until the Secularization in 1802 Freising – the city of Freising and adjacent territories – were ruled by a so called Prince-Bishop, who had both secular and clerical power. The prince-bishopric of Freising was directly subject to the Holy Roman Empire and neighbour of the duchy of Bavaria. Beyond the immediate territory of Freising regions in Upper Bavaria (e.g. “Werdenfelser Land”), in Austria, Italy and Slovenia of today belonged to the dominion. The current twin towns of Maria Wörth, Innichen und Skofja Loka remind us of this historical relationship.

The coat of arms of the prince-bishopric shows the head of a black man wearing a crown. The origin and the meaning of this symbol are still unclear. Pope Benedikt XVI, however, whose career as a theologian was closely connected to Freising, integrated some of the ancient symbols into his papal coat of arms.



Papal coat of arms of Pope Benedict XV (Source: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benedikt_XVI.1.)

The county upon the river Isar - map dated second half of the 17th century, Bavarian State Archives. Source: http://www.nordostkultur-muenchen.de/architektur/images/hochstift_freising_fink.gif

Prince-Bishops Striving for Splendour: Renaissance – Baroque – Rococo

The political influence of the prince-bishops within the Empire was not very important. But despite this they brought glory to Freising with the edifices they constructed and decorated and the artists they invited to the city



Credit: Bildungszentrum Freising

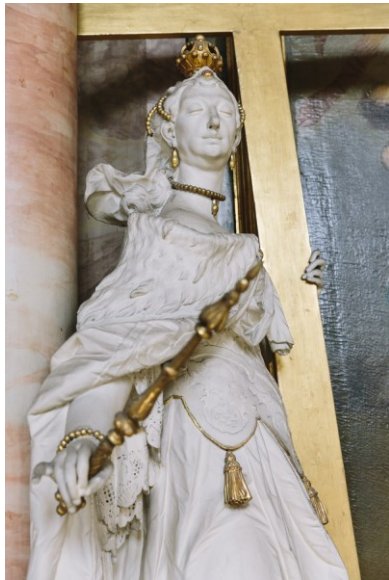
In the 16th century Prince-Bishop Philipp (1480 to 1541), a member of the famous aristocratic Wittelsbach family of Palatinate, brought the Renaissance to Freising by building the Residence with its courtyard surrounded by arcades.

Whereas the first half of the 17th century was characterized by the destructions and the sieges which occurred during the Thirty Years' War, the second half was a period of reconstruction and renewal. Prince-Bishop Veit Adam von Gepeckh commissioned a new painting for the high altar of the cathedral by Peter Paul Rubens: "The Apocalyptic Woman" – today a replica (right); the original painting is exhibited at the Alte Pinakothek München.



The peak of baroque splendour was at the beginning of the 18th century under the rule of Johann Franz Eckher von Kapfing und Liechteneck (1649-1727).

On the occasion of the 1000th Anniversary of the Bishopric in 1724 the interior of the Cathedral was ornamented with frescos and stuccos and a sequence of paintings illustrating the life of St Corbinian. The artists engaged were the two brothers Cosmas Damian and Egid Quirin Asam.



The church of the monastery of Neustift was rebuilt by Antonio Viscardi in the first half of the 18th century. After a fire occurred in 1751 its interior was redesigned. The high altar and some of the sculptures were created by the most famous rococo artist of Bavaria, Ignaz Günther.

All those highly renowned architects, painters, and artists specializing in stucco and fresco who had been engaged by Bishop Eckher and his successors have left their imprint not only on the edifices of the Cathedral Mountain, but also on those of the Old town, where the citizens lived.

Ignaz Günther, St Helena, Sidealtar. Credit Diözesanmuseum Freising, Foto: Thomas Dashuber“

The Old Town

The Marienplatz has been the centre of the Old Town for centuries.

The Asam-Building (below left) built in 1695 was the university for the education of the clergy. The name refers to the father of the aforementioned artists who created the frescos and painted the ceiling of the theatre. In the centre of Marienplatz the Marian Column was erected in the middle of the 17th century. At that time the veneration of St. Mary as the patron saint of Bavaria commenced. In the background the Mayor's House in the new-gothic style and St. George's Church with its impressive baroque tower of 84m, offering a wonderful view towards Upper and Lower Bavaria.



From left to right: The Asam-Building, the Marian column, the Mayor's house in the background and St. George's church. Credit: Touristinfo Freising/R. Lehmann

Marienplatz is the starting point for both the Upper and the Lower Main Street (Obere, Untere Hauptstraße) which is lined with originally medieval houses whose facades were refurbished in the 17th or 18th century.
The historical ambience is the charm of the centre of Freising.



From left to right: the Ziererhaus (about 1730, originally the home of a master bricklayer of the court, today the registry office of Freising); view onto a building, probably refurbished in the 19th century; facades in “Obere Hauptstraße”)

The Secularisation, the 20th and 21st century

The Secularisation: Following the reforms initiated by Graf Montgelas in 1802 the Prince-Bishop lost his secular power and territories. The prince-bishopric became a part of the Duchy of Bavaria which became a Kingdom in 1806. Many churches and monasteries were entirely or partially destroyed. The city of Freising lost a considerable amount of its importance and economic power. A host of measures designed to compensate this loss were taken: The foundation of a seminar for priests on the Cathedral Hill, the transfer of the School for Agriculture from Munich to Freising in 1852, and in 1858 Freising was connected to the Railway line Munich-Landshut.

Headquarters of the Wissenschaftszentrum Weihenstephan, Technische Universität München



The era of industrialisation in Freising is linked to two famous names: **Alois Steinecker** and **Anton Schlüter**.

At the end of the 19th century the first one founded a brewery machines plant. It merged with the internationally operating Krones AG in 1994 and is still an important employer in Freising today.

In the early 20th century a plant producing engines and later on tractors owned by Anton Schlüter moved to Freising. It was operational until 1993. Nowadays the Schlüter tractors have achieved cult status. The former Schlüter plant was renovated recently- the rules of the preservation of historical monuments being observed - and converted into a shopping mall.

The two towers of the Schlüter area capture your attention when you arrive from the direction of Munich.



When talking about the hills of their city, Freising citizens often use nicknames which nicely rhyme (and can only be translated roughly):

Lehrberg (“Hill of Education” which is the Cathedral Hill), **Nährberg** (“Hill of Nutrition”, referring to the Brewery of Weihenstephan and the nutritious value of beer) and **Wehrberg** (“Hill of Defense”). At the beginning of the 19th century military troops were stationed there. The former barracks were or are going to be converted to civil use.



The former Vimy Barracks, a building in the new baroque style, now converted to a residential area.

Hofgarten at Spring time with the “Salettl”, the prince-bishops’ restaurant, in the background

The Science Campus of Weihenstephan continuously developed during the last decades of the 20th century. Besides their merits in cutting edge research and education of students the two universities have a strong impact on the architecture of the city. Outstanding examples are the Central Library of the TUM School of Life Sciences and the “Lehrgebäude an der Pappelallee” of Hochschule Weihenstephan Triesdorf (HSWT) where, to a large extent, wood has been used as construction material. The numerous gardens and parks like “Buchsgarten” (box tree garden) and “Hofgarten” on the Weihenstephan Hill and the nearby “Staudensichtungsgarten” (Shrubs garden) are directed by HSWT. They serve educational purposes and are highly esteemed by both professionals and amateurs.



This was our brief survey of Freising, its history, its city. Unfortunately some of the most prominent monuments are currently closed for restoration, including the baroque library, St. Peter's and Paul's Church, the Diocesan Museum, one of the biggest of its kind world wide.



The Central Library of Wissenschaftszentrum Weihenstephan, TUM

And there is more to discover, like the sculpture park of Weihenstephan, the Pilgrimage Church Wieskirche, the small lanes in the Old Town.



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