

OBERHASLACH AU FIL DU TEMPS

OBERHASLACH OVER THE YEARS



OF PEOPLE AND BUILDINGS The village's little treasures

Nestled in a haven of greenery, the village of Oberhaslach provides you with a rich blend of Christian mythology and pagan legends. Various histories, religions, architectures, influences and cultures from many places meet here. Evidence of ancient human occupation has been found through the unearthing of prehistoric vestiges, mostly weapons, in the region.

The place was an important crossroad under the Roman Empire. Funerary steles with bas relief, shaped like miniature rectangular houses, bear witness to that period. German tribes coined the name "Hassellach" for the village, which means "hazel wood enclosure near the Hasel River".

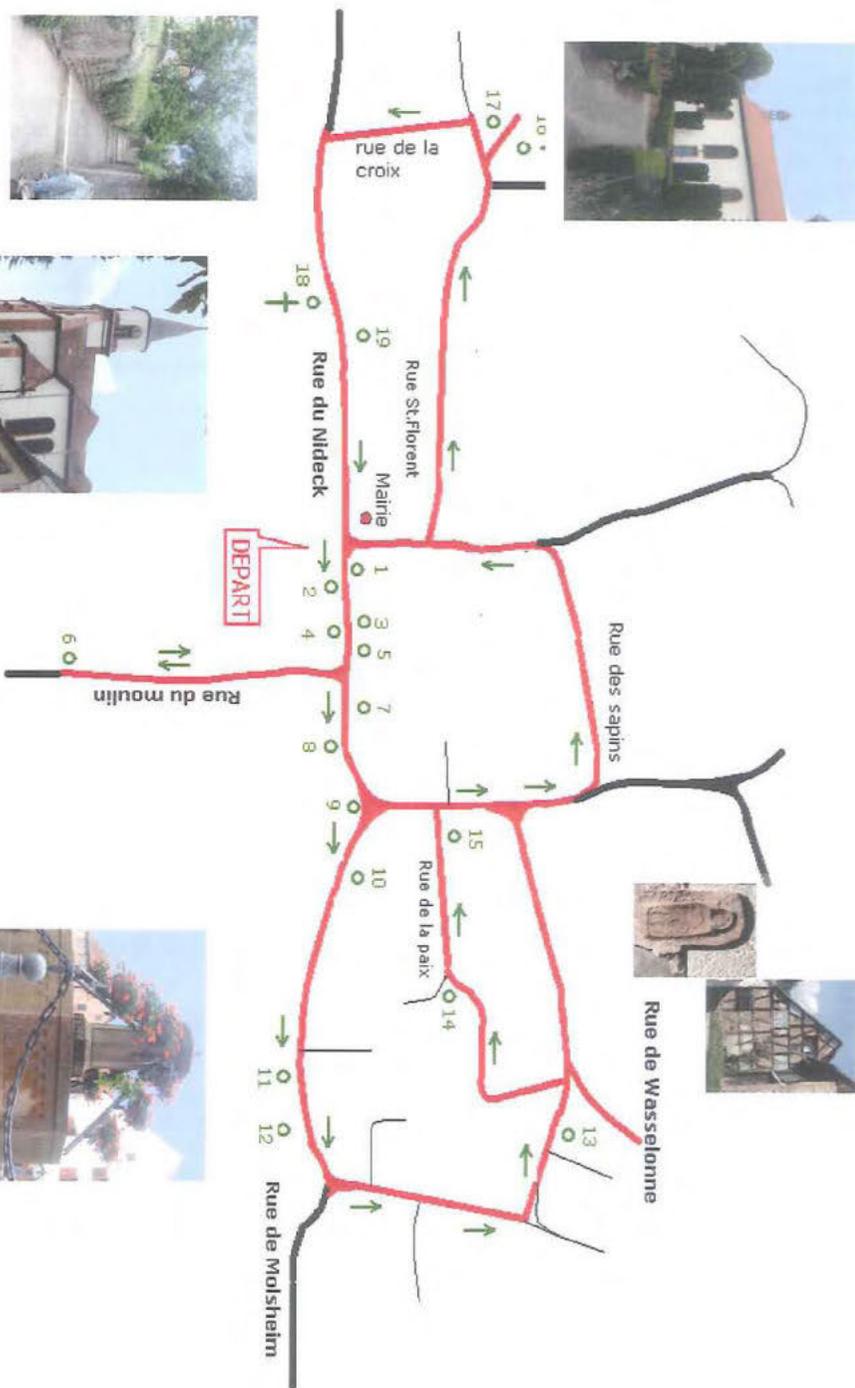
The 5th century marks the beginning of Christianity. Florentius, son of the King of Ireland, was in the region with St. Arbogast and his companions, called the "Schotten". Unlike his friends, he decided to stay in Alsace and became a hermit. The would-be saint came to be the protector of animals, before building a monastery and then a church: the current Collegiate Church of Niederhaslach. He would later be chosen as the seventh Bishop of Strasbourg.

A street still bears the name of "Schotten", a moniker then given to all Anglo-Saxons. As for the name "Oberhaslach", it appeared for the first time in a charter from 1216. The St. Florentius Chapel was built in 1315, where the hermitage once stood. Until the construction of the current St. Arbogast Church (between 1782 and 1784) and the presbytery in 1805, services took place in the Collegiate Church of Niederhaslach.

The houses, mostly made of stone (as was the case for most houses next to a quarry), feature an interesting mixture of architectural styles. There are low Vosgian dwellings, contiguous to small barns characterized by a gutter wall facing the street and a thin stretch of soil (the "usoir"), which had a practical purpose. Other houses are characteristic of the Alsatian plains or the Kochesberg, featuring large and beautiful doors; proof of the original owners' wealth. They also boast quoins, and finely crafted door and window frames.

Another local sign of prosperity: a small window surrounded by two lintels, above the door. Several of these houses have been built during the 18th century. Swiss immigrants were the inspiration behind the "Schopf" (a type of barn), which was open on its lower side and attached to a house. Some surrounding villages were populated by Mennonites, who left for the United States.

This brochure is your introduction to the visit of our village, so keep your eyes peeled and discover our suggested tour in the following pages.



Distance : 2,9 km

1. Sandstone well

A rectangle-shaped well from 1874, with a beautiful cast-iron barrel decorated with stylized flowers and a trio of faces evoking an ancient divinity.

2. No.7, Rue du Nideck ("Nideck Street")

This mansion displays both Vosgian and Alsatian features. If you take a look at the two great barn doors, you will see three oculus above them, sign of the original owners' wealth. The open courtyard with access to the street is called the "usoir", in the Vosges region: a space separated by a low wall, indicating where manure was stored.

3. No.12-14-16, Rue du Nideck ("Nideck Street")

Cluster of three low Vosgian-style houses, attached together. Notice the small barn from 1796, with a crest in its lintel, characteristic of the period.



4. No.5, Rue du Nideck ("Nideck Street")

The coat of arms of this house from 1779 features a palm-leaf motif. The upper part of the barn, or "Schopf", is quite unusual, as it is decorated with carved panels reminiscent of the Swiss influence.

5. No.8, Rue du Nideck ("Nideck Street")

The shield of arms of the village, a hazel branch and a shepherd's cross, proudly adorn the newsstand.

Go down the Rue du Moulin ("Mill Street"), next to the "Ruines du Nideck" restaurant.

6. No.30, Rue du Moulin ("Mill Street")

Above the door, an angel with carved wings watches over this house since 1828. On the left, up on the wall, a crest displays the tools of the winemaker (a pruning knife) and the farmer (a coulter and a plowshare).

7. No.2, Rue du Nideck ("Nideck Street")

The quoins of this house have been crudely hammered. Notice the small trough, as well as the oculus above the barn door. The small lean-to has seen a lot of use in its time.

8. No.2, Rue de Molsheim ("Molsheim Street")

Here is the Auberge du Nideck (Nideck's Inn), built in 1928. In the vast dining room is displayed a fresco made by the travelling painter Ringenbach de Masevaux in 1932, illustrating the legend of the Nideck Giant's Daughter.



9. Lovely octagonal fountain

Probably built in the late 19th century, it is decorated with geometrical patterns and fleur-de-lis. It used to be sitting in the middle of a crossroad and doubled as a watering place, with several troughs for cattle and draft animals.

10. No.1, Rue de Molsheim ("Molsheim Street")

This is a double house from 1779. Its door's lintel features a rare piece of iconography: two hearts in an oval. The first one is a reminder of the Sacred Heart and the second one, with its cross, represents the Sacrificial Lamb.



11. No.24, Rue de Molsheim ("Molsheim Street")

This was a halt on the Margraviate of Austria. Here, a niche contains a miniature Zouave soldier: possible reminder of the North-African infantry division, or maybe just artistic license.

12. No.30, Rue de Molsheim ("Molsheim Street")

A house from 1708, with a beautiful "Schopf" and which roof is supported by a Y-shaped beam: the original timber frame design, as well as a callback to the idea of "Mann" (the male figure). The barn door displays lovely round "cushions", a peculiarity which used to be commonplace. The lower stones protruding from the frame prevented carriages from getting stuck. Notice also the double layered ledge above the front door.

13. No.5, Rue du Capitaine Lahner ("Captain Lahner's Street")

Here is a gorgeous cross from 1823. The cartouche contains a picture of St. Florentius curing Rathilde, the dumb and blind daughter of Dagobert, King of Austria.

Go down the Rue des Pâquerettes ("Daisy Street") into a passage, to reach the Rue de la Paix ("Peace Street").

14. House with a half-timbered cob wall on its side

Retrace your steps and go down the Rue de la Paix ("Peace Street").

15. No.1, Rue de la Paix ("Peace Street")

A house from 1822. Inside its wall was discovered a funerary stele from the Gallo-Roman period, depicting a young woman carrying a pitcher and a fruit basket.



Go up the Rue de Wasselonne ("Wasselonne Street"). Reach the Rue St-Florent ("St. Florentius Street") where you can admire two really beautiful crosses on your right.

16. The chapel

It was built in 1315, on the supposed location of the first cabin belonging to St. Florentius, the hermit who became Bishop of Strasbourg. Since the chapel's renovation in 1750, many ex-voto paintings are stored in its Baroque inner sanctum. The first one was from 1790, and they all bear witness to the healing performed by the Saint, as he answered people's prayers. A very old cross, supposed to be the final resting place of the holy man, is hidden under a bush.

17. The presbytery

This Catholic presbytery was built in 1805 and features beautiful quoins. Above the door are featured cherub sculptures, from the Renaissance period.



Go down the stairs of the quaint Ruelle de la Croix ("Cross Alley").

18. The church



This Neoclassical church was built between 1782 and 1784 and expanded in 1937. Its very harmonious inner sanctum features a few Byzantine characteristics, as well as draperies where one can see a very vivid depiction of the Stations of the Cross. The modern glass stained windows from 1938 were made by the Ott Brothers.

On your right after you have exited the church, you will see a War Memorial similar to a pieta, made by Raymond Keller. It is dedicated to the men who died during the two great wars of Indochina and Algeria. On the opposite side of the street is a fountain, which offers cool drinking water.

19. No.38, Rue du Nideck ("Nideck Street")

Two stone cannonballs sit in front of this little house characteristic of the Vosges. Both of them contributed to the destruction of the nearby Castle Hohenstein, in 1338.