

A circular walk through the Ahr valley, Germany

A multi-day hike through the Ahr valley, in the Eifel. Here you trek through a classic [German](#) river landscape. *You won't find much more German than this, apart perhaps from Bavaria, with its Lederhosen and Dirndls.*

Photos: Ahrtal und Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler Marketing en Hans Plas



Ahrtal

Please note: *In the summer of 2021, the Ahr valley was hit by severe flooding. Large parts of the tourist infrastructure in the Ahr valley were destroyed. As a result, some routes may not be accessible or partially accessible at the moment. Therefore, check [with the local tourist offices](#) in advance about the possibilities of hiking in the Ahr valley.*

This route goes from Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler to Insul and back again. There via the left bank of the river Ahr and back via the right. In four days you will cover 80 kilometers through vineyards, wine villages and wine festivals (in September and October). Here you walk on excellent hiking trails with excellent markings. Along the way there are also more than enough facilities for the hiker. Including *eine gutbürgerliche Küche*, with the unofficial motto "*quality instead of quantity*". The latter is also the philosophy of the winegrowers along the Ahr. On the not too large plots along the steep slopes above the river, the red grapes thrive very well. Are you a fan of a good Spätburgunder? The German Pinot Noir? Then the Ahrtal is a paradise for you!

Four hiking trails

The described route is a combination of four routes that are plotted here: the famous Rotweinwanderweg, the Karl Kaufmanweg, the Ahrsteig and the Ahrweg. Combining all these processes seems like a lot of hassle, but in practice this is not so bad. After all, this route is not much different than walking largely via one bank, and back largely via the other. If you take the Ahrsteig on the way back at Insul, you also have a nice climb and a beautiful view as an extra.



Along vineyards

On the recommended hiking map – see bottom of this article – all walking routes are drawn. With some preliminary work you can map out countless combinations.

The Ahr and the landscape

The Ahr rises in Blankenheim, in the medieval city centre and flows into the Rhine at Sinzig, just south of Bonn. That is why the laudatory leaflets of the local tourist offices also call this river "*a daughter of the Rhine*". And then immediately add the difficult-to-translate term "*wild romantic*". I do not venture into this translation. The walk goes through a varied landscape with gorges, split rocks, centuries-old vineyards and high-rising forests.

The walk uses the many small roads and paths through and along the vineyards. Along the way, this route offers many beautiful views of the wine villages and ruins of castles and fortresses. If you choose a route right along the river (on a small path) you can enjoy "*untouched nature*", according to the already mentioned leaflets. That's a bit of an exaggeration, but it's certainly beautiful. Walking along splashing water is always beautiful in my opinion!

Ahrweiler

Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler is a great place to start and end the hike. The city has managed to preserve a number of buildings from a distant past, including the medieval city wall from the thirteenth century, complete with canals, gates and towers. The old Fachwerkhäuser also make a visit to this city more than worthwhile. Also take a look inside the old Hallenkerk and the old Town Hall. Or visit the Beethoven Haus, where the world-famous composer spent a few summers.



The scenery

Of more recent date are the excavations and restorations of a Roman villa belonging to a Roman estate, a *Villa Rustica* – a *Römervilla* – from about the first century AD. The remains of the structure are now a museum.

Cycle path

Almost from the source of the Ahr at Blankenheim to its mouth in the Rhine, cycle paths have been built along the banks. However, these are not yet completely car-free, so keep your eyes open on the road. The paths are mostly paved, but sometimes the routes are no more than sandy paths. In Dümpelfeld on the Ahr you can turn off Direction Adenau and further south.

If you start in Blankenheim it is mostly slightly descending to the Rhine. At the Rhine, take a look at the Bridge of Remagen and its museum. This historic location is all about the battle that took place here in 1945. Impressive in its simplicity!



General route tips

- Recommended hiking map: "Das Ahrtal, zwischen Schuld und Sinzig am Rhein", scale 1:25.000, publisher: Eifelverein. Or for the entire route: "Hiking map 09, Ahrtal – Eifelverein".
- In September and October, the atmosphere is determined by the wine festivals. Unless you love it, it is better to avoid the region in these months. Then it could be very busy. Choose spring or summer. The only disadvantage is that you will miss the grape.
- The route is easy to walk. Apart from the ascent at Insul, there are hardly any significant height differences.
- The infrastructure for hikers is – like almost everywhere in Germany – perfect. You may find it exaggerated, [but the system of the Qualitätswege](#) is a godsend for the hiker! How different things are now with the level of facilities in France!

By public transport to this route? By plane or [Take the train to Cologne](#), change here to Remagen and then to Bad Neuenahr/Ahrweiler. A train runs along the river to Ahrbrück. The bicycle is also allowed on this train.



By bike

