

Zug on Foot

HILLSIDE POSITION

above the rooftops

Tours with a View

St.-Oswalds-Gasse • St. Oswald's Church • Castle
Art Gallery • Outer Town Wall • St. Michael's Church
Maria Opferung Convent • Zurlaubenhof • Theiler House



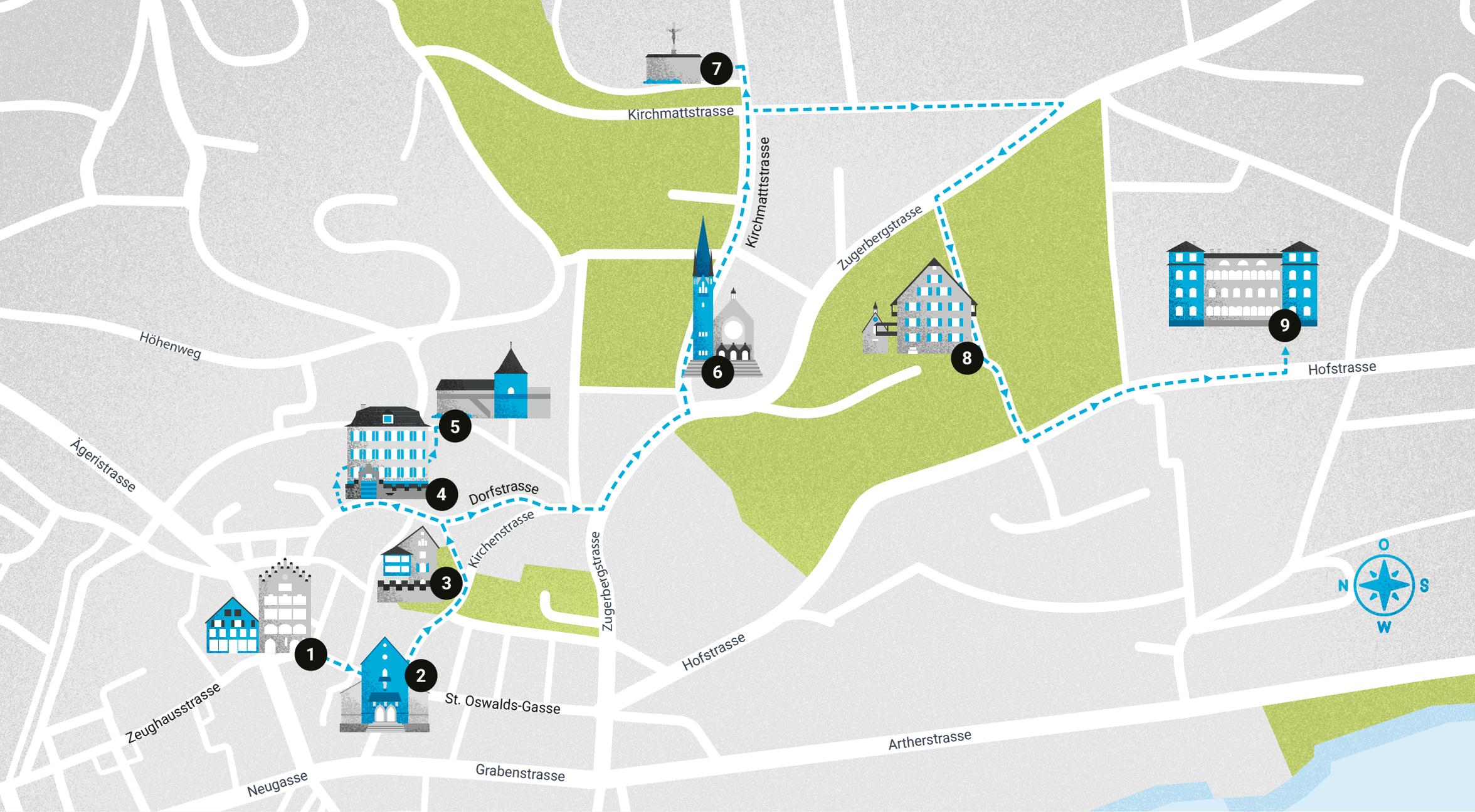
Welcome to Zug

This brochure invites you to visit Zug's hilly location and linger awhile. The leaflet is your personal travel guide, telling you the history of some of the most striking buildings, squares and locations. These are easy to find with the help of the overview map. Follow the map, explore the town and discover its history.

If you would like to know more, take a guided tour of the town. To book a private tour, please contact Zug Tourism:

info@zug.ch

+41 41 511 75 00



Map Key

- | | | | | |
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St.-Oswalds-Gasse

'Pax intransibus, salus exeuntibus', in English: 'Peace to those who enter and salvation to those who leave'. This blessing above a lintel welcomes us to a house in beautiful St.-Oswalds-Gasse.

But where does this former main road begin? According to the numbering, it starts at the junction with the Ägeri Road.

A narrow row of houses winds its way up the hillside, punctuated by the sound of children laughing. Here the Burgbach school building is located, with its unusual past: built in 1511 as a hospital, later an orphanage, it was converted into a school in 1873. There is a surprise hidden beneath this building: the Burgbach Cellar. Wine used to be stored here until the artists Annemarie and Eugen Hotz discovered the 16th-century room. In 1968, they turned it into a small theatre in keeping with the times. The name comes from the Burgbach stream, which flows from the castle past the school building under the alleyway and into the lake. After the crossroads, we see St. Oswald's Church, which gives the road its name.

Further on, a pink baroque mural catches the eye. The date above the entrance door testifies to the age of the building. It has been owned by the Petrus Claver Sisters

for over 100 years. The former ballroom now houses a special Africa Museum with ethnographic objects from the Missions. A historical reappraisal of these objects is still pending.

On the side of the hill, the new granary was built in 1530 because the old one in the lower old town had become too small. Later it served as a boys' school, barracks and, in 1981, as a briefly autonomously occupied youth centre. Since the building was gutted and extensively renovated in 1986, it has housed the Zug Library. Opposite is the classicist four-storey 'House of Learning', which has been used for educational purposes since 1722. It was the first secondary school for boys in Zug town. Today it is open to everyone and offers various services ranging from yoga courses to language classes.



Visit the **Ochsen Bar**, have a coffee and admire the unique modern stained-glass windows designed by Ferdinand Gehr. The mural in the lounge is also worth seeing.

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St. Oswald's Church

The monumental St. Oswald's Church stands in the middle of St. Oswald's-Lane. Building commenced in 1478 as a representative testimony to an imperial town and St. Michael's retained its status as a parish church even beyond the town itself.

The period in which St. Oswald's Church was built is no coincidence, as it was precisely at that time that the town was expanded and enclosed by another wall. By 1492, the church, which had been consecrated nine years earlier, had already become too small. So, in no time at all, the nave was extended and the church enlarged with two side aisles.

The builder of the Church was Johannes Eberhard. His family's castle estate also included the adjacent land, but such a church had to be paid for, so he was dependent on donations. Eberhard kept meticulous records of both large and small donations – marking some names with 'het nüt gen noch' (has nothing left). It was not without reason that Eberhard was elected town priest during the construction. The good economic situation in the 15th century and a windfall from the spoils of the Burgundian War had finally made the construction possible. Even the King of France and the famous hermit Nikolaus von Flüe had donated gold guilders for the construction of the church – naturally also for the salvation of their souls. Eberhard confidently had himself portrayed in a lifelike manner in the painting which shows him worshipping Saint Oswald as he relinquishes his church to the community (holy clan). A copy of the donor's portrait still hangs above the door to the church tower today. The valuable original is part of the Zug Castle Museum's collection.

The choice of Saint Oswald as Patron Saint is no coincidence. As a king, he advocated the Christian faith. An image of him – or at least an idea of him – can be seen on the left-hand side, above the western entrance with the large flight of steps.



Have a look at the various **royal figures** on the double portal.

Castle

Based on archaeological findings, 26 different architectural phases from the 8th to the 20th century have been reconstructed. However, it is not known who built the castle.

Another landmark of Zug town is its castle. The castle is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Zug. However, written sources only mention the castle as a building since the late Middle Ages. Its history began around 900 years ago: in the 11th century it was initially a simple structure of wood and clay. There was no trace of knightly romanticism at that time. Various noble families lived here, including ministers of the Counts of Lenzburg, Kyburg and – one imagines – the Habsburgs, as Knights of Hünenberg.

An episode from mythical/traditional Swiss history is said to have had its decisive beginning here: on 14 November 1315, the Habsburg Duke Leopold assembled his army in Zug – right next to the castle, where he also spent his last peaceful night before the battle. He wanted to march across the Ägeri Valley to Einsiedeln to protect the plundered monastery from further felony by the people of Schwyz. But the next day, they attacked Leopold's advancing army at the upper end of Lake Ägeri and, after bloody close combat, caused them to flee across the swamp.

Over the centuries, the castle has been rebuilt and expanded several times. Its size and appearance are the result of a centuries-long development process. It was not until the 16th century that it acquired its 'knightly appearance' with the addition of a ring wall crowned with battlements. This optimal state was seemingly reached in the 18th century, and was the version that Canton Zug used, based on principles of monument preservation, when a full-scale restoration was made between 1979 and 1982. In 1983, the castle, which had previously been considered a ruin, became a historical museum. The Burg Zug Museum collects, documents and communicates the history of Zug from the High Middle Ages to the present day.



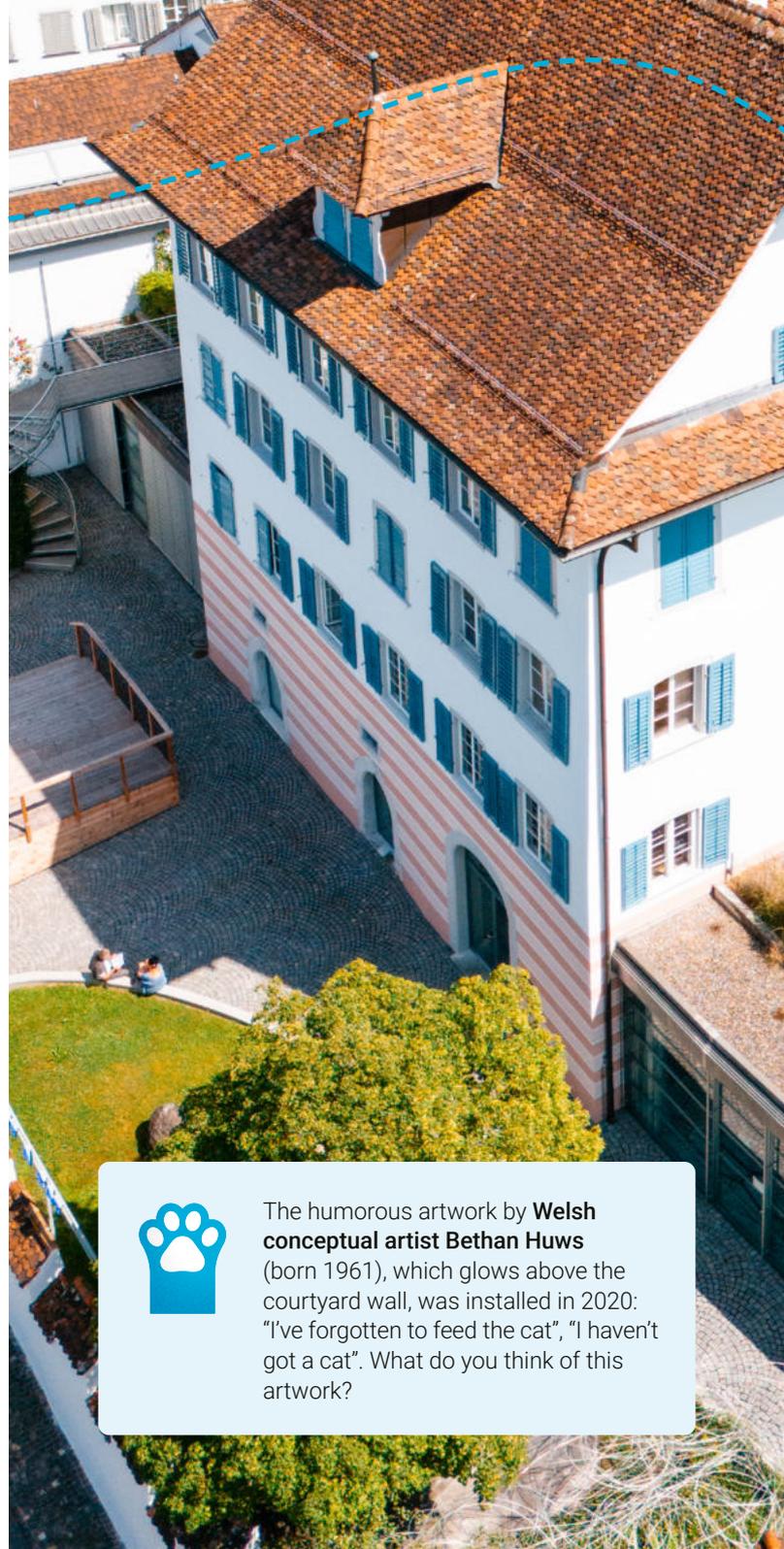
In the **moat**, you can trace selected construction phases of the castle back to the 12th century. Which castle is your favourite?

Art Gallery

The area surrounding the Art Gallery is part of the neighbourhood known as “Dorf” (village), one of the oldest districts dating back to the time before the town’s foundation.

The Kunsthaus Zug is a renowned museum for modern and contemporary art. Its first location was in the Altstadthalle, (Old Town Hall) where it opened in 1977. Since 1990, it has been located on the edge of Zug’s old town in a terraced complex dating from the 16th century, the ‘Hof im Dorf’, which once belonged to the Frauental monastery. The manor house is surrounded by a Baroque courtyard wall and has been rebuilt several times over the centuries and owned by various influential families in Zug. Thanks to the last renovation by the renowned Swiss architect Franz Füg (1921–2019), the complex now has two wings and modern, clearly-defined exhibition spaces. There is also a garden of sculptures, where visitors can find works by Fritz Wotruba, Michael Kienzer and Richard Tuttle.

The Kunsthaus Zug houses a significant collection on permanent loan, focusing on classical modernism, particularly Viennese modernism, such as Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Oskar Kokoschka and others. The collection was established in the 1950s and 1960s by Fritz Kamm (1897–1967), a Swiss banker, and his wife Editha Kamm-Ehrbar, with the Austrian sculptor Fritz Wotruba having a pivotal influence on the collection. Shortly before the Second World War, Wotruba fled with his Jewish wife Marian into exile in Switzerland and settled in Zug, where he met Fritz and Editha Kamm-Ehrbar. This led not only to a deep friendship, but also to an important artistic collaboration, including a joint gallery in Vienna. In 1998, Peter and Christa Kamm and Christine Kamm-Kyburz established the “Kamm Collection Foundation”, based in Zug, which today owns over 400 works.



The humorous artwork by **Welsh conceptual artist Bethan Huws** (born 1961), which glows above the courtyard wall, was installed in 2020: “I’ve forgotten to feed the cat”, “I haven’t got a cat”. What do you think of this artwork?



Outer Town Wall

The battlements and the town wall between Huwilerturm and Chnopfliturm are still partially visible and accessible. The Ägeritor gate “in between” was the last town gate to be demolished in 1879 at the dawn of a new era.

Between 1478 and 1528, Zug was given a new town wall. It was 850 metres long, with six round defense towers and three large gates. This made the area of the town about six times larger than before. Construction was not carried out all at once, but in stages, interrupted by long breaks.

At that time, a wall was not only intended to provide protection. It also indicated that those who lived inside were citizens, and that those who lived outside belonged to the rural population. Strict rules applied within the walls. Outside was the natural world and with it danger. The gates were closed in the evening, and underground streams blocked to keep out unwelcome visitors. If you arrived too late, you were left outside.

A battlement ran alongside the wall. Guards patrolled there, especially when storms or the enemy approached. The Capuchin Tower served as a lookout point, which is why it used to be called the 'Luegisland Tower'. From there, you could overlook the whole town. Gunpowder was

stored in the Powder Tower – which was not without its dangers. When a severe thunderstorm was forecast in 1652, the powder had to be distributed among several towers for safety reasons.

Huts, stables and sheds were built onto the town wall. As the town became increasingly overcrowded, these buildings had to be converted into living accommodation. The interior of a town wall was always filled with earth, stones and rubble: hence trees often grow on crumbling walls.

Today, parts of the wall and four towers are still preserved: the Powder Tower, the Huwiler Tower, the Chnopfli Tower and the Capuchin Tower. Most of the gates and two towers were demolished in the 19th century. The towers belong to the residents' or citizens' community and can be hired for events.



Can you spot the **holes** in the town wall? They are the result of the horizontal bars of medieval scaffolding.

St. Michael's Church

Today's St. Michael's Church was consecrated in 1902. It stands slightly below its predecessors, close to St. Michael's Cemetery. The previous church stood next to the ossuary (where bones were kept). It is a place with a long and complicated history.

A church stood on this slope as early as the first millennium. Several church buildings followed later. However, the building constructed between 1360 and 1362 burned down completely in 1457. Its replacement was completed in 1469 – but that too did not survive. At the end of the 19th century, people wanted a larger, more dignified church, not 'God's Barn'.

At that time, Zug was undergoing a period of change. The town was growing – and so was its self-confidence. There was even talk of establishing a bishop's seat in Zug. Accordingly, plans were made for a wide staircase, a large church interior and a spacious rectory – all in episcopal scale. The new church was not built on the old site in 1902, but 200 metres further down. The demolition of the old church was definite. Not even its tower was left standing, as it would have allowed inquisitive onlookers to spy on the neighbouring Maria Opferung convent and the girls' boarding school.

What was particularly bitter was that when the old church was demolished in 1898, not only were the walls removed, but its treasures were also sold. The pastor of Konstanz, Conrad Gröber, heard about the valuable altars and pulpit – and seized the opportunity. For 7,000 Marks, the artifacts went to Constance to the Trinity Church (a former Augustinian monastery). The then parish priest of Zug was against this, but his voice went unheard. At least the ossuary remained, which can still be found in the Zug cemetery today.



At the end of the 19th century, the site of St. Oswald's Church was even considered as a possible location for **St. Michael's Church**, but then the existing late Gothic church would have had to be demolished.



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Maria Opferung Convent

Since the late Middle Ages, various monastic female communities have lived here, and in the 15th century, the nuns decided to make the education of girls their special mission.

As early as 1309, there are references to a Christian community at the foot of the Zugerberg. Men and women lived as beguines and begarden around St. Michael's Chapel. They prayed, cared for the sick and assisted at funeral masses. In 1611, some women joined the Capuchin Order – with strict monastic rules for life, work and Christian faith. The Capuchin nuns lived and worked in the same place until the 21st century. Since the consecration of the new monastery church in 1635 in honour of 'Mary's Sacrifice', the sisters have given themselves the name of this Saint's Day.

Shortly after adopting the Capuchin rule, the nuns suffered a severe blow: in 1629, a plague epidemic killed two-thirds of the sisters. The first Mother Superior, Sister Scholastica, also died.

After a difficult start, the convent flourished and became an important place of education in Zug. The sisters had been teaching girls since the 15th century, and in 1657 they opened a school. Generations of girls and young women

learned reading, writing and other 'feminine pursuits' such as home economics and nursing – but hardly any of them learned geometry and natural science. The sisters also ran their own farms, baked communion wafers and decorated relics. The convent and school complex continued to grow over the centuries.

For the sisters the last decades of the 20th century were marked by a lack of new recruits and by financial problems. In 2003, the sisters relinquished their schools to the Zug town authorities. With the advent of the day school and the Zug School for Special Education, good solutions had been found. 'We don't know what the future holds but God knows,' said the last Mother Superior, Sister Anna, after the schools had been taken over by the Zug authorities.



The foot of the **Zugerberg** is also known as the '**Zuger Bildungshügel**' (Zug Hill of Learning), because even today there are many different educational institutions located on its slopes. Which ones do you know?

Zurlaubenhof

The farmstead on the southern edge of the town is the most important manor house in the Zug area, having been built between the end of the 16th century and the middle of the 18th century.

Until it became extinct in 1799, the Zurlauben family had owned the house since 1597, with a few interruptions. They had gained wealth and influence as mercenary lords and deputies in the service of the French kings. They recruited mercenaries for the French armies, but the victims were those who did not return from this mercenary service, as these missions were very dangerous.

The courtyard ensemble consists of the main house, a Rococo extension accessible via a covered passageway, a chapel, gardens and several buildings that were used for agricultural purposes for a long time. These now house apartments.

The showpiece is the Great Hall, also known as the Banquet Hall. It is decorated with portraits of the Franconian and French kings from the early Middle Ages to 1610. Scenes from early Swiss history featuring heroic figures and pictures of the Standard Bearers of all the cantons in the Swiss Confederation with their respective locations complete the décor. An inscription spanning the walls and ceiling describes the earliest phases of Swiss history.

The 'Brown Room' on the second floor and the Garden Room with reproductions of French Rococo paintings are also worth mentioning. The Bourbon lilies, the 'Fleur de Lys', can also be seen in several places. These were awarded by the French kings to officers of the Zurlauben family in gratitude for their service and loyalty. Since 2019, the property has been owned by Zug town, which is currently working on a new concept for its use.



Visit the **Great Hall** and look out for the **wooden painting of Brother Klaus**. It is one of the first portrayals of the hermit, who was canonised in 1947.



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Theilerhaus

The so-called 'Theiler House' has recently been given a new lease of life thanks to renovation work. Due to its industrial and architectural significance, conservation aspects were taken into account during the planning stage.

The Theiler House at Hofstrasse 13 is an imposing exposed-brick building, and an important industrial monument with a rich history. It was built in 1896 as a factory building for the company Theiler & Cie., which was founded by Richard Theiler and Adelrich Gyr. The company specialised in the production of electricity meters, laying the foundation for what would later become the global corporation Landis + Gyr. In 1904, sheds were erected next to the building.

After the company headquarters moved in 1929, Theiler House remained a factory until the 1980s. The rooms on the first floor were converted into flats in 1984 and occupied by Italian guest workers. Part of the building stood empty for a long time and fell into disrepair. In 1989, it was due to be demolished, but Canton Zug bought the site at the last minute, thus ensuring the

preservation of this historic building. In 2006, it was listed as a historic monument.

In the summer of 2008, a party was held in the still vacant Theiler House to draw attention to the lack of cultural space. A total of around 300 people entered the barricaded building and held a loud party. The group demanded more cultural space in the town.

Renovation of the Theiler House was planned for 2023. There is a restaurant on the ground floor and the administrative Court is housed on the upper floors. Its relocation to the Theiler House provided an appropriate, representative setting and the building regained its former glory.



The Museum of Prehistory has also been located in the old factory complex on the Hofstrasse since 1997.



About the Association Zuger Stadtführungen

The association aims to bring the history, culture and economy of Zug town and Canton closer to its residents and visitors. To this end, it organises tours of the town and creates resources to explain the town and its surroundings. It preserves knowledge about the region and passes it on to third parties. It supports the town Zug authorities in an advisory capacity in maintaining the quality of life in the town and its local recreation area. It promotes the diversity of the region's tourist attractions in cooperation with Zug Tourism and other organisations.

Public tours on Saturdays

With varying themes

Meeting point: Customs house at the Zytturm

Duration: approx. 1.5 hours

For public tours in English and French, please refer to the events calendar on the website.

No reservation required.

Further information: www.zugerstadtfuehrungen.ch (Ger.)

Private guided tours (all year round)

Meeting point: Can be arranged individually

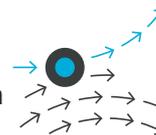
Duration: approx. 1.5 hours

Reservations via Zug Tourismus:

info@zug.ch

+41 41 511 75 00

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Stadtführungen



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Publisher

Verein Zuger
Stadtführungen

Project management

Stephanie Müller

Texts

Delia Cramer
Ueli Fritsche
Mercedes Lämmli
Stephanie Müller
Christian Raschle
Donatus Stemmler
Thomas Zaugg

Content Editing

Renato Morosoli

Translation

Mercedes Lämmli

Editing

Marilyn Buchmann

Proofreading

Tincan

Design, photography, image credits

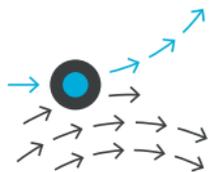
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You can find more information about the town's history and individual buildings in the book 'Zug, Der Stadtführer' (Zug: The Town Guide), which was published by the civic community of Zug in 2024.

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Contact

Verein Zuger Stadtführungen

P.O. Box, 6301 Zug

info@zugerstadtfuehrungen.ch



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