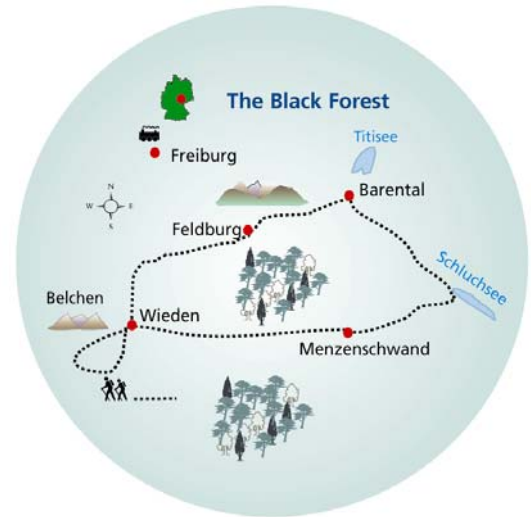


Germany: The Black Forest

Tour code: JBF

Revised: October 2008

The Black Forest covers an area of over 400 sq miles. Its name conveys an image of dense tangled forest, but nothing could be further from the truth. The area is wooded but there are also vast open tracts of undulating hills peppered with attractive traditional villages and half-timbered houses. There are many fine open ridge walks that afford grand views over forest, pasture and mountain lakes. The trails which Mark Twain described in such glowing terms, in his book "A Tramp Abroad," are now meticulously way marked and lead the walker from one attractive village to another even more attractive village. We have developed a route through the Black Forest that takes in such highlights as Feldberg (1493m), the highest peak, Belchen the most impressive peak, and the lake at Schluchsee from where the views extend as far as the Alps. At the heart of the valleys are welcoming traditional hotels, reminiscent of cuckoo clocks, where you can enjoy every modern comfort (many have swimming pools) and the local gastronomy, that extends well beyond the famous cake, and is regarded as the best in all Germany.



Travel Information

Arrival: First hotel in Barental. You will have to take a bus from Basel airport to Freiburg train station (approx. 10 Euros). Then there are trains once per hour from Freiburg-im-Breisgau to Barental. The hotel is located about 1km from the train station. The journey from airport to hotel takes a little under 2 hours and you should aim to arrive here by early evening. The walk from the station is too far if you are carrying baggage; the hotel management have offered to collect you from Barental station, if you telephone them, preferably from Freiburg, or else on arrival in Barental.

If you are travelling in your own car, we recommend you leave your car at the hotel in Barental. Barental is located at the crossroad of the roads 317 and 500 "Basel-Donaueschingen" between Titisee and the lake of Schluchsee (it is 8km away from Titisee). See maps Michelin No. 242 or No. 413 [Germany-South]).

End of Tour: After breakfast on Day 7 at Barental. There are hourly trains to Freiburg via Titisee.

Air Travel from the UK: Flights from Heathrow to Basel on scheduled services of British Airways.

Season: May to late October (But not starting on Saturdays)

Level of Difficulty

Fitness: This walk is graded 'Moderate' and should present no difficulties for anyone in reasonable physical condition and accustomed to mountain walking on varied gradients and surfaces.

Waymarking: The route is well marked and well defined, mainly following good forest footpaths.

Day Stages: An average of 17-22 Kms. (approx 12.5 Miles) with a height gain/loss of between 250 to 990 metres. Each walk will last an average of 4 - 6 hours. Your luggage will be transferred from one hotel to the next and this is included in the trek price.

Outline Itinerary

- ❑ **Day 1:** Arrive towards early evening at Barental. Settle into a typical Black Forest hotel, which at 950m is situated near the edge of the forest.
- ❑ **Day 2:** Rounded walk from Baerental (18 km/5hours, height gain 520m). On the first day's walk in the heart of the Black forest you will pass through Mathilsweiher (1000m) and ascend the peak of Seebuck 1448m. The main feature of this stretch will be to enjoy the wonderful view of Feldsee Lake. From Feldberg you take a short bus ride back to the hotel in Barental.
- ❑ **Day 3:** Morning return by bus to Feldberg-Ort and then walk to Wiedenereck, St Wilhelmer Hutte, Stubenwasen, and Notschrei. (19 kms / 6 hours, height gain 520m). The vantage points on this walk are splendid and one can also attempt the ascent of the highest summit of the Black Forest, the Feldberg that towers to 1493m. At the summit one has almost an entire panorama of the mountains and hills of the forest.
- ❑ **Day 4:** Circular walk from Wiedenereck via Nonnenmattweiher, with possible swim (16,5km / 5 hours, height gain 770m). A superb stage which allows us to progress steadily. You can familiarize yourself with the mountain environment and the often flower bedecked wooden houses. The traverse of Neuenweg village is very pretty, a very typical Black Forest setting which leaves you at

Lake Nonnenmattweiher, where you can rest or take a dip. There then follows the ascent of Belchen, the third highest peak of the Black Forest at 1414m. Now and again you take small footpaths, otherwise small trails wind up through the rocks to the top, for the view before descending back to Wiedenereck. You can also choose to have a shorter day (14km/4 hours, height gain 650m).

□ **Day 5:** Weidenereck to Menzenschwand, via Knopflers Brunnen, Todnau, and Herzogenhorn (22,5km / 7 hours 30mins, height gain 835m). Today there is the ascent of the second highest summit, 1417m, of the area, the Herzogenhorn from where a view of the most picturesque village of the forest: Menzenschwand can be spied. The village is made solely of large wooden houses, one of which will be our residence in the heart of the village this evening.

□ **Day 6:** Menzenschwand to Baerental, via Aulemer Kreuz, Rosshutte and Schluchsee (20km / 6 hours, height gain 480m). The main point of interest today is the approach to the magnificent Schluchsee Lake; where we can bath before ending in Baerental.

□ **Day 7:** End of tour after breakfast.

General Information

Baths: it is not normal for your room to have a bath, the main reason being that it takes up a lot of space, some hotels/guesthouses may have a separate room in the house where a bath is available to guests, but in the main it is showers.

Breakfast: in countries such as Switzerland/Norway/Germany/Austria they are usually buffet style, please don't offend your hosts by making up a picnic lunch from the breakfast buffet unless it has been specifically organised for you i.e Finse in Norway. It is important for you to tell us if you have any dietary requirements when you book your holiday so that we can inform everyone that you are staying with.

Single Supplements: are payable on most of our tours. The single supplement guarantees the privacy of your own room, however, rooms can at times be small and in some places may not enjoy the same facilities as double/twin rooms.

Language: When travelling in less frequented areas you will not necessarily come across people speaking English.

Remember you have left home to find things different so bring a phrase book with you.

Luggage: When staying in hotels, sometimes your luggage will have been taken to your room awaiting your arrival. However don't be surprised if your luggage is waiting for you to take it up to your room.

Accommodation & Meals

Is on a half board basis (evening meal and breakfast), in twin rooms or in a single room (subject to a supplement) with shower and toilet en suite, in comfortable hotels and "Gasthauser" (guesthouses), usually family run and traditional Black Forest buildings, sited either on the mountain side or in mountain villages. Some hotels have swimming pools and a sauna. The food is typical of the Black Forest, and can be accompanied, if you want, by the famous regional wines of Baden or by the numerous exceptionally good locally brewed beers.

Lunches: They are not included in the price of the tour. Picnic materials can be bought easily. We recommend suitable lunch stops along the route in our notes, or if you prefer the hotels will provide packed lunches on request. Pay direct to the hotelier, around 7 to 10 Euros per person for a lunch.

□ **Nights 1, 2 & 6:** Baerental: The 3* hotel is situated at the edge of the forest. It is a lovely, small, typical hotel where you will enjoy the sauna and swimming pool. We spend our first, second and last night here.

□ **Nights 3 & 4:** Wiedener-Eck: We stay two nights at a elegant 3* mountain hotel, which is situated in one of the most scenic areas of the Black Forest on the 1050m Munstertal Schonau Pass. The hotel also has a sauna & swimming pool.

□ **Night 5:** Menzenschwand: Your 3* hotel tonight is a delightful Black Forest hotel located in a farming village. The hotel has its own sauna, solarium and terrace