



THE ÖDENTURM

The base walls are 2.8 metres thick, the tower is 33.4 metres high. The surrounding hills are very steep, but to the west a rock was converted into a lookout platform.

The basic layout changes twice: the foundation is a square and changes into an octagon higher up. The upper part is round and the walls get thinner the higher up you get. The existing entrance was opened at a later stage, the pointed arch of the original entrance can still be seen 9 metres above the current entrance.

The tower is 635 metres above sea level, Geislingen is at 463 metres, Helfenstein castle at 610 metres.



Plan your visit – opening hours

May 1st to end of October
Saturday, Sunday and public holidays 10:00 to 17:00
special opening hours can be arranged via

Schwäbischer Albverein

Ortsgruppe Geislingen/Steige

Werner Staudinger, Tel. 0 73 31/45 207
Helmut Grätzbach, Tel. 0 73 31/42 538
Wolfgang Köpf, Tel. 0 73 31/4 01 01

Tourismusbüro der Stadt Geislingen

Tel. 0 73 31/24 279 · infopunkt@geislingen.de



Ödenturm

GEISLINGEN AN DER STEIGE

Ödenturm

LOCATION

The Ödenturm is situated on a rock high above Geislingen. It has been kept intact for many centuries and therefore has become a landmark of the surrounding area. From the top of the tower the visitor has a spectacular view over the "Swabian Alb" and far down the valley of the river Fils. Only when the castle ruins of the "Helfenstein" were excavated in the 1930s, the town of Geislingen had a new site for a fine view.



The tower can be reached on foot from the car park near Helfenstein castle, the path is signposted, it takes about 20 minutes. People who wish to avoid the steep path between the castle ruin and the tower can take a longer path at ground level. The tower can also be reached on foot from the town, if you leave the pedestrian area in the direction towards the tower and walk uphill, it takes about 45 minutes.



View of Geislingen from the Ödenturm tower.

View from the Ödenturm tower of the Helfenstein castle ruins.



HISTORY

We do not know for certain when the tower was actually built. The stonework points to the time of the Staufen-dynasty, that would be between the 12th and 13th centuries. The tower was probably mainly used for the defence of the castle.

At the end of the 14th century, the Free Imperial City of Ulm bought the town, the castle and the tower. In 1552, during an armed conflict between Protestant princes and the Catholic Emperor, the castle was conquered by raiders, but the city of Ulm reconquered the castle and tore it down afterwards. The stonework of the castle was transported to Ulm for further use there. The Ödenturm remained standing and was used as a watchtower for the town. A bell was installed in 1558, so that people could be warned in case of a fire. Later there was also a cannon that could be fired as a warning.

During the reign of Napoleon, the tower was handed over to the Kingdom of Bavaria. It was to be torn down, but the citizens of Geislingen intervened successfully, and the tower remained a landmark of the surrounding area. The tower has belonged to the city of Geislingen since 1823. Over the centuries, strokes of lightning hit the tower five times and caused fires that destroyed parts of it. In 1669 a watchman was killed by a stroke of lightning. The last big fire was in January 1921, afterwards the roof of the tower was rebuilt in the present form.

In 2019 the electrical equipment failed, but a fundraiser brought in enough money to repair the system, and now we can again see the Ödenturm brightly illuminated during the evening.

IMPRESSIONS

The room at the top of the tower offers a small exhibition showing the history of Geislingen and of the Counts Helfenstein.

