

Nomination of  
**The GREAT  
SPAS** *of Europe*



for inclusion on the  
**World Heritage  
List**

Volume I: *Bad Ems*, Germany



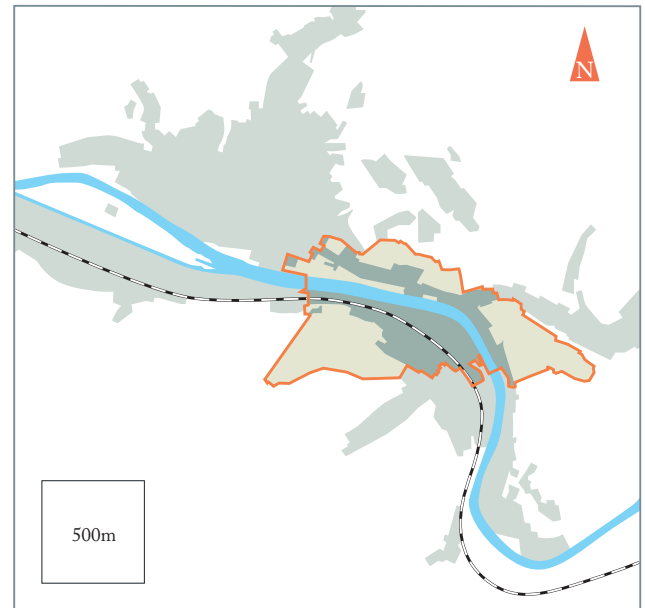
# 7. *Bad Ems* (GERMANY)

## Introduction

*Bad Ems* (German *Bad* = Bath) is a compact model ‘*Great Spa of Europe*’ in a restricted space. Its area of 80 ha represents, after *Vichy*, the smallest of the component parts that comprise the series *The Great Spas of Europe*. *Bad Ems* is confined, and defined, topographically by the predominantly monocentric location of its cluster of 15 hot springs, together with the broad river in a relatively narrow valley bordered by steep hills (the local topography had a major influence on the townscape, the narrow Lahn valley and its side valleys with the mouths of the Lahn tributaries inevitably limited the spreading of the town). It has a clearly separated principal spa quarter, continually occupying the same site centred on the thermal springs, that boasts a successive architectural ensemble that includes the “Kurhaus” built around 1696-1715, together with the ‘Brunnenhalle’ (assembly rooms or conversation hall) of 1715 which, along with Bath, represent the oldest examples in Europe (the first “Assemblée-Saal”, a predecessor of today’s “Kurhaus”, was built in *Bad Ems* in 1696).

The Romans were at *Bad Ems* (the Limes), but there is no proof they used the springs, and the bathing cure here is first documented in the fourteenth century, with thermal water-drinking in the sixteenth century. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the town was known as the ‘summer capital of Europe’. Half of guests were from abroad – rulers and a fashionable elite – and they came first by the river, a highway that was especially popular among French, Russian and British visitors who could arrive via the rivers Rhine and Lahn. Extensive nineteenth century developments (when the majority of the principal spa buildings were built) contributed to *Bad Ems* being held as one of the most important of the German spa towns by 1900. The royal spa resort was Germany’s answer to Nice.

The spatial urban plan and architectural heritage of *Bad Ems* clearly documents the spa’s development from the medieval “Wildbad” through courtly life in the Baroque era to the sophisticated nineteenth century resort, and beyond to the modernising developments of the early twentieth century. The closed ensemble on both sides of the River Lahn includes all essential elements of a spa (distinct quarters for hotels and villas, integrated with a therapeutic land recreational spa landscape of park, promenades and steep historic pathways that access rocky and wooded heights with dramatic panoramic overlooks), and also documents the temporal depth of the European bathing tradition with a focus on an international public and a linked musical heritage.



- Boundary of the component spa town
- Urban fabric within the component spa town
- Urban fabric outside the proposed boundary of the component spa town

View east past the Kurpark, overlooked by the rank of spa hotels along Römerstraße, to the Kursaal (centre left) and the Bäderlei Ridge that leads to Concordia Heights and the Concordiaturm (top right)



## Location and setting

The German spa town of *Bad Ems* is located in the state of Rhineland Pfalz, between the agglomerations of Frankfurt and Cologne, 18 km east of Koblenz and 113 km west of Frankfurt. It is situated in the Rhenish Slate Massif, in the valley of the lower River Lahn, a tributary of the Middle River Rhine 12km to the west. It lies on both banks of the long canalised straight of the otherwise tightly meandering river, a linear layout confined tightly by the narrow and deeply cut river valley, nestled between the mountains of the Westerwald range to the north and the western end of the Taunus range to the south. Its principal historic spa quarter is centred on the cluster of thermal springs on the right bank of the river, rising where the Lahn has carved its bed deepest into the Ems quartzite. The adjacent hills and ridges dominate the town, their close steep slopes, wooded in places and rocky in others, rise to a height of c.150 - 300m above the river to present a high natural aesthetic. The climate is pleasant and temperate, with the average warmest month being July, also its wettest, with average maximum temperatures rarely exceeding 23°C.

The town has around 9,500 inhabitants (some 1,160 of which live within the nominated property) and is the administrative centre of the association of municipalities, which includes eight more nearby boroughs. It is also the capital of the Rhein-Lahn district, and the seat of the Statistical Office of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate. The urban districts are all situated in the heart of the Nassau Nature Reserve, and this landscape continues south and east of the spa ensemble. To its west the rest of the small town continues squeezed between the sides of the valley to provide an urban setting for part of the nominated property. Economy, including industry, is connected to the town's spa status.

## Principal features described

The description of the component part has been sub-divided into the following:

- Historic urban landscape of the 'Great Spa'
- Springs
- Urban ensemble of the spa town
- Therapeutic and recreational spa landscape
- Spa infrastructure
- Internationalism, scientific, artistic and literary values, events and cultural tradition

## Historic urban landscape of the 'Great Spa'

The spatial plan of the nominated property can be divided into:

1. The monocentric spa-quarter in the valley bottom (both sides of the River Lahn, but predominantly the north bank), with its grand Kurhaus and pump-room centred on the principal cluster of springs (that remained the centre of the spa), together with bath-houses, structures for leisure and pleasure (including Kursaal, casino and theatre).
2. The linear, street-lined, hotel quarter and spa park on the north side of the river.

3. The linear villa quarter on the southern side of the river and the lower valley slopes.
4. The railway station quarter, including adjacent hotels.
5. The steep valley sides of an extensive therapeutic and recreational spa landscape, with numerous trails, overlooks and towers.

## 7.1 Springs

The medicinal springs of *Bad Ems* yield pleasant acidulous alkaline water of the sodium-hydrogen carbonate chloride (Na-HCO<sub>3</sub>Cl) type, at a temperature of around 27 to 57°C (though there are also several cold acidic springs with temperatures lower than 20°C). Fifteen hot springs rise on the anticlinal axis of the so-called Emser Quellensattel on both banks of the River Lahn. Historically, they were captured mostly on the right (north) bank of the river in a localised cluster that prompted a broadly monocentric development of the primary spa quarter. They occur on the southern foot of Klopp and Baederlei hills, and one spring still rises in the riverbed itself - close to the Spa Bridge (“Kurbrücke”), a reminder of their former collective natural occurrence prior to land reclamation.

Artesian springs are named Emser Kränchen and Kesselbrunnen (the oldest and best-known that are both located in the Brunnenhalle, or Kurhaus pump room, which has been in use since 1696/c.1725), Fürstenbrunnen, Kaiserbrunnen, Römerquelle, Robert-Kampe Sprudel and Neuquelle I – IV, whilst boreholes (Bohrungs) 2 to 5 date from the 1930s and are pumped (Bohrung III is still surmounted by a wellhead that dates from 1939).

Geologically, the thermal spring catchment is part of the Rhenish Lower Devonian, characterised by greywacke and alternating beds of quartzite, sandy shale and argillite (formed from consolidated clay). Mineral water, mobilised continuously by convection in multiple open and deep geological faults, originates from a uniform coherent confined groundwater aquifer that feeds ascending thermal water that is further assisted by carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub> derived from post-volcanic carbonic acid) in a phenomenon known as “gas lift”. This contributes to their artesian quality (under pressure, therefore free-flowing), the thermal waters emerging between shale formations where the quartzite stratas diverge. Spring discharges are terraced one on top of the other, lower in the east than in the west. The Robert-Kampe Sprudel, located next to the Kurhaus, is today the most important and abundant spring and issues as a fountain eight metres high and provides water for the present bath facilities.

There are around 3 km of pipelines and several pumping plants that increase water pressure distributed to four balneo-therapeutic facilities. The water, noted for its high mineral content, serves to relax the mucous membranes and liquefy frequently viscous secretions, and to improve blood circulation. It is used mostly for the treatment of diseases of the respiratory tract and the gastro-intestinal system, the spa being well known to treat asthma and catarrh sufferers. The waters are administered as drinking cures, bathing, and gaseous CO<sub>2</sub> bathing - inhalation, using a vapouriser (developed in the nineteenth century) has a beneficial effect on sore throats. The water has a long history as bottled mineral water, and its salts used since 1858 to produce famous lozenges called the ‘Emser Pastillen’, now (since 1958) made by Siemens & Company.

A protection area for the mineral springs was established by ordinance in 1974 and updated in 2013.

## 7.2 Urban ensemble of the Spa Town

The principal, well-defined and clearly separated, spa quarter comprises exemplary, and successive, architectural ensembles always centred on the same cluster of hot springs - to the east of the original small settlement. Its Kurhaus (1709-25) with the Brunnenhalle (pump room) is one of the oldest known. This is complemented by the Kurpark, various churches for international clientele, and grand historical architecture in distinct quarters for hotels (including the former hotel district on Römerstraße), villas and mansions.

### 7.2.1 Building ensembles connected to 'curative' waters

The Kurhaus remained the centre of the spa, directly at the mineral springs. From around 1820, the new administration of the duchy of Nassau set town-planning parameters and specifications for the design of new buildings, and devised new axes and laid out plots for built-up areas and individual suburban mansions. Much care was taken to ensure that the buildings we see today blended in harmoniously with the existing townscape and its natural surroundings. The work of two of the duchy of Nassau's building officials, Eduard Zais and Theodor Götz, came to be a massive influence on the town's appearance.

#### 7.2.1.1 Kurhaus (1709-25)

Bathhouses have been occupying this site next to the discharge point of the thermal springs since the fourteenth century. The Kurhaus (today Häcker's Grand Hotel, Römerstraße 1-3) in its present incarnation, took shape during a very thorough renovation in 1912-13 from plans by Vitalli. The eastern part with the pump room (Trinkhalle) built over the Kesselbrunnen spring at its centre, the restaurant, the Kaisersaal (great hall) and the eastern wing (Kaiserflügel) was built 1709-25 as a bathhouse for the ruling family of Orange-Nassau, probably from plans by Jean Coulon. It was originally designed to be a three-wing Baroque palace, but the western wing was never built. Apart from some minor alterations to the exterior, the Nassau bathhouse was largely preserved during the 1912 renovation.



The Kaisersaal still retains its original stuccoed ceiling from c.1725. The eastern pump room with Kesselbrunnen, too, dates from that time. It still features the large marble marital coat of arms of Prince Johan Willem Friso of Orange-Nassau and his spouse, Princess Marie Luise of Hesse-Kassel, dating from 1709 (but relocated from its original position). Prince Friso's mother, Princess Henriette Amalie of Nassau-Diez, had commissioned the eastern Kurhaus while the western part had been the Hesse dynasty's bathhouse, containing the Fürstenbrunnen and Kränchenbrunnen springs. Its wings are built on a ground plan resembling an obtuse angle; they still rest on the foundation walls of the fourteenth and fifteenth century bathhouses, rebuilt in 1696 and again in 1912. Parts of the ground-floor walls of the western pump room (Trinkhalle) of 1696, with the original entrance surmounted by the coat of arms of the landgraves of Hesse-Darmstadt, have been preserved. The third of the former Hessian bathhouses, the Lahnbau, was originally built in 1581-82 by the landgrave of Hesse and rebuilt on the same ground plan in 1912-13.

### 7.2.1.2 Vier Türme bathhouse (1845)

The first bathhouse on the site was an extension built on to the Vier Türme mansion in 1822, which was replaced by today's structure (Römerstraße 41 a), designed by a building official, Faber, in 1845. Bathing came to an end in the 1970s; today the building is used as a theatre and restaurant.



### 7.2.1.3 Altes Kurmittelhaus (1853)

The Kurmittelhaus (Badhausstraße/Wilhelmsallee) was originally a bathhouse ("Neues Badehaus"), built in 1853 from plans by Nassau official Theodor Götz. Another storey was added in 1926, and further extensions in 1967-68. Closed down as a bathhouse in 1994, it is today used as an office building by the State Statistical Office.



### 7.2.1.4 Quellenturm (1907-08)

In 1850 the Neuquelle spring was accessed to supply the baths with water, and the tower was built above it in 1907-08 to serve as a reservoir. Its brickwork walls contain a cast-iron core. When the very abundant Robert-Kampe-Sprudel was impounded, the tower at Wilhelmsallee lost its original function.

## 7.2.2 Buildings for leisure and pleasure

*Bad Ems*, in spite of its overall compactness, was a “great spa”, and the scale and quality of its architecture, its purpose and capacity, is testimony to this. Socialising and entertainment was a crucial early “diversion” whilst taking the cure, and organised gaming took place here from 1720 in the former “Assemblée-Saal” of 1696 (replaced by the present Kursaal), one of Germany’s first casinos.

### 7.2.2.1 Kursaal (1836-39)

The new Kursaal contained an assembly room, casino and theatre, and was constructed from 1836 to 1839; architect Johann Gottfried Gutensohn had modelled it on a Renaissance palace (the Villa Farnesina) in Rome. At first the building consisted of a single marble hall that has remained largely unaltered: 16 marble columns support a gallery, from which 16 more rise to support the 49-panel coffered ceiling. The stucco and decorative mural painting are based on Renaissance models. In 1913-14 the theatre was built on to its western side and fitted out in a neo-Rococo style. Additional extensions included the small concert hall (today the gambling casino) with the “Blue Salon”, another Rococo venue, above it. The exterior of the complex was designed along Baroque lines, although the Marmorsaal from Jacques Offenbach’s day was left unchanged.



The site of the new Kursaal is historic too: in 1696, a small “Assemblée-Saal” was built in the vicinity, and its leaseholder was granted a gambling concession in 1720.

### 7.2.2.1 Colonnade (1913)

The cast iron colonnade from 1839 between Kurhaus and Kursaal was replaced by the present one in 1913.



### 7.2.2.2 Kurtheatre (1914)

The theatre, a lavish hall in Art Nouveau and neo-Rococo style was built in 1913-14 as an extension of the Kursaal on its western side. (see Kursaal 7.2.1.2).





### 7.2.2.3 Casino

*Bad Ems* founded Germany's oldest licenced casino in 1720. The nineteenth century casino was originally in the marble hall of the Kursaal, but in 1872 the first Emser Casino was closed (as were all casinos in Germany) as it was incompatible with Prussian ideals of the Imperial Spa. In 1987 it was reopened in the small concert hall of the Kursaal.



## 7.2.3 Accommodation

From the 1820s and '30s, hotels and boarding houses sprang up in quick succession, and the spa town developed the structure and neighbourhoods it has largely retained ever since. The first area to be built up was the old connection between the village and the spa of Ems, today's Römerstraße. Russischer Hof and Vier Jahreszeiten were the first large, privately run hotels. East of the spa district, too, new lodging establishments lined Lahnstraße and Grabenstraße.

### 7.2.3.1 Stadt Algier (c1820s)

The house (Lahnstr. 23) was probably built pre-1822, with another storey added later. Fyodor M. Dostoyevsky stayed here during his spa breaks, writing parts of his novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, among other works. The house has remained largely unaltered since then; some stuccoed ceilings have survived.



### 7.2.3.2 Darmstädter Hof (1815-18)

The hotel (Lahnstr. 3-4), today a residential building, was built 1815-18 to replace a smaller inn. In 1863, shops were installed on the ground floor. The façade was refashioned in a neo-Classical style in 1878; at the same time the attached No. 4 was rebuilt. Tsar Alexander II stayed here during his 1870 spa break.



### 7.2.3.3 Europäischer Hof (1841)

This was among the earliest of the large hotels on Römerstraße (today's number 5). The façade features elements modelled on Italian Renaissance. The original ground-floor arcades have been removed, as has the private bathhouse that was opened in the hotel's courtyard in 1866.



#### 7.2.3.4 Stadt Wiesbaden (1833-38)

The hotel (Römerstr.18), today a residential building, was created by converting and refurbishing two older inns. It was well-known as an inn and guest house frequented by Jewish patrons. Jacques Offenbach stayed and worked here during his spa breaks in 1863 to 1870. A fourth floor was added in 1895. In 1977 the building was converted into the lower terminus of the new Kurwaldbahn funicular and altered almost beyond recognition; the stuccoed ceilings were lost.



#### 7.2.3.5 Braunschweiger Hof (1824-25)

Built with a neo-Classical facade, the building (Römerstr. 20) is characteristic of the smaller guesthouses. In 1850, the French painter Eugène Delacroix stayed here during his spa break, and in 1858 and 1860, so did Jacques Offenbach, who also worked on his operettas here. An inhalatorium was installed in 1903, which has since ceased operation.



#### 7.2.3.6 Lodging house "Herzog von Nassau" (1826)



This building in classical style from 1826 was the home of a dynasty of spa doctors, the Vogler family. Over four generations they wrote books on *Bad Ems* and its mineral springs. Moreover it was a lodging house for guests.

#### 7.2.3.7 Russischer Hof (1826-27)

Built as one of the earliest of the large hotels on Römerstraße, it had another storey added in 1865. The original façade - a neo-Classical layout with neo-Baroque stucco ornamentation - has been preserved (today Römerstr. 23).



### 7.2.3.8 Schützenhof (1863-64)

The hotel (Römerstr. 33) was built to replace a smaller inn, and boasts a striking facade reminiscent of Italian Renaissance buildings. Around 1900 it was among the spa town's most elegant restaurants. The rooms retain some of the original stucco.



### 7.2.3.9 Herzog von Leuchtenberg (1847-1903)

The 1847 building (Römerstr. 40) had an additional storey added in 1903. At the same time the façade was refashioned in a Rococo style. The guesthouse was also the original company building of the medical engineering firm and inhalatorium of Carl Heyer.



### 7.2.3.10 Englischer Hof (Malbergklinik)

The history of the building (Römerstr. 46) reflects the rapid rise of *Bad Ems* during the first half of the nineteenth century. Storeys were added to the original structure in 1825, 1834, and 1893, and the façade was extended in 1838. Around 1850 it was considered the spa town's best private hotel. King Ludwig II of Bavaria and King Leopold II of Belgium were among its patrons. In 1926, it was converted into a spa clinic.



### 7.2.3.11 Villa Beriot (1856-57)

The Swiss chalet-style villa (Villenpromenade 6) was built for the violinist and composer, Charles Auguste de Beriot.



### 7.2.3.12 Schloss Balmoral (1867-68)

This huge mansion (Villenpromenade 11) with its distinctive tower is a legacy of the Russian aristocrats who took the waters of *Bad-Ems* in the nineteenth century. It was built for Russian country estate owner Vassili Miakoff. Richard Wagner stayed here during his spa break in 1877, working on his opera "*Parsifal*".



### 7.2.3.13 Villa Reale, today Parkhotel (1864)

The mansion (Malbergstr. 7) with its four corner towers was built in 1864 and has remained almost unchanged on the outside. “Cannon King” Alfred Krupp spent a number of spa breaks here.



### 7.2.3.14 Mainzer Haus (1694)

In 1694 the elector of Mainz, Anselm Franz von Ingelheim, built a fine spa residence (Mainzer Str. 1) facing the baths of Ems but within the boundaries of the town of Oberlahnstein, and thus his own Catholic territory. The original half-hipped roof was altered in the nineteenth century. In 1786, the “Mainzer Haus” provided the venue for the Congress of Ems, a meeting of delegates of the German episcopate discussing greater independence from the Pope. Along with the entirety of that part of Oberlahnstein, Spieß, the house was incorporated into *Bad Ems* in 1876.



### 7.2.3.15 Vier Türme (1696)

The magnificent spa residence (Römerstr. 41) with its four distinctive corner towers was built for Field Marshal General Hans Karl von Thüngen, from plans by Electoral Trier’s court architect Johann Christophorus Sebastiani. In the nineteenth century Vier Türme was an elegant hotel patronised by, among others, Carl Maria von Weber, Tsarina Alexandra, and King Oscar II of Sweden. It was here that Tsar Alexander II issued the Ems Ukaz during his 1876 spa break.



### 7.2.3.16 Alte Post (1694)

The house (Lahnstr. 9), originally built in 1694 but much altered, is among the last remaining examples of the townhouses built c.1700 on both sides of the baths.



## 7.2.4 Religious buildings and facilities

English, Russian, Catholic and Protestant churches were embedded in new neighbourhoods; they, too, owed their construction to the thriving spa business and growing number of patrons from all of Europe.

### 7.2.4.1 Maria Königin chapel at Spieß (1661)

The church (Wintersbergstraße 6) was built in 1661 by the Catholic landgrave Ernst of Hesse-Rheinfels. At the time, the building site was located within the boundaries of the town of Oberlahnstein, and thus the territory of the Catholic electorate of Mainz - the church was built specifically for Catholic spa patrons as the adjacent resort of Ems was Protestant territory. It was extended in 1711 and 1724. The high altar, curved gallery and patron's coat of arms are all part of the original Baroque layout. The 1830 organ was created by the Ems organ builder, Schöler. It was only in 1876 that the church, along with the village, was incorporated into *Bad Ems*.



### 7.2.4.2 Catholic parish church of St. Martin (1876)

The church (Viktoriaallee) was built in 1876 from plans by Eduard Zais in a neo-Gothic style. Its east-facing front and tower provide a fine visual terminus on the western border of the Kurpark.



### 7.2.4.3 Russian Church (1876)

The building (Wilhelmsallee 12) was initiated in 1857 by the locals of *Bad Ems* but only realised in 1876 with the financial support of Tsar Alexander II (the Tsar was at the opening). The architect of the cross-in-square structure, Goldmann, was an associate of Nassau building official Zais. Its blue colour and five cupolas are characteristic of the genre. The iconostasis was created by St Petersburg court cabinetmaker Schrader, and the painting of Vasly Vasilyevich Vereshchagin's "Resurrection" is exceptional. The gallery was added in 2016.



#### 7.2.4.4 Protestant Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kirche

The “spa church” (Malbergstr. 5), planned as early as 1870, was intended to spare patrons the long walk to the Protestant church of St. Martin at the village of Ems. It was built in 1899 with the support of Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, founder of the Bethel Institution, from plans by government building official Siebold of Bethel.



### 7.3 Therapeutic and recreational spa landscape

There is a very close connection between the spa town and the therapeutic and recreational spa landscape. The town’s surroundings were systematically accessed from 1816 onwards, and described as uncommonly beautiful in numerous medical and tourist publications (e.g. Baedeker, 1835) as well as in literature (Goethe, Dostoyevsky). An extensive, rugged and demanding therapeutic spa landscape remains little altered today. There are many grand vistas, for example from the historic lookout tower (1861) on Concordia Heights, and the distinct Bäderlei ridge where, from the early nineteenth century, spa curists who were not yet so able to walk to the strenuous heights might be taken by a donkey ride. The surrounding countryside is thoroughly interconnected with the spa district, the promenades and Kurpark, with numerous vistas between the spa district and spa landscape. Beginning in 1816, the state administration created an extensive network of footpaths and scenic lookouts, most of it still preserved today. Particularly noteworthy is the Felsenpfad leading to Bäderlei, to the Heinzelmännshöhlen (the “brownie caves” that no guidebook of the time left unmentioned), to Mooshütte, and to the Concordia tower built 1861. Henriettenweg (created 1826) and Henriettensäule, which forms part of the spa landscape, may still be enjoyed by visitors, as may the footpaths leading to Adolph's temple and up Malberg hill with its viewing tower, built in 1848.

#### 7.3.1 Kurpark (1830s)

Since the eighteenth century, promenades had been leading off from the springs and Kurhaus (there were two alleys on both sides of the Kurhaus). The Kurpark acquired its present-day look largely after the building of the Kursaal. The uphill side of Römerstraße was lined with hotels and boarding houses while the downhill side remained free of buildings between Kursaal and Altes Rathaus, the older Vier Türme mansion excepted. Instead, a kurpark was laid out, divided into two sections: an eastern part in “French” style with borders and flowerbeds, and a western part laid out in the style of an English landscape garden. The statue of Emperor William I was erected in 1893 as the first to show him in civilian clothing (a reflection of the spirit of *The Great Spas of Europe*). A plaque from the 1880s recalls the Ems Dispatch from this place.



### 7.3.2 Bismarcksäule (1901)

The most recent feature to be added on the hills above the town is the Bismarcksäule built in 1901. Today a modern restaurant is located in front of it. Below is the panorama trail “Ernst-Vogler-Weg”.



### 7.3.3 Malberg and Malberg Tower (1848)



The tower on top of the hill was built in 1848 and is still preserved. The panorama trail “Henriettenweg” was opened in 1826, the obelisk “Henriettensäule” is from 1827. The free view from here down to the Kurpark has recently been restored.

### 7.3.4 Bäderlei with Concordiaturm. (1816 and 1861)

The footpath from 1816, mentioned by Baedeker in 1835, is still in use. The Mooshütte has been restored on the original nineteenth century basement. The path leads past the Heinzelmännshöhlen and leads up to the Concordiaturm. This is still the original from 1861.



## 7.4 Spa Infrastructure

The construction of the railway line and station determined the new axes on the left bank of the Lahn: Bahnhofstraße, Badhaus-, Alexander- and Mainzer Straße. The Kurwaldbahn funicular railway, built in 1979, links the town with the Bismarckturm (Bismark Tower).

### 7.4.1 Railway station (1860-61)

In 1858 *Bad Ems* obtained its own railway connection. Today’s station building (Bahnhofplatz) was constructed in 1860-61 and extended in 1910. The station warehouse of 1870 houses a business enterprise today while the original mineral-water shipping shed (built c.1870) has been relocated to the vicinity of the Emser Bergbaumuseum, Emser Hütte 13. *Bad Ems* lies on the Lahn Valley Railway.



#### 7.4.2 Malbergbahn funicular railway (1887)

Construction of the Malbergbahn was initiated by a group of hoteliers, physicians and entrepreneurs alarmed by the increasing competition from seaside resorts and climatic spas. Opened in 1887, Malbergbahn was a water-powered steep grade railway with a rack-and-pinion drive. The upper terminus is fashioned in the style of a Swiss chalet. The bodies of both cars were replaced in 1956; the railway was decommissioned in 1979. It is a technology monument today. The valley station has been carefully restored.



#### 7.4.3 Altes Rathaus (1823/1861)

In 1823, a new schoolhouse was built (Römerstr. 97) between the spa and the village of Ems. It was extended in 1836, and served as a town hall simultaneously. In 1861 a winged neo-Gothic structure with a clock and bell tower was built on to it, designed by Eduard Zais to connect the ensemble with the Catholic church that was also planned. In 1906 the entire facade was redecorated with Baroque elements. Today the building houses the *Bad Ems* Museum.



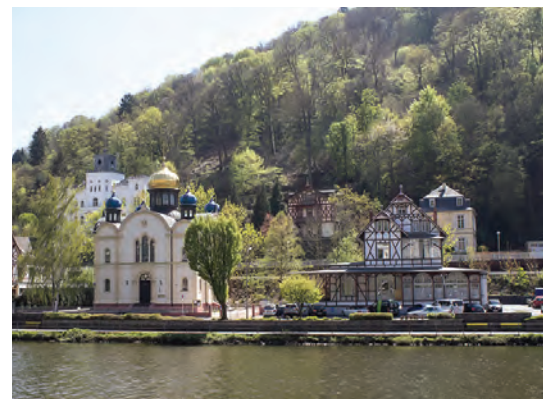
#### 7.4.4 Fountains: Lahnstraße and Römerstraße (1839-40)



The first water line to ensure the supply of the new Römerstraße hotels was installed in 1839-40. The three surviving public fountains on Lahnstraße and Römerstraße date from the same time.

#### 7.4.5 Milchkuranstalten (Whey cure institutes)

The whey cure was established in *Bad Ems* in 1845. The two whey cure institutes on both sides of the Russian Church were built ca 1885 (Wilhelmsallee 11) and 1904 (Wilhelmsallee 13) in "Swiss Chalet style". The first houses a restaurant today, the second meanwhile belongs to the Russian parish.





## 7.5 Internationalism, scientific, artistic and literary values, events and cultural tradition

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries *Bad Ems* was considered one of Germany's most famous bathing resorts. In its nineteenth century heyday, it was the summer residence for Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany, Tsar Nicholas I and Alexander II of Russia, Richard Wagner, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Vasil Vasilyevich Vereshchagin.

The spa was patronised by Kings of England, Sweden, Saxony and Bavaria, Jenny Lind, Alfred Krupp, Paul Heyse as well as Jacques Offenbach who was engaged for the Kursaal. The former hotels where guests stayed and worked are preserved.

The first treatise written about *Bad Ems* by a physician, Johann Dryander's *Vom Eymsser Bade* (1535), is one of the earliest books about a Central European spa in existence. Numerous medical spa treatises followed, among them the books by Marsilius Weigel (1627), Peter Wolfart (1716), and Johann Jacob Gramb (1732). Daniel Horst's *Kurzer Bericht vom Emser Bad* was translated into French as early as 1683, and published under the title *Les bains d'Ems*. *Bad Ems* was mentioned in major publications on Central European spas in general, among them those by Jacob Theodor Tabernaemontanus (*Neuw Wasserschatz*, 1581) and Johann Friedrich Zückert (*Systematische Beschreibung aller Bäder und Gesundbrunnen Deutschlands*, 1768). The nineteenth century saw the development of additional treatments such as hydrotherapy and the whey cure. An innovative French treatment, mineral-water inhalation, was introduced in 1855 and developed further at *Bad Ems*. Numerous spa physicians published books on the resort, the benefits of its waters and new methods of treatment, with many of them translated into other languages and contributing to further advances in balneology.

“Emser Pastillen”,  
prepared for export  
to various countries,  
c. 1910

From the eighteenth century onwards, the Ems water was bottled and shipped; by the end of the nineteenth century, more than 2 million litres of “Emser Kränchen” were sold annually. Following the example set by *Vichy*, from 1858 the salt contained in the local water was extracted to produce the famous “Emser Pastillen” lozenges and other products. Medical engineering firms have been establishing themselves at *Bad Ems* since 1883, and still constitute a major branch of the local economy.

After 1720 there was licensed gambling. Like all the other gambling casinos in Germany, the Ems casino was shut down in 1872, and only re-opened in 1987. Gambling never had quite the significance at *Bad Ems* that it had at *Baden-Baden*, but the casino had a major impact on the development of the spa facilities and the promotion of theatre and the spa orchestra.

In the nineteenth century, there were concerts, plays, reading rooms and libraries providing international literature and the major European newspapers.

*Bad Ems* attracted the political and cultural elites. Kings and emperors came visiting, as did artists and representatives of the middle class from all of Europe. At the spa, even



ruling princes cultivated a down-to-earth image, donning civilian dress and mingling with the crowd on the promenade and in the pump room. The monument to Emperor Wilhelm I erected in the Kurpark in 1892 bears this out: it was the first, and has remained one of very few, to depict him in civilian clothing.

The spa town provided a stage for major political events. In 1786, the deputies for the archbishops of Mainz, Cologne and Trier and the prince-bishop of Salzburg met at the Mainzer Haus q.v. for the Congress of Ems to try and gain more independence from Rome for the German bishops. Their deliberations were published and discussed in the so-called "Emser Punctation". On 13 July 1870, a meeting on the promenade between the Prussian king Wilhelm I, at Ems for his annual spa break, and the French ambassador Benedetti led to the publication of the Ems Dispatch, contributing to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71 and the founding of the German Empire. A plaque installed c.1880 commemorates the event. In 1876, during his own spa break, Tsar Alexander II of Russia signed the Ems Ukaz at the Haus der vier Türme. This decree, which banned the use of the Ukrainian language in literature and writing, is even now considered a symbol of Russian repression by Ukrainians.

The Kursaal provided a stage for eminent artists. Jenny Lind, the most celebrated singer of her time, gave a benefit concert here in gratitude for her successful spa break. Franz Liszt and Niccolò Paganini performed here. In 1858, Jacques Offenbach and his ensemble, the Bouffes-Parisiens, were engaged for the first time to perform at the Kursaal summer theatre; they would return nearly every year up to 1870. Offenbach wrote one-act pieces at Ems, but he also worked on his major operas: large parts of "*Orpheus in the Underworld*" were written in his lodgings at Braunschweiger Hof. In his own rooms at Schloss Balmoral, Richard Wagner worked on "*Parsifal*". Writers including Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1774) and, in the nineteenth century, Nikolai Gogol, Victor Hugo and Edward Bulwer-Lytton came visiting. The future Nobel Prize winner Paul Heyse memorialised the Ems region in his novella, *Der Blinde von Dausenau*. Fyodor Dostoyevsky spent four spa breaks at Ems, and wrote at length about them both in his letters to his wife and in *A Writer's Diary*. It was here that he, according to himself, found the leisure for literary work. In his lodgings at the Stadt Algier guesthouse he wrote parts of his novel *The Adolescent* in 1874, and Books 6 and 7 of *The Brothers Karamazov* in 1879.

Spa towns served as trailblazers for new sports as well. The *Bad Ems* rowing regatta has been in existence since 1858, and the Kaiserpokal race that is still contested today goes back to 1884. In 1889 the spa administration laid out the first tennis court.

## 7.6 Continuing spa tradition

*Bad Ems* is traditionally known as the spa for catarrh and asthma. In the Kurhaus (Häcker's Grand Hotel) as well as in the Emser Therme, bathing is available in the water from the healing springs. In the pump room in the Kurhaus it can be drunk at several springs. *Bad Ems* is home to several rehabilitation clinics and other health care facilities, and guests of the clinics make up a large proportion of visitors to *Bad Ems*.

The "Emser Kränchen" is available as bottled water, and the "Emser Pastiche" (lozenge) is still produced from the healing water, as it has for over 150 years. It is distributed world wide. The Emser salt is extracted from the healing water, and can be inhaled at home or in the Emser Therme.

Every year the “Bad Emser Health Days” take place in the Kursaal. Apart from rehabilitation many guests visit *Bad Ems* to enjoy a famous spa town in a picturesque landscape. The landscape can still be explored on the same paths and promenades as 150 years ago. Today hiking and cycling are very popular in the region. The tradition of cultural events of high quality is continued for example with the “Concerts in the Kurpark” or with the “Festival gegen den Strom”.



Spa guests drinking at the Kränchen Brunnen