

The red building with its skewed corner was a butcher shop. On the first floor is a stone console table, which might have had an important use but to this day remains a mystery.

If you follow the «Rue du Presbytère» (Presbytery Street), you will walk past the former public bath house which was located in House No. 4. Although the well still exists in its cellar, the bathtubs and frescoes decorating the walls are long gone.

Back on the «Route Principale» or Main Street

House No. 46: An imposing house from 1804 displays on its wall a crest with a palm-leaf motif. The round stones adorning its flight of steps are in fact cannonballs used during the siege of the Hohenstein Castle, which was destroyed by the Swedes.

Go up the main street again and take the middle path at the three-way crossroads.

«Rue du Tir» or Bullet Street

Here, we have a very traditional street, with its simple Lorraine region style houses. On the right, a little chapel is only a few steps away, on top of a steep slope. This is the former domain of the Lords of Eckwersheim. This family played an important part in the victory of the people of Strasbourg over the bishop, at the battle of Hausbergen in 1262. As a result, the Episcopal troops destroyed all the Lords' assets. Today, only this little chapel built between the 14th and 15th centuries and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, remains. On the southern side lays a funeral slab to the memory of the Marx family, alas the inscriptions on the stone have become illegible. Niederhaslach still holds many treasures and we hope that you enjoyed the tour.



**A VILLAGE BUILT AROUND
A COLLEGIATE CHURCH**



A stroll along the centuries

Nesting in the lush valley of the Hasel, the traditional village of Niederhaslach, well known for its beautiful 13th - 14th century gothic collegiate church, invites tourists to stop by and discover its many riches.

Although the site has been populated since time immemorial (the valley was an important Roman road used to cross the Vosges Mountain range), the actual birth of the village goes back to St. Florian. He founded in this very place a monastery and later became the successor of St. Arbogast to the Episcopal See of Strasbourg, between the 6th and the 7th centuries. After the transfer of the relics from Strasbourg to Haslach (on November 7, 810), the site turned into an important site of pilgrimage, which it still is today (on the first Sunday in November, after the 6th).

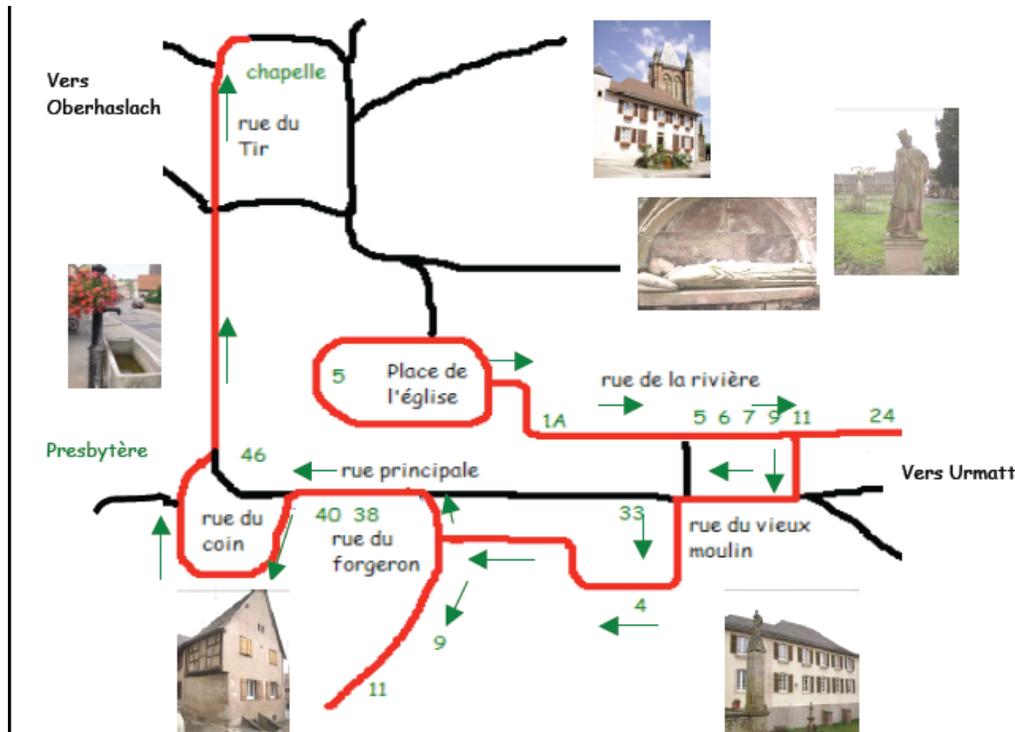
During the 11th century, the monks were replaced by canons who in turn established the Chapter of Haslach, which existed until the Revolution came. The abbey was transformed into a collegiate church and canonries (such as a mill, smithies, a sheep pen, public bath houses, or a tithe barn) were built around it.

Haslach belonged to the Episcopal grounds and, as such, possessed its own court which had jurisdiction over several villages. The «Advocate» (the Bishop's representative) presided over the proceeding, aided by 14 aldermen. They met three times a year.

Forestry development and the sandstone quarry were the two main sources of income for the inhabitants, next to agriculture.

Many styles of architecture co-exist in Niederhaslach. Stone houses with beautiful quoins stand next to cob and timber frame houses, or Vosgian-style houses. The Swiss immigrants' influence is also prevalent, with the existence of open-type barns, called «Schopf».

But enough History for today. Let us begin the tour, shall we.



A special thank to Mr Schaller & Mr. Meyer from the DRAC, so as Mrs Busser

Coming from Molsheim or Strasbourg, you will see a tall half-timbered building with roof shingles, before reaching the roundabout. This is the «Schweizerhoff» (Swiss Farm), which belonged to Mennonites from Switzerland. The house itself was built in 1851 and it was successively a coaching inn and probably a tiliary afterwards. Soon, on the left side of the street, you will spot a beautiful violin-shaped Baroque cross: the Cross of Oswald, from 1920.

Church Square

We are now in the «Stift» (Monastery), fortified in 1385 and once surmounted by a medieval tower. Every house, with the exception of the town hall, (from 1900) used to be a canonry house. **House No. 5** displays a lovely turret from 1514 and a vaulted cellar on the corner. Both the restaurant and the school (built around 1720) are part of the medieval church. At the back, another canonry house with a turret, added to the building in the 19th century, as well as the fire station, from the early 20th century.



If you would like to visit the church, please use the brochures at your disposal

Next to the collegiate church is the entrance to the ancient Roman cloister. The funeral slabs go back to the 14th century. On the wall is displayed a gorgeous sculpture of «Jesus Christ on the Mount of Olives» from 1492, which used to be a quite vivid piece of work.



Exit the park and cross the street towards the bakery (the yellow painted house)

If you take a look at some of the windows adorning its cellar, you will see a vertical steel bar with hooks attached to it. This was called the «Haxe Baase» (Witch's Broom) and it was supposed to prevent evil spirits from

entering the house.

«Rue de la Rivière» or River Street (on the left side)

On the right, a small set of stairs goes down to the river. In the old days, they were legion in this street, along with individual wash houses.

House No. 1A: An Alsatian Renaissance style house, circa 1600. Its mullioned windows also have accentuated jambs.



House No. 5: This is the collegiate church's former tithe barn, from the 17th century. The original barns have been destroyed but the building still boasts its elegant highlighted quoins, angular niche, transoms and corbels (jutting stones which were supposed to support a structure).

House No. 6: One of Niederhaslach's ancient forges.

House No. 7: A large Alsatian house that belonged to a farmer and a lumberjack in 1802. It has got a courtyard and a shed, as well as a deep ditch for manure disposal.

House No. 9: The former communal sheep pen (the house was the shepherd of the community's)



House No. 11: A house renovated in 1762. The front gate is surrounded by a wall with bossages, which was highly unusual at the time. History tells us that Catherine Ade and Jacques Wiedlöcher, respectively cook and coachman for Robespierre, lived here after 1793.

House No. 24: Nicknamed «Schnellemühl» (Fast Mill), this building used to manufacture brushwood. It also had a water wheel, hence the name.

Cross the bridge, then the street and go up the main street.

The small exposed stone house opposite the bridge used to be a smithy.

«Rue Principale» or Main Street

House No. 33: The first former collegiate church mill, built in 1182. A river ran behind the building and two grind wheels turned walnuts into flour. The pretty house you see today seems to be from the 18th century. Next to the huge barn door, a low L-shaped wall indicates a place where one would store manure. This was called the «usoir», a useful space between the house and the street in the region of Lorraine. As you can see, traditions seem to meet here. As a side note, in 1759, the canons refused a man called Matthias Wiederlöscher the right to build a second mill.



«Rue du Vieux Moulin» or Old Mill Street

Here we have **House No. 4**, the oldest house of the entire village, which was completed in 1620. As seen by the set square on its crest, its proprietor used to be Alexandre Claus, master stonecutter. Inside, can be found a spiral staircase. If you continue on this street, you will see a house from 1786 with its cob and half-timber barn.



Take the path alongside the mill's former waterway

«Rue du Forgeron» or Blacksmith Street

House No. 9: A traditional half-timbered house, from Northern Alsace.



House No. 11: Another canonry house from 1790, before the canons left the place in 1793. This building features a uniquely decorated lintel, visible on the window next to the door.

«Rue Principale» or Main Street

Continue your walk towards a former 18th century canonry house, converted into a restaurant. On the other side of the street you can notice two statues on a roof, representations of the Christ holding an orb. The latter being a symbol for perfection or Heaven, since it has neither beginning nor end.



Go down the main street again

House No. 38: Another canonry house but with a sizeable difference: an inscription which has been subsequently added to the building. It reads «Si le Seigneur ne bâtit pas la maison, en vain, y travaillent ceux qui la construisent» («If the Lord does not build the house, in vain work those who build it»).

On the other bank of the river, the big half turret house you see also was Church property.

House No. 40: A house from 1920 with an architectural style ranging from art deco to neo Austrian art (known as «Sécession à tendance géométrique»). On the other hand, the barn and its wooden top is clearly a call back to the Swiss «Schopf».

«Ruelle dite 'du Coin'» or Corner Alley

The house with corbels, on the right, was a former smithy, as seen by the ring in the wall used to tie up the horses. Wooden panels on the side and at the back of the barn could be opened, as in a Swiss «Schopf». On a small square stands the rectory from 1720, the last known canonry house.

