

JÜDISCHES
MUSEUM
FRANKEN

JEWISH LIFE IN FRANCONIA PAST AND PRESENT



Fürth | Schnaittach | Schwabach

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EXPERIENCE HISTORY, DISCOVER DIVERSITY: THE JEWISH MUSEUM FRANCONIA AND ITS BRANCHES IN FÜRTH, SCHNAITTACH & SCHWABACH

Franconia is one of the most significant regions of Jewish history in southern Germany. The Jewish Museum Franconia invites you on a fascinating journey through nearly a thousand years of Jewish life – vivid, moving, and compellingly told.

At three historic locations – in Fürth, Schnaittach, and Schwabach – the museums showcase the rich diversity of Franconian-Jewish culture from the Middle Ages to the present day. More than a place of remembrance, the Museum is also a space for dialogue, education, and encounter.

All three museum buildings are housed in elaborately restored monuments dating from the 16th to 18th centuries. Many traces of everyday Jewish life are still preserved: walk-in sukkahs, original ritual baths (mikva'ot), and historic living spaces that bring the past to life. The permanent exhibitions feature rare Judaica, personal everyday objects, and captivating insights into the religious, social, and economic life of Jewish communities – in both urban and rural settings.

Changing exhibitions, special events, and guided tours explore specific themes and connect the past to the present. Jewish history here is not only made visible – it becomes an experience.

Discover the Jewish Museum Franconia – a place for wonder, reflection, and understanding!



JEWISH EVERYDAY LIFE BEHIND HISTORIC WALLS

The Jewish Museum Franconia in Fürth offers unique insights into the everyday lives of Jewish families – right where that life once took place. The Museum is located in a former residential building that was owned by Jewish families from 1702 until the late 19th century.

Among its former residents was the respected Fromm family, which produced community leaders and operated the first Hebrew printing press in Fürth. The Fromms were also connected by family ties to prominent Jewish court suppliers (court Jews), highlighting their central role in the city's social and economic life.

The historic building still preserves remarkable original features of Jewish domestic culture:

- a ritual bath (mikveh) dating back to the house's construction
- a walk-in sukkah (temporary hut for the Jewish festival of Sukkot) with an ingenious roof design
- and ornately stuccoed reception rooms that reflect the representative lifestyle of the time.

These architectural elements make the museum itself a key exhibit – an authentic place of Jewish history in the heart of Fürth.



COLLECTION AND EXHIBITION ON JEWISH LIFE IN FRANCONIA

A rich and distinctly Franconian-Jewish culture—shaped by its own rituals, customs, and scholarly traditions—began to take form in Franconia as early as the Middle Ages. In its permanent exhibition, the Jewish Museum Franconia in Fürth presents one of the most remarkable collections dedicated to this heritage. Spread across five floors, the exhibition traces Jewish life in Franconia from its medieval origins to the present day, exploring themes of homeland and exile, tradition and adaptation, destruction and renewal.

A central focus of the exhibition is the Jewish history of Fürth itself. Known today as the birthplace of Henry Kissinger, Jakob Wassermann, and Leopold Ullstein, Fürth served as the leading Jewish religious center of southern Germany from the 17th to the early 19th century. During this period, the city flourished with several synagogues, Talmudic academies, and Hebrew printing presses.



THE KRAUTHEIMER RESEARCH LIBRARY & THE ADOLPH S. OCHS LOUNGE

The Krautheimer Research Library is an impressive place for research, study, and reflection. This publicly accessible specialist library is dedicated to Jewish history and culture. Located in the modern annex of the Jewish Museum Franconia in Fürth, it offers a quiet study environment as well as the elegant Adolph S. Ochs Reading Lounge, generously donated by Dr. Richard Roth (Fürth).

The library currently houses around 12,000 items, including academic books, scholarly journals, and essential publications on Jewish history, religion, art, and culture. Its primary focus is Jewish life and culture in Franconia, complemented by a wide range of primary sources and research materials.

Highlights of the collection include:

- Hebrew printed works and manuscripts from Franconia (17th–20th century)
- Family archives and historical documents
- Rare prints from the Löwensohn Publishing House in Fürth
- A growing collection of audiovisual materials

As a reference library, it is open to researchers, students, and anyone engaged in scholarly work.

Please note that use of the library requires advance registration at least three working days before your visit (bibliothek@juedisches-museum.org).



MARY S. ROSENBERG CAFÉ

Tucked away in the peaceful courtyard of the Jewish Museum Franconia, the Mary S. Rosenberg Café is a true insider tip for those looking to take a break from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Surrounded by historic architecture and a charming museum garden, the café invites you to relax, unwind, and enjoy.

A culinary highlight is the Fürth Lemon Cake, a traditional Jewish delicacy. Its recipe comes from handwritten cookbooks of Jewish families from Fürth, which are now preserved in the museum's archive – a taste of living history!

The café is named after Mary S. Rosenberg (1900–1992), a bookseller from Fürth. In 1933, due to increasing persecution by the Nazis, she was forced to run her bookstore from her private apartment. In 1939, she managed to emigrate to the United States. With just 10 dollars in starting capital, she opened a German-language antiquarian bookshop in New York – which soon attracted prominent customers such as Thomas Mann and Albert Einstein.

Visitors are welcome to browse daily newspapers as well as Jewish publications and magazines, which are available for reading in the café.



ALFRED HEILBRONN MUSEUM GARDEN – BOTANIK BAHÇESİ

The museum garden at the Jewish Museum Franken in Fürth is named after the renowned botanist Alfred Heilbronn (1885–1961), who was born and raised in Fürth. Heilbronn studied natural sciences in Munich and later taught as a professor of botany at the University of Münster.

After being dismissed by the National Socialists, he fled to Turkey in 1933, where he founded the Botanical Institute at Istanbul University and established one of the country's first scientific botanical gardens – the Alfred Heilbronn Botanik Bahçesi.

In 2014, the garden was taken away from the university and handed over to the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs. Since 2019, it has been closed to the public. The original entrance sign bearing Heilbronn's name was removed, and parts of the garden are planned to be built over.

The museum garden in Fürth honors Heilbronn's botanical legacy and connects it with Jewish culture and religious symbolism. The plants grown here reflect both the biblical flora and the customs of Jewish holidays:

Etrog, fig, almond, date, pomegranate, grapevine, hops, and herbs all mentioned in the Torah. Some plants come directly from the botanical garden in Istanbul — creating a living bridge between past and present, science and faith.



JAKOB WASSERMANN BOOKSTORE & MUSEUM SHOP

"If a book has the power to make me forget myself in its company, then I become a reader!"

Jakob Wassermann

The Jakob Wassermann Bookstore, operated in cooperation with Korn & Berg / Buchhandlung Edelmann, offers a curated selection of high-quality literature on Jewish history and culture. The collection includes contemporary fiction and non-fiction, cookbooks on Jewish cuisine, children's and young adult literature, as well as graphic novels. In partnership with the Jewish Museum Franconia, the bookstore also hosts annual readings by Jewish authors and book presentations on Jewish topics.

In addition to books, the museum shop at the Jewish Museum Franconia offers an appealing selection of Judaica, souvenirs, and quirky Jewish-themed gifts. From modern protective amulets to contemporary Hanukkah menorahs, Judaica enthusiasts will find plenty to discover.

Jakob Wassermann (1873–1934), born in Fürth, was one of the most widely read authors of his time and enjoyed international acclaim during his lifetime. His novels were bestsellers and translated into more than thirty languages. Wassermann viewed the success of his books as proof of a successful German-Jewish cultural symbiosis. However, the rise of antisemitism in the Weimar Republic and the emergence of National Socialism eventually forced him back into the "spiritual ghetto" he had once striven to leave behind.



THE KRAUTHEIMER NURSERY

The Krautheimer Nursery tells the moving story of the Jewish Krautheimer family and their charitable foundation. Opened in 1912, the nursery served as a modern daycare center – welcoming both legitimate and illegitimate children, regardless of religious background. At the time, it was a pioneering example of social progress.

The small exhibition traces the Krautheimer family's journey – from their commitment to public welfare to their forced emigration under the Nazi regime. Today, the historical building is used by neighboring schools.

The Jewish Museum Franken cooperates closely with these institutions – offering guided tours, workshops, and educational projects that bring history to life.



THE OLD JEWISH CEMETERY

Peacefully situated and shaded by tall, lush green trees, the Old Jewish Cemetery in Fürth was established in 1607 on the edge of the historic town center. Over the centuries, this sacred place has witnessed a turbulent history.

Today, it ranks among the most significant and impressive Jewish cemeteries in southern Germany. With around 6,500 gravestones – many bearing Hebrew inscriptions and intricate symbols – the cemetery reflects more than 300 years of Jewish life in Fürth.

In cooperation with the Jewish Community of Fürth, the cemetery can be visited as part of a guided tour offered by the Jewish Museum Franconia.



HOUSE HISTORY AND EXHIBITION

The Jewish Museum Franconia in Schnaittach is located in a former synagogue, built in 1570, along with the adjoining rabbi's and cantor's house. With its historic architecture and impressive collection, the museum focuses on rural Jewish life – a must-see for anyone interested in Jewish traditions outside the big cities.

The synagogue consists of separate sections for men and women. Its architecture was inspired by medieval models such as the Pinkas Synagogue in Prague. In 1735/36, the building was expanded to the east and south to accommodate the growing congregation.

The synagogue's interior was almost completely destroyed during the November Pogrom of 1938, also known as "Reichskristallnacht". Only the stone Torah ark and the original grilles separating the women's section have survived.

The museum complex also includes the rabbi's and cantor's residence, built by the local Jewish community in the 17th century. These buildings served not only as living quarters but also for community functions. A ritual bath (mikveh) is located in the basement of the rabbi's house.

The upper floors of the museum house Schnaittach's local history museum, featuring a unique collection on the town's past.

EXHIBITION AND COLLECTION ON FRANCONIAN RURAL JEWRY

From the 16th century onward, Schnaittach was home to a significant Jewish community. Until the 19th century, it served as the rabbinical center for the surrounding congregations and operated its own Talmudic school.

In its permanent exhibition, the Jewish Museum Franconia in Schnaittach showcases an important collection of material culture documenting Jewish life in rural southern Germany. The collection includes not only religious ritual objects but also a wide range of everyday items from the Jewish rural communities known as the *Medinat Aschpah* — an administrative association of the Jewish communities of Ottensoos, Schnaittach, Forth, and Hüttenbach.



THE JEWISH CEMETERIES

Schnaittach is home to three Jewish cemeteries that survived periods of non-Jewish use as well as partial destruction during the Nazi era. The oldest cemetery was established in the early 16th century, while the other two date from the 19th century. Jewish residents of Schnaittach and the surrounding communities of Ottensoos, Forth, and Hüttenbach were laid to rest here. Until 1607, even the Jewish community of Fürth—30 kilometers away—buried its dead in Schnaittach.

In cooperation with the Association of Jewish Communities in Bavaria, the cemeteries can be visited as part of a guided tour offered by the Jewish Museum Franconia.



HOUSE HISTORY AND EXHIBITION

During renovation work in 2001, a remarkable treasure of European Jewish cultural heritage was uncovered at Synagogengasse 10a: a historical sukkah adorned with striking late Baroque wall frescoes. The visual language of these paintings is unique in Western Europe. They were created in the 18th century, when the Jewish homeowner, Moses Löw Koppel, commissioned the richly decorated sukkah inside his residence.

The exhibition uses architectural traces and animated films to illuminate the Jewish festival of Sukkot, the history of the house, and the Jewish history of Schwabach. Temporary exhibitions on the first and second floors further explore various facets of Jewish history and culture.

SYNAGOGUE LANE

The Synagogue Lane (Synagogengasse) is just a short walk from Schwabach's modern town center. It boasts a rich and varied history and served for many centuries as the heart of Jewish life in the region. As the seat of a district rabbinate with its own Talmudic school, Schwabach played an important role not only for the town itself but also for the surrounding Jewish communities.

Along the Synagogue Lane and its immediate surroundings, visitors can see the old synagogue, the former rabbi's residence, the Talmudic school, and the homes of Jewish court factors and families. Together, these buildings form a historically significant ensemble, offering an authentic glimpse into Jewish life from the 17th to the 20th century.

Visitors can also explore the Synagogue Lane and its surroundings independently with the help of a dedicated app.





VISITOR INFORMATION

FÜRTH

The Jewish Museum Franconia in Fürth
Königstraße 89
+49 (0)911 950 988-88

Tuesday – Sunday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed on Mondays, except Easter Monday and
Whit Monday
U1 to Fürth Rathaus

SCHNAITTACH

The Jewish Museum Franconia in Schnaittach
Museumsgasse 12–16
+49 (0)911 950 988-88 / +49 (0)9153 7434

Saturday and Sunday: 12 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Open on Easter Monday and Whit Monday
Booked groups can also visit the museum outside
of regular opening hours.

SCHWABACH

The Jewish Museum Franconia in Schwabach
Synagogengasse 10a (rear entrance)
+49 (0)911 950 988-88 / +49 (0)9122 88 62 100

Sunday 12 a.m. to 5 p.m. (May to September)
Saturday and Sunday: 12 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Oktober to April)
Open on Easter Monday and Whit Monday
Booked groups can also visit the museum outside
of regular opening hours.

GUIDED TOUR BOOKING

besuch@juedisches-museum.org

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