



# RheinBurgenWeg (Rhine Castle Trail)

THE COMPLETE GUIDE



[hikelist.com/hikes/rheinburgenweg-rhine-castle-trail](https://hikelist.com/hikes/rheinburgenweg-rhine-castle-trail)

Last updated 10 June 2026

© 2026 HikeList.com · All rights reserved

# Contents

---

- 01** Overview

---

- 02** Key Data

---

- 03** Introduction

---

- 04** Stage-by-Stage Guide

---

- 05** Recommended Itinerary

---

- 06** Planning the Route

---

- 07** Towns, Villages and Overnight Stops

---

- 08** Getting to the Start

---

- 09** Getting Home from the Finish

---

- 10** Which Direction Should You Walk?

---

- 11** Accommodation Along the Route

---

- 12** Camping and Wild Camping

---

- 13** Food, Water and Resupply

---

- 14** Navigation and Waymarking

---

- 15** Terrain, Conditions and Difficulty in Practice

---

- 16** Weather and Best Time to Walk

---

- 17** Safety Notes

---

- 18** Gear Recommendations

---

- 19** Budget and Costs

---

- 20** Luggage Transfer, Guided Tours and Support Services

---

- 21** Shorter Hikes and Best Sections

---

- 22** Highlights and Points of Interest

---

- 23** Common Mistakes and Planning Tips

---

- 24** Final Advice

---

# Overview

---

## RheinBurgenWeg: Rhine Castles on the Left Bank

The RheinBurgenWeg is a 195 km, 13-day, moderate long-distance trail in **Germany**, following the left bank of the Rhine through the UNESCO Upper Middle Rhine Valley. It runs between Bingen am Rhein and Remagen-Rolandseck, linking medieval hilltop castles, ruined fortresses, vineyards, forested ridges and river viewpoints. It suits hikers who want a cultural thru-hike with easy rail access and regular towns, rather than a remote alpine route. For other German multi-day trails, compare the **Eifelsteig** or the longer **Goldsteig**.

## Route Overview

This is a point-to-point trail along the left bank of the Rhine, commonly walked south to north from Bingen am Rhein, near the Mauseturm, to Remagen-Rolandseck and the Rolandsbogen. Official stage numbering runs the other way: Rolandsbogen/Remagen, Bad Breisig, Andernach, Bassenheim, Winnigen, Koblenz, Rhens, Bad Salzig, St. Goar, Oberwesel, Bacharach, Trechtingshausen and Bingen. The route stays in low-mountain terrain above the river, repeatedly climbing from riverside towns to ridges, castles and viewpoints. Logistics are unusually simple: the Koblenz–Mainz left-bank railway stops in almost every stage town, and Rhine ferries connect to the opposite bank.

## Castles, Tolls and Rhine Romanticism

The Rhine gorge's castles were built largely between the 12th and 14th centuries to control and tax river traffic. Many fortifications were later damaged by French troops in the 17th century, while several were romantically rebuilt in the 19th century during the Rhine Romanticism era. The Upper Middle Rhine Valley became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2002 for its dense concentration of castles, historic towns and cultural landscape. The modern RheinBurgenWeg links the left-bank fortresses and complements the Rheinsteig on the right bank.

## Notable highlights

- **Burg Rheinfels, St. Goar:** Sprawling fortress ruins directly above the left-bank trail, with wide views over the Rhine and the surrounding gorge.
- **Burg Stahleck and Bacharach:** The 12th-century castle crowns Bacharach and now houses a youth hostel; the wine town below is known for half-timbered streets and medieval walls.
- **Schonburg above Oberwesel:** A well-preserved 12th-century castle above the “town of towers”, where the trail gives strong views over Oberwesel's medieval wall line.
- **Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck:** A close trio of restored hilltop castles between Bingen and Trechtingshausen, with the path passing near Rheinstein's walls.
- **Lorelei viewpoint:** The Lorelei rock stands across the river on the right bank, but the left-bank Loreleyblick viewpoint gives one of the classic panoramas near St. Goar and Oberwesel.
- **Mauseturm and Bingen:** The southern terminus looks towards the Mauseturm, a toll-tower islet linked to the legend of Bishop Hatto and the gateway to the Rhine gorge.

## Challenges to expect

Expect constant up-and-down rather than high altitude: the trail climbs repeatedly from Rhine towns to forested slate ridges, vineyards and castle viewpoints, with about 3,900 m of total ascent. Surfaces are mostly dirt, gravel and natural paths, with rocky sections on steeper climbs and short paved village stretches. Summer vineyard slopes can be hot and exposed. Waymarking is strong, and resupply, accommodation and railway exits are frequent. For another scenic German limestone-and-river route, see the [Altmühltal Panorama Trail](#).

# Key Data

---

Country	Germany
Distance	195 km
Duration	13 days
Difficulty	Moderate
Trail type	Point to point
Elevation gain/loss	3900 m
Highest point	462 m
Terrain & landscape	Forest, Mountainous
Trail surface	Dirt, Gravel, Rocky
Accommodation	Hotels, Hostels, Campsites
Average daytime temp.	18°C
Chance of rainfall	Medium
Estimated cost	\$\$
Optimal season	Spring, Summer, Autumn
Accessibility	Family Friendly, Pet Friendly
Facilities	Restrooms, Water Sources, Campsites, Picnic Areas
Permits & fees	No permits or fees

---

# Introduction

---

The RheinBurgenWeg is a castle-and-wine long-distance walk along the left bank of the Rhine, linking Bingen am Rhein with Remagen-Rolandseck through the Middle Rhine Valley. It suits walkers who want strong scenery, historic towns and simple logistics rather than a remote wilderness route.

The trail climbs above the river to vineyards, slate ridges and castle viewpoints, then drops back into Rhine towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz and Andernach. Highlights include Burg Stahleck, Schönburg, Burg Rheinfels, the Loreleyblick / Maria Ruh viewpoint across to the right-bank Loreley rock, and the Rolandsbogen at the northern end.

At 195 km over 13 official stages, it is a practical thru-hike for independent walkers. The West Rhine Railway runs along the valley, making it easy to join, leave, shorten or section-walk individual stages.

The challenge is not technical ground, but repetition: steep climbs from the riverbank, exposed vineyard slopes in warm weather, slippery sections when wet, and around 3,900 m of cumulative ascent. Fit walkers may combine stages, but most should plan around the official day-by-day structure and book Rhine-town accommodation carefully in busy periods.

This guide covers stages, daily planning, accommodation, food, transport, terrain and the common mistakes to avoid.

## Stage-by-Stage Guide

The stages below follow the south-to-north direction used on this page, from Bingen am Rhein to the Rolandsbogen. The official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way, so official Etappe 13 is the Bingen end and official Etappe 1 is the Remagen/Rolandsbogen end.

Throughout the route, the main planning pattern is consistent: start in a Rhine-side town, climb to vineyards, forested slate ridges and castle viewpoints, then drop to the next town. The trail is well waymarked with the RheinBurgenWeg logo, but a GPX track or current map is still useful at town exits, vineyard junctions and in forest sections where many local paths intersect.

### Stage 1: Bingen am Rhein to Trechtingshausen — 13 km

This opening stage starts at Bingen am Rhein by the Mäuseturm, the toll-tower islet at the southern gateway to the Rhine gorge. It gives an immediate sense of the RheinBurgenWeg's character: short distance on paper, but with repeated climbing from the river towards castle viewpoints and wooded slopes.

The main landmarks are the close castle cluster between Bingen and Trechtingshausen: Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck. This is one of the densest castle sections on the left bank, and it is worth allowing time if planning to visit any castle interiors rather than simply passing below or near them. Opening times should be checked before travelling.

Underfoot, expect a mix of natural paths, gravel tracks and some steeper rocky or cobbled sections near settlements and castle approaches. The vineyard slopes can feel hot in summer, while shaded forest paths and slatey descents can be slippery after rain.

Bingen am Rhein is the best place to stock up before setting off. Trechtingshausen has end-of-stage accommodation options, but as with smaller Rhine villages, rooms should be booked ahead in busy walking and wine-season periods. The West Rhine Railway serves both Bingen and Trechtingshausen, making this an easy first day to shorten, delay or walk as a day section; check live train times before travel.

Navigation is generally straightforward if the waymarks are followed carefully from Bingen out of town. Do not be tempted across the river: the RheinBurgenWeg is the left-bank route, while the right-bank trail is the Rheinsteig.

### Stage 2: Trechtingshausen to Bacharach — 20 km

This is one of the longer early stages and should be treated as a full walking day. The route continues through classic Middle Rhine terrain, alternating between riverside approaches, vineyard heights and forested ridge paths before dropping into Bacharach.

Bacharach is the clear highlight at the end of the stage. Burg Stahleck crowns the town above its half-timbered streets and medieval walls; the castle now operates as a DJH youth hostel, making it one of the most distinctive overnight options on the whole route.

The terrain is moderate rather than technical, but the cumulative up-and-down is the challenge. Some climbs out of the river corridor are steep enough to slow the pace, and wet natural paths can be greasy

underfoot. In warm weather, carry more water than the distance alone might suggest, as exposed vineyard sections can be draining.

Food and water should be sorted in Trechtingshausen before departure and again in Bacharach at the finish. Do not assume regular refreshments on the high-level parts of the route. Trechtingshausen and Bacharach are on the West Rhine rail corridor, so the stage is practical for section hikers as well as through-walkers.

For accommodation, Bacharach is a strong overnight stop with guesthouses, hotels, winery rooms and the Burg Stahleck hostel. Book early if aiming for the hostel or a specific guesthouse, especially in spring, autumn and holiday periods.

### **Stage 3: Bacharach to Oberwesel — 14 km**

This shorter stage links two of the most atmospheric wine towns on the route. It is a good day to start unhurriedly, but it still includes the RheinBurgenWeg's usual climbs from the riverbank to vineyard and ridge paths.

Leaving Bacharach, the trail gains height above the Rhine and then works north through a mixture of open slopes, tracks and wooded sections. Views back over Bacharach and along the river are the reward for the climbing.

Oberwesel is known as the "town of towers", with a near-complete medieval wall and tower line. Schönburg stands above the town and is the main castle landmark for this stage, with broad views over Oberwesel and the river bend.

Bacharach and Oberwesel both have food, water and accommodation options, but there may be limited services once out on the slopes between them. Carry enough water from Bacharach and plan lunch rather than relying on a mid-stage stop.

Both towns are served by the West Rhine Railway, and road access at either end is straightforward. Navigation needs most attention when leaving Bacharach and entering Oberwesel, where local paths, lanes and town streets can make waymarks easier to miss than on open ridge sections.

### **Stage 4: Oberwesel to St. Goar — 10 km**

This is the shortest stage in the standard south-to-north itinerary, but it is not simply a flat stroll along the river. The route still climbs above the Rhine and uses the high ground to deliver some of the most famous views on the trail.

The key viewpoint is Loreleyblick / Maria Ruh near Urbar, where the view is across the river to the Loreley slate rock on the right bank near Sankt Goarshausen. The Loreley itself is not on the RheinBurgenWeg; it is seen from the left-bank side.

The stage finishes in St. Goar, below Burg Rheinfels. The fortress ruins are one of the major left-bank highlights of the route and are worth allowing extra time for if visiting at the end of the walking day.

Food and water are available in Oberwesel and St. Goar, but the high-level walking between them should be treated as a self-sufficient section. The short distance makes this a realistic half-day, or a candidate to combine with an adjacent stage for fit walkers, but only if the accumulated ascent and castle-visit time are accounted for.

Oberwesel and St. Goar are both on the West Rhine Railway. Waymarking is good, though care is needed around viewpoint paths and local walking loops so that the RheinBurgenWeg line is not confused with short circular routes.

### **Stage 5: St. Goar to Bad Salzig — 19 km**

This is a longer day after the compact Oberwesel–St. Goar section. The route leaves the St. Goar area and returns to the regular rhythm of climbing from the Rhine to forested heights, then traversing above the valley before descending towards Bad Salzig.

Burg Rheinfels dominates the start of the day if not visited the previous afternoon. Once beyond St. Goar, the interest becomes less about a single named monument and more about sustained Middle Rhine walking: woodland, slatey paths, vineyard edges and views opening and closing through the valley side.

The terrain is non-technical, but the length and repeated ascent make this a solid stage. Wet descents can be slippery, and in summer the open slopes can be hot with limited shade in places.

St. Goar is the place to buy food and fill water before starting. Bad Salzig and the wider Boppard area have accommodation options, but availability should be checked and booked ahead. If using the railway at the end of the stage, confirm the exact station and current train times before travelling.

Navigation is usually clear on the waymarked trail, but this is a day where a map or GPX helps with pacing: the repeated small climbs and descents can make progress feel slower than the distance suggests.

### **Stage 6: Bad Salzig to Rhens — 16 km**

This stage continues through the left-bank heights between the Rhine towns, with a steady mixture of forest paths, gravel tracks, vineyard approaches and descents back towards habitation. It is a moderate day in distance, but still includes the cumulative climbing that defines the route.

There are fewer major named castle highlights in the route notes for this section, so the appeal is the walking itself: high-level views over the Rhine corridor, quiet wooded stretches and the contrast between river settlements and the slopes above them.

Food and water should be arranged at Bad Salzig before departure. Rhens is the end-of-stage base, but accommodation and evening food should be booked or checked in advance rather than left to chance, particularly outside the main season or on busy weekends.

Public transport access is practical along this part of the Rhine corridor, though live train and local connection times should be checked before travelling. Road access at the stage ends is straightforward.

The main warning is not technical difficulty but fatigue. After several days of similar terrain, short steep climbs can start to add up, so keep water accessible and use poles if helpful on the descents.

### **Stage 7: Rhens to Koblenz — 13 km**

This stage brings the walk into Koblenz, the natural midpoint of the RheinBurgenWeg and the city where the Mosel meets the Rhine. It is shorter than several earlier days, but the approach to a larger city means the feel changes from rural valley-side walking to a more urban finish.

Expect the usual mix of paths above the river before the route drops towards Koblenz. As the city approaches, paved stretches, lanes and urban junctions become more likely than on the quieter vineyard and forest stages.

The main landmark is the Deutsches Eck, the headland at the confluence of the Mosel and Rhine. Koblenz also marks the transition between the Upper and Lower Middle Rhine sections of the route.

Food, water, accommodation and onward transport are easiest in Koblenz, which is the strongest logistics hub on the trail. This is a sensible place for a rest day, a resupply, laundry, or joining/leaving the route by rail.

Navigation needs more attention than usual in and around Koblenz because urban waymarking can be easier to miss at road crossings, riverside paths and street junctions. Follow the RheinBurgenWeg markers carefully and keep the map handy through the city edge.

### **Stage 8: Koblenz to Winningen — 15 km**

Leaving Koblenz, the route moves back from city logistics into quieter low-mountain terrain. This is a useful reset after the urban midpoint, with the trail returning to ridges, slopes and valley-side paths rather than continuous town walking.

The stage does not have a major named castle highlight in the route notes, so plan it as a terrain-and-views day rather than a sightseeing-heavy one. The walking remains typical RheinBurgenWeg: moderate, waymarked, and shaped by repeated height gain rather than technical ground.

Koblenz is the best place to buy food and fill water before setting out. Winningen has end-of-stage services and accommodation, but rooms should be booked ahead, especially if walking during the wine season or at weekends.

Public transport from Koblenz is excellent, while onward connections at Winningen should be checked before travelling. Road access is available at both ends, making the stage manageable for section walkers.

The main practical warning is exposure in open vineyard country during hot weather. Start early in high summer, carry enough water, and do not rely on shade for the whole day.

### **Stage 9: Winningen to Bassenheim — 16 km**

This stage heads to Bassenheim rather than one of the better-known Rhine-side overnight towns, so it needs slightly more logistics planning. The walking remains moderate in difficulty, with the route using the low hills and connecting paths of the wider Rhine/Middle Rhine landscape.

Because Bassenheim is less prominent in the accommodation pattern than the main Rhine towns, this is a stage where booking ahead matters. If suitable accommodation is not available in Bassenheim, arrange a transfer, taxi or public-transport connection to a nearby overnight base before starting the day. This should be checked before travelling.

Carry food and water from Winningen and do not assume frequent mid-stage refreshment. The terrain may not be technically difficult, but a 16 km stage with the usual climbs is still a proper day's walk.

Public transport and road access need more checking here than on the simple Rhine railway stages. Bassenheim is not one of the main left-bank Rhine rail stops listed for the route, so onward travel, luggage-transfer arrangements and accommodation shuttles should be fixed in advance.

Navigation is important on this stage because the route is less obviously tied to the Rhine corridor. Keep following the RheinBurgenWeg markers rather than local paths that may lead towards nearby settlements.

### **Stage 10: Bassenheim to Andernach — 14 km**

This stage brings the route to Andernach, one of the main service towns in the northern half of the trail. The distance is moderate, and it can feel like a more manageable day if the previous stage's accommodation and transport have been well organised.

The walking continues over low hills and connecting paths before reaching the Rhine-side town. Expect the familiar mix of natural paths, tracks and some paved sections near settlements.

Andernach's standout attraction is Geysir Andernach on the Namedyer Werth peninsula, reached by boat from Andernach. The cold-water geyser erupts roughly every 90–100 minutes and can reach around 50–60 m, but the boat schedule and visiting times should be checked before travelling.

Food and water should be carried from Bassenheim, with more reliable services again in Andernach. Accommodation is available in Andernach, and the town is a practical overnight stop with rail access on the West Rhine Railway.

Navigation should be straightforward once the route begins to orient back towards the Rhine, but check the map at town approaches and do not let a visit to the geyser disrupt the walking schedule unless it has been planned into the day.

### **Stage 11: Andernach to Bad Breisig — 20 km**

This is one of the longer stages in the itinerary and should be planned as a full walking day. The route continues north through the Lower Middle Rhine landscape, using the same pattern of climbs, ridge or slope walking, and descents to river towns.

There is no technical or alpine ground, but the combination of 20 km and repeated ascent can be tiring, especially after ten previous stages. Wet natural paths may be slippery, and open vineyard sections can be hot in summer.

Andernach is the best place to resupply before starting. Carry enough food and water for the whole stage, as services should not be assumed between the main towns unless checked locally.

Bad Breisig is the end-of-stage base, with accommodation and rail access on the left-bank corridor. Book rooms ahead during busy periods and confirm live train times if using the stage as a day walk.

Navigation is generally dependable on the marked Qualitätsweg, but the length of the stage makes it worth keeping an eye on time, especially if planning to catch a specific train or arrive before accommodation check-in deadlines.

## **Stage 12: Bad Breisig to Remagen — 16 km**

This penultimate full stage moves towards Remagen and the northern end of the RheinBurgenWeg. The walking remains moderate, with forest, slope and track sections rather than technical mountain terrain.

The main landmark near the end of the stage is the Apollinariskirche, the neo-Gothic hilltop pilgrimage church overlooking the Rhine at Remagen. It is one of the key northern highlights of the route and a useful visual marker that the trail is approaching its final section.

Food and water are available at Bad Breisig and Remagen, but carry what is needed between them. As on earlier stages, the exposed sections can be hot in summer and the steeper natural paths can be slippery after rain.

Remagen has accommodation and West Rhine Railway access, making it a practical place to finish the day, shorten the route, or pause before the final walk to the Rolandsbogen. Book ahead if walking in peak season or over public holidays.

Navigation into Remagen requires the usual care at town edges, where the marked trail shares space with roads, lanes and local paths. Keep to the RheinBurgenWeg waymarks rather than following general riverside assumptions.

## **Stage 13: Remagen to Rolandsbogen (Rolandseck) — 14 km**

The final stage leads from Remagen to the Rolandsbogen at Rolandseck, the northern terminus of the RheinBurgenWeg. It is a moderate final day, short enough to combine with onward travel if started early, but still involving the route's characteristic changes of height.

If the Apollinariskirche was not visited at the end of the previous stage, allow time around Remagen before moving on. The finish at the Rolandsbogen is the symbolic end of the walk: the surviving stone arch of the former Burg Rolandseck, with views towards the Siebengebirge and Nonnenwerth island.

Carry food and water from Remagen and do not rely on the terminus itself for full hiker services. Accommodation is most straightforward to organise in Remagen or another nearby transport-linked base rather than assuming a wide choice at the arch.

Rolandseck is on the rail corridor near the northern end of the route, and Remagen is also rail-served, so the finish is easy to link with onward travel towards Bonn, Koblenz or other Rhine towns. Check live train times before travelling.

Navigation remains important right to the end. Follow the RheinBurgenWeg markers to the Rolandsbogen rather than drifting onto local viewpoint paths, and remember that the official stage numbering treats this northern end as the start of Etappe 1 rather than the finish.

## Recommended Itinerary

The RheinBurgenWeg is easiest to plan around the 13 official day stages, especially if booking accommodation town-to-town. HikeList presents the route south-to-north from Bingen am Rhein to Rolandseck; the official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way, from Rolandsbogen/Remagen towards Bingen, so match place names rather than stage numbers when using official material.

### Standard itinerary: 13 walking days

This is the most straightforward itinerary for most independent walkers. Daily distances are manageable, but the repeated climbs from river level to vineyards, forest ridges and castle viewpoints mean the shorter days are still useful rather than wasted.

Day	From	To	Approx. distance	Why this stage makes sense	Services/accommodation notes
1	Bingen am Rhein	Trechtingshausen	13 km	A sensible first day from the Mäuseturm end of the route, with an early taste of the left-bank castle country around Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck.	Bingen am Rhein and Trechtingshausen both have rail access on the West Rhine Railway. Book ahead in smaller places, especially at weekends and during wine-season periods.
2	Trechtingshausen	Bacharach	20 km	One of the longer early stages, so it is best tackled after a short opening day. The finish in Bacharach gives a strong overnight stop beneath Burg Stahleck.	Bacharach has good walker facilities and rail access. The DJH youth hostel in Burg Stahleck is a notable budget option, but availability should be checked before travelling.
3	Bacharach	Oberwesel	14 km	A moderate day between two classic wine towns, leaving time for Oberwesel's walls and the Schönburg area rather than arriving late.	Both Bacharach and Oberwesel are practical overnight towns with rail access and a range of hotels, guesthouses and winery rooms.
4	Oberwesel	St. Goar	10 km	A deliberately short stage, but not one to dismiss: it allows time for the Loreleyblick/Maria Ruh viewpoint across to the right-bank Loreley and for Burg Rheinfels above St. Goar.	St. Goar is a useful overnight base with rail access. This short day also works well as a recovery stage after the longer Trechtingshausen–Bacharach leg.

Day	From	To	Approx. distance	Why this stage makes sense	Services/accommodation notes
5	St. Goar	Bad Salzig	19 km	A fuller walking day continuing through the central gorge landscape, with the usual RheinBurgenWeg rhythm of climbs away from the river and descents towards towns.	Bad Salzig is part of the Boppard area and has rail access nearby on the left bank. Accommodation should be reserved rather than left to chance.
6	Bad Salzig	Rhens	16 km	A balanced mid-route stage: long enough to make progress, but not so long that the accumulated ascent becomes excessive.	Rhens is a smaller overnight stop. If accommodation is limited, nearby rail links make it possible to sleep in a larger Rhine town and return by train. This should be checked before booking.
7	Rhens	Koblenz	13 km	A shorter approach into Koblenz, the natural midpoint of the trail where the Mosel meets the Rhine at the Deutsches Eck.	Koblenz has the broadest choice of accommodation, food shops and transport on the route. It is the best place for a rest night, gear replacement or a section-hike changeover.
8	Koblenz	Winningen	15 km	A practical restart after Koblenz, moving from the city back into smaller Rhine/Mosel-edge walking country without making the day too long.	Koblenz and Winningen both have rail access. Winningen is a sensible overnight stop, but book early in busy periods.
9	Winningen	Bassenheim	16 km	A standard-length stage that keeps the northern half of the trail evenly paced.	Bassenheim is not one of the main left-bank rail stops listed for the route, so accommodation and onward logistics need more careful checking than in the Rhine towns.
10	Bassenheim	Andernach	14 km	A moderate day into Andernach, useful if planning time for the town or for Geysir Andernach on a separate visit.	Andernach has rail access and a wider range of services than smaller stage stops. The Geysir Andernach boat schedule changes by season and should be checked before travelling.

Day	From	To	Approx. distance	Why this stage makes sense	Services/accommodation notes
11	Andernach	Bad Breisig	20 km	Another longer stage, best placed after the easier Bassenheim–Andernach day. Expect the cumulative climbs and descents to matter more than the distance alone.	Both Andernach and Bad Breisig are rail-served left-bank towns with accommodation options. Reserve ahead if relying on a specific hotel or guesthouse.
12	Bad Breisig	Remagen	16 km	A steady penultimate day into Remagen, bringing the route close to its northern finish while leaving the final approach to Rolandsbogen unhurried.	Remagen has rail access and good practical value as the final overnight stop before Rolandseck. The Apollinariskirche area is close to the northern end of the trail.
13	Remagen	Rolandsbogen / Rolandseck	14 km	A fitting final stage to the surviving arch of Burg Rolandseck, with views towards the Siebengebirge and Nonnenwerth island from the northern terminus.	Rolandseck has rail access nearby, making it straightforward to leave the route after finishing. Check live train times before travelling.

## Slower variant: 13 stages plus rest or buffer days

The best slower plan is not usually to split every stage, but to keep the official stage structure and add one or two extra nights. This suits walkers who want time for castles, wine towns and viewpoints, or anyone carrying a full pack who prefers not to rush the longer 19–20 km days.

Good places for extra nights are:

- **Bacharach** — useful after the longer Trechtingshausen–Bacharach stage, with Burg Stahleck above town.
- **St. Goar** — gives time for Burg Rheinfels and the Loreleyblick/Maria Ruh area without squeezing them into a walking day.
- **Koblenz** — the strongest practical rest stop, with the best transport links and services on the trail.
- **Andernach** — useful if visiting Geysir Andernach; the boat schedule should be checked before travelling.

Because the West Rhine Railway runs along the left bank and stops in or beside most stage towns, a slower walker can also use trains to shorten or reposition around individual days. Do not assume every smaller overnight place has the same level of transport or accommodation; check official mapping, train times and lodging before booking.

## Faster variant: 9–11 walking days

Fit walkers sometimes combine stages, but the RheinBurgenWeg is more tiring than its modest altitude suggests. Combining days works best where a short stage sits between two practical overnight towns, and it should be planned around accommodation and rail exits rather than just kilometre totals.

Common compression options include:

Combined section	Approx. distance	Who it suits	Planning cautions
Bacharach to St. Goar via Oberwesel	24 km	Strong walkers who want to absorb the short Oberwesel–St. Goar day into a longer stage.	This risks rushing Oberwesel, Schönburg, the Loreleyblick/Maria Ruh viewpoint and Burg Rheinfels. Start early if sightseeing matters.
Rhens to Winningen via Koblenz	28 km	Fit hikers comfortable with a long day and an urban midpoint at Koblenz.	Koblenz is the best resupply and rest point on the trail; skipping an overnight there removes the easiest logistics buffer.
Bad Breisig to Rolandseck via Remagen	30 km	Very fit walkers aiming for a strong final push.	This is a long final day after accumulated fatigue. Only sensible with a light pack, settled conditions and confirmed onward transport from Rolandseck.

A faster itinerary should still respect the route's repeated ascent and descent. The trail is not technical, but the climbs out of the Rhine towns and exposed vineyard sections can make a nominally moderate distance feel much harder in hot weather.

# Planning the Route

## How many days to allow

The cleanest plan is to follow the 13 official day stages, using the Rhine towns as overnight stops. This gives enough time for the repeated climbs and descents, and also leaves realistic space for castle visits, viewpoints and town logistics without making every day feel rushed.

Fit walkers can combine some stages, especially where the official distances are short, but the route is less forgiving than the kilometre figures suggest. The climbs repeatedly pull away from the river onto vineyard and forest heights, so a 14–16 km day can still feel full if the weather is hot or the paths are wet.

A slower plan is also sensible if castles and towns are part of the reason for walking the RheinBurgenWeg. Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach and Remagen all reward extra time, and a rest or half-day in Koblenz works well because it sits near the route's natural midpoint.

## Direction and stage numbering

HikeList describes the walk south to north, from Bingen am Rhein and the Mäuseturm to Remagen-Rolandseck and the Rolandsbogen. Many walkers use this direction because it follows the Rhine gorge northwards and gives a clear finish above Rolandseck.

The official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way: Etappe 1 starts at the Rolandsbogen/Remagen end, and Etappe 13 finishes at Bingen. When using the official website, maps or accommodation pages, check whether the stage is being described north-to-south or south-to-north before booking rooms or transport.

## How the stages shape the plan

The route is naturally divided by towns, rail stops and accommodation rather than by remote camping points. Most stage ends are practical overnight bases, with hotels, guesthouses, winery rooms or other walker-friendly accommodation in the Rhine valley towns.

The official stages vary from short days such as Oberwesel to St. Goar, to longer days such as Trechtingshausen to Bacharach and Andernach to Bad Breisig. Shorter stages are useful for castle visits or travel days; longer stages should be treated as proper hill-walking days because of the cumulative ascent.

Bassenheim needs a little more attention in planning than the main Rhine-side towns, because it is not one of the listed West Rhine Railway stops. If staying there, check accommodation and onward transport carefully before committing to that stage plan.

## Fast, standard or relaxed itinerary

Plan	Best for	Practical notes
13 days	Most walkers	Follows the official structure, keeps daily workload manageable and matches the natural town-to-town rhythm.

Plan	Best for	Practical notes
Fewer than 13 days	Strong walkers travelling light	Possible by combining shorter stages, but the repeated ascent/descent makes this harder than simply adding the kilometres together.
More than 13 days	Castle visits, wine towns, gentler pacing	Add rest or short days in larger or more interesting towns such as Bacharach, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach or Remagen.
Section hiking	Walkers using public transport	Very practical because the Linke Rheinstrecke railway runs along the left bank and serves many stage towns.

## Shortening, extending and section hiking

The RheinBurgenWeg is one of the easier long-distance trails in Germany to shorten. The West Rhine Railway runs along the left bank between Köln/Koblenz–Bingen–Mainz and stops in or near many route towns, including Bingen, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck.

This makes bail-out planning straightforward. If weather, fitness or time becomes an issue, it is usually possible to drop down to the valley and leave by train from a nearby town rather than being committed to several remote days.

Section hiking is equally practical. Good short blocks include the castle-heavy southern stages between Bingen am Rhein, Bacharach, Oberwesel and St. Goar, or a northern block around Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck. Exact train times should be checked before travelling.

Extending the route is usually a matter of adding extra nights rather than adding distance. Ferry crossings can link to right-bank towns and stations, but ferry seasons and timetables change, so this should be checked before travelling.

## Accommodation planning

Accommodation is the main booking task on this route. The valley has a good spread of hotels, Gasthäuser, Pensionen, winery rooms, campsites and some youth hostels, including the DJH hostel in Burg Stahleck above Bacharach.

Accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts are useful because they are set up for walkers and may offer services such as luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches. These services should be booked in advance and current availability should be checked before travelling.

Booking ahead is wise in the busier spring-to-autumn walking season, and especially during the autumn wine-harvest period. Larger towns give more flexibility, but smaller overnight stops can have limited choice if arriving without a reservation.

## Food and water

This is not a wilderness route, and the frequent Rhine towns make resupply relatively simple. The key is not to assume that every climb has services: the trail often leaves the riverside, climbs onto ridges or through vineyards, and only returns to a settlement later in the day.

Carry lunch or snacks for each stage unless a definite stop is planned. Packed lunches from accommodation can be useful on days where the walking line spends long stretches above the valley.

Water planning matters most in summer. Open vineyard slopes can be hot and exposed, so start each stage with enough water for the climbs rather than relying on finding it between towns.

## **Navigation and maps**

The RheinBurgenWeg is a waymarked Qualitätsweg Wanderbares Deutschland, marked with its own stylised castle/tower logo. In normal conditions, navigation should be straightforward for walkers used to following trail signs through towns, vineyards and woodland.

A GPX track or mapping app is still strongly recommended. The route passes through settlements, side paths, forest tracks and vineyard lanes where a missed marker can waste time, and temporary diversions can occur.

Digital route files are available on platforms such as komoot and Outdooractive, and printed Mittelrhein hiking maps and Rheinsteig/RheinBurgenWeg guidebooks exist. Current diversions should be checked before travelling.

## **Weather and seasonal planning**

Spring, summer and autumn are the best planning window. The trail is described as walkable year-round, but the practical experience changes significantly with heat, wet ground and daylight.

In high summer, plan early starts for exposed vineyard sections and carry more water than the short town-to-town distances might suggest. In wet weather, rocky and forested climbs on slate terrain can become slippery, so footwear with reliable grip is more important than speed.

Autumn is a strong season for vineyard colour and wine towns, but it can also increase demand for accommodation. Book the smaller stops early if walking during popular periods.

## Towns, Villages and Overnight Stops

The places below are listed south-to-north, from Bingen am Rhein to Rolandseck, matching the walking direction used on this page. The official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way, from Rolandsbogen/Remagen southwards to Bingen, so check stage names carefully when booking accommodation or comparing with the official site.

Accommodation is generally straightforward for a long-distance trail: hotels, Gasthäuser/Pensionen, Weingut rooms, some youth hostels and campsites are found along the Rhine towns, and accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts may offer luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches. Smaller overnight stops should still be booked ahead, especially in the wine-harvest season and on weekends.

### Bingen am Rhein

Bingen am Rhein is the usual southern starting point when walking the route south-to-north, with the Mäuseturm marking the gateway into the Rhine gorge. It is a practical place to arrive the night before starting, rather than trying to reach the trailhead and walk the first stage on the same day.

As a sizeable Rhine town and rail stop on the Linke Rheinstrecke, Bingen is one of the easier places on the route for accommodation, food and last-minute supplies. It also works well for anyone arriving via Frankfurt airport, as the Rhine rail corridor is part of the main access pattern for the trail.

### Trechtingshausen

Trechtingshausen is the first standard overnight stop north of Bingen and sits in the castle-rich southern section of the route, near Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck. It is useful for keeping the first day short and allowing time for the steep, view-heavy terrain above the river.

Expect a smaller stop than Bingen or Bacharach, so accommodation and evening food should be arranged before arrival. Trechtingshausen has rail access on the left-bank Rhine line, which makes it a convenient bailout or section-start point.

### Bacharach

Bacharach is one of the strongest overnight bases on the RheinBurgenWeg. The trail drops into a historic wine town below Burg Stahleck, where the DJH youth hostel inside the castle is a notable budget-style option on the route.

There is usually a better choice of accommodation and food here than in the smaller villages, including guesthouses and wine-related lodging. Bacharach is also on the Linke Rheinstrecke, making it simple to start, finish or skip a section by train if plans change.

### Oberwesel

Oberwesel is the next main Rhine town north of Bacharach and a logical overnight before the short stage to St. Goar. It is known on the route for its medieval wall line and Schönburg above the town, with the trail using the higher ground for views before returning to the river corridor.

Accommodation and food options are generally stronger here than at the smaller intermediate stops, but it is still worth booking ahead in busy periods. Oberwesel has a left-bank railway station, so it is also a useful place for a shorter section hike.

## **St. Goar**

St. Goar is a key stop because Burg Rheinfels stands directly above the left-bank trail and the Loreleyblick/Maria Ruh viewpoint lies in this part of the gorge. The Loreley rock itself is across the Rhine on the right bank near Sankt Goarshausen, so allow time for viewpoints rather than assuming the rock is on the walking route.

St. Goar is a good overnight for walkers who want a shorter day from Oberwesel or time around Burg Rheinfels. It is served by the Linke Rheinstrecke, and Rhine ferry options in this area can be useful for right-bank connections, but ferry seasons and times should be checked before travelling.

## **Bad Salzig (Boppard)**

Bad Salzig is the standard stop between St. Goar and Rhens, associated with the Boppard area on the route. It breaks up one of the longer middle sections and keeps the itinerary aligned with the 13-stage plan.

Accommodation should be booked rather than left to chance, as this is not as obvious a base as Koblenz or Bacharach. Rail access is available in the Boppard/Bad Salzig part of the left-bank corridor, but the exact station and onward walk to accommodation should be checked before travelling.

## **Rhens**

Rhens is the overnight stop before the route reaches Koblenz. It is useful because it prevents the St. Goar-to-Koblenz stretch becoming too long and gives a quieter night before the city stage.

Treat Rhens as a smaller booking stop: reserve accommodation in advance and do not assume late food or broad shop choice. Public-transport options and current timetables should be checked before travelling.

## **Koblenz**

Koblenz is the natural midpoint of the RheinBurgenWeg and the biggest logistics hub on the trail. The route reaches the city at the meeting of the Mosel and Rhine, with the Deutsches Eck providing an obvious landmark and reset point.

This is the best place on the route for a rest day, laundry, replacement gear, onward rail connections and a wider choice of accommodation and food. Koblenz is on the Linke Rheinstrecke and is the easiest location for changing plans between the Upper and Lower Middle Rhine sections.

## **Winningen**

Winningen is the first overnight stop after Koblenz when continuing north. It keeps the post-city stage manageable before the route turns towards Bassenheim and Andernach.

Accommodation and evening food should be checked before booking the stage sequence, particularly if walking outside the main season. Transport details for Winningen should be checked before travelling,

as the main left-bank Rhine railway stops listed for the route do not cover every inland or side-valley stage point equally.

## **Bassenheim**

Bassenheim is the main inland-feeling overnight in the northern half of the RheinBurgenWeg, sitting between Winnigen and Andernach rather than functioning like the classic Rhine river towns. It is important for the official stage rhythm, but it needs more planning than the railway towns.

Book accommodation ahead and clarify evening meals, packed lunches and any luggage-transfer arrangements before committing to this stage. Local transport options are less straightforward than at the left-bank Rhine railway stops. This should be checked before travelling.

## **Andernach**

Andernach is a strong overnight and resupply stop in the northern half of the route. It is also the access point for Geysir Andernach, reached by boat from Andernach to the Namedyer Werth peninsula; the boat schedule should be checked before travelling.

For hikers, Andernach is valuable because it combines accommodation, food and rail access on the Linke Rheinstrecke. It is a sensible place to pause if the Bassenheim-to-Andernach section leaves little time for the geysir visit on arrival day.

## **Bad Breisig**

Bad Breisig is the standard overnight between Andernach and Remagen. It is a practical Rhine-side stage stop rather than a place that needs complicated logistics.

Accommodation and food should still be booked ahead in busy periods, especially if relying on a single preferred guesthouse or hotel. Bad Breisig has rail access on the left-bank line, so it also works well for section walkers.

## **Remagen**

Remagen is the final full-service town before the northern terminus at Rolandsbogen. It is a good overnight before the last stage, especially for walkers who want time for the Apollinariskirche or who prefer not to finish the trail and travel onward late in the day.

Remagen has left-bank railway access and a useful choice of town services compared with the smaller end-point area at Rolandseck. It is also the better base if accommodation at the actual terminus is limited or inconvenient.

## **Rolandseck / Rolandsbogen (Remagen-Rolandseck)**

Rolandseck and the Rolandsbogen mark the northern end of the RheinBurgenWeg, south of Bonn. The finish is a viewpoint and landmark rather than a major trail town, so most walkers either stay in Remagen before or after the final stage, or continue onward by train.

Rolandseck is listed as a left-bank railway stop, making it practical to leave the route without retracing to Remagen. If planning to sleep at or very near the finish, accommodation and food options should be checked before travelling.

## Getting to the Start

The HikeList route starts in **Bingen am Rhein** at the **Mäuseturm**, then heads north along the left bank of the Rhine. Note the direction issue when planning: the official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way, with Etappe 1 starting at **Rolandsbogen / Remagen-Rolandseck** and Etappe 13 finishing at Bingen.

### By train

Train is the easiest way to reach the start. **Bingen am Rhein** lies on the **West Rhine Railway / Linke Rheinstrecke**, the left-bank rail line running through the Rhine valley between **Köln / Koblenz / Bingen / Mainz**.

This line is the key logistical advantage of the RheinBurgenWeg: it serves Bingen and most stage towns, including **Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck**. That makes Bingen straightforward to reach at the beginning and also makes it practical to return to the start by train after finishing at Rolandseck or Remagen.

From the station in Bingen am Rhein, allow time to reach the riverside start area by the Mäuseturm. If arriving late, carrying heavy luggage or staying away from the riverfront, use a local taxi rather than trying to solve the final approach on foot in the dark. Live train times and any engineering works on the Linke Rheinstrecke should be checked before travelling.

### By bus

Bus is usually secondary for this trail because the railway follows the same Rhine corridor and is more useful for stage access. Local buses may help with accommodation on the hillsides above the river or with short transfers within the Bingen area, but they should not be relied on without checking current timetables.

If a guesthouse is outside the town centre or away from the station, ask the accommodation about the best local connection or taxi arrangement before arrival. This should be checked before travelling.

### By car

Driving to Bingen is possible, but it creates the usual problem for a point-to-point walk: the trail finishes at **Rolandseck / Rolandsbogen**, not back at Bingen. Most walkers using a car will either need to leave it at the start and return by train from **Rolandseck or Remagen**, or park near the finish first and take the train to Bingen before starting.

Long-stay parking availability, local restrictions and any hotel parking arrangements in Bingen should be checked before committing to a plan. Do not assume that riverside or town-centre parking is suitable for leaving a vehicle for the full 13-stage walk.

### From the nearest airport

The nearest major airport is **Frankfurt Airport (FRA)**, which has a direct rail link and is the simplest international gateway for most hikers starting in Bingen. From there, travel by train towards the Rhine corridor and Bingen am Rhein, checking the exact connection and arrival station before booking.

**Köln/Bonn Airport (CGN)** is also a practical option because the Rhine rail corridor runs via Köln and Koblenz towards Bingen. **Frankfurt-Hahn Airport (HHN)** is another possible airport, but onward transport is less straightforward and should be checked carefully before booking flights.

## Where to stay before starting

**Bingen am Rhein** is the most practical place to stay the night before starting. It puts you close to the Mäuseturm start area and avoids beginning the first stage after a long same-day journey.

Accommodation along the RheinBurgenWeg is generally based around hotels, guesthouses, winery rooms and other hiker-friendly stays in the Rhine towns. If using luggage transfer or needing a packed lunch for the first day to **Trechtingshausen**, choose accommodation familiar with RheinBurgenWeg walkers and confirm the arrangement before arrival.

If arriving very late by train, staying in a larger rail hub such as **Mainz** or **Koblenz** can work, but it means an extra train journey to Bingen before the first walking day. For a clean start, staying in Bingen is usually the simplest option.

## Getting Home from the Finish

The northern finish is at the Rolandsbogen above Remagen-Rolandseck, not in a remote mountain area, so leaving the trail is normally straightforward. The key point is to plan the final descent and onward connection before the last day, especially if finishing late, because exact train, bus and taxi options are timetable-dependent.

### By train

Rolandseck is the nearest named railway stop to the finish area, and Remagen is the next major trail town immediately before the terminus. Both sit on the West Rhine Railway — the Linke Rheinstrecke — which runs along the left bank of the Rhine and connects the trail corridor with Koblenz, Bingen am Rhein, Mainz and Köln.

This makes rail the simplest way home for most walkers. From Rolandseck or Remagen you can head south back down the Rhine towards Koblenz, Bingen am Rhein and Mainz, or north towards Köln. If you have left a car or luggage at the southern start in Bingen am Rhein, the same left-bank rail corridor is the natural return route.

Check live train times before setting off on the final stage. Evening and weekend service patterns can differ, and the practical choice may be to continue to Remagen station rather than relying on a perfectly timed departure from Rolandseck. This should be checked before travelling.

### By bus

Rail is the main public-transport option at the finish. Local buses may be useful for short movements around Remagen-Rolandseck, Remagen or nearby accommodation, but bus routes, evening services and weekend frequencies are not something to assume without checking the current timetable.

If the final day is likely to end late, plan around the train first and use buses only as a backup. This should be checked before travelling.

### By car/taxi

For walkers being collected at the end, arrange the pick-up point carefully: the trail finishes at the Rolandsbogen, while transport connections are lower down around Rolandseck and Remagen. A taxi can be useful if you are tired, carrying luggage, staying away from the station area, or finishing after convenient public transport.

If returning to a car parked at Bingen am Rhein or another stage town, the West Rhine Railway is usually the most practical solution. Parking rules, taxi availability and any access restrictions around the finish should be checked before travelling.

### From the nearest airport

For onward flights, Köln/Bonn Airport is a relevant option from the northern end because the finish is south of Bonn and rail connections run north towards Köln. Frankfurt Airport is also a major option for the Rhine corridor, with direct rail links serving the wider route area; Mainz and Bingen am Rhein sit on

the same broad rail axis used by many walkers starting or ending the RheinBurgenWeg. Frankfurt-Hahn is another possible airport, but it is less directly tied to the rail line.

Allow a buffer between the final walking day and any flight. The finish involves a last trail section to the Rolandsbogen plus the onward move to Rolandseck or Remagen station, and exact rail-to-airport timings should be checked before booking tight connections.

## **Where to stay at the finish**

Staying overnight near the finish is sensible if you want to visit the Rolandsbogen without rushing, finish late in the day, or avoid a long onward journey after the final stage. Remagen and Rolandseck are the most convenient finish-area choices, with other Rhine towns on the rail line offering further options if local rooms are full.

Accommodation along the RheinBurgenWeg is generally a mix of hotels, guesthouses, winery rooms, youth hostels and campsites, with many services concentrated in the Rhine towns. If you need luggage transfer, a packed lunch or a shuttle on the final day, book with an accommodation provider that specifically offers walker-friendly services and confirm the arrangement before arrival.

## Which Direction Should You Walk?

The RheinBurgenWeg works well in either direction, but there is one important planning nuance: this guide presents the walk **south to north**, from **Bingen am Rhein** to **Rolandsbogen / Rolandseck**, while the official stage numbering runs the other way. On the official site, **Etappe 1 starts at Rolandsbogen / Remagen** and the final stage finishes at **Bingen am Rhein**.

### South to north: Bingen am Rhein to Rolandsbogen

South-to-north is the most natural direction if following this HikeList itinerary and many English-language walk descriptions. It starts at the **Mäuseturm** by Bingen am Rhein and quickly enters one of the trail's strongest castle sections, with **Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck** between Bingen and Trechtingshausen.

This direction gives an immediate sense of the Rhine gorge: wine towns, steep vineyard slopes, forested slate ridges and major left-bank castles arrive early. The route then continues through **Bacharach, Oberwesel and St. Goar**, before reaching **Koblenz** as a practical midpoint.

The finish at **Rolandsbogen** also works well psychologically. The surviving arch above Rolandseck gives a clear end-point rather than simply finishing in a town centre, with views towards the **Siebengebirge** and **Nonnenwerth island**.

### North to south: Rolandsbogen to Bingen am Rhein

North-to-south is the direction used by the official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering. If booking directly from official stage descriptions, accommodation lists or walking packages arranged around Etappe 1 to Etappe 13, this direction may be simpler to match with the published material.

It also suits walkers arriving from the north, especially via **Köln/Bonn** or the rail corridor through **Remagen / Rolandseck**. The route then builds towards the best-known Upper Middle Rhine gorge towns and finishes at **Bingen am Rhein**, beside the Mäuseturm at the southern gateway of the gorge.

### Transport and accommodation

There is no major transport disadvantage either way. The **West Rhine Railway** runs along the left bank and serves or sits close to the main stage towns, including **Bingen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck**. This makes both end-to-end walking and section-hiking straightforward in either direction.

Accommodation flow is also balanced. The route is built around Rhine towns with hotels, guesthouses, winery rooms, youth hostels and campsites, plus accredited RheinBurgenWeg hosts offering services such as luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches. Availability, luggage-transfer arrangements and any package direction should be checked before booking.

### Climbs, weather and trail feel

Walking in reverse does not make the RheinBurgenWeg significantly easier. The route repeatedly climbs from the river to vineyards, castles and slate ridges, then drops back towards the next Rhine town, so both directions involve regular steep ascents and descents.

The main difficulty is cumulative ascent rather than any single climb. Some vineyard slopes are hot and exposed in summer whichever way you walk, and wet forest or rocky sections can be slippery in either direction. There is no clear prevailing-weather advantage that should decide the direction.

## **Recommendation**

For most independent hikers, **walk south to north from Bingen am Rhein to Rolandsbogen**. It matches this itinerary, starts strongly with the densest early castle scenery, uses the same excellent rail logistics, and gives a satisfying final objective at the Rolandsbogen.

Choose **north to south** if following the official stage numbering exactly, using a package arranged around the official Etappen, or if your travel plans make **Remagen / Rolandseck** the easier starting point.

## Accommodation Along the Route

The RheinBurgenWeg is well suited to inn-to-inn walking. Most stages finish in Rhine towns or established valley settlements with hotels, guesthouses, pensions, winery rooms and some campsites, and the West Rhine Railway makes it easy to adjust plans if one night's accommodation is full.

The easiest booking pattern is to use the 13 official stage towns as overnight stops. The page describes the route south-to-north from Bingen am Rhein to Remagen-Rolandseck, while the official stage numbering runs north-to-south, so check the place names carefully when matching accommodation to official Etappen.

### Where accommodation is strongest

The best choice is in the larger and more touristed Rhine towns: Bingen am Rhein, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig and Remagen. These are the most straightforward places for walkers who want several hotel or guesthouse options, restaurants, rail access and the ability to shorten or restage a day.

Koblenz is the obvious midpoint for a rest day or resupply stop. It has the broadest city accommodation base on the route and is useful if you want to split the walk into a southern and northern half.

### Smaller overnight stops

Trechtingshausen, Rhens, Winningen and Bassenheim need more care. They work as stage ends, but they are smaller places and availability can be tighter, especially if arriving at the weekend or during the main walking and wine season. Book these nights first, then fit the larger towns around them.

If a small-stage stop is full, the railway along the left bank can often solve the problem for riverside stages: stay in a nearby Rhine town and take the train back to the stage start the next morning. For inland or off-river accommodation gaps, a taxi or host shuttle may be more practical. This should be checked before travelling.

### Partner hosts, luggage transfer and packed lunches

The official RheinBurgenWeg accommodation network includes accredited partner hosts. These are particularly useful for thru-hikers because they are set up for walkers and may offer services such as luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches.

Luggage transfer makes the route much easier if the repeated climbs and descents are the main concern. It is also helpful where accommodation is not exactly at the day's end: a host shuttle or taxi transfer can keep the walking itinerary intact without requiring a long detour with a full pack.

### Booking advice

Advance booking is strongly recommended from spring through autumn, and especially in autumn during the wine harvest period. Weekends can be busy in the Rhine towns, and smaller places may have limited spare capacity even outside peak periods.

Do not assume every guesthouse serves evening meals every night. In small villages, check food arrangements when booking, and ask whether a packed lunch is available for the next stage.

## Accommodation by main route stop

Place	Accommodation level	Best for	Notes
Bingen am Rhein	Good	Start night, rail arrival, first-stage logistics	Sensible place to stay before starting south-to-north from the Mäuseturm area.
Trechtingshausen	Limited	Official stage stop between Bingen am Rhein and Bacharach	Book early; if full, use rail logistics from a nearby Rhine town.
Bacharach	Good	Historic overnight stop, winery rooms, budget options	Strong hiker stop; Burg Stahleck above Bacharach is a DJH youth hostel.
Oberwesel	Good	Shorter stage planning, castle-and-town overnight	Useful after the Bacharach stage and before the short walk to St. Goar.
St. Goar	Good	Rhine views, Burg Rheinfels area, rail fallback	Practical stop with good transport flexibility on the left bank.
Bad Salzig	Limited to moderate	Stage stop before Rhens	Part of the Boppard area; book ahead and check evening meal options.
Rhens	Limited	Shorter walk into Koblenz next day	Smaller stop; accommodation should be secured before relying on it.
Koblenz	Good	Rest day, resupply, transport hub	Best midpoint for a zero day or for splitting the trail into two trips.
Winningen	Limited to moderate	Mosel-side overnight after Koblenz	Smaller than Koblenz; book ahead for weekends and wine-season dates.
Bassenheim	Limited	Inland stage stop between Winningen and Andernach	One of the stops to arrange early; taxi or host shuttle options should be checked before travelling.
Andernach	Good	Geysir Andernach visit, rail access, northern-section base	A practical town stop before the Bad Breisig stage.
Bad Breisig	Good	Spa-town style overnight, stage break before Remagen	Useful for keeping the northern stages at manageable length.
Remagen	Good	Final full overnight before Rolandsbogen / Rolandseck	Stronger base than trying to rely on the endpoint itself.

Place	Accommodation level	Best for	Notes
Rolandseck / Rolandsbogen	Limited	Finish logistics, final viewpoint	Treat the Rolandsbogen as the terminus rather than a guaranteed overnight stop; most walkers should plan accommodation around Remagen or the Rolandseck area. This should be checked before travelling.

## Camping and Wild Camping

The RheinBurgenWeg can be walked with camping gear, but it is not a wilderness camping route. It is a cultural valley trail with frequent towns, railway access and established accommodation, so most walkers use hotels, guesthouses, Weingut rooms, youth hostels or accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts rather than carrying a full camping load.

There are campsites in the Rhine corridor on or near the route, but availability, opening dates and exact access from each stage should be checked before travelling. Many practical overnight options are likely to involve dropping down into a riverside town at the end of a stage, then rejoining the waymarked trail the next morning.

### Is camping practical on this route?

Camping is most practical if you are happy to plan each night around official campsites rather than expecting to pitch wherever the day ends. The trail repeatedly climbs from the Rhine into vineyards, forest and slate ridges, then descends to towns such as Bingen am Rhein, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard/Bad Salzig, Rhens, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig and Remagen. These towns are the logical places to look for campsites or other overnight options.

The main drawback is weight. The RheinBurgenWeg is moderate rather than technical, but the repeated climbs and descents add up over 13 stages; a tent, mat, stove and extra food will make the hot vineyard climbs and steep forest sections noticeably harder. If camping, keep the kit light and avoid carrying unnecessary food, as the route is not remote.

### Wild camping

Do not plan the RheinBurgenWeg around wild camping. The route passes through a busy, cultivated and protected Rhine landscape, including vineyards, forests, castle areas, villages and much of the UNESCO Upper Middle Rhine Valley. Much of the land beside the trail is private, managed or environmentally sensitive.

Wild-camping rules in this area depend on land ownership, municipality and protected-area restrictions, and they must be checked locally before travel. Unless you have clear permission from the landowner or an authorised local body, assume that pitching a tent outside an official campsite is not acceptable.

A discreet bivouac is also a poor fit for much of the route. The hillsides are steep, visible from the valley, crossed by vineyard tracks and close to settlements. There are few places where an overnight camp would be both legal and genuinely low-impact.

### Best approach for campers

The most sensible camping strategy is to combine official campsites with occasional fixed accommodation when campsite spacing, weather or fatigue makes that easier. The West Rhine Railway runs along the left bank and stops in or beside many stage towns, so it is possible to adjust a day, skip forward to accommodation, or leave the trail if a planned campsite is unavailable.

Before committing to a camping itinerary, check:

Planning point	Why it matters
Campsite opening dates	Some sites may be seasonal, especially outside the main spring-to-autumn walking period.
Distance from the trail	A campsite may be close to the Rhine but still require extra descent, road walking or a detour from the waymarked route.
Booking requirements	Summer, weekends and the autumn wine-harvest period can be busy in Rhine towns.
Food access	The route passes through towns regularly, so there is usually no need to carry several days of food. Exact shop and restaurant opening times should be checked locally.
Bad-weather fallback	Trains and towns make it easy to switch to a guesthouse, hostel or hotel if conditions deteriorate.

## Water and cooking

Plan water refills in towns, accommodation, official campsites and public services rather than from natural sources. The Rhine is not a practical drinking-water source for hikers, and small streams or vineyard drainage should not be relied on without treatment.

In summer, carry enough water before leaving each riverside town, particularly for exposed vineyard slopes. Shade can be limited on open sections, and the cumulative climbing makes dehydration more likely than the modest altitudes suggest.

Use stoves only where permitted, ideally at official campsites. Open fires are inappropriate on this route, especially in forests, vineyards and dry summer conditions.

## Leave No Trace on the RheinBurgenWeg

The trail crosses a heavily used cultural landscape, so low-impact behaviour matters. Stay on the waymarked path through vineyards and forest, do not enter private vineyard rows, and avoid damaging walls, terraces or farm tracks.

If camping at official sites, keep pitches tidy and use the facilities provided. If you have explicit permission for any private overnight stop, arrive late, leave early, remove all litter and leave no visible trace. Human waste, food scraps and toilet paper should never be left beside the trail, in vineyards or near viewpoints.

## Food, Water and Resupply

The RheinBurgenWeg is not a wilderness resupply problem. The route repeatedly drops into Rhine towns and villages, and the West Rhine Railway links many of the stage points, so food and water planning is mostly about timing, opening hours and not being caught short on exposed vineyard or ridge sections.

Most walkers should start each day with breakfast arranged at their accommodation, carry lunch or a packed lunch, and refill water before leaving town. Once the path climbs above the river into vineyards, forest and slate ridges, services may be absent until the next settlement.

### Food planning

Accommodation is plentiful in the Rhine towns, including hotels, Gasthäuser/Pensionen, winery rooms and accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts. Some partner hosts offer packed lunches, which is useful on the longer or more rural-feeling stages.

Restaurants, cafés and wine venues are most dependable in the stage towns rather than on the high-level sections between them. Specific village shops, supermarkets, petrol stations and opening hours should be checked before travelling, especially if walking outside the main spring–autumn season.

Do not assume that every small place will have convenient day-hiker food at the exact time you pass through. Rural opening hours can be limited, and Sunday or holiday shopping should not be relied on without checking locally in advance.

For a normal stage, carry at least lunch plus snacks. On the 20 km stages — Trechtingshausen to Bacharach and Andernach to Bad Breisig — it is especially sensible to leave with food already bought or ordered from your accommodation.

### Water planning

Plan water refills around accommodation, cafés, restaurants and public facilities in towns. The route is low-mountain terrain rather than alpine country, but the repeated climbs and descents make hydration important.

Open vineyard slopes can be hot and exposed in summer. On those days, carry more than a minimal town-to-town amount, as shade and services may be limited once above the river.

Natural water should not be treated as a dependable resupply strategy on this trail. If any natural source is used, it should be filtered or treated, but the practical approach is to refill with tap water in settlements and at accommodation.

## Stage-by-stage resupply outlook

Section	Food availability	Water availability	Notes
Bingen am Rhein to Trechtingshausen	Best arranged before leaving Bingen am Rhein; Trechtingshausen is the next stage stop.	Fill before leaving Bingen am Rhein; refill at the end of the stage.	Shorter stage, but the trail climbs away from the river past castle country, so do not rely on finding food once on the hillside.
Trechtingshausen to Bacharach	Carry lunch or arrange a packed lunch; Bacharach is a key overnight stop.	Start full from Trechtingshausen and refill in Bacharach.	One of the longer stages. Food planning matters more than the map distance suggests because the route spends time above the valley.
Bacharach to Oberwesel	Food is easiest in Bacharach and Oberwesel.	Refill before leaving Bacharach; top up in Oberwesel.	A manageable stage, but still carry snacks and lunch unless a meal stop has been checked.
Oberwesel to St. Goar	Food is available at the stage towns; carry snacks for the walk.	Fill in Oberwesel and refill in St. Goar.	Short stage, often easy to manage with breakfast plus snacks, but do not depend on hillside services.
St. Goar to Bad Salzig	Carry lunch from St. Goar or arrange it with accommodation.	Start with a full bottle supply; refill at Bad Salzig.	Longer day with repeated climbing, so water and food should be packed before setting off.
Bad Salzig to Rhens	Food is best treated as start/end-town based unless checked.	Fill in Bad Salzig; refill in Rhens.	Carry lunch and snacks. The route's up-and-down profile makes this more demanding than a riverside walk.
Rhens to Koblenz	Food can be planned around Rhens and Koblenz.	Refill at the start and in Koblenz.	Koblenz is the natural mid-route resupply point for anything missing or worn out. Specific shops and hours should be checked before travelling.
Koblenz to Winningen	Stock up before leaving Koblenz; Winningen is the next stage stop.	Fill in Koblenz; refill in Winningen.	Do not leave Koblenz without water, especially in hot weather on exposed sections.
Winningen to Bassenheim	Carry food from Winningen or arrange a packed lunch.	Start full from Winningen; refill in Bassenheim.	Treat this as a self-sufficient walking day between settlements.
Bassenheim to Andernach	Carry lunch unless services have been checked in advance.	Fill in Bassenheim; refill in Andernach.	Andernach is a useful resupply point before the final northern stages.
Andernach to Bad Breisig	Carry a full day's food or a packed lunch from Andernach.	Start with plenty of water; refill at Bad Breisig.	One of the longer stages. In warm weather, carry extra water from the start.

Section	Food availability	Water availability	Notes
Bad Breisig to Remagen	Food is easiest at the stage towns.	Fill in Bad Breisig; refill in Remagen.	Carry lunch and snacks unless a stop has been checked. Remagen is a practical final resupply point.
Remagen to Rolandsbogen / Rolandseck	Buy or carry food from Remagen.	Fill in Remagen; do not assume water at the terminus area.	Final stage to the Rolandsbogen. Check onward plans and opening hours before relying on food near the finish.

## Navigation and Waymarking

The RheinBurgenWeg is a waymarked Qualitätsweg Wanderbares Deutschland and is generally straightforward to follow by long-distance hiking standards. It has its own RheinBurgenWeg marker: a stylised castle/tower logo used on the left-bank route between Bingen am Rhein and Remagen-Rolandseck.

Do not treat the waymarks as a substitute for navigation entirely. The route repeatedly leaves riverside towns, climbs through vineyards and forest, crosses local walking paths, and drops back into built-up areas where signs can be easier to miss. Pay particular attention when leaving stage towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz and Andernach, where urban streets and local paths can interrupt the rhythm of the trail.

### Direction and stage numbering

Most HikeList route planning here follows the south-to-north walking order: Bingen am Rhein to Remagen-Rolandseck. The official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way, with Etappe 1 starting at the Rolandsbogen / Remagen end and Etappe 13 finishing at Bingen.

This matters when matching signs, GPX files, accommodation plans and official stage descriptions. If using the official stage pages, check the direction of each Etappe rather than assuming Etappe 1 is the first day from Bingen.

### GPX and digital maps

A GPX track is recommended, especially for independent walkers linking accommodation, stations and stage starts. The route is available on platforms such as komoot and Outdooractive, and downloadable GPX files are useful for checking junctions, town exits and diversions.

Download maps for offline use before starting each stage. The Rhine valley has frequent towns and transport access, but mobile data should not be the only navigation method on wooded ridges, vineyard slopes or in built-up sections where a missed turn can add unnecessary climbing.

### Paper maps and guidebooks

A current Mittelrhein hiking map or Rheinsteig/RheinBurgenWeg guide is sensible as a backup, particularly if walking the whole 195 km rather than doing single stages. Paper mapping is also useful for identifying railway stations, alternative descents to the Rhine towns and nearby services without depending on a phone battery.

Use only current editions where possible, and check for active trail diversions before travelling. This is a managed long-distance trail, but forestry work, path repairs or local closures can temporarily alter the signed route.

### Common navigation pitfalls

The main route-finding issue is not wilderness navigation, but attention to detail. The trail's repeated climb-and-descend pattern means a wrong turn out of a town or vineyard can cost time and height.

Also keep the left-bank alignment clear in mind. The RheinBurgenWeg stays on the west/left bank of the Rhine; the right-bank long-distance trail is the Rheinsteig. Landmarks such as the Loreley rock are viewed across the river from the left-bank side rather than being on the RheinBurgenWeg itself.

### **Suitability for less experienced navigators**

The RheinBurgenWeg suits hikers with limited navigation experience better than remote mountain routes because it is waymarked, non-technical and regularly passes towns, stations and accommodation. It is still a proper long-distance walk, so carry an offline map, know the day's end point, and check the route at every unsigned or ambiguous junction.

For most walkers, the best approach is to follow the RheinBurgenWeg waymarks on the ground, keep a GPX track open for confirmation, and carry a map or guidebook as backup.

## Terrain, Conditions and Difficulty in Practice

The RheinBurgenWeg is best thought of as a low-mountain ridge-and-valley walk rather than a riverside promenade. Although the Rhine is almost always the organising feature, the path repeatedly leaves the river towns, climbs onto slate ridges, vineyard heights and castle viewpoints, then drops back towards the next settlement.

There is no alpine or technical terrain, and the route is a well-waymarked Qualitätsweg. The difficulty comes from the saw-tooth profile: roughly 3,900 m of total ascent over 195 km, with many separate climbs rather than one big mountain day.

### Underfoot: paths, tracks and village sections

Most walking is on dirt and natural forest paths, gravel tracks and steeper rocky sections. The rocky ground is most relevant on climbs and descents, where wet slate and compacted earth can become slippery.

Expect short paved and cobbled stretches through villages and towns such as Bingen am Rhein, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach, Remagen and the smaller Rhine settlements in between. These sections make navigation and resupply easier, but they also mean hard surfaces underfoot most days.

This is not a boggy or marshland route. After rain, the main issue is not deep mud but slippery forest paths, slick stones and greasy vineyard or woodland tracks on steep gradients.

### Climbs, descents and cumulative fatigue

The lowest parts of the route sit close to the Rhine, at around 59 m, while the highest point is about 462 m. Those figures can look modest, but they hide the real character of the trail: repeated climbs from river level to the heights above the gorge.

The descents matter as much as the ascents. Several days involve dropping back into a Rhine town after a ridge or vineyard section, so knees and feet take a steady pounding even when the daily distance looks moderate.

Fit walkers may be able to combine stages, but the harder days are not defined by distance alone. A 14–16 km stage with repeated climbing can feel more demanding than the figure suggests, while the longer stages of around 20 km need an early start if conditions are hot or wet.

### Exposure, vineyards and heat

Open vineyard slopes are one of the route's main practical challenges in warm weather. They can be hot and exposed in high summer, with limited shade compared with the forested ridge sections.

Carry enough water before leaving each town, especially on days where the route climbs quickly away from the river. The easy rail and town logistics can make the trail feel forgiving, but exposed slopes still require normal hillwalking judgement in heat.

Forested sections provide shade and cooler walking, but they are also where damp paths can stay slippery after rain. Footwear with reliable grip is more useful than heavy mountain boots for most walkers, provided it is comfortable over repeated hard-surface town sections and rougher natural paths.

## Technical difficulty and hazards

There are no technical scrambling sections and no alpine exposure as part of the standard RheinBurgenWeg. The trail is suitable for reasonably fit walkers who are comfortable with sustained ups and downs on mixed surfaces.

The main hazards are practical rather than technical:

Condition	What it means in practice
Wet weather	Slippery dirt paths, rocky steps and steep forest or vineyard tracks; trekking poles can help on descents.
High summer heat	Exposed vineyard slopes can feel much harder than the map distance suggests; start early and carry water.
Long paved sections through towns	Easy navigation and services, but more impact on feet after several consecutive days.
Repeated descents	Cumulative strain on knees and calves, especially with a full pack.
Combining stages	Possible for strong walkers, but ascent and heat make distance-only planning unreliable.

## Season-by-season conditions

Spring, summer and autumn are the best practical seasons. The official route is walkable year-round, but conditions and daylight change the difficulty significantly.

Season	Conditions to plan for
Spring	Generally a good walking season, with cooler temperatures than summer; wet paths can still be slippery in forest and on rocky climbs.
Summer	The hardest season for heat management, especially on open vineyard slopes. Early starts and water planning are important.
Autumn	Often one of the most attractive times, with colour in the vineyards and the wine harvest period; daylight is shorter later in the season.
Winter	The trail is not an alpine route, but shorter days, wet surfaces and seasonal service changes can make planning less forgiving. This should be checked before travelling.

## What makes the route easier

The RheinBurgenWeg is forgiving because it is well waymarked, close to frequent towns and served by the West Rhine Railway along the left bank. If weather, injury or fatigue becomes an issue, many stages can be shortened or exited by train from Rhine towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck.

Accommodation and food logistics are also easier than on a remote trail. This reduces pack weight if luggage transfer or town-based accommodation is used, which makes the repeated climbing much more manageable.

### **What makes it harder than it looks**

The moderate rating should not be mistaken for flat or effortless walking. The Rhine is close, but the path keeps climbing away from it to reach castles, ridges and viewpoints.

The cumulative effect is the key difficulty: ascent, descent, hard town surfaces, occasional rocky ground, heat on exposed slopes and the repetition of doing it again the next day. Walkers who pace the climbs, protect their feet and avoid overloading their pack will find the route far more enjoyable than those who plan it as a simple riverside walk.

# Weather and Best Time to Walk

The RheinBurgenWeg is officially walkable year-round, but the most practical season is spring through autumn. The route is low-mountain rather than alpine, with a high point of about 462 m, so altitude is not the main issue; the bigger seasonal factors are heat on exposed vineyard slopes, slippery paths after rain and short winter daylight.

## Best seasons

Spring and autumn are the strongest choices for most walkers. Temperatures are generally better suited to repeated climbs from the Rhine towns onto the ridges, and the open vineyard sections are less punishing than in high summer.

Autumn is particularly attractive because the vineyards have colour and the wine harvest gives the valley towns a lively feel. Accommodation should still be planned ahead, especially in popular Rhine towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard/Bad Salzig, Koblenz, Andernach and Remagen.

Summer is perfectly feasible, but it is the season that most affects daily pacing. Some vineyard slopes are hot and exposed, with limited shade between forested sections, so early starts, extra water and realistic stage times matter.

Season	What it means on the RheinBurgenWeg
Spring	Good walking conditions in principle; expect variable weather and wet paths after rain. A strong option for avoiding summer heat.
Summer	Long daylight and easy logistics, but exposed vineyard climbs can be hot. Start early and carry enough water between towns.
Autumn	One of the best times: vineyard colour, wine-harvest atmosphere and usually more comfortable walking temperatures. Book beds ahead in busy towns.
Winter	Possible, but less convenient: short daylight, colder conditions, potentially slippery descents and reduced seasonal services. Treat it as an off-season walk.

## Rain, mud and slippery ground

The trail is not technical, but it does include steep climbs and descents on natural forest paths, gravel tracks and rocky sections. After rain, the steeper slate and woodland paths can become slippery, particularly on descents into the Rhine towns.

Waterproof footwear with good grip is more useful than heavy mountain boots for most walkers. Trekking poles can help on repeated descents, especially on wet ground or when carrying a multi-day pack.

## Heat and exposure

Heat is the main summer hazard. The route repeatedly leaves the riverbank and climbs through vineyards and open viewpoints before dropping to the next town, so there are sections where shade is limited.

In hot weather, avoid treating the official stage distances as the only factor: a 14–16 km day with repeated climbs can feel harder than it looks. Start early, refill whenever possible in towns, and do not rely on finding water on the ridge sections unless a specific stop has been planned.

## **Fog, wind and views**

The RheinBurgenWeg is a view-led walk, with many of its best moments coming from ridge paths, castle approaches and Rhine panoramas. Fog, low cloud or heavy rain can remove much of the reward from stages such as the sections around Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar and the Loreleyblick/Maria Ruh viewpoint.

In poor visibility the trail remains a waymarked low-mountain route, not a navigation expedition, but a map or GPX track is still sensible. The railway along the left bank makes it easy to shorten a day if the weather turns or a viewpoint stage is not worth pushing through.

## **Winter practicality**

A winter thru-hike is realistic for well-prepared walkers, but it is not the best version of the route. The main limitations are short days, colder starts from the river towns, wet or icy paths on steep descents, and reduced flexibility if some tourist services are operating shorter hours or seasonally.

There is no alpine terrain and no single high summit, but that does not remove winter risk on shaded forest paths or rocky sections. Check current trail conditions, accommodation availability and transport times before committing to a winter itinerary.

## **Accommodation and seasonal services**

Accommodation is plentiful along the Rhine towns, including hotels, guesthouses, winery rooms, youth hostels and campsites, but availability varies with season and local demand. Autumn wine periods and popular weekends can fill beds in the smaller towns, while winter can mean fewer open options.

Any plan depending on ferries, the Geysir Andernach boat, luggage transfer or specific host services should be checked before travelling. The West Rhine Railway gives the route unusually good bad-weather and off-season flexibility, as most stage towns have rail access on or near the left bank.

## Safety Notes

The RheinBurgenWeg is not a wilderness or alpine route, but it should still be treated as a proper long-distance hike. The main risks are cumulative fatigue, steep repeated climbs and descents, slippery ground after rain, heat on exposed vineyard slopes, and navigation errors where the trail leaves towns for forest or ridge paths.

### Emergency help and phone coverage

In Germany, call **112** for emergency assistance. Save accommodation details, the day's start and finish points, and the nearest rail exits before setting off.

Mobile signal is usually less of a concern here than on remote mountain routes because the Rhine towns and the West Rhine Railway are frequent, but it should not be treated as guaranteed on forested ridges, vineyard slopes or away from settlements. Carry an offline map or downloaded GPX, plus enough battery for navigation at the end of the day.

### Terrain and underfoot hazards

The route has no technical or alpine ground, but the profile is repeatedly up and down from the riverbank to slate ridges, vineyards, viewpoints and castles. The total ascent is around **3,900 m**, so tired legs on descents are a real safety factor even though the high point is only about **462 m**.

Expect dirt paths, natural forest tracks, gravel, rocky sections on steeper climbs, and short paved or cobbled stretches through villages. Wet slate, roots, leaves, cobbles and vineyard tracks can all be slippery, especially on descents into towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar and Boppard/Bad Salzig.

Walking poles are useful for the repeated descents, particularly with a multi-day pack. Footwear should have reliable grip rather than just road-walking comfort.

### Heat, sun and weather exposure

Summer heat is one of the more important hazards on this route. Several vineyard sections are open, south-facing and exposed, with limited shade compared with the forested ridge sections.

Start early in hot weather, carry more water than usual between towns, and do not assume every small hamlet or viewpoint has an open café or shop. A sunhat, sunscreen and a lightweight long-sleeved layer are practical kit, not optional extras in high summer.

Spring and autumn are generally good walking seasons, but wet weather can make the steeper paths greasy. In cooler months or poor weather, the open viewpoints and ridge sections can feel much colder than the river towns below, so carry a warm layer and waterproofs even on moderate stages.

### Navigation and waymarking

The RheinBurgenWeg is a certified, waymarked trail, using its own castle/tower logo. Even so, pay attention when leaving town centres, passing through vineyards, or joining and leaving forest tracks, as these are the places where walkers most easily miss turns.

The official stage numbering runs **north-to-south** from Rolandsbogen/Remagen, while many walkers use the route **south-to-north** from Bingen am Rhein. When using signs, maps or GPX files, check that the direction and stage order match the itinerary being walked.

## Roads, towns and rail exits

The trail regularly passes through Rhine towns and villages, so expect short paved, cobbled and roadside sections, plus road crossings near stations, accommodation and riverfront areas. Use normal road caution, especially when tired at the end of a stage or when navigating through busy town centres such as Koblenz.

A major safety advantage of this route is the West Rhine Railway, which serves or sits close to many stage towns including Bingen am Rhein, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck. This makes it relatively straightforward to shorten a day, stop early or leave the route if weather, injury or fatigue become a problem. Live train times should be checked before relying on a rail exit.

## Water, rivers and ferries

There are no special river-fording or tide hazards on the RheinBurgenWeg. The Rhine is a major river beside the route, but the walking line is usually on the left bank, in towns, vineyards, forest or above the gorge rather than in the watercourse.

If using Rhine ferries to connect with the right bank or alternative stations, check operating seasons and times before committing to a plan. Do not build a safety exit around a ferry without checking that it is running that day.

## Solo hiking

Solo hiking is realistic on this trail because the stages link frequent towns and transport, but the route still has quiet wooded and vineyard sections. Share the planned stage and accommodation with someone, carry an offline map, and avoid pushing on late in the day if tired or dehydrated.

The easiest safe bailout is usually to descend to the next Rhine town and use the railway. If a stage has already involved several steep climbs, stopping early is normally the safer decision than forcing the planned finish.

## What to check before setting off each day

Before leaving accommodation, check:

- the day's weather, especially heat, thunderstorms, heavy rain or strong wind on exposed viewpoints;
- the stage distance and likely ascent, not just the kilometres;
- daylight and your realistic walking pace with stops;
- current trail diversions or forestry/vineyard closures;
- water and food availability before the next town;
- live train times on the Linke Rheinstrecke if using a rail exit;
- ferry times if crossing the Rhine for accommodation or transport;

- accommodation check-in arrangements at the next overnight stop.

## Gear Recommendations

The RheinBurgenWeg is not a wilderness trek, so heavy expedition kit is unnecessary for most walkers. Gear choices should be driven by the route's real challenges: repeated steep climbs and descents between river towns and vineyard heights, rocky and sometimes slippery paths, exposed summer slopes, and a 13-day point-to-point itinerary with frequent access to towns and the West Rhine Railway.

### Footwear

Choose footwear with good grip rather than heavy mountain boots by default. The trail uses a mix of dirt paths, forest tracks, gravel, rocky sections on steeper climbs, and short paved or cobbled stretches through villages, so a sturdy walking shoe or lightweight boot suits most hikers.

Waterproof footwear is useful in spring, autumn or unsettled weather, especially on forested slate ridges where wet rock and mud can become slippery. In high summer, breathable footwear may be more comfortable on the exposed vineyard slopes, but it still needs a sole that grips well on loose gravel and rock.

Avoid minimalist road-style trainers unless walking only short dry sections. The cumulative descent over 195 km can be hard on feet, knees and toes, particularly on the repeated drops back towards Rhine towns such as Bacharach, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach and Remagen.

### Waterproofs and Layers

Carry a proper waterproof jacket even in good-weather months. The RheinBurgenWeg is low-mountain terrain rather than alpine country, but many stages spend time above the river on open ridges, vineyard slopes and forest tracks where shelter may not be immediate.

A light insulating layer is enough for most spring-to-autumn itineraries, backed up by a warm mid-layer in cooler months. Early starts, shaded forest sections and windy viewpoints can feel noticeably cooler than the towns along the Rhine.

Waterproof trousers are optional in settled summer weather but sensible for a multi-day spring or autumn walk. They are more useful on long exposed or forested sections than in the towns, where drying kit and changing plans is usually straightforward.

### Navigation

The RheinBurgenWeg is a waymarked Qualitätsweg with its own stylised castle/tower logo, but a backup navigation method is still important. Carry offline mapping or downloaded GPX on a phone or GPS device, especially where the trail leaves a town and climbs quickly into woodland or vineyards.

A printed Mittelrhein hiking map or guidebook is useful for longer trips, particularly if using the West Rhine Railway to shorten, skip or rejoin stages. Because the official stage numbering runs north-to-south while many walkers and this guide describe the route south-to-north from Bingen am Rhein to Remagen-Rolandseck, check that maps, apps and accommodation notes are being read in the correct direction.

Current trail diversions should be checked before travelling. The route is well supported, but vineyard tracks, forest paths and access routes can occasionally be affected by maintenance or local closures.

## Water and Food Carry

A typical daypack should have capacity for at least a normal day's food and water, not a multi-day wilderness load. The route regularly returns to towns and villages including Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Bad Salzig, Rhens, Koblenz, Winningen, Bassenheim, Andernach, Bad Breisig and Remagen, so resupply is generally part of the walking rhythm.

In summer, carry more water than the map distance alone suggests. Vineyard slopes can be hot and exposed, and the repeated climbs away from the river increase fluid needs even on relatively short stages.

Packed lunches are worth arranging for stages where the best walking sits above the river for long stretches. Accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts may offer packed lunches, shuttles and luggage transfer, but individual services should be confirmed when booking.

## Trekking Poles

Trekking poles are strongly recommended for many walkers, even though the trail has no technical or alpine ground. The cumulative ascent of around 3,900 m comes from repeated climbs and descents rather than one major pass, and poles help on steep vineyard tracks, rocky forest sections and long descents into the Rhine towns.

They are especially useful for hikers carrying camping gear, anyone with knee issues, and walkers combining official stages into longer days. Rubber tips may be helpful on paved and cobbled village sections.

## Power, Phone and Documents

Carry a power bank if navigating by phone, using GPX files, booking accommodation on the move, or relying on rail connections for section hiking. The trail is public-transport friendly, but a flat phone can make it harder to check live train times on the Linke Rheinstrecke or adjust plans after a long stage.

Keep accommodation details, rail plans and any luggage-transfer arrangements available offline. This is particularly important when walking point-to-point with bags being moved between hosts.

## Sun, Heat and Insects

Sun protection is important from late spring through early autumn. A hat, sunglasses and high-factor sunscreen are particularly useful on open vineyard slopes and exposed viewpoints above the Rhine.

Insect protection is sensible in warm weather, especially around wooded sections, riverside areas and evenings in the towns. No specialised insect kit is needed, but a small repellent and bite treatment can make multi-day walking more comfortable.

## Advice for Inn-to-Inn Hikers

Most inn-to-inn hikers can keep the pack light: waterproofs, spare layer, water, lunch, navigation, first-aid basics and daily personal items. The frequent towns, guesthouses, winery rooms, hotels and youth hostels make this a classic light-pack cultural thru-hike rather than a self-sufficient expedition.

If using luggage transfer, still carry everything needed to finish the day safely. Do not put waterproofs, warm layers, medication, navigation or essential documents in the transferred bag.

A small pair of lightweight evening shoes can be worthwhile because many stages finish in historic Rhine towns with cobbled streets and steep lanes. Keep them optional if pack weight matters.

## **Advice for Campers**

Camping is possible in the wider accommodation mix, with campsites along the Rhine valley, but it needs more planning than inn-to-inn walking. Campsite availability, opening periods and booking requirements should be checked before travelling.

Campers should expect the climbs to feel harder with a full load. Use a compact shelter, lightweight sleeping system and simple cooking setup, and keep food carry realistic rather than excessive because the route repeatedly passes through service towns.

Do not assume that every official stage end has a convenient campsite directly on the route. Plan each night individually and allow for short extra approaches or public-transport adjustments where needed.

## **Advice for Fast and Section Hikers**

Fast hikers combining stages should prioritise light, durable kit: grippy footwear, poles, waterproof shell, compact insulation, phone navigation with backup power, and enough water for exposed climbs. The individual stages are moderate, but linking them creates long days with significant cumulative ascent and descent.

Section hikers can travel lighter because the West Rhine Railway serves or sits close to many stage towns, including Bingen, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck. Even so, carry weather protection and water for the full walking section, as the trail often climbs away from immediate town services.

Live train times should be checked before travelling, especially when using the railway as a bail-out or return option at the end of a long day.

## Budget and Costs

Plan the RheinBurgenWeg in **euros (€)**. Costs vary strongly by season, room type, booking window and whether luggage transfer is used, so current prices should be checked before booking rather than relying on fixed totals.

The main budget items are accommodation, meals, rail travel to and from the route, optional ferries across the Rhine, paid attractions such as castles or Geysir Andernach, and any luggage-transfer or shuttle services arranged through accommodation providers.

### Budget styles

Approach	How to keep costs down	What to watch
<b>Budget</b>	Use youth hostels where available, simple Gasthäuser/Pensionen, campsites where they fit the stage plan, and public transport rather than taxis. Burg Stahleck above Bacharach is a notable DJH hostel option on the route.	Campsites and hostel beds need checking stage by stage; do not assume every stage town has the same low-cost options. Book early in popular Rhine towns and during the autumn wine season.
<b>Mid-range</b>	Stay in guesthouses, Weingut rooms and small hotels; eat locally in the stage towns; use the Linke Rheinstrecke railway for arrival, departure or shortening stages.	This is the most typical cost level for the RheinBurgenWeg. Compare whether breakfast, packed lunches or shuttle help are included before judging room prices.
<b>Comfortable</b>	Choose better hotels or winery accommodation, add rest nights in larger towns such as Koblenz, include paid castle visits and Geysir Andernach, and use luggage transfer.	Convenience services can add up quickly because the route moves town almost every day. Ask for the total luggage-transfer or shuttle cost before committing.

### Accommodation costs

Accommodation is the largest cost on a full 13-stage walk. The route is not a hut-to-hut mountain trail; most walkers use the Rhine towns and villages for hotels, guesthouses, Pensionen, Weingut rooms, youth hostels and occasional campsites.

Smaller stage ends can have fewer cheap beds than larger places such as Bingen am Rhein, Koblenz, Andernach or Remagen. Autumn wine-harvest periods, summer weekends and popular castle towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel and St. Goar can book up early.

If walking south to north, allow for an arrival night in or near Bingen am Rhein if starting early the next morning. Some walkers also add a final night near Remagen or Rolandseck rather than travelling immediately after the last stage.

### Food and drink

Food costs depend on whether accommodation includes breakfast and whether you buy packed lunches, café meals or restaurant dinners. When comparing rooms, check whether breakfast is included and whether the host can provide a packed lunch for the next stage.

The route repeatedly climbs away from the river into vineyards and forested ridges, so buy enough water and food before leaving town. This is especially important on hot exposed vineyard sections, where relying on an open café or restaurant mid-stage can be risky.

Wine-town dinners and cellar visits are part of the appeal of the Mittelrhein, but they are discretionary costs. A budget walker should plan simple lunches and reserve restaurant spending for selected towns.

## Transport costs

The RheinBurgenWeg is unusually easy to manage by train. The West Rhine Railway, the **Linke Rheinstrecke**, runs along the left bank and stops in or beside many stage towns, including Bingen am Rhein, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard/Bad Salzig, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck.

This rail access is the best way to control transport costs. It reduces the need for taxis, makes section-hiking practical, and gives an easy exit if weather, injury or time forces a change of plan. Live train times and ticket prices should be checked before travelling.

Frankfurt Airport is the nearest major airport with a direct rail link, while Köln/Bonn and Frankfurt-Hahn are also possible arrival options. Long-distance rail or airport-transfer costs can vary widely, so price these separately from the walking budget.

Rhine ferries are useful for reaching right-bank towns or stations, but they are not necessary for staying on the left-bank RheinBurgenWeg. Ferry operating seasons, timetables and fares should be checked before relying on them.

## Taxis, shuttles and luggage transfer

Taxis are rarely essential because of the railway, but they can be useful for off-route accommodation, late arrivals, missed connections or shortening a stage. In smaller villages, arrange taxis in advance rather than assuming one will be available at the end of the day.

A network of accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts offers services such as luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches. Costs and conditions vary, so ask whether transfer is charged per bag, per stage or as part of an accommodation package.

Luggage transfer is most valuable for walkers who want to enjoy the repeated climbs without a full pack. Budget walkers can avoid it entirely; comfortable walkers should include it as a separate daily cost in their trip plan.

## Campsites and lower-cost nights

Campsites can reduce costs, but they need more careful planning than hotel-based walking. Check opening dates, exact location, booking rules and how well each campsite fits the official stage ends before committing to a camping itinerary.

A mixed approach often works better than trying to camp every night: use campsites where convenient, then book hostels, Pensionen or guesthouses in places where camping does not fit the route. Current campsite prices should be checked before booking.

## **Packages and organised options**

Self-guided packages are relevant on the RheinBurgenWeg because the route has established accommodation partners and luggage-transfer options. These packages may save planning time by bundling accommodation, luggage movement and sometimes route information.

Compare any package against booking accommodation and rail travel independently. The independent version is straightforward because the trail is waymarked and the Linke Rheinstrecke gives excellent access, but a package can be worth paying for if availability is tight or daily luggage transfer is important.

# Luggage Transfer, Guided Tours and Support Services

## Luggage transfer

The RheinBurgenWeg is well suited to walking with luggage transfer. The route passes through regular Rhine towns rather than remote mountain huts, and there is a network of accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts offering walker-friendly services such as luggage transfer, shuttle help and packed lunches.

For a full Bingen am Rhein to Remagen-Rolandseck walk, the simplest arrangement is usually to book accommodation first, then ask each host whether they can move bags to the next overnight stop or arrange the transfer locally. This is especially useful on the longer and hillier days, such as Trechtingshausen to Bacharach, St. Goar to Bad Salzig and Andernach to Bad Breisig, where the distance and repeated climbs make a lighter day pack worthwhile.

Before booking, check:

- whether the host participates in RheinBurgenWeg luggage transfer;
- the cost per bag and per stage;
- latest bag drop-off time each morning;
- where bags should be left and labelled;
- whether transfer is available in the direction you are walking;
- whether there are restrictions on bag weight or size.

The official stage numbering runs north-to-south from Rolandsbogen/Remagen, while many walkers follow the route south-to-north from Bingen am Rhein. Make the direction unambiguous when booking baggage moves, particularly if using the official Etappe numbers in emails.

Current luggage-transfer prices and conditions should be checked before travelling.

## Self-guided packages

A self-guided package can make sense if you want the walking to remain independent but prefer accommodation, luggage movement and route notes to be organised in advance. On a route with 13 official stages and many possible overnight towns, this removes much of the admin while still leaving each day unguided.

A typical self-guided arrangement may include booked hotels or guesthouses, luggage transfer between overnights, route information and emergency contact details. Some packages may use the full 13-stage itinerary, while others may combine shorter stages or omit sections. Exact inclusions, dates and prices vary and should be checked before booking.

Independent hikers who are comfortable booking German hotels and using the Linke Rheinstrecke railway may not need a package. The RheinBurgenWeg is waymarked, towns are frequent, and trains serve or sit close to most stage towns, so it is one of the easier long-distance routes in Germany to organise yourself.

## Guided walking

A full guided trek is not essential for this trail. The RheinBurgenWeg is a certified, waymarked Qualitätsweg with no alpine or technical ground, and the main planning challenge is accommodation and daily logistics rather than navigation in wild terrain.

Guided support is most useful if you want cultural interpretation of the castles, wine villages and Rhine history, or if you prefer walking with a group. Guided day walks or short themed sections may be more practical than a fully guided end-to-end trip. Availability changes by season and should be checked before travelling.

## Shuttle and taxi support

Taxis and accommodation shuttles are useful back-up options, particularly when staying away from the riverside towns or when a day has to be shortened. Many stages begin or end in places with easy rail access, but not every overnight choice will sit directly on the trail.

Use taxis or host shuttles for:

- reaching accommodation away from the waymarked route;
- returning to the trail after an off-route overnight;
- shortening a stage in bad weather or extreme heat;
- dealing with injury, fatigue or missed connections;
- linking to a railway station when not overnighing in a rail-served town.

For most hikers, the train is the main support system. The West Rhine Railway runs along the left bank, with stops in or beside many stage towns including Bingen, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck. Live train times should be checked before travel.

## What to book ahead

Accommodation should be booked ahead if walking in the main spring-to-autumn season, at weekends, or during busy wine and holiday periods. Once overnight stops are fixed, arrange luggage transfer directly with the hosts or through the booking provider.

Packed lunches are worth requesting where the next day starts with a climb or where services between towns may be limited. The trail often leaves the Rhine bank for vineyards, ridges and forest tracks, so relying on finding food exactly when needed is not sensible on every stage.

If planning to use ferries, the Geysir Andernach boat, taxis, or any shuttle service as part of the itinerary, check current schedules before travelling.

## Shorter Hikes and Best Sections

The RheinBurgenWeg is unusually easy to shorten because the West Rhine Railway runs along the left bank below the trail. Bingen am Rhein, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Boppard/Bad Salzig, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck all give practical access to individual stages or multi-day sections.

Distances below follow the south-to-north order used on this page. The official RheinBurgenWeg stage numbering runs the other way, from Rolandsbogen/Remagen towards Bingen, so match place names carefully when using official stage pages or GPX files.

### Best day walk: Oberwesel to St. Goar

Start	Finish	Approx distance	Best for	Transport
Oberwesel	St. Goar	10 km	A short but classic Rhine gorge stage	Railway stations at both Oberwesel and St. Goar on the left-bank line

This is the best single-day sample of the route for many walkers: short enough to fit into a relaxed day, but still full of RheinBurgenWeg character. It links Oberwesel, the Schönburg area, the left-bank heights above the gorge, the Loreleyblick / Maria Ruh viewpoint looking across to the Loreley rock on the right bank, and the descent towards St. Goar and Burg Rheinfels.

Do not treat it as a flat riverside walk. The trail still climbs from town level onto the slopes above the Rhine, and the path can be hot on open vineyard sections or slippery after rain.

### Best weekend section: Bingen am Rhein to Bacharach

Start	Finish	Approx distance	Suggested split	Transport
Bingen am Rhein	Bacharach	33 km	Bingen am Rhein → Trechtingshausen, then Trechtingshausen → Bacharach	Railway access at Bingen am Rhein, Trechtingshausen and Bacharach

This two-stage weekend gives the strongest castle concentration near the southern gateway of the Rhine gorge. Starting at Bingen am Rhein and the Mäuseturm, the route heads north past the castle-rich stretch around Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck before continuing to Bacharach, with Burg Stahleck above the town.

It is a good choice for a first RheinBurgenWeg weekend because the stages are logical, the rail escape points are clear, and Bacharach has the accommodation base expected of a popular Rhine walking town. Book ahead in busy spring, summer and autumn periods, especially if aiming for a specific guesthouse, Weingut room or youth-hostel bed.

## Best 3–5 day section: Bingen am Rhein to St. Goar

Start	Finish	Approx distance	Standard stages	Transport
Bingen am Rhein	St. Goar	57 km	4 days via Trechtingshausen, Bacharach and Oberwesel	Railway access at each stage town

For a compact version of the full trail, Bingen am Rhein to St. Goar is the strongest 3–5 day choice. It includes the Mäuseturm, the castle cluster between Bingen and Trechtingshausen, Bacharach and Burg Stahleck, Oberwesel and Schönburg, the Loreleyblick / Maria Ruh panorama, and Burg Rheinfels above St. Goar.

The standard four-day split keeps the days manageable: 13 km, 20 km, 14 km and 10 km. Fit walkers may combine shorter stages, but the repeated climbs from the river to the vineyard and forest heights make this section more tiring than the distances suggest.

## Best section for scenery: Bacharach to St. Goar

Start	Finish	Approx distance	Suggested split	Transport
Bacharach	St. Goar	24 km	Bacharach → Oberwesel, then Oberwesel → St. Goar	Railway access at Bacharach, Oberwesel and St. Goar

Bacharach to St. Goar is the most efficient scenic short break: two moderate days, three useful rail towns, and a high concentration of Rhine gorge views. The route combines Bacharach's half-timbered streets and Burg Stahleck, Oberwesel's wall-and-tower skyline, Schönburg, and the classic view across the river to the Loreley rock.

This is also a sensible choice if time is short but the aim is to experience the UNESCO Upper Middle Rhine Valley character rather than simply tick off kilometres.

## Best section for beginners: Oberwesel to St. Goar, or Bacharach to Oberwesel

Start	Finish	Approx distance	Why it works	Transport
Oberwesel	St. Goar	10 km	Shortest official stage, strong highlights	Railway stations at both ends
Bacharach	Oberwesel	14 km	Manageable distance with clear town-to-town logistics	Railway stations at both ends

Beginners should choose a short station-to-station stage rather than underestimating the full trail's cumulative ascent. Oberwesel to St. Goar is the shortest official stage and gives a rewarding first taste, while Bacharach to Oberwesel adds a little more distance without creating awkward logistics.

Carry enough water in warm weather, start early in high summer, and allow extra time for the climbs out of the towns. The RheinBurgenWeg is well waymarked and non-technical, but it is still a hill route above

the Rhine, not a promenade path.

## Best for public transport: station-to-station stages on the left bank

Practical options	Approx distance	Why it works
Bingen am Rhein → Trechtingshausen	13 km	Short southern opener with castle interest and rail at both ends
Bacharach → Oberwesel	14 km	Straightforward day stage between two Rhine towns
Oberwesel → St. Goar	10 km	Shortest official stage, easy rail return
Koblenz → Winningen	15 km	Useful option near the trail's midpoint and a major transport hub
Andernach → Bad Breisig	20 km	Longer northern day with rail access at both ends
Remagen → Rolandseck / Rolandsbogen	14 km	Northern finish section with rail access near Remagen and Rolandseck

The easiest way to section-hike the RheinBurgenWeg is to sleep in one Rhine town and use the train to reach the start or return from the finish. This works particularly well on the left-bank stages because the railway broadly follows the same valley corridor as the trail.

Live train times should be checked before travelling, especially for early starts, late finishes or Sunday travel. Ferries across the Rhine can add useful flexibility, but ferry operating seasons and times should also be checked before relying on them.

## Best for villages and accommodation: Bingen am Rhein to St. Goar

Start	Finish	Approx distance	Main overnight places	Transport
Bingen am Rhein	St. Goar	57 km	Trechttingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar	Railway access throughout

This is the best shorter section if comfortable accommodation, wine towns and easy evening logistics matter as much as the walking. The stage towns are close enough to make sensible overnight stops, and the area has the mix expected on the RheinBurgenWeg: hotels, guesthouses, Weingut rooms and youth-hostel options, including the DJH hostel inside Burg Stahleck above Bacharach.

Accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts can offer hiker-friendly services such as luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches. Availability and current prices should be checked before booking.

## Camping and very low-budget section hikes

Camping is possible on the RheinBurgenWeg corridor, but it is less central to the route than guesthouses and small hotels. Campsites are found in Rhine towns along the valley, while the trail itself often runs

higher on vineyard and forest slopes, so expect some extra descent or local transfer at the end of the day.

For a camping-based short hike, choose a station-to-station section with towns at both ends rather than assuming there will be a campsite beside the footpath. Current campsite opening dates, prices and exact access from the trail should be checked before travelling.

## Highlights and Points of Interest

The RheinBurgenWeg is at its strongest where the trail links a steep river climb, a castle viewpoint and a historic Rhine town in the same stage. The notes below follow the south-to-north walking order used on this guide, from Bingen am Rhein to Rolandseck; the official stage numbering runs the other way.

### Mäuseturm and the gateway at Bingen am Rhein

The Mäuseturm marks the southern gateway to the Rhine gorge and is the usual starting landmark for walkers heading north. The tower stands on its island at the mouth of the gorge and is tied both to its former toll function — the name is a corruption of *Mautturm* — and to the legend of Archbishop Hatto and the mice.

It is worth allowing a little time here before starting the first climb out of Bingen am Rhein. This is the point where the route begins to leave the riverside and commit to the RheinBurgenWeg pattern of repeated climbs to higher ground.

### The Bingen–Trechtingshausen castle cluster

The opening stages contain the left bank's densest run of castles: Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck between Bingen am Rhein and Trechtingshausen. Rheinstein, dating from around 1316/17 and later romantically restored by Prince Friedrich of Prussia, has the most dramatic cliff-top position.

Reichenstein and Sooneck are 19th-century neo-Gothic reconstructions of earlier robber-baron strongholds. For hikers with limited time, this is one of the best sections of the route for castle density without needing to leave the left bank.

### Bacharach and Burg Stahleck

Bacharach is one of the most attractive overnight stops on the trail, with half-timbered streets, medieval walls and Burg Stahleck above the town. The castle is a 12th-century site linked to Count Hermann von Stahleck, Count Palatine of the Rhine; it was destroyed by French troops in 1689 and rebuilt from the 1920s.

Burg Stahleck now houses a DJH youth hostel, making it unusually practical as well as scenic. Walkers who want one extra night in a smaller Rhine wine town should put Bacharach high on the shortlist.

### Oberwesel, Schönburg and the town walls

Oberwesel is known as the "town of towers", and the trail gives strong views over its near-complete medieval wall and tower line. Schönburg, a well-preserved 12th-century castle now partly used as a hotel, sits above the town and is the main landmark here.

This is a good place to slow down if the itinerary allows, particularly because the following stage to St. Goar is one of the shorter official walking days. The shorter distance makes it easier to combine sightseeing with the day's walking rather than rushing straight through.

## **Loreleyblick / Maria Ruh viewpoint**

The Loreley rock itself is on the right bank of the Rhine at Sankt Goarshausen, not on the RheinBurgenWeg. The left-bank highlight is the Loreleyblick / Maria Ruh viewpoint near Urbar, which looks across the river to the famous slate rock and the narrowest, deepest bend of the Rhine.

This distinction matters when planning: the RheinBurgenWeg stays on the left bank, while right-bank sights belong to the opposite side of the valley and the Rheinsteig corridor. For the classic Loreley panorama while remaining on-route, aim for the Maria Ruh viewpoint.

## **St. Goar and Burg Rheinfels**

Burg Rheinfels above St. Goar is one of the major historic sites of the whole trail. Built from 1245 by the Counts of Katzenelnbogen to tax river traffic, it became the largest fortress of the Middle Rhine before being slighted by French forces in 1797.

The ruins stand directly above the left-bank route and give wide views into the gorge. St. Goar is therefore one of the best places to build in extra time, especially if combining the castle with the Loreley viewpoint area.

## **Koblenz and the Deutsches Eck**

Koblenz is the natural midpoint of the RheinBurgenWeg and the point where the Mosel meets the Rhine. The Deutsches Eck headland is the key landmark, and the city also marks the boundary between the Upper and Lower Middle Rhine sections of the route.

For practical planning, Koblenz is the obvious place for a rest night, laundry stop or itinerary reset. It has far more services than the smaller wine towns and sits on the main left-bank rail corridor.

## **Andernach and Geysir Andernach**

Near Andernach, Geysir Andernach on the Nemedyer Werth peninsula is the route's most unusual natural feature. It is the world's highest cold-water geyser, erupting up to around 50–60 m roughly every 90–100 minutes.

Access is by boat from Andernach, so it needs more planning than a viewpoint directly beside the path. The boat schedule and operating arrangements should be checked before travelling, especially if walking a fixed stage itinerary.

## **Remagen and Apollinariskirche**

Near the northern end, Remagen is notable for the Apollinariskirche, a neo-Gothic hilltop pilgrimage church overlooking the Rhine. It was built between 1839 and 1857 by cathedral architect Ernst Friedrich Zwirner and contains Nazarene-school frescoes.

This is one of the more distinctive cultural stops on the final approach to Rolandseck. It is also a useful place to pause before the last stage, rather than treating the northern end as only a transport exit.

## Rolandsbogen at Rolandseck

The Rolandsbogen is the northern terminus of the RheinBurgenWeg and the surviving stone arch of the former Burg Rolandseck. It is a symbol of Rhine Romanticism and gives a sweeping view towards the Siebengebirge and Nonnenwerth island.

For south-to-north walkers, this is the natural finish photograph and the point where the trail's castle theme closes neatly. For north-to-south walkers following the official stage numbering, it is the starting landmark.

## Best places to spend extra time

Place	Best for	Planning note
Bingen am Rhein / Mäuseturm	Starting landmark and southern gateway to the gorge	Allow time before the first stage rather than arriving late and walking straight out.
Trechtingshausen area	Highest concentration of left-bank castles	Best castle-density section, with Rheinstein, Reichenstein and Sooneck close together.
Bacharach	Historic wine town, Burg Stahleck, half-timbered streets	Strong choice for an extra night in a smaller town.
Oberwesel / St. Goar	Town walls, Schönburg, Burg Rheinfels and Loreley views	The shorter Oberwesel–St. Goar stage makes sightseeing easier to fit in.
Koblenz	Deutsches Eck, services and itinerary reset	Most practical rest stop on the trail.
Andernach	Geysir Andernach	Boat times and geyser visit arrangements should be checked before travelling.
Remagen / Rolandseck	Apollinariskirche and Rolandsbogen	Worth not rushing if finishing the trail here.

## Common Mistakes and Planning Tips

The RheinBurgenWeg is logistically forgiving, but several details catch walkers out because the route looks easier on paper than it feels underfoot. The fixes are mostly simple: plan by stage town, respect the climbing, and check live travel details before committing to bookings.

Common mistake	Planning fix
<p><b>Confusing the walking direction and stage numbers.</b> The HikeList route is described south-to-north from Bingen am Rhein to Remagen-Rolandseck, but the official stage numbering runs the other way, with Etappe 1 starting at the Rolandsbogen/Remagen end.</p>	When booking rooms, trains or luggage transfer, use the town names rather than only stage numbers: Bingen am Rhein, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Bad Salzig, Rhens, Koblenz, Winningen, Bassenheim, Andernach, Bad Breisig, Remagen and Rolandseck.
<p><b>Treating it as a flat riverside walk.</b> The trail follows the left bank of the Rhine, but it repeatedly climbs from river towns to forested slate ridges, vineyards and castle viewpoints before dropping again.</p>	Build the itinerary around the cumulative ascent of about 3,900 m, not just the 195 km distance. Be especially cautious about combining stages: a 20 km day such as Trechtingshausen to Bacharach or Andernach to Bad Breisig can feel much harder than a flat 20 km riverside path.
<p><b>Overloading the pack as if this were a remote wilderness route.</b> The route is a cultural thru-hike with frequent Rhine towns, rail access and accredited RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts offering services such as luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches.</p>	Carry what is needed for the day's weather, food and water between settlements, but avoid unnecessary expedition weight if sleeping in hotels, guesthouses, winery rooms, hostels or campsites. If using luggage transfer, arrange it with accommodation providers in advance.
<p><b>Assuming every climb has services at the top.</b> The stage towns are well spaced, but the route often leaves the riverbank for exposed vineyard slopes and wooded heights where cafés, shops or water may not be available.</p>	Start each stage with enough water and food to cover the ridge and vineyard sections. In high summer, plan earlier starts for open slopes and refill before leaving towns such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach or Bad Breisig.
<p><b>Relying only on waymarks.</b> The RheinBurgenWeg is a certified Qualitätsweg and is waymarked with its own castle/tower logo, but junctions in towns, vineyards and forest tracks still require attention. Temporary diversions can also change the line.</p>	Carry an offline map or GPX as a backup to the waymarks, and check current trail diversions before travelling. Printed Mittelrhein hiking maps or a downloaded route track are useful when leaving or rejoining the trail from a station.
<p><b>Using old or mismatched route data.</b> Distances and ascent figures vary between mapping platforms and guide sources, and some online tracks include variants or circular additions.</p>	Plan with the HikeList figures of 195 km and about 3,900 m ascent, then check the latest official stage information before departure. If importing GPX files, make sure they match the linear RheinBurgenWeg between Bingen am Rhein and Remagen-Rolandseck rather than a variant.
<p><b>Forgetting that the RheinBurgenWeg is the left-bank trail.</b> The parallel right-bank trail is the Rheinsteig, and some famous Rhine sights are across the river rather than on the route.</p>	Keep the route on the west/left bank unless deliberately adding a side trip. The Loreley rock is viewed across the Rhine from the left-bank Loreleyblick/Maria Ruh viewpoint; it is not on the RheinBurgenWeg. Marksburg is also a right-bank castle, not an on-route RheinBurgenWeg castle.

Common mistake	Planning fix
<p><b>Not checking onward transport at the start and finish.</b> The Linke Rheinstrecke railway makes the trail very flexible, with stations in or near many stage towns, but timetables still matter.</p>	<p>Check live train times before travelling, especially for early starts, late finishes and the final connection from Rolandseck or Remagen. The point-to-point route is easy to section-hike, but only if train times line up with the planned stage.</p>
<p><b>Building plans around ferries or side trips without checking schedules.</b> Rhine ferries are useful for right-bank visits, and the Geysir Andernach is reached by boat from Andernach, but these are not details to leave vague.</p>	<p>Treat ferries and the Geysir Andernach boat as scheduled services, not guaranteed walk-up extras. Ferry operating seasons and times, and the geyser boat schedule, should be checked before travelling.</p>
<p><b>Booking accommodation too casually in smaller stage towns.</b> Accommodation is plentiful along the Rhine Valley, but not every stage town has unlimited choice, and the most convenient rooms near the route can fill.</p>	<p>Book the sequence of overnight stops before committing to a fixed thru-hike itinerary, especially if walking the official 13-stage pattern. If a stage town is full, the left-bank railway can sometimes make it practical to sleep in a neighbouring Rhine town and return by train, but this should be planned rather than improvised late in the day.</p>
<p><b>Underestimating wet or hot conditions.</b> The route is not technical, but rocky sections, natural forest paths and slate-influenced ground can be slippery when wet; open vineyard slopes can be hot and exposed in summer.</p>	<p>Use footwear with reliable grip and carry sun protection in warm weather. After rain, allow extra time on descents into river towns and avoid planning the longest stages at an ambitious pace.</p>
<p><b>Trying to see every castle and attraction without allowing time.</b> Castles such as Burg Rheinstein, Reichenstein, Sooneck, Burg Stahleck, Schönburg and Burg Rheinfels sit close to the walking line, and Koblenz, Andernach and Remagen also reward extra time.</p>	<p>Decide in advance which visits are essential and where to add slack. Koblenz is a natural place for a shorter day or overnight pause, and Andernach needs extra planning if visiting Geysir Andernach by boat.</p>

A robust plan for this route is simple: book accommodation by place name, carry navigation backup, check live trains and any ferry or boat services, and treat each day as a hill walk above the Rhine rather than a flat promenade beside it.

## Final Advice

The RheinBurgenWeg is best suited to walkers who want a long-distance trail with strong cultural interest, regular towns and straightforward escape options, but who are still ready for sustained daily climbing. It is not technical or remote, yet the repeated ascents from the Rhine to vineyard and slate-ridge viewpoints make it more demanding than the river-valley setting can suggest.

The main planning priority is pacing. The 13-stage schedule is sensible for most walkers because it allows time for castle visits, town stops and hot-weather breaks on exposed vineyard slopes. Fit hikers can combine shorter stages, but doing so reduces the margin for sightseeing and makes the cumulative ascent more noticeable.

Accommodation should be booked ahead in the smaller Rhine towns, especially in the main walking season and around autumn wine-harvest periods. RheinBurgenWeg partner hosts can be useful for luggage transfer, shuttles and packed lunches, but current availability and prices should be checked before booking.

The route works well as either a full thru-hike or a section hike. Walking the full Bingen am Rhein to Remagen-Rolandseck line gives the strongest sense of progression along the left bank, while the West Rhine Railway makes shorter trips very practical from places such as Bacharach, Oberwesel, St. Goar, Koblenz, Andernach, Bad Breisig and Remagen.

For many walkers, the most rewarding sections are where the trail repeatedly climbs above the river for castle and gorge views: the southern stages around Bingen, Trechtingshausen, Bacharach, Oberwesel and St. Goar are especially rich in classic RheinBurgenWeg scenery. Further north, Koblenz, Andernach, Remagen and the Rolandsbogen give the walk a strong final run of historic towns and Rhine viewpoints.

Do not underestimate summer heat on open slopes or wet conditions on rocky and forested descents. Carry enough water between towns, use footwear with reliable grip, and keep a current GPX or map to hand even though the route is well waymarked.

Before travelling, check live train times on the Linke Rheinstrecke, current trail diversions, ferry operating periods if crossing the Rhine, and the Geysir Andernach boat schedule if planning that detour. Also remember that the official stage numbering runs north-to-south from Rolandsbogen/Remagen, while many walkers and this guide describe the route south-to-north from Bingen am Rhein.