

## University of Hohenheim

Hochschulkommikation | Marketing & Veranstaltungen  
Schloss Hohenheim 1 | Mittelbau 032 | 70599 Stuttgart  
E [hochschulmarketing@uni-hohenheim.de](mailto:hochschulmarketing@uni-hohenheim.de)



UNIVERSITY OF  
HOHENHEIM

### Guided Tours

Visitors can only look around the palace as part of a guided tour. We also offer historical tours of the palace, conducted by experts, as a special service.

Please book guided tours online at:

[www.uni-hohenheim.de/fuehrungen](http://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fuehrungen)



An Insight into Schloss Hohenheim

# Tour of the Palace

Text: Prof. Dr. Ulrich Fellmeth  
Translation: Orange Translations Ltd.  
Editorial Staff: Johanna Lembens-Schiel  
Design: Claudia Preker  
Photography: University of Hohenheim: Victor S. Brigola, Martin Sigmund

New Edition 2018 | 5.000 copies



[www.uni-hohenheim.de/english](http://www.uni-hohenheim.de/english)

## Hohenheim Palace and its History

Hohenheim lies to the south of Stuttgart on a fertile mountain ridge between the Ramsbach and Körsch valleys, and is framed by the small market towns of Plieningen and Birkach. The first written account of Hohenheim was found in the register of land grants of the Hirsau cloister in 1100. Later, the Bombasts of Hohenheim were mentioned as the village's owners. One descendant of the Bombast family was the famous naturalist, doctor and theologian, Theophrast von Hohenheim, also known as Paracelsus. From the 15th to the middle of the 16th century, Hohenheim belonged to the Katharine Monastery in Esslingen and it was only in 1567 that Hohenheim became part of Württemberg. After Hohenheim was almost completely destroyed during the Thirty Years' War, the Augsburg patrician and imperial official Emanuel Garb purchased the land in 1676. On the irregular layout of what was left of a palace from the Middle Ages, he built a moated palace in renaissance style.

In 1769, Duke Carl Eugen von Württemberg captured Hohenheim. Three years later, Franziska von Leutrum, Carl Eugen's sweetheart, was presented with the palace and estate as a gift from her beloved duke.

From 1776 onwards, Hohenheim became Carl Eugen's summer residence. During this time, his lifestyle and style of rule changed. His transition to a reserved country nobleman in Hohenheim is often attributed to the influences of Franziska von Leutrum. However, Carl Eugen's new style of rule probably had more to do with the changed political landscape during the years leading up to the French Revolution. Nevertheless, it is noticeable that after about 1770, the region's welfare and prosperity – for instance the “Hohe Carlsschule” military academy, road construction, the canalization of the Neckar river, arboriculture and much more – increasingly interested him. Despite the despotism, which Carl Eugen could never quite put aside, he truly succeeded in changing during his years in Hohenheim by being less of an autocratic rake and more of a father figure.

In 1774, his efforts to bring Franziska von Leutrum, “his Franzele”, up to his social status by elevating her, finally met with success: Franziska became Imperial Countess of Hohenheim and the couple now occupied

the small palace that Garb had built in Hohenheim. They soon built a separate residence, the building that now houses the “Speisemeisterei” (a top-quality restaurant), as well as an outbuilding. Carl Eugen now presided over an agricultural estate spread across Hohenheim, Karlshof and Klein-Hohenheim and it became one of the few ducal businesses to operate profitably.

During this time, the so-called ‘English Garden’ also emerged in Hohenheim and was soon renowned throughout Europe as a horticultural work-of-art.

After 15 years of living together, the couple decided to legitimise their relationship, as Carl Eugen was determined to protect his common law spouse from the hostility she experienced at court and from the duke's own family. On the 11th of January 1785, Carl and Franziska were married. In that same year, they decided to build a large, new residential palace in Hohenheim and the cornerstone for it was laid in 1785. Carl Eugen and Franziska watched over the construction work almost daily.

The old Garb residence was torn down and the modern Hohenheim Palace, with its stunning corner risalits and expansive balcony, was built to replace it. Modelled after Versailles, a residential palace emerged, in which the room layout was designed around its centre, the seat of the absolute ruler. At the court of the Sun King, Louis XIV of France, this Structure symbolised the dominating role of the king, radiating out much like a sun across his entire kingdom. Carl Eugen copied this design. The area in front of the palace is the most indicative representation of the Sun King's architectural influence at the time of Carl Eugen's reign. Left largely unplanted, this area portrayed the radiating and far-reaching influence of the palace's axes. It was only after 1829 that the creation of a botanical garden changed the view of the south side of the palace. The far-reaching Baroque effect of the palace and its axes was lost all the more with the planting of a belt of trees. This came about because, from 1820 to 1881, the palace served among other things as a school for foresters, who needed the tree population for scientific purposes. However, still today, the original system of axes is clearly recognisable as you make your way around the palace.

The new palace was to become a veritable residential palace with its 75 rooms and nearly 600 metre width; today, this corresponds to the distance from the central train station in Stuttgart to the Schlossplatz. Its construction took many years and, after 8 years, the shell and the inside of the east wing stood completed. However, in numerous rooms in the west wing, wall coverings, floors, stoves and windows were still, for the most part, missing.

It was at this point in the construction that Duke Carl Eugen died in October 1793 while living on the mansard floor of the couple's temporary flat in today's Speisemeisterei wing. Even though Carl Eugen took care to provide well for his "Franzele" in his will, the ducal family expelled the (in their eyes) illegitimate social climber, not only out of Hohenheim but even out of Stuttgart. Though she had been the rightful Countess of Württemberg since 1791, Franziska now had to live, a recluse from her own court, on her estate in Sindlingen and on her widow's estate in Kirchheim Teck. In 1811, Franziska died in Kirchheim Teck, 18 years after her beloved "Carl Herzog".

Completion of Hohenheim Palace after the death of Carl Eugen was delayed for a long time. Later, Hohenheim Palace was even plundered in order to provide the furnishings for the New Palace in Stuttgart. For 25 years it stood as a partially completed construction site and, at the time, some even considered demolishing it. In 1816 and 1817, life in Württemberg degenerated into famine, poverty and bitterness, as a result of two extraordinarily bad harvests in a row. This situation was politically very damaging for the young royal couple, Wilhelm I. and Catharina Pawlowna, who had just acceded to the throne of Württemberg, and urgent countermeasures were called for. Queen Catharina recognised the immediate threat and tended to the welfare of her people. However, in order to guarantee a continuous and ample supply of food to the populace, some very basic economic reforms were needed; this became King Wilhelm's concern. First, he founded an Agricultural Association based in Stuttgart and in addition, established an Agricultural Institute in the orphaned Hohenheim Palace on the 20th of November 1818. He thereby laid the cornerstone for the Universität Hohenheim of today.

In the central part of the palace and in the buildings around the middle and western courtyards, there was room for lecture halls, laboratories, libraries, and even accommodation for professors and students. The eastern courtyard was used by the Institute of Manorial Economics and the agricultural college. In the south wing of the east courtyard, Chemistry and Agricultural Technology were housed in larger workshops and laboratories. This use of the palace continued substantially unchanged for more than 100 years.

After the end of the 1950s, the palace buildings were renovated. Between 1957 and 1967, the buildings around the western courtyard were torn down and rebuilt in the same style as before, but with modern construction materials. The same was done between 1969 and 1970 to the wings around the eastern courtyard and one of the wings in the centre courtyard.

Finally, in 1967, the renovation of the central part of the palace began and continued until 1986. The renovation of the historic Speisemeisterei was completed in 1993. As a result of this renovation, the survival of historic Hohenheim Palace, unique in so many respects, has been assured for the long term, while, at the same time, its structure has been upgraded to meet the demands of a modern university.

## A walk around the Palace

Rooms that can be accessed are marked in blue on the floor plan.

1



Das Untere Foyer | The Lower Foyer

2



Der Schlosskeller | The Palace Cellar

3



Das Obere Foyer | The Upper Foyer

4



Der Balkonsaal | The Balkony Hall

5



Das Tannenzapfenzimmer |  
The Pine Cone Room

6



Die Aula | The Auditorium

7



Der Blauer Saal | The Blue Hall

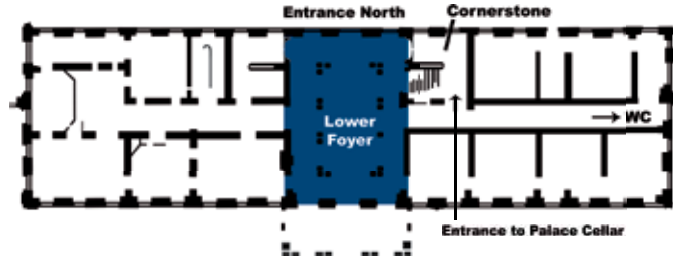
8



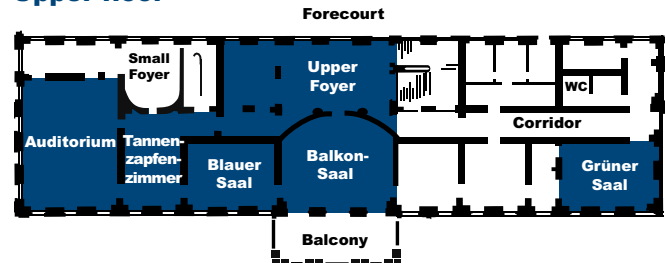
Der Grüne Saal | The Green Hall



### Ground floor



### Upper floor



## ① **Das Untere Foyer | The Lower Foyer**

The new palace in Hohenheim was originally intended to be the summer residence of Duke Carl Eugen. Extending to cover a distance roughly equivalent to the distance between Stuttgart's central train station and the Schlossplatz, and with three courtyards, it was then one of the largest palace buildings east of the Rhine. It was not a completely functional residence because it was still missing several state apartments.

Carriages arriving from the South drove directly under the balcony into the lower foyer, allowing the royal party to enter the palace on dry ground and climb the staircase to the Bel-Étage.

The ground floor originally housed the ducal art gallery with its approximately 470 paintings. After Carl Eugen's death, the paintings were transferred to other palaces.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the rooms on the ground floor were renovated to such an extent that nothing remains of their original grandeur.

The cornerstone of the palace bearing the date 1785 is particularly noteworthy and can be found to the left of the staircase up to the first floor.

## ② **Der Schlosskeller | The Palace Cellar**

This palace cellar is not actually a cellar in the usual sense but rather a substructure, or in other words, a foundation for the palace building itself. This substructure served to protect the lower walls of the palace from the very moist soil. In order to increase the stability of the construction, the load-bearing arches were filled with rubble, which explains why the cellar could not be used at all until the second half of the 20th century.

Today, the distinctive cellar, with its massive, interlaced curved arches has become a favourite venue for festive celebrations and convivial gatherings for students and faculty members.

## ③ **Das Obere Foyer | The Upper Foyer**

The foyer on the upper floor reflects Duke Carl Eugen's attitude during the second half of his life: his retreat into the life of a country gentleman is represented symbolically here. Note how the decorative plaster mouldings have predominantly rural themes, such as fruits, baskets and garden implements. The statues of the four seasons have a similarly symbolic and bucolic character.

The asymmetrical construction of the upper foyer is untypical for Baroque architecture. The foyer can only be reached from a staircase on the east side; the western staircase had indeed been planned, and the necessary space is there even today, but owing to the Duke's death and the resulting halt in construction, the second staircase was never completed.

The upper foyer provides an excellent view over the large central courtyard of the palace that had originally been designed as an "Ehrenhof" or monumental forecourt.

## ④ **Der Balkonsaal | The Balcony Hall**

When it was originally constructed, the central hall of the palace was intended to be the focal point of the residence. This is where Duke Carl Eugen was to hold court, but since the room was not finished until after his death, it never witnessed any of the duke's celebrations or receptions. Later in the 19th century, this room served as a place for meetings and assemblies of the Agricultural Institute. The wall decorations and the stove were plastered and the entire room was painted "academically sober" white.

From the sketches that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe made in his diary on the occasion of his visit to Hohenheim in 1797, it can be seen that, at that time, the room enjoyed magnificent wall decorations. It was only after restoration began in the palace that remnants of the original alabaster were found under the plaster – colourfully patterned wall tiles, stucco marble and brightly finished wall decorations. Using alabaster from the Rems valley and the Löwenstein mountains, the original character of the room was restored. As a result, the university now has a magnificent room for ceremonial events, much envied by many.

## 5 **Das Tannenzapfenzimmer | The Pine Cone Room**

When Johann Wolfgang von Goethe visited Hohenheim in 1797, he noted in his diary that construction work was taking place in several rooms in the west wing.

While he was disappointed and even outraged by the Rococo-style decorations on the eastern side of the palace, he was impressed by the work of the Swabian neoclassicists, Isopi and Thouret: "Since part of the palace is not yet completed, it is to be hoped that through their work the decorations would contribute much to an overall improvement".

In fact, the few rooms that had been completed by 1797 are characterised by a completely different, neoclassical style.

The ceiling frieze is not decorated with pine cones that give the room its name, but with what are probably either hops umbels or artichoke blossoms.

## 6 **Die Aula | The Auditorium**

The "Aula", or auditorium, is one of the rooms that was completed in 1797 in the neoclassical style.

Of particular note with this style are the sober, clean lines and the dominance of space – a marked difference to the playfulness of the rooms decorated in a Rococo style in the east wing. (see next page for photograph). Today this room is also used for conferences and events organised by the university. The historical quality of this room has been effectively combined with the technical requirements of a modern conference room.

## 7 **Der Blaue Saal | The Blue Hall**

This room has been changed to such an extent over time that nothing was known of its original design prior to the renovation work in 1970. The restoration work uncovered remnants of the original room decorations under the plaster: decorative flounces and trompe l'oeil painted

on the walls. An example of this can be seen on the uncovered section of the original wall decoration on the west side of the room, to the right above the entrance doors. The room was then restored based on these uncovered patterns. As a result, the Blue Room now closely resembles the original style from the end of the 18th century.

The dominant colour in the wall frescos gives the room its name today. The Blue Room is a very popular room for functions organised by the university.

## 8 **Der Grüne Saal | The Green Hall**

The Green Hall was originally intended as a bedroom for Duke Carl Eugen although he never slept here – the room had been fully decorated by the time of his death, but the ceremonial bed had not yet been delivered.

It is occasionally said that Hohenheim Palace was one of the most inexpensive of all of Carl Eugen's palaces. Having said that, his bedroom has a floor area of just under 120 square metres – the same floor area as a common four-roomed apartment today! So he certainly was not scrimping on the design of his final palace.

During its use by the Agricultural Institute, this room, like all of the other ducal private rooms in the east wing – nowadays the Business Economics and Social Sciences Library – was used as service apartments. Naturally, at the time, the rooms were partitioned and a suspended ceiling was fitted making the ceiling approximately 1.5 metres lower. The "old" wall decorations were removed below this suspended ceiling and the rooms were decorated in the style of that era. This meant that all of the original wall decorations were lost, although the ceiling area above the suspended ceiling remained intact and could be largely restored.

Today this room is used as a conference room by the university and as a meeting room for many of the university's bodies. The fact that this room was originally designed as a "room for sleeping" is – it is said – pure coincidence and has nothing to do with its current use!