

NICS RAMBLERS - 2024 **HOLIDAY** with walks (for those who want to walk)

Germany (Landau in der Pfalz) – 7 nights (plus an option of 3 additional nights near Giessen) sometime between late May and late June

Please consider **urgently** if you are interested in going. RSVP by 5 November.

Arrangements will be finalised in mid/late November – so complete the questionnaire at the end of this flyer without delay (email your completed questionnaire to Email *****).

Key approximate costs are as follows: Flights - c£188 return with Lufthansa (direct from Belfast City); Hotel Amelie (7 nights)- c£325pp (couple sharing), c£545 (single); Airbnb, c£60 per person per night, all bus and rail travel in Germany (but not using express trains) – c£45 at moment using an DB App and subject to Deutsche Bahn rules (otherwise German bus and rail travel will be about £150 (for those staying 10 days).

Initial Background

This will be the main foreign trip in 2024, given the interest already expressed by many members in this area. Between Covid 1 and 2 lockdowns (September 2020), a small group of NICS Ramblers had a lovely 10 night stay here. The trip will be for 1 week in Landau (plus an optional 3 nights near Giessen), sometime between late May and late June 2024 – exact dates will be confirmed in early November 2023.

The weather should be very pleasant in this wine growing area, but there can be cooler spells and rain in this part of Germany. As noted, some members may wish to stay on for another few days near Giessen – where we will meet Ludo, Reinfried and Sylvia (who joined us in Thassos).

This will be a walking **holiday** i.e. walks (for those who wish) and relaxation (for everyone). There will be a range of walks – so not tough for those who want to ramble. For those who want longer walks, most walks can be extended – the gentler ramblers can simply return by bus/and or train. Lots of scope for cycling as well. Landau, like many German towns, has a very nice swimming area.

There are many good walking (and cycling) trails in this area – through this extensive wine growing area; into the hills and forests of the Pfalz; alongside the Rhine etc. We will be staying in the historical town of Landau in der Pfalz with its lovely squares, pubs, cafes, restaurants and interesting shops. Each day we will use the extensive local bus/rail network to travel to, and from our walks/trips. Our walks will be self-guided – the many trails are very well marked. For those who wish to do less walking, close by are many beautiful and historic towns – for example Speyer, Heidelberg, Mannheim and Worms. The Rhine is also near and for sure one of our walks will also be there. It is an area I know very well, as I stay here with very good German friends (Gitta and Klaus) most years.

The hotel we (and for sure the couples) are likely to stay in (www.hotelamelie-landau.de) offers optional bed and breakfast and is perfect for couples (all beds are large double beds – NOT twin beds). It is in a nice location. The Hotel gets good reviews on Booking.Com – see link at - [booking.com website](https://www.booking.com). If numbers are very high, I will suggest some alternative hotels to stay in Landau and you can book directly with them.

Those wishing to share will need to confirm who they wish to share with at time of booking. **I would suggest those wishing to share rooms (especially friends), book a local Airbnb** – in a fairly central location. For those who wish, you can of course stay on for a few more nights in Landau – it's a good base to travel to other interesting towns. See links at [Rheinland Pfalz tourist site](#) and [The Pfalz walks website](#).

The optional extra 3 nights near Giessen (about £50 to £60 per night per person), will be sorted out later in November. Giessen is near Marburg, a lovely City. Ludo, Reinfried and Sylvia will be welcoming us.

When?

Sometime between late May and late June 2024 – when the weather is pretty good in this area – lots of warm sunshine - see link at [Climate in Landau](#) . Evening though can be cool – this is not the Mediterranean and of course there can be rain. With a sunshine duration of over 1800 hours a year, the area around the German Wine Route is one of the warmest regions in Germany, allowing the cultivation of crops such as figs, lemons and kiwifruit.

Where to – the Pfalz or Palatinate region

The *Pfalz* (Palatinate) is located in the **southwest of Germany**, touching the French border to the Alsace and the Lorraine, in the state of *Rheinland-Pfalz* (Rhineland-Palatinate) It is called one of the most beautiful regions of middle Europe, with its magnificent nature, historical sites and variety of activities. The eastern part stretches into the Rhineland, with its **romantic wine area** and Mediterranean climate (the *Deutsche Weinstrasse*). The centre of the *Pfalz* features the impressive mountains of the Palatinate Forest, the *Pfälzerwald*. It covers 1.798 km², 75% of this being forest. As Germany's largest continuous area of forest it is a **German Natural Reserve** (*Naturpark Pfälzerwald*) and has been an **UNESCO Biosphere Reserve** since 1992. The Trip Advisor site gives some information on Landau – certainly no lack of eating choices – see weblink at [Tripadvisor - Landau](#)

We will stay in the large town of **Landau in der Pfalz (Landau)**, which is surrounded by the [Südliche Weinstraße](#) ("Southern Wine Route") district of southern [Rhineland-Palatinate](#), Germany. It is a university town, a long-standing cultural centre, and a market and shopping town, surrounded by vineyards and the wine-growing villages of the [Palatinate wine region](#). Landau lies east of the [Palatinate forest](#), Europe's largest contiguous forest, on the [German Wine Route](#). Unlike wine festivals in other German wine regions, wine is served in 50 cl glasses rather than the typical 25 cl ones – some of our members will therefore thoroughly enjoy the wine. The German Wine Route is marked by numerous open-air wine festivals and we will hopefully go to at least one of these festivals.



Travel

This is our own self designed trip. Most of us will travel directly with Lufthansa from Belfast City Airport to Frankfurt International Airport. Flights are currently (as at 21/10/23) from about £188 return. Once you have confirmed your accommodation, I would suggest you book your flights without delay – I will send details of the flights I will be booking in due course. For those travelling from other parts of the UK, I would suggest you fly to Frankfurt International Airport – although you may wish to consider Baden Baden. In all cases, you/the group will then make your own way by train to Landau in der Pfalz.

Frankfurt International Airport has a railway station. Most of us will travel to Landau as a group from the airport.

At the moment, German Railways have a monthly phone app rail and bus ticket for the whole of Germany for about £45. If that continues to be in place, I will advise how to purchase it - in due course. The only catch with this monthly pass, is that express trains can't be used – but we are not in a rush.... Alternatively, we can buy a 5-day regional pass and add on a few trips – if so, travel costs in Germany (in total, shouldn't be more than around £150.

Walking (and cycling) – trails are well marked, and we will be self-guided. The link attached shows the enormous range of walks in this area – all lengths, with drop out options on most walks and scope for some to add on some further walking. So, walks for all! And no walks for those just wanting to relax/sightsee.

[Rheinland-pfalz tourist site](#) and [The Pfalz walks website](#)

For those wishing to cycle, please see attached link [Cycling in the Pfalz website](#) .

We will use local trains and occasionally buses, to travel to and from the walks/tourist sights. The Amelie hotel is reasonably close to all 3 Landau railway stations.

Additional nights

Those who wish will be able to stay additional nights – you can book whatever flights you wish – and additional nights. For example, I will be staying the 3 extra nights after the core 7 nights in Landau.

What now?

Without delay, complete this questionnaire below and return to me no later than 5 November – see next page.

Without delay, complete this questionnaire below and return to me no later than **5 November** – see next page.

QUESTIONNAIRE – RSVP – post or email to Email *****	Yes/No/comments
I am interested in this walking holiday	
During the period 18 May to 30 June, the following dates are okay for me.	
I wish to share a double room in the Hotel Ameile	
I will be sharing a double room with.....	
I wish to have a single room in the Hotel Amelie	
If I cannot have a single room, I will stay in a double bedroom as a single guest in the Hotel Amelie	
I would prefer to share (note that sharing a double room in most German hotels means sharing an extra-large bed – twin bed frame, shared mattress – NOT twin mattresses – see photo on Hotel Ameile’s website.	
I will share with	
I want bed and breakfast at this hotel – about £9 per person per night	
I would like to stay in an Airbnb – with a friend.	
I plan to travel from Belfast City Airport to Frankfurt	
I would prefer to travel from England to Germany & vv	
I would like to stay on for 3 more nights near Giessen before flying home – accommodation details will be confirmed (and then booked later). If sharing, confirm who you wish to share with.	
I am happy to assist leading a walk	
My full name is:	
My address is:	

Happy rambling
Michael

