



Leipzig

Experience music

# *A World-Class City of Music*

Experience the fascinating  
power of music



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Leipzig – where music calls the tune	3
Gewandhaus Orchestra. 275 years of the “Grand Concert”.	4
Leipzig Opera. 325 years of da capo!	5
Johann Sebastian Bach – his heirs, his followers	6
Experience authentic historic places	8
Leipzig Music Trail	10
Organ building in the Leipzig Region	12
Event highlights	14
Travel offer	16

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Richard Wagner's "Rheingold" at Leipzig Opera

## *Leipzig – where music calls the tune*

In Leipzig you can feel the fascinating power of music everywhere – in the streets and squares, in churches, concert halls and in the many authentic places where famous composers and musicians lived and worked. A long-standing tradition: over 500 composers have lived here over the centuries including the greatest names in music history – Johann Sebastian Bach, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and the married couple Clara and Robert Schumann, as well as Richard Wagner, Edvard Grieg, Albert Lortzing, Gustav Mahler and Hanns Eisler.

### **Music comes to life here**

The Gewandhaus Orchestra is part of Leipzig's rich musical heritage. Originally founded by both the nobility and the citizens of Leipzig, in 2018 it will be celebrating its 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary with its new principal conductor, Andris Nelsons. Leipzig Opera also has reason to celebrate in 2018. At 325 years of age, it is one of the longest-standing civic opera houses in Europe. The company feels a particular obligation to preserve Richard Wagner's legacy – after all, the composer was born in Leipzig.

And the City of Music can boast many more first-class ensembles – the St. Thomas Boys Choir with its long tradition, and the MDR Symphony Orchestra, to name but two. Music lovers will also derive a lot of pleasure from a day out in the surrounding countryside, where many of the little towns are home to prime examples of the organ builder's art. Visit Leipzig and experience for yourself the musical variety of the city and the region.



The Hildebrandt organ in the protestant church at Störmthal

More detailed information about Leipzig City of Music is available online at: [www.leipzig.travel/music](http://www.leipzig.travel/music)



## *Gewandhaus Orchestra. 275 years of the “Grand Concert”.*



Leipzig’s Gewandhaus Orchestra is a world-class ensemble, and in 2018 it is celebrating its 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was founded by a group of sixteen merchants in 1743 as the “Großes Concert”, and set the stage for Leipzig to become one of the world’s most important centres for music. The name “Gewandhaus” refers to the trade fair building used by the fabric merchants where its first concert was held. Today, the Orchestra is based at the New Gewandhaus on Augustusplatz, which is home to two concert halls, both with excellent acoustics.

### **A world-class orchestra**

The Gewandhaus is one of Leipzig’s most famous cultural institutions, astounding around half a million visitors each year. Artists including Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Arthur Nikisch, Kurt Masur and Riccardo Chailly have all held the position of “Gewandhauskapellmeister”, adding their own personal touches to its distinct culture. Latvian Andris Nelsons takes over as principal conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in 2018. The Gewandhaus Orchestra has accompanied the Leipzig Opera for over 200 years. It also supports the St. Thomas Boys Choir when it sings the motets at St. Thomas Church every week. It is one of the key institutions behind Leipzig’s international reputation as a city of music.



- 1 Gewandhaus Orchestra
- 2 Leipzig Gewandhaus
- 3 Andris Nelsons conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra
- 4 Leipzig's Opera House in Augustusplatz
- 5 "Rachmaninow", Leipzig Ballet
- 6 "The Valkyries", the first work in Wagner's Ring Cycle



## *Leipzig Opera. 325 years of da capo!*

Leipzig's opera tradition dates back to 1693. The Opera House is the third oldest civic music theatre stage in Europe. Its history is closely linked to the life and work of famous composers including Leipzig-born Richard Wagner, Georg Philipp Telemann, Heinrich Marschner, Albert Lortzing and Gustav Mahler.

The Opera and Leipzig Ballet are located in Leipzig Opera House on Augustusplatz, which opened in 1960. An international ensemble of soloists, the award-winning Opera Choir and the Gewandhaus Orchestra, which traditionally accompanies the operas and ballets, guarantee musical performances of the highest quality. Under Artistic Director and General Music Director Prof. Ulf Schirmer, the works of Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss in particular are being brought back into the centre of the repertoire. So the first six months of 2018 will see three complete performances of Wagner's Ring Cycle, one of which will take place as part of the Wagner Festival at the Leipzig Opera in May. The festival brings Wagnerians from home and abroad to the composer's birthplace every year.

Mario Schröder, ballet director and head choreographer of a young company with dancers from 23 different countries, focuses on his dancers' strong personalities and looks to create a direct dialogue with the audience. The Musical Comedy Theatre is the place to go for musicals, operettas and light opera in the Lindenau area of Leipzig.

# *Johann Sebastian Bach – his heirs, his followers*



After stops in Arnstadt, Weimar and Köthen, in 1723 the great composer and organist of the Baroque Era assumed the position as choirmaster of St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, a post which he held until his death in 1750. In addition to organ pieces, motets and cantatas, during this time he also composed such outstanding works as the Christmas Oratorio, the St. John Passion and the St. Matthew Passion. To this day these compositions have not lost any of their charisma and are quite naturally included in the yearly repertoire of many Leipzig choirs. Bach's legacy lives on here like in no other city!



## **The Leipzig Bach Museum**

The permanent exhibition in the Leipzig Bach Museum presents Bach's life and work in many different ways: sound experiments, multimedia stations and interactive elements as well as precious originals are to be found. A highlight of the exhibition is the Treasure Chamber, in which the original Bach manuscripts and other rarities are on display. At concerts and during guided tours the baroque Summer Hall with its unique sound chamber is also accessible for visitors. The annual highlight in Bach-related events, however, is the international Leipzig Bachfest in June hosting some 100 events in historical venues such as St. Thomas and the Old City Hall. Even jazz interpretations of Bach's works can be heard.





- 1 St. Thomas Boys Choir
- 2 Leipzig St. John's church organ console in the Bach Museum
- 3 Bose house at St. Thomas Churchyard
- 4 In the Leipzig Bach Museum
- 5 Bach Monument



## St. Thomas Boys Choir (Thomanerchor)

Dating back over 800 years, the St. Thomas Boys Choir is Leipzig's oldest cultural asset. The boys choir has been in existence since 1212, when the Margrave of Meissen founded the St. Thomas Augustinian Canons (Augustiner-Chorherrenstift zu St. Thomas). Much has changed over the centuries, but even today the choirboys of St. Thomas still live in the boarding school and attend St. Thomas School. With the choirmaster of St. Thomas, Gotthold Schwarz, the young choristers are dedicated to the upkeep of sacred music and, of course, of Bach's legacy. They are not only to be heard here in Leipzig; they also carry the sound of the city all over the world on their regular concert tours.

## St. Thomas Church

The St. Thomas Boys Choir can be heard three times a week in Bach's former workplace, mainly performing motets and Bach cantatas. And where else, indeed, could one experience the great composer so intimately? His tomb lies in the sanctuary of the 800-year-old Late-Gothic church. In front of the church, in the St. Thomas Churchyard (Thomaskirchhof), stands the Bach Monument, erected in his honour by Leipzig sculptor Carl Seffner in 1908, and a popular snapshot for music lovers from all over the world.



*Experience  
authentic  
historic places*

### **Mendelssohn House**

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy was a major influence on European musical history – and he in turn was influenced by his experience of Leipzig. Under his musical direction, the Gewandhaus Orchestra became a first-class orchestra. Moreover, Mendelssohn is renowned for his rediscovery of Bach. The performance of the St. Matthew Passion under his musical direction in 1829 initiated the “Bach Renaissance”. He is also credited for the foundation of the “Conservatory of Music” in 1843,

Germany’s oldest music academy. Famous contemporaries such as Schumann and Wagner were frequent visitors to his home on Goldschmidtstraße. Today, it is home to the world’s only Mendelssohn museum. Visitors can do more than just take a look around the rooms in the Mendelssohn House. The museum reopened in February 2014 after a complete renovation and now offers a number of interactive stations to help explore the life and work of the composer. And if you’ve always wanted to conduct a symphony orchestra, you can now make your dream a reality in the world’s only “Effektorium”. It’s almost like being in the Gewandhaus!



### **Richard Wagner, Leipzig born and bred**

Richard Wagner was born here on 22 May 1813. As a youth he attended St. Nicholas School, and later St. Thomas School. At the age of 16, in his home town, he decided to devote his life to music. In 1831 he enrolled as a music student at the University of Leipzig, and also took instruction in composition with the St. Thomas choirmaster,

Christian Theodor Weinlig. His first works were performed in the Gewandhaus, such as his Symphony in C Major in 1833. To celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth in May 2013, Leipzig finally unveiled its Wagner Memorial, created by sculptor Stephan Balkenhol. The Old St. Nicholas School has also opened a permanent exhibition entitled “The Young Richard Wagner, 1813 to 1834”, which highlights Wagner’s early life and musical education.



- 1 The composer’s home office in Mendelssohn House
- 2 “Effektorium” at the Mendelssohn House
- 3 Richard Wagner
- 4 GRASSI Museum of Musical Instruments
- 5 In the Schumann House



## Schumann House

Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck may be Leipzig’s most famous lovers from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After their wedding on 12 September 1840 in the village church at Schönefeld near Leipzig, the celebrated female pianist and the still unknown composer moved to Inselstraße. Among other things, the “Spring Symphony” and the first movement of the piano concert in A minor were created during this period. Today the Schumann House presents an exhibition on the life and work of the musician couple. In addition, concerts and readings take place regularly.

## Edvard Grieg Memorial Place

Throughout his life, Edvard Grieg retained close ties to Leipzig’s music academy, the “Konservatorium”, first enrolling there in 1858. His encounters with Brahms and Tchaikovsky in Leipzig inspired him for decades, and it was here that Grieg wrote his first compositions. His publisher, C. F. Peters, lived in Talstraße 10, where Grieg stayed regularly and where today an exhibition commemorates the composer’s work.

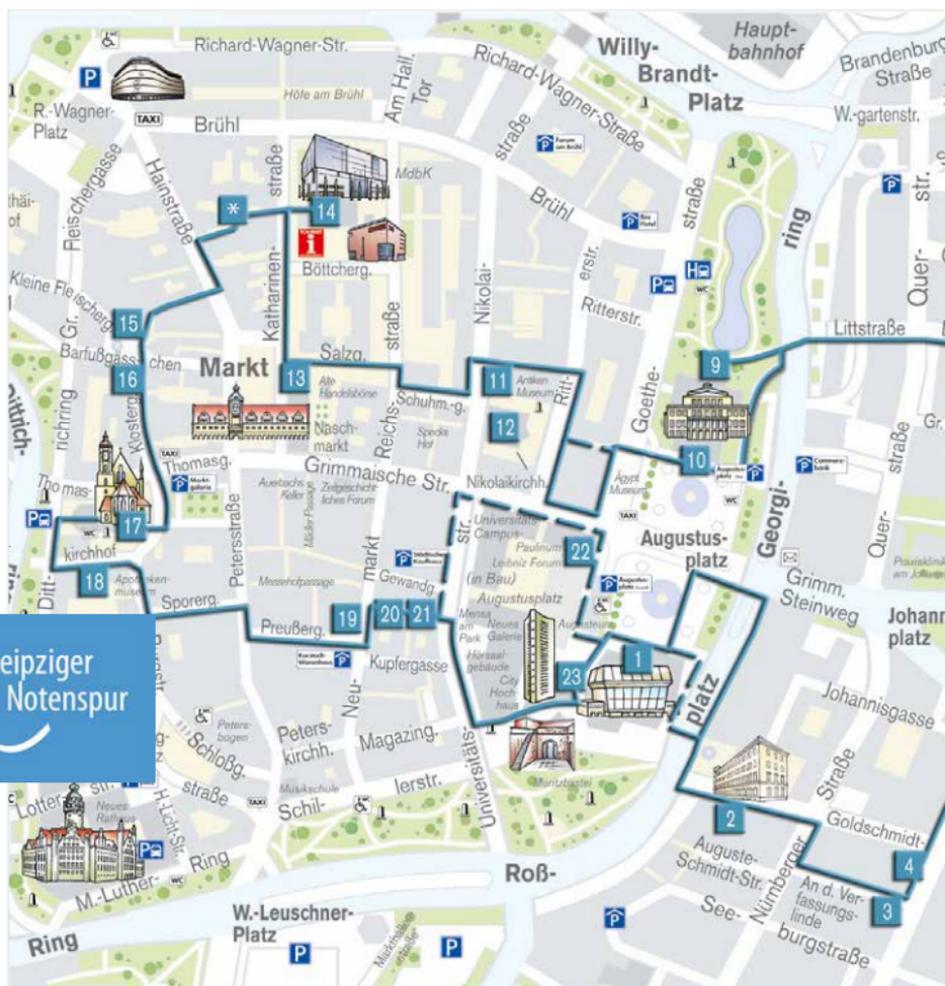
## GRASSI Museum of Musical Instruments

It holds one of the biggest collections of its kind – the Museum of Musical Instruments of the University of Leipzig. Its exhibitions offer insights into the magic of musical instruments and instrument making since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Its 5,000 or so precious exhibits include the oldest known clavichord (1543) and the world’s oldest surviving original pianoforte (1726). In the museum’s sound lab you can try out some of the instruments yourself.



## Leipzig Music Trail

Leipzig has a concentration of authentic famous composers' homes and workplaces that is unique in the world – a sparkling musical past that laid the foundations for a vibrant musical present. The aim of Leipzig's Music Trail initiative is to make this treasure visible and tangible. The "Leipzig Music Trail" is a signposted route connecting





- 1 On the Leipzig Music Trail
- 2 Grieg Memorial Place, Talstraße 10
- 3 Leipzig Music Trail leads the way through the city



the most important original sites of relevance to musical history in the city centre. Curved stainless-steel shapes set in the ground mark the “ribbon” that winds its way through the city centre and highlights the musical tradition within the cityscape.

The innovative audio guide plays a number of musical pieces and audio clips from the great composers, thus allowing visitors to listen to Leipzig’s musical history as they follow the five kilometre tour. Information panels as well as themed tours provide fascinating insights into the lives of Bach, Wagner and others. For individuals, the audio guide (available to hire from the Museum of Fine Arts during opening hours) and the Notenspur app are a wonderfully informative guide to the “Leipzig Music Trail”.



- 1 New Gewandhaus concert hall
- 2 Mendelssohn House
- 3 Grieg Memorial Place
- 4 Former Peters Music Library
- 5 GRASSI Museum of Musical Instruments
- 6 Old St. John’s Cemetery
- 7 Schumann House
- 8 Graphic arts quarter – music publishers
- 9 Wagner Memorial
- 10 Leipzig Opera House
- 11 St. Nicholas School
- 12 St. Nicholas Church
- 13 Old City Hall
- 14 Museum of Fine Arts
- 15 Zum Arabischen Coffe Baum (Germany’s oldest coffee house)
- 16 Former Hôtel de Saxe
- 17 St. Thomas Church
- 18 Bach Archive, Bach Museum
- 19 Clara Wieck’s birthplace
- 20 Location of the old Music Academy (Konservatorium)
- 21 Location of the first Gewandhaus concert hall
- 22 Paulinum – Auditorium and University Church St. Pauli
- 23 MDR Cube – Radio Orchestra
- \* Sound installation

[www.leipzig.travel/musictrail](http://www.leipzig.travel/musictrail)

Currently certified as accessible – detailed information available at: [www.sachsen-barrierefrei.de](http://www.sachsen-barrierefrei.de)



## *Organ building in the Leipzig Region*

The king of instruments always provides an unforgettable musical experience, both in Leipzig and the surrounding area. Leipzig Region is home to an amazing variety of outstanding organs. The great organ builders such as Silbermann, Hildebrandt, Kreuzbach and Ladegast have left behind instruments that still set the standards today and inspire organ lovers the world over. The little town of Rötha to the south of Leipzig is home to two famous Silbermann organs from the baroque period.

The two-manual organ at the St. George Church was made by Gottfried Silbermann and his apprentice Zacharias Hildebrandt in 1721. Just one year later, the Marienkirche in Rötha also received one of these precious instruments. None other than Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy sang the praises of the two organs when he visited Rötha in 1840.



### **Silbermann's heritage**

Zacharias Hildebrandt had only just completed his apprenticeship with Silbermann when he was asked to build an organ for the Kreuzkirche in Störmthal. The church's accounts show that the instrument was "accepted, examined and tested, then vaunted and declared to be sound and consistent by Mr Johann Sebastian Bach, Cantor of Leipzig" in November 1723.



- 1 Manuals and stops on an organ
- 2 St. Mary's Church in Rötha
- 3 Schramm organ in the castle chapel at Hubertusburg
- 4 Organ concert at the St. Laurentius Church in Markranstädt
- 5 Restoration of the Hildebrandt organ in Störmthal



Another wonder of the organ world can be found at the castle chapel at Hubertusburg in Wernsdorf. Although it cannot be seen from outside, the castle features a magnificent chapel with a Schramm organ, richly decorated in a rococo style. It has been completely restored to its original tonality and still astounds concert-goers today. Another great name is just as inseparable from the organ-building industry in the Leipzig Region: Friedrich Ladegast. His imposing organs in the Altleisnig church in Polditz and the Stadtkirche Naunhof are still considered highlights of the musical landscape today.

### Restoring former glory

Extensive restoration has meant that the majority of organs in the Leipzig Region have now been brought back to their original state so that music-lovers can once again experience their unique, beautiful music. There are also a number of excursions, church tours and individual opportunities to gain an insight into the historical development of organ building in the Leipzig Region.

[www.faszination-orgel.de](http://www.faszination-orgel.de) (German only)