



The Historical Pentagon and mansion district.
Carl Friedrich Thelemann, general plan of 1862.

Wiesbaden pursues its application for UNESCO World Heritage status in cooperation with several other grand old European spa towns, among them Karlovy Vary, Baden-Baden, and Spa. One precondition is that the property must be inscribed on the German Tentative List: the nomination has been submitted in 2012. Every aspect of spa and bathing culture has been and still is being researched thoroughly. The results will be made available to the public in lectures and a range of publications.

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For information regarding sights, tourist attractions and day-trip destinations in Wiesbaden and the Rheingau region, guided city walks and bus tours, special offers for groups, accommodation bookings and advance sales of tickets for events both in the capital of Hesse and in all of Germany, please contact:

www.wiesbaden.de/tourismus

Tourist Information Wiesbaden

Marktplatz 1, 65183 Wiesbaden
Phone: +49 (0) 611 172-930
Public transport: Dern'sches Gelände

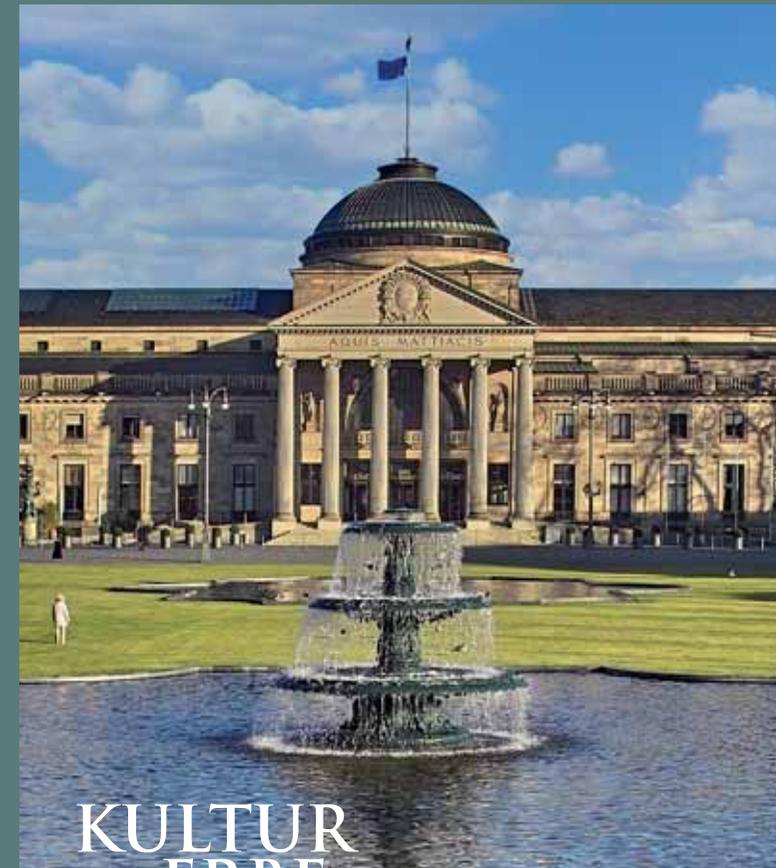
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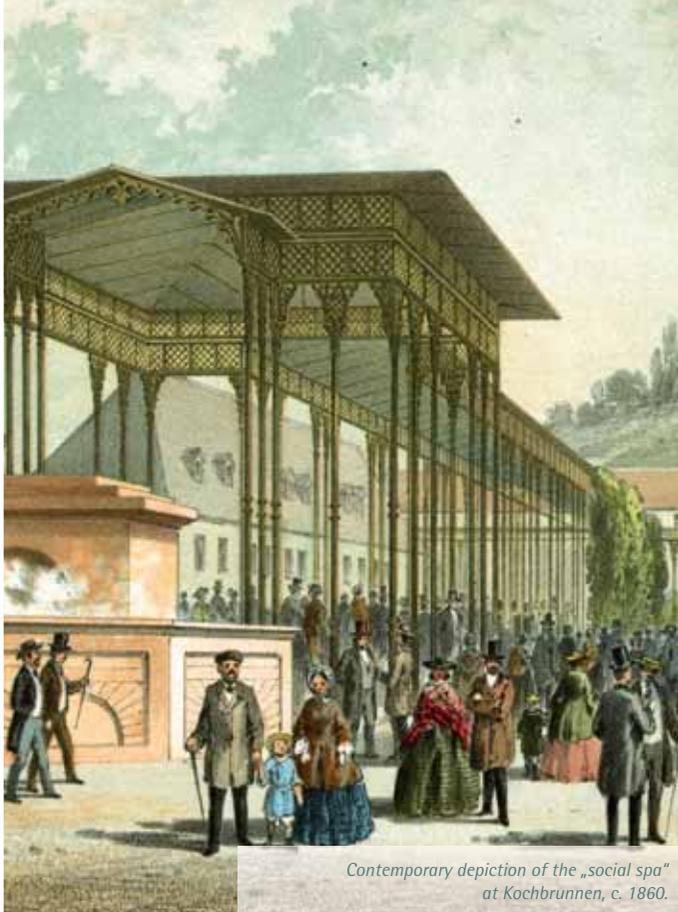
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THE CULTURAL LEGACY OF WIESBADEN:
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY'S SOCIETY SPA





Contemporary depiction of the „social spa“ at Kochbrunnen, c. 1860.



ROMAN RESORT TO GLOBAL SPA

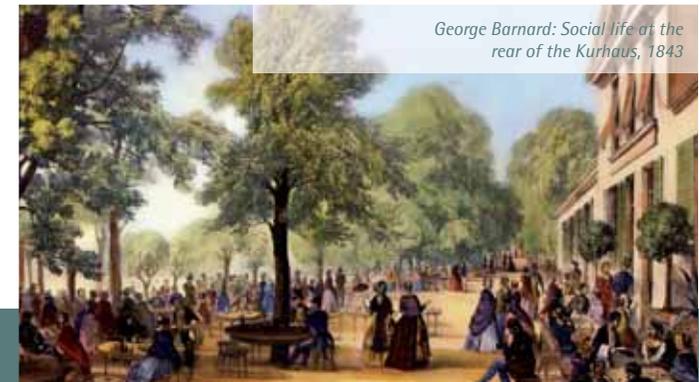
Wiesbaden's incomparable situation in a climatically favoured valley and, crucially, in the vicinity of the hot mineral springs made the town into a resort as early as Roman times, and it remained a well-known spa throughout the Middle Ages and the Early Modern era. It was the 19th century, however, which in the course of a hundred years transformed what was initially still a small rural town of mostly smallholder-townsmen into one of the foremost international luxury and fashion spas. The new-built assembly rooms in the newly established spa district – the Kurhaus (1808–10), a building which created a furore in all of Europe – provided the initial spark for a plan of consistent urban redevelopment. The buildings of the old town centre, now considered unappealing, were contained within a neat pentagon of straight-running streets. Fine new buildings and generous green spaces were created. The town's appearance was redesigned in its entirety, and it maintained its new character as it grew into the spa city it still remains today. At the same time, spa culture itself underwent a fundamental change. Wiesbaden became the stage and embodiment of the 19-th century "society spa".

WIESBADEN: WORLD CULTURE

Wiesbaden provided the perfect setting for the self-presentation of the international spa and resort society of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The medicinal properties of the springs, the favourable climate, the luxurious spa facilities and magnificent architecture and, more than anything, the glamorous international atmosphere – all served, year after year, to lure yet more visitors from all of Europe and America to the Taunus foothills. Here the aristocracy and the aspiring middle classes met and mingled. Events of historic significance took place. Wiesbaden has been a place of inspiration for eminent artists and scientists. The city is an outstanding testimony to and embodiment of the idea and the disappeared "cosmos" of the society spa, and legitimately numbered among the "salons de l'Europe". Wiesbaden is also one of a group of eminent European spa and resort towns applying for the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage status – the world's highest distinction for a cultural monument.

“WIESBADEN HAS DONE ME A LOT OF GOOD.” (GOETHE, 1815)

Wiesbaden was the most eminent European "spa metropolis" of the 19th century, the very epitome of sophisticated, internationally oriented spa culture. It has remained just as livable ever since. The city is as impressive today, with its fine homogeneous townscape, a beautifully preserved, uniquely multi-faceted monument to the history of urban planning as well as the architecture and landscape design of the 19th century.



George Barnard: Social life at the rear of the Kurhaus, 1843